SPOTLIGHT ON AFRUCA

AFRUCA Summit on African Families in London

3rd Edition 2013
Dear Friends/Supporters

The 3rd edition of our Newsletter for the year focuses on our Summit on African families in London taking place on 12 October 2013. With an increasing number of Africans migrating into the UK, there is no better time to organise and discuss pressing issues affecting African families across the capital. We explore why AFRUCA is holding this important event.

As a direct response to the over-representation of African Children in the social and welfare system, we have launched a new, innovative project: ‘The Child Protection Community Volunteering Project’. This project aims to recruit 100 Children’s Champions over the next two years to help educate others about child protection in order to help reduce the number of African children ending up in care. Find out how you can play your part by becoming a Children’s Champion.

Lydia Taiwo’s new book: "A Broken Childhood II: Forgiveness" is reviewed in this edition. Also, Joanna Rich, our first student on placement writes about her placement experiences at AFRUCA.

Our 7 days Activism Against Human Trafficking was a big success with stakeholders from different agencies coming together to discuss Human Trafficking and partake in the different activities organised as part of the campaign.

The Body Shop Foundation’s Cycle Ride from London to Paris to raise funds for our work at AFRUCA was a huge success. The money raised will go towards direct victim support for children and young people branded as witches in the Congo and Nigeria.

Hope you Enjoy Reading!

Debbie Ariyo OBE
(CEO/Founder AFRUCA)
Why AFRUCA is Holding A Summit on African Families

by Debbie Ariyo OBE

On the 12th of October 2013, about 350 African parents, young people, children, faith and community leaders as well as professionals who work with African families will converge in London at a special Summit organised by my charity AFRUCA to deliberate on some of the key issues faced by families across the capital. This is a very timely event necessitated by many recent developments in the African community.

Our work at AFRUCA shows an increasing number of children who are being removed from their families as a result of physical abuse. We continue to have parents come to see us at our offices asking for help and support to get their children from local authorities across the country. These are families whose actions are seen to be at odds with the laws of the UK in relation to how children are brought up. Our parents living in this country still believe in the power of the cane to solve problems – forgetting it is an offence to use an implement to beat a child.

It is important that as many parents as possible understand the risks involved when they beat their children. I have worked with families where four children have been removed because a child in the family was beaten by a parent.

The other children are deemed to be at risk of abuse as a result. Another issue which is quite worrisome is the rate of breakup of families across the capital. African families are not immune from this. The recession is having a terrible impact on many families, due to loss of employment and reduced income, housing issues, immigration problems and many other factors. Many parents are finding it harder to cope and this leads to stress within the family. Parents become hostile to each other, they fight each other and many families are experiencing conflict as a result.

Children in such families also experience emotional abuse, seeing their parents constantly fight each other. It is essential to address this issue and give families tips and advice on how to prevent conflict in the home no matter the pressure. We will address this topic as part of the Summit on the 12th of October.

One of the most terrible developments being experienced by our young people is the increasing rate of mortality as a result of gang warfare on the streets of London. This year alone at least ten young people have been killed on the streets of London as
a result of gun and knife crime. Young people of African origin are being sentenced to life imprisonment for killing other young people. This is a very crucial issue to be addressed as a matter of extreme urgency hence its inclusion in the programme at the Summit.

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The challenge of living in a new or different country with all its intricacies and complexities is taking its toll on many parents. Increasingly, adult Africans as well as children and young people are becoming over represented in the mental health system. More and more Africans are being sectioned by the mental health system.

Many parents who have mental health problems also end up with other challenges including having their children removed by the local authority due to their inability to guarantee the children’s wellbeing. Immigration problems and other social challenges are key factors leading to many people developing mental health problems. We have invited some professionals to help provide tips to participants at the Summit on how to deal with stress and other challenges.

The cultural differences in the way children are brought up, the conflict between tradition and modernisation, the problem of identity experienced by many of our young people the challenges of bringing up children who are more "street wise" than their parents lead to conflict and an inability to communicate effectively.

