

# WORLD DAY <sup>of Prayer & Action</sup> for Children 2022

Activity report








Protecting Children's Dignity! A Call  
to Action for Children on the Move

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Arigatou International — New York  
Prayer and Action for Children

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## World Day of Prayer and Action for Children

The **World Day of Prayer and Action for Children (World Day)** is celebrated every year on November 20, the anniversary of the adoption of the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and World Children's Day.



**Arigatou International** launched the World Day in 2008 to provide an opportunity for people of diverse religions and cultures to come together to pray and meditate, and to promote and take action for children's rights and well-being.

Since its inception, the annual World Day of Prayer and Action for Children has brought together numerous partners working for children and built on the unique assets of faith actors to provide a platform for children and adults from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds to address critical child rights issues. **The World Day 2022** enabled participants to engage in interfaith and intergenerational dialogue to raise greater awareness about the situation of children on the move and to promote respect for their dignity and rights.



*"Today UNICEF co-signs with all of you the call to action for children on the move. Today more than ever, governments, local authorities, international NGOs, civil society, faith-based organizations, and leaders must join forces to promote and protect children's rights. Particularly, of to those that are more vulnerable as are children on the move."*

**- Ms. Sarah Martelly, Coordinator a.i. UNICEF's National Response, Italy.**



## What brought us together in the Holy City of Rome?

Millions of children are “on the move”. This includes an unprecedented number of refugees, migrants, and internally displaced people. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that in May 2022, global forced displacement surpassed **100 million**, and at least **37 million** were children below 18 years old. Many children are forced to move with their families while others are unaccompanied minors without parents or caregivers. The complex driving factors are often related to violent conflict, poverty, natural disasters, and climate change. Regardless of the reasons for displacement, children risk their lives on these journeys and face common risks in transit, at destination and upon return, including economic or sexual exploitation, abuse, neglect, and violence.

Committed to building a better world for and with children, the World Day Planning Committee convened **sixteen child-focused organizations and networks** to bring attention to the situation of children on the move including:



Shanti Ashram

Gandhian center for development, learning and collaboration



The New York Board of Rabbis

Where diversity and unity meet



The World Day Planning Committee welcomed the collaboration of the Office of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the **International Consortium on Nurturing Values and Spirituality in Early Childhood for the Prevention of Violence**.

## Protecting Children's Dignity! A Call to Action for Children on the Move

The World Day 2022 was commemorated through activities worldwide and the Symposium *Protecting Children's Dignity! A Call to Action for Children on the Move* held in Rome on **November 17th** and **18th**. The local hosts were the Institute of Anthropology, Interdisciplinary Studies on Human Dignity and Care (IADC) and the Centre for Interreligious Studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome.



## Some Highlights of the World Day 2022

+65



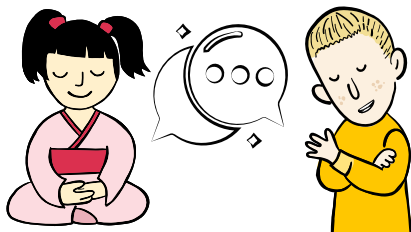
The Symposium convened over 65 speakers, 23 organizations, and participants representing eight different faith communities.

+95

+300



Over 95 participants in-person and more than 300 joined online including children and youth.



The Symposium encouraged dialogue and reflection; allowed follow-up on previous multi-stakeholder commitments to support children on the move; and triggered collaboration opportunities.

## CONSORTIUM

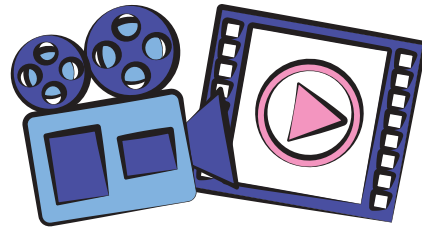
on Nurturing Values and Spirituality in Early Childhood for the Prevention of Violence

It served as a platform for the launch of an important **resource** developed over the last four years by The International Consortium on Nurturing Values and Spirituality in Early Childhood for the Prevention of Violence.





It allowed the opportunity to celebrate the passing of a new UN resolution proclaiming the 18 November the World Day for the Protection and Healing of Child Dignity. An initiative led by the Global Collaborative and the Missions of Sierra Leone and supported by Arigatou International and others like minded organizations.



This year Arigatou International also advanced the long-term agenda item of amplifying the work of the organization and its partners, and through a [documentary project](#). The trailer was well received at its premiere during the two-day Symposium (please find more information about this ongoing project at the end of this report).



