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Welcome remarks

Who are we?

Edmund Rice Advocacy Network (ERAN) is a faith based organization run under the auspices of the Congregation of Christian Brothers in East Africa. Our mandate is to mainstream rights-based approach to advocacy into the Christian Brothers’ ministries and beyond, challenging directly oppressive systems and structures that continue to impoverish and marginalize people and undermine their inherent dignity.

We welcome all our readers to this second edition of volume one 2017 Newsletter. Enjoy your reading. Previous edition of the newsletter will be on our website from end of May for your access.

Our focus areas;

- Research and Development; this area fosters information and resource from basic survey and networks. Its purposefully informative research.
- Human Rights and Peace Building; this component mainly builds the capacity in human rights and fostering peace.
- Children Rights; this is a component that fosters awareness and channels of promoting and protecting children rights.
- Environmental Conservation; is a program entity for promoting sustainable mother earth.
- Networking and partnership; to foster the spirit of sharing information and resources.

Inspiring stories of achievements:

- See detail for each activity

Youth peace building training and tournament

Edmund Rice Advocacy Network has high regards for empowering youth to respect, promote and champion human rights and become peace ambassadors. Youthful stage in life need to be utilized in a fruitful manner that enhances life and purpose for the youth.

With the Kenyan situation, we are aware youth are the most vulnerable. In order to mitigate this challenge ERAN held its first Youth Peace Tournament, the first in its schedule 3 year competition from 31st March to 2nd April, 2017. The meeting was aimed at promoting peace among the youth, more so in this electioneering period in accordance with our Human Rights and Peace building Program objectives. The event brought together 8 Men’s Teams and 2 Ladies Teams from Dagoretti South and Kibra Sub-Counties. It involved one-day training on Peace building and a two-day knock-out tournament.

The event was held in collaboration with the Pentecostal Transformation Ministries, Franciscan Africa, Kuunganisha, World Peace Initiative, Sports department of Kibra-Sub County, the policy post of Jamuhuri as our key partners.

Lang’ata Southlands cleanup

On the 14th March, 2017, ERAN carried out an Environmental Clean-up exercise at Lang’ata Southlands,
Mugumo-ini Location of Lang’ata sub-county in partnership with the Mugumo-ini Chief’s Office, Nairobi

County Environment Division, Social Awareness and Development Agency (SADA), Community Health Volunteers (CHV), Make A Change International Development (MACID), Domus Mariae Radio FM, and a number of youth groups in the area participated.

The event attracted over 78 participants and we had a remarkable clean up.

Apart from the cleanup we had sharing on the importance of clean water and sanitation and need to advocate against dumping waste on the road side and water drainage system.

**Children Camp at Mathare**

ERAN held a Children’s Camp at the Good Samaritan Children’s Home in Mathare between 6th and 7th April, 2017. The Children’s Home hosts about 300 children from all the age groups and has existed for over 25 years.

The Team from ERAN had various indoor fun activities with the children at the Home for the two-day period that the camp ran. They also shared with the children about their rights and responsibilities. The participating children displayed a variety of talents using locally ‘waste’ materials as shown in the photo. Children only need to be motivated and affirmed to show case what they are and express their inner being!

**International Day for the Street Children**

The International Day of the Street Children was celebrated on the 12th April, 2017 worldwide. ERAN held its celebrations at the Kwetu Home of Peace for Rehabilitating Street Children at Madaraka, Nairobi. The Day was held under the theme “This is Our Time”.

The Children’s Home hosts street children for 3 months before transferring them to another of their facility in Ruai to help with their education and reintegration. The team from ERAN took time with the children to enjoy games, fun learning about children and other outdoor activities that culminated in the sharing of a cake to commemorate the day.

**Human Rights, Advocacy and UPR Process Training in Arusha**


The training, attended by over 45 members of Edmund Rice Network in Arusha, comprised of staff and students at the school. They were grateful for the training and undertook to further their participation on various issues affecting the community, especially those that were important to Blessed Edmund Rice.
Youth Camp at Embulbul

On the 20th and 21st April, 2017, ERAN hosted about 60 youth for camp. The two day camp involved lots of fun activities and a peacebuilding session where the participating youth interacted with some of the local leaders and peace building experts to share on issues of peace within their community of Embulbul.

They were encouraged to promote and maintain peace throughout this electioneering period and beyond. Further, they were encouraged to help influence their peers who were not part of the camp not to engage in violence and not to be misused by the political elites. The youth undertook to play their part in promoting peace within their neighborhoods.

MCA’s Debate

Domus Radio, in collaboration with ERAN and other partners, hosted contestants of the Oloolua Ward Member of the County Assembly position on Friday, 24th March 2017 at the Domus Mariae School.

The event was aimed at bringing the candidates, a selection of the voters and the listeners, drawn from the Oloolua Ward of Kajiado County to a meeting where they could discuss the various issues that the contestants hoped to tackle if elected to office. Key among the issues discussed were youth and women empowerment, infrastructure, bursary, insecurity, inclusivity and peaceful and harmonious living prior to, during and post-election period. Further, the candidates undertook to work with the eventual winner of the elections.

Embulbul Youth Walk

ERAN held a Youth Walk on 29th April, 2017 with the aim of promoting peaceful pre- and post-election period. The Walk was part of the follow up of the Youth Camp held on 20th and 21st April, 2017. The Walk happened around the Embulbul community and centre. The youth passed peace messages through songs and banners, encouraging all to be responsible and to live harmoniously with one another. Slogans such as ‘VIJANA TUMECHOKA KUDANGANYWA NA KUTUMIWA’ meaning ‘youth are tired of being cheated and used!’ were evident during the walk.