Many parents experience a lot of anguish due to their inability to "bond" with their children. This vacuum leads to children and young people looking for alternative albeit the wrong ways to satisfy their needs for support, acceptance and a “family”, leading often times to conflict with the law. It is important that the causes of these key issues are addressed. For this reason, we are also holding a special Intergenerational Forum of parents and young people as part of the Summit to enable a frank and open discussion so that we can jointly find solutions to this particularly difficult issue.

AFRUCA’s Summit on African Families on 12th October is billed to be an example of a community taking ownership of its problems and working hard to find solutions to address them.

We are happy to be involved in such a historic event because we do know from enquiries received that many people see this as a very good development. We expect that participants at the Summit will spend the day sharing knowledge, ideas and professing solutions to help support families who are facing challenges. At the end of the day, we hope that this event will help galvanise further action to support families who need help in order to protect our children and improve their welfare.

For further information about the Summit visit: www.afruca.org
WHO’S WHO AT AFRUCA’S SUMMIT IN LONDON?

Debbie Ariyo OBE: is the Founder and Chief Executive of AFRUCA – Africans Unite Against Child Abuse and Convenor of the Summit on African Families in London.

Meg Hillier MP: is a British Labour Co-operative politician who has been the Member of Parliament (MP) for Hackney South and Shoreditch since 2005, and was a junior Minister in HM Government from 2007 to 2010. She is the Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Nigeria and is Summit Chief Host.

Vuyiswa Ngqobongwana: is a broadcaster, writer and producer. She currently presents Africa Today on Press TV and has nearly 20 years experience in community development work, specialising in mental health advocacy and organisational development. She is Summit Host and Compere for the Day.

Muzvare Betty Makoni: is a CNN World Hero and a gender activist who founded the Girl Child Network, which cares for young sex abuse victims; the organization has rescued more than 35,000 girls. She is Special Guest of Honour at the Summit.

Richard Taylor OBE: Founder of Damilola Taylor Trust. He set up the Damilola Taylor Trust to bring positive change to inner city communities and increase the options and opportunities available to youngsters in those areas. He was awarded an OBE for his services to the prevention of youth violence. He is Special Guest of Honour at the Summit.
Kevani Kanda: has been in local authority care from the age of nine. She spent her childhood with different foster parents and in a children’s home and intends on breaking every negative government statistic about children in care. Kevani recently explored the disturbing and hidden world of faith-based child abuse in the BBC3 film Branded a Witch. She is Co-Chair of the Summit’s Special Intergenerational Forum With Parents and Young People.

Pauline Long: is the founder of Europe’s biggest award ceremony for Black and Ethnic Personalities in Entertainment, Film, Fashion, Television and Arts (BEFFTA). She has a daytime global TV talk show - The Pauline Long Show on SKY Channel 182 on BENTV. She is an entrepreneur, philanthropist, fashion designer, mentor, motivational speaker, writer and TV presenter. She is Co-Chair of the Summit’s Special Intergenerational Forum With Parents and Young People.

Prospera Tedam: is a senior Lecturer in Social Work-Practice at Northampton University and a Programme leader. She is the Chair of AFRUCA’s Board of Trustees and is Chairing a Workshop Session on Child Protection.

Patricia Lamour: (Pat Lee-Sang) is the Managing Director of Aspire Education Group, gender and international education expert. She is passionate about the transformation and success of young people through education, and promoting gender equality for global development. She is Chairing the Workshop on Schools, Exclusions and Attainment.

Jesse Appiah: is a fast-rising acoustic soul singer-songwriter on the verge of making an impact on the British music scene. In 2013, he released his debut E.P ‘Studiocoustic’ featuring the single “I Ain’t Rich... Yet”, which was featured on BBC 1Xtra introducing playlist. Besides creating music, he has a degree in Social Anthropology. Jesse is supporting AFRUCA with his music at the Summit.
Lydia Taiwo is a survivor – a survivor of physical, mental and emotional abuse at the hands of those who should have loved and protected her.

Nightmares normally end when we awaken. But what if your waking hours actually were your nightmare? In her first book, ‘A Broken Childhood’, Lydia Taiwo opened her heart and showed us how she survived horrific abuse as a child.

