

A Report on

MPYRAA'S HIV/AIDS

Free

Holiday Activities
organized in Tiko

2008/2009

EVASION!!!

INTRODUCTION :

The rural areas of the South West Region are home to some of the poorest people of the country, but our organization is striving to ensure that the underprivileged (mostly women, children and the old) can build better lives for themselves and their families. Our organization appropriately called Movement for the Promotion of Youths, Rights and HIV/AIDS Awareness (MPYRAA) was founded in 1998 and legalized 2years later, on the 19th of February 2000. We strive to bring knowledge, skills and education to some of the most vulnerable groups in the region, notably youths and women.

In our desperate quest to meet up with set objectives and indicators in our operational plan, MPYRAA carried out successfully an HIV/AIDS Free Holiday programme within the Tiko Municipality. So, to keep our youths involved in a regular activity during the Long holidays, we came up with a program Tagged EVASION.

EVASION

Based on a popular TV program that used to be broadcasted over the National Television in the late 90s, we developed our own unique style of EVASION to suit the need and culture of the Tiko Population. We started by securing necessary authorization from the administrative authorities which was granted to our greatest satisfaction. A timetable was arranged for the program choosing Wednesdays and Saturdays starting from 4PM and was to run for a predetermined period of 2months (July and August).

Our team of dynamic and committed youths then went around sensitizing the local population on the importance of such a program and the possible advantages it might bring to the community at large. Moving from one quarter to another we met various youth leaders who assisted us in mobilizing youths at various levels.

After a week of awareness campaign we were able to come up with 6 Teams which was a comfortable representation of the various quarters;

1. YOUNG STARS (Motombolombo)
2. OBAMA BOYS (New Quarters)
3. DARKMAN FAMILY (Long Street)
4. YATIK (Tiko Town)
5. SEXY LOVERS (Mutengene)
6. JARDON (New Lay Out)

We then proceeded to concerting with the various representatives and stakeholders to select activities that will be of great interest to the participants. We came up with the following items;

- Quiz (Academic and general Knowledge)
- Dancing Competition (Makossa, Coupé- Decalé, R&B Rap and Traditional and Cultural dance)
- Arm Wrestling, Tug of War & Sack Race
- Eating competition
- Ball and Basket
- Ball and Net
- Thread and chewing gum
- Discipline

Participants were thrilled each time a competition was taking place. Judges were taken from a scrutinized selection of secondary schools teachers, Global Network for Good Governance (Limbe), Nnoko Chambers and of cause students from the University of Buea.

During the 19 times the event took place, we had a cumulative population of 9,800 youths. This is the first event of its kind known to have gathered and to reach out to so many youths in the Tiko municipality. And through this medium we can further emphasize the importance of the fight against HIV/AIDS and discuss all the means of prevention.

CHALLENGES

The major challenge we encountered was in dealing with youths, who are a very sensitive group, that is quick to violence. Some minor incidences were recorded during the program over disagreement on scores but our team of experts saw into it amicably.

Another challenge was starting on time. Programs were scheduled for 4PM but did not start until 6PM; it was very difficult for us as we had to run in to the night to finish up. After a careful study by our team, we realized that most of our participants were involve in household chores while others even had holiday and computer classes that made it impossible for them to come at that appointed time. Consequently we had to renegotiate the starting time.

We also had obvious funding problems as most of the activities involved heavy financial cost ranging from renting of the town Green Hall to chairs and buying of the various items to be used. Our General Coordinator, in the person of Mr. Tumbu Fomanka Bartholomew had to go extra miles to make ends meet so that the program will be a success.

We will like to use this opportunity to thank all our partners and sponsors for last year's edition especially Brasseries du Cameroon (Ombe) for their support.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the above challenges and difficulties we faced during the last year, it is our noble hope that this time around we get more administrative support from the Ministries notably, Youth Affairs, Social Affairs and Women Affairs which could be in the form of logistics and material or simply personnel to assist us in the organization. If we could get assistance from the police to help us guarantee the safety of participants and equipment during the event that will have enormous importance to the success of the program.

Also, financial support from interested parties will be welcomed and will go a long way to boost the image and sustainability of the program.

Based on the success of the program we intend to expand our scope of activities to include sporting events like football and handball so as to get as many youths as possible off the streets during long holidays.

CONCLUSION

Statistics and probabilities have proven beyond the iota of reasonable doubt youths are the most affected by any urban phenomenon. It is specifically relevant to youths because not only are they key to any sustainable development, they are the backbone and the driving force of any emerging economy. For youths to productively utilise their potentials they must be empowered, as "empowering young people means creating and supporting the enabling conditions under which young people can act on their own behalf, and on their own terms, rather than at the direction of others."

Unemployment, high cost of living, idleness and juvenile delinquency are just a few of the challenges facing youths in cities, challenges that are constantly increasing with each coming holiday. These challenges might be common to everyone but will be acute in the case of youths as they will require more time and possible orientation before they can get use to the rhythms of long holidays and idleness.

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- **Tiko Rural Council (TRC)**
- **Global Network for Good Governance (GNGG), Limbe**
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