The youth, numbering about 50, showed enthusiasm in the walk and messages of peace. Further, they undertook to be peace ambassadors among their peers and the community at large.

The walk was flagged off by the area chief and ODM aspirant for MCA post for Ololua ward.

Human rights, Peace Building and children rights and responsibilities in EFL

On 25th to 28th ERAN facilitated four days training: two days for high school students and two days for parents all beneficiaries of Education For Life (EFL) program in Eldoret. The project is managed by the Christian brothers. The training was a success and participants were enthusiastic to have had the opportunity to learn new ideas on how to address the increasing cases of child abuse, youth drug abuse and household conflict.

A lot of needs emerged especially on the urgency to engage men from the region in addressing child abuse cases, child neglect and also healing the wounds of the past in relation to land issues.
There is much more that need to be done to heal the past experiences of post-election violence amongst community members.

**Child Rights Training at Mirror of Hope CBO in Adams, Guadalupe Parish**

5th and 6th of May ERAN conducted a two day’s training the staff of Mirror of Hope CBO. Mirror of Hope CBO works with children through sponsoring them for schooling. Our training focused on the understanding of international, regional and local legal instruments for protection of children, forms of child abuse and how to prevent them and legal redress process, networking and linkages for enhancing child safety and welfare.

Victor, ERAN staff taking participants through legal redress session at Mirror of Hope during the training.

**Nomadic Children Education Centre, Turkana.**

Have you ever wondered what happens to children who are got in the midst of cattle rustling? Who gives attention to their plights? Their rights to be protected? To be cared for and given first priority in terms of food and shelter? This is where rights in Kenya apply selectively, contrary to the spirit and demands of the constitutions and UNCRC.

In Turkana children who are got in the fiasco of cattle rustling are often left abandoned while men and women run for safety. Some of them lose their parents and find themselves nowhere in the vast wilderness of scotching conditions with no one to run to. Others remain in hands of desperate women who cannot afford to offer them much!

One Catholic Priest, Fr. Joseph Ekomwa, a diocesan priest working at Catholic University in Eldoret campus, also coming from Lopur village in Katilu, Turkana County is struggling to come to terms with how multi-sectorial parties could join forces to advocate for the rights of these children especially on right to education and basic needs. He realized that his home village has a sizable number of nomadic children abandoned in war of cattle rustling. He has managed to mobilize the community to donate land to begin setting up an education and rescue centre for these children. The hardships and conditions are just too much for these innocent, bright children whose future is left hanging.

The centre only has a small shed as class room without walls and no fence or other necessary amenities for the children to use.

Recently I met with Fr. Ekomwa who heard about the work of ERAN and inquired what ERAN could do to advocate for the right to education and other basic needs for children in Turkana as well as any other efforts that could be secured as immediate aid to offer the kids a sheltered home to enjoy their rights.

The photo shows the Priest having a conversation with community members and the school shed at the back ground and kids seating innocently.

Anyone who feels the need to know more or give a supporting hand to these innocent children of Lopur village could get in touch with ERAN programs coordinator to facilitate the communication with the priest to reach the site of the project.

The innocent faces of children in Lopur, in Katilu, Turkana County seemingly in a learning class room!

**From the ERN family**

In the spirit of Edmund Rice Network, members are emerged and spirited to revive the power of working together as a family.
ERN organized a meeting in Nairobi on 8th of April which brought members from across various ministries of brothers and communities who felt are inspired by charism of Edmund Rice. The meeting was held at ERAN premises in Embulbul. Representative from Arusha shared inspiring story of progress in Sinon to motivate others.

On 6th May ERN family meeting to celebrate the feast day of Blessed Edmund Rice was held at Karen Brothers’ house where various participants across East African ministries of brothers and international visitors were present. We are encouraging the networking because through it we feel solidarity, compassion and support for each other.

**Interactive Topical Session**

Our African roots call us all to respond to the distress of our brethren. This is where the Ubuntu philosophy emerged from! Think about it and take your own small step to reflect on the impact of this……

![Image](image.jpg)

**Your digest:**

- Why is there overwhelming cases of child abuse within our communities?
- Why is human rights being violated and yet globally and locally there are great legal instruments to protect and guide humanity?
- Do you see any linkage of the above aspects with our African culture and how it could play any mitigating roles?
- What makes you who you are?
- Is the African hospitality real? Does it apply to our own African people too or limited to foreigners?
- Why do we have many street children nowadays?

**Upcoming Activities**

- Month of June: 30 Rights in 30 days which is children based campaigns on various issues that address the rights of the child.
- Month of June: Environmental day (5th June), we shall be having a tree planting.
- International child labor day & Day of the African Child: we shall celebrate it on 16th May.

**Your Space**

- We invite you to contribute by sharing most significant stories to feature in our newsletter especially on issues pertinent to our programs.
- Like our Facebook page and drop a comment or share a document via the email address availed.
- Visit our website for more information and what we do.

**Our local Partners**

- Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Franciscan Africa.
- Kuunganisha Coaching and Training
- Mother Earth Network
- Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, Ngong
- Radio Domus Mariae 99.9 FM
- Local administration; Office of chief and children officers – Kajiado North and Lang’ata Sub-Counties.
- Mary Mother of God Catholic Church – Embulbul
- Brother Ministries in East Africa.
- Pentecostal Transformation Ministries
- World Peace Initiative

**Our financial Partners and supporters**

- Edmund Rice Foundation Australia
- Misean Cara
- Edmund Rice Development
- World Peace Initiative
- Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Franciscan Africa
- Kuunganisha Coaching and Training
- Mother Earth Network
- Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, Ngong
- Radio Domus Mariae 99.9 FM
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