In ‘A Broken Childhood II: Forgiveness’, Lydia’s story continues when her parents finally decide to take her back to Nigeria. However any hopes that her life will improve are swiftly dashed by her mother. Alone in a strange country, she is determined to survive, but when she finally escapes her parents’ clutches, Lydia will find that the hardest battle of all is learning how to come to terms with the past.

As Lydia herself admits, learning to forgive was the beginning of a journey of redemption and in turn, led to her being able to move on and build a remarkable life.

A happily married mother of six, and a Doctor of Science, Lydia now devotes much of her time to helping those whose lives have been ruined by abuse and neglect.


Victory is achieved by he who forgives. Ultimately, the lesson of A Broken Childhood is salvation through forgiveness.”
– Duke Sandefur

You can find out more about Lydia at: www.LydiaTaiwo.com.
The AFRUCA Centre for African Children and Families is receiving an increased profile and popularity among African communities and other agencies for the valuable services and activities it renders in and around Greater Manchester and in Yorkshire. We continue to be invited to attend and participate in different activities in both areas as community child protection experts and to help deliver training activities to community and faith organisations in the areas. This is especially as part of our ongoing project: "Safeguarding African Children in African Faith Organisations in Yorkshire and Greater Manchester".

Between 1st June and 30th September 2013, we delivered 5 training sessions to a total of 71 people out of which nearly half of them i.e. 35 were faith leaders and worker and the remaining half i.e. 36 were parents.

Most of the training sessions we delivered this year fall between the period September 2012 to May 2013. Usually, it is difficult to arrange training sessions with faith groups during the summer as most people are on holiday and many faith groups also arrange their own special events around this period.

Out of the five training sessions delivered between June and September, 3 of them were for faith leaders and workers while the remaining two were for parents in general. The churches we worked with in the period include:

- Body of Christ in Sheffield
- Mesitand Abundant faith in Leeds
- His Presence 4Square Church in Leeds
- Eye of God Church in Manchester

In July 2013, the Centre participated in and delivered a well crafted presentation at the Redeemed Christian Church of God Annual Conference themed: ‘Raising Champions’ in Rotherham. The conference was fully packed with over 50 participants from local communities and from other parts of the country. The role AFRUCA has been playing in raising the profile of African children and their families in the UK was highly appreciated by the participants and attendees vowed their full support and commitment to work together with AFRUCA as partners in furthering its overall objectives.

In August 2013, we were also invited to attend and deliver a presentation at the Celestial Church of Christ - Salvation Ark Annual Conference held in Salford.

At this event, Debbie Ariyo, Chief Executive Director of AFRUCA attended and delivered a presentation urging the participants to fully comprehend the enormity of the problems African children and their families face in the UK and the need to be familiar with UK Law on Child Protection so children can be better protected. She reiterated the need to work together as a community to find an
African solution to the African problem of children ending up in the care system through effective joint-working.

“There is a the need to work together as a community to find an African solution to the African problem of children ending up in the care system through effective joint working”

Again in August 2013, the Centre was invited by the Greater Manchester Police to deliver a presentation, share good practice and experiences at an anti-human trafficking event organised and attended by five regional police forces and other local agencies. Lola Gani-Yusuf, AFRUCA’s Anti Trafficking Co-ordinator represented AFRUCA and delivered a paper at this event.

The Centre was also invited to deliver a paper at a similar event on Child Trafficking organised by the Black Health Agency (BHA) in Manchester in association with the English Mission Christian Centre. Additionally, the Centre has been relentlessly working toward the successful implementation of two very demanding community projects in Greater Manchester and Yorkshire areas. These projects are being carried out as planned and are making significant impact on their respective target group.

To strengthen out work with African families in the Greater Manchester area, and to help meet demand for our work from other parts of the North of England, AFRUCA applied to the Big Lottery Fund to fund a new project to support families going through the child protection system so children can be better protected and families can be kept together. We are pleased to announce that we were awarded a grant totalling £299,997 to run this project for the next three years.

In the next few months, the Centre will be holding a series of seminars on Child Trafficking focusing on different parts of the African community in the Greater Manchester area. Funded by Awards for All, we want to use this opportunity to help raise awareness of this key issue so that a lot more victims of child trafficking and exploitation in the area can receive help and support.

For further information about AFRUCA Centre for African Children and Families
Please contact Teamirat:
(Regional Programmes Co-ordinator)
teamirat@afruca.org
or
info@afruca.org or call:
01619534712
What You Gain as a Children’s Champion

- Opportunity to help protect African children from abuse and harm.
- Free Child Protection training and a Certificate of Participation.
- Some experience of community training and public speaking.
- Opportunity to contribute to improving the African community in London & the South of England.
- Some experience of outreach work in the African faith and or community sector.

Your Commitment as AFRUCA’s Children’s Champion

- A strong commitment to the rights and welfare of children.
- To undergo a two-day training to gain necessary skills to train others in the community on child protection and cultural practices, and their impact on black/African children’s wellbeing and safety.
- Use AFRUCA training materials to conduct and evaluate your own half day training workshop on similar subjects.
- Our Champions will always be supported by experienced AFRUCA staff as they conduct their training sessions.
- Disseminate AFRUCA materials on child protection to support parents.
- Meet with other Children Champions to share learning as a group.

Person Specification

- Willingness to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service check to confirm your suitability to represent a children’s charity and provide two satisfactory references.
- Must have some experience of parenting or working with children.
- Must be able to communicate effectively in English and 1 other language.
- Must be computer and internet literate.
- A good understanding of African cultural and religious issues and the link with child exploitation and abuse.

Our aim is to address the over-representation of African children in the child protection and social welfare system.

For further information about AFRUCA’s Children’s Champions Project, please contact Iro Emokpae (Project Co-ordinator) on 0207 7042261
To apply please send your CV to: iro@afruca.org
Joanna Rich: Our First Student on Placement Speaks About Her Placement Experience at AFRUCA

What were your first impressions of AFRUCA?
My very first impressions of AFRUCA involved it being a quiet, serious office in which everyone worked hard at their computers! I also recognised everyone's levels of expertise and commitment to working in their given areas, as well as their desire to share their knowledge.

What did you enjoy most about working for AFRUCA?
I enjoyed the opportunity to work in a variety of areas. Not all placement sites provide students with opportunities to support young victims of trafficking/asylum seekers as well as children and families in the context of child protection. This also provided a range of training opportunities (Justin's, the Salvation Army conference, etc.)

What did you enjoy least about working for AFRUCA?
Although I do understand it's an essential part of work when you're a small charity, I didn't enjoy communicating with social workers about billing and commissioning.

What would you miss most about working with/at AFRUCA?
I will miss all the people I have met, including my colleagues who have always been so kind. In particular, I will miss the group of young people, whose strength and resilience have been an inspiration to me.

Would you recommend AFRUCA to other placements students? Why?
Yes, it's a supportive environment that provides a range of practice experiences.

Did you find your role challenging and rewarding?
Working at a charity that supports African children and families in the UK when you are neither African nor from the UK did present many challenges!

What could you have done better or more for us given the opportunity?
I think there was scope for me to do more work with the young people, both as individuals (particularly with the ones “further afield”) and as a group. I know there are many things they would be interested in doing together if they had the resources.

In your opinion what can we do to make student placements at AFRUCA better?
Although it's wonderful to work in a variety of areas, I think it would be helpful for students needs to have one person to whom they're accountable and can provide direct practice supervision.
AFRUCA - Africans Unite Against Child Abuse – recently held a ‘7 Days Activism Against Human Trafficking’ from the 29 June to 5 July to increase awareness of the impact of human trafficking among African communities across London and Greater Manchester, as well as to commemorate the charity’s 12th anniversary. The week long campaign kicked off on Saturday 29 June with a Fundraising and Variety event held at Amnesty International Centre in London. The variety night showcased AFRUCA’s service users, who are survivors of trafficking on stage in a spectacular African theatre styled drama titled: ‘The Big Festival’ directed by the award winning Iroko Theatre Company. This was a very unique performance by a group of young people who have experienced a lot of abuse, hardship and suffering as a result of their experiences of being trafficked and exploited.

The audience was also treated to traditional African music by Iroko Theatre. The event ended with a raffle draw and an auction with items donated by local businesses and some audience members winning fabulous prizes.

The highlight of the activism week was a high profile seminar titled: “Child Trafficking, Prevention is Better than Cure!” held at the House of Commons on the 1st of July. The seminar was hosted by Meg Hillier MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Nigeria. Another event titled: “Child Trafficking: A New Form of Child Abuse in Greater Manchester?” was held on the 3rd July, in Manchester and was chaired by Ian Rush, Chair, Manchester Safeguarding Children Board.

Other highlights of the night included a classical music rendition by Georgina Whitehead, poetical recital by Dr Christy Akumabor, and a fashion show by an AFRUCA young person that featured creative designs. The drama production was a unique programme put together by AFRUCA and Iroko Theatre as part of AFRUCA’s menu of support for victims of trafficking to aid their healing and transition into independent living.
Both seminars were well attended and featured speakers including Debbie Ariyo OBE, Founder and Executive Director at AFRUCA, Klara Skrivankova, Anti-Trafficking Coordinator at Anti-Slavery International; Jenny Pennington of the Institute of Public Policy and Research, James Behan, Head of Operations at UK Human Trafficking Centre, Raggi Kotak, Barrister at 1 Pump Court Chambers, Denise MacDowell, Director at Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit; DC Colin Ward of Greater Manchester Police and Romana Caccioli Head of Programmes at Anti-Slavery International. In addition to the events above, a series of Road-shows attracting dozens of people were held to help promote AFRUCA’s work on trafficking and raise awareness of the issue. Fabulous cup cakes donated by Sweet Bakes did help in attracting people to come and talk to AFRUCA staff during the road shows.

Explaining the rationale for the Human Trafficking Activism week, Debbie Ariyo OBE, AFRUCA Founder and Director said: “The 7 days Activism campaign was aimed at increasing awareness of the impact of human trafficking among African communities across London and Greater Manchester. We want African communities in these regions to partner with AFRUCA in ensuring that no African child is trafficked either for sexual exploitation, domestic servitude or penalised as a result of being forced to engage in illicit criminal activities by their traffickers.”

Some of the key recommendations from the events held included the need for government agencies to develop better relationships and trusts with African communities to encourage referrals and reporting of the crime of trafficking. One of the shocking revelations at the event was the fact that Nigeria has one of the highest (possibly the highest) numbers of victims of trafficking from Africa into the UK. Speakers at the seminar in London called for the revival of a Joint Agreement signed by the UK and Nigerian governments in 2004 to collaborate on fighting human trafficking and protecting victims.

“For further information about AFRUCA and its work against Child Trafficking in the UK visit www.afruca.org”
What is Private Fostering?

The UK government defines private fostering as an arrangement, usually between a parent and another adult carer to look after a child or young person under the age of 16 for more than 28 days. In other words, Private fostering is a private arrangement made between a parent and a non-relative to look after a child. Therefore, in most situations parental consent is understood to have been granted for this arrangement to take place.

While there are no official figures of privately fostered children in the UK, research carried out in 1991 showed that approximately 8,000 -10,000 children were living in private fostering situation. Majority of these children were under the age of five and of West African origin. Effective safeguarding of privately fostered children has been a cause for concern to government departments and professionals working with children.

This booklet explores the issue of private fostering and examines it especially within the African culture of fostering children. Additionally, it distinguishes between private fostering and child trafficking.

Furthermore, it highlights the legal requirement for both parents and private foster carer to notify local agencies of the arrangement and provides information on how to protect children in fostering situations. Finally, it examines AFRUCA’s work on child trafficking and private fostering, and provides useful contacts and resources on child safeguarding.

“Private Fostering (is)... among the least controlled and most open to abuse of all the environments in which children lived away from home.”

Sir William Utting

To read more visit:
Upcoming Training Events

3
October 2013
Child Safeguarding, Working with Black/African Children and Families.

9
November 2013
AFRUCA Children’s Champions Training Day 1

29
October 2013
Child Safeguarding, Working with Black/African Children and Families.

10
November 2013
AFRUCA Children’s Champions Training Day 2

5
November 2013
Female Genital Mutilation as a Child Safeguarding Issue.

3
December 2013
Child Abuse Linked to Belief in Witchcraft or Juju.

19
November 2013
Working with black/African Children in Foster Care

For Further Information about our training programmes please contact: training@afruca.org
The Body Shop Foundation organised a cycle ride from London to Paris in August 2013 to help raise funds for AFRUCA. From 27th to 30th August 2013, a team of 23 cyclists with grit and determination covered over 237 miles in 3 days, cycling from London to Paris. Through this challenge the Body Shop Foundation raised a total of £20,500 towards our work, which we intend to use to set up projects in the two countries (Nigeria and the Congo) which have the highest numbers of children suffering from the consequences of being branded as witches. We would like to say a HUGE Thank you to the Body Shop Foundation for their continuous support of our work and projects.
AFRUCA THANKS... Sainsbury’s

Sainsbury’s Stoke Newington makes AFRUCA "Charity of the Year"

The Sainsbury's Shop in Stoke Newington, Hackney has made AFRUCA its chosen "Charity of the Year". As part of this, the organisation will provide support to AFRUCA in different ways including the provision of support in organising events as well as providing a venue for us to exhibit our work to their customers. Iro Emokpae, AFRUCA Projects Co-ordinator said: "We are really grateful Sainsbury's are supporting our work in cash and kind. Its a very good example of how a local business can support local charities to help enhance their work"

"We are really grateful Sainsbury's are supporting our work in cash and kind. Its a very good example of how a local business can support local charities to help enhance their work"

New Big Lottery Grant for AFRUCA Centre Manchester.

AFRUCA Centre for African Children and Families has been awarded a new three year Big Lottery Fund grant to help develop its Family Support Programme in the North of England.

The new grant of £299,997 will help us to provide intensive support to families who are going through the child protection system and need assistance in gaining new skills and knowledge in order to better protect their children from abuse and harm. The grant will also help us to organise Child Protection training courses for parents across the North of England to help improve their knowledge so they can better safeguard their children.

AFRUCA will be recruiting two new staff members who will run the project.

To find out more about our work visit: www.afruca.org

Iro, Grace and Saater at a recent Road Show in Sainsbury to raise awareness about AFRUCA’s work.
AFRUCA THANKS

We will also like to say thank you to Dinny Hall Islington for donating these lovely pair of silver earrings towards our raffle price draw at our Fundraising and Variety Evening in June.

Many thanks Dinny Hall for your support

We will also like to say thank you to Beauty Republic Islington for donating these His and Hers Beauty Boxes towards our raffle price draw at our Fundraising and Variety Evening in June.

Many thanks Beauty Republic your support

We will also like to say thank you to Olivia’s Sweet Bakes for donating these delicious cakes towards our road-show at our 7 Days Activism Against Human Trafficking.

Many thanks Olivia’s Sweet Bakes for your support

We will also like to say thank you to LUSH Liverpool Street Station for donating this beautiful gift box towards our raffle price draw at our Fundraising and Variety Evening in June.

Many thanks LUSH for your support

We will also like to say thank you to Rodizio Rico Islington for donating Dinner for two and a bottle of wine towards our raffle price draw at our Fundraising and Variety Evening in June.

Many thanks Rodizio Rico for your support

Support our Work

Donate Securely at: WWW.JUSTGIVING.COM/AFRUCA
You can also donate by texting:
AFRU01+ the amount you wish to give to 70070 its free on all Networks.
AFRUCA Thanks our Funders

For Supporting our Anti-child Trafficking Project

For Supporting our work in tackling Witchcraft Abuse

For Supporting our work with faith organisations to Safeguard Children in Yorkshire and Greater Manchester

For Supporting our work on Child Protection

For continued support of our programmes and events

And a BIG Thank You to All Our Amazing Volunteers
AFRUCA
Africans Unite Against Child Abuse

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You can also donate by texting:
AFRU01+ the amount you wish to give to 70070 its free on all Networks.

WWW.AFRUCA.ORG

AFRUCA is a UK registered charity number 1093027 and a company limited by guarantee number 4306536.

AFRUCA promotes the Rights and Welfare of African Children in the UK and in Africa.