*“Now with this November 18 as a World Day, we are going to make this a priority. We are going to cascade this to not only Sierra Leone, but Africa. I’ve already started talking with First Ladies of Africa to use this as an opportunity for them to congregate and for them to help victims. Rape is a problem in Africa, but we know it is a global problem.”*

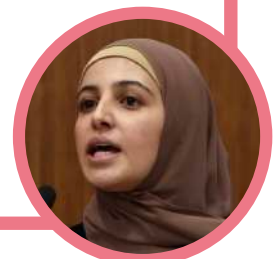
**- First Lady of Sierra Leone**





*"Without educated and empowered children, we cannot progress as societies. Today, more than ever, when more than 36 million children are affected by violence and conflict, we need to work together and to come together to make decisive actions. We must put our differences aside and come together for children."*

**Ms. Muzoon Almellehan. UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador**



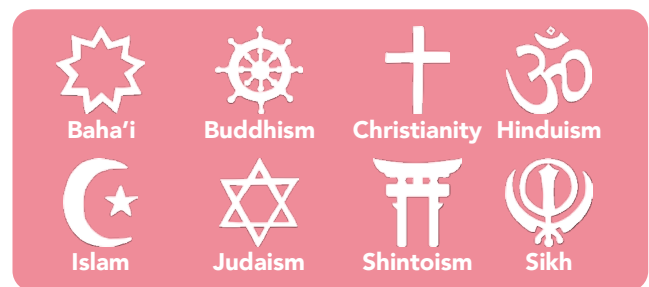


Watch the [recording](#) of the World Day 2022 to learn more about multi-stakeholder efforts to support children on the move.

The moral imperative to advocate for the dignity of children on the move was captured in the [Joint Statement](#) presented in Rome on November 17th. It represents the commitment of over **15 organizations** including faith-based communities that came together to advocate for the protection of the unprecedented number of refugees, migrants, and internally displaced people, many of whom are children. You can provide support by signing the Statement [here](#).

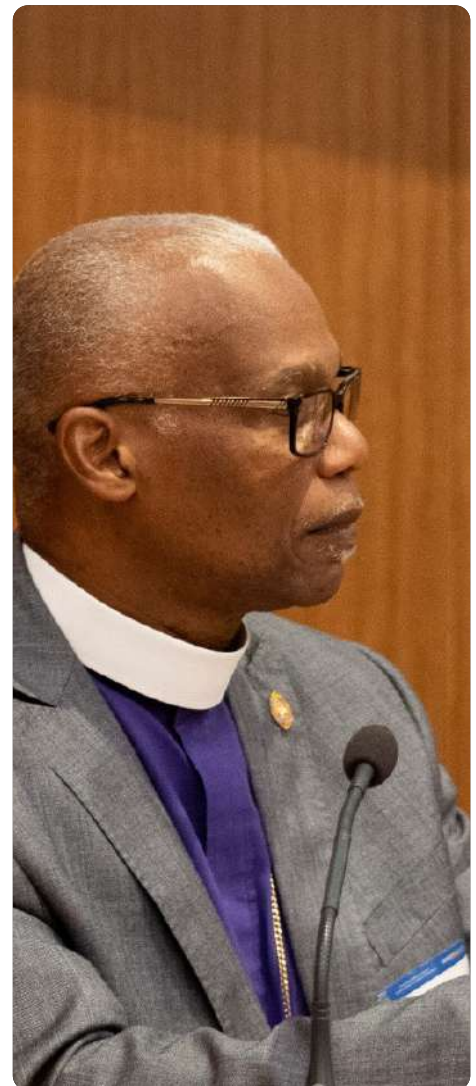


Religious communities from around the world engaged in World Day activities in Rome and other locations:



The World Day live streaming was followed by people from **43 countries** including:

- |                              |                |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Albania                      | Kenya          |
| Angola                       | Mexico         |
| Argentina                    | Nepal          |
| Austria                      | Nicaragua      |
| Bhutan                       | Nigeria        |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina       | Pakistan       |
| Canada                       | Panama         |
| Chile                        | Portugal       |
| Colombia                     | Romania        |
| Democratic Republic of Congo | Serbia         |
| Ecuador                      | South Africa   |
| El Salvador                  | Spain          |
| Finland                      | Sri Lanka      |
| France                       | Sudan          |
| Greece                       | Switzerland    |
| Guatemala                    | Tanzania       |
| Guinea                       | Turkey         |
| India                        | Uganda         |
| Italy                        | United Kingdom |
| Japan                        | United States  |
|                              | Zambia         |





Partners and members of the Global Network of Religions for Children commemorated the World Day through diverse actions such as panel discussions on migration and child trafficking; workshops on migration; interfaith services; and other actions focusing on spirituality and building resilience; and, child-led photography and art exhibitions on children's views about their rights. The World Day actions engaged over **1700 participants** in the following countries:



Argentina



Bosnia and Herzegovina



Brazil



Chile



Colombia



Dominican Republic



Ecuador



El Salvador



Guatemala



India



Lebanon



Mexico



Panama



Peru



Serbia



*The principles enshrined in the Convention are also found at the core of all the world's major religions. This is why they have become the common ground for diverse faith-based organizations and leaders to pray and take action together for children."*

**- Rev. Keishi Miyamoto, President, Arigatou International.**



# WEARmySHOES AWARD 2022



The World Day Planning Committee values the work of local organizations and believes in the importance of supporting grassroots initiatives to promote and protect children's rights. Established in 2021, the **Wear My Shoes Award 2022** recognized five outstanding grassroots practices addressing the rights and dignity of children on the move. The prize of US **\$5,000** to each of the five Award winners is a significant contribution towards their work and a well-deserved endorsement of their outstanding efforts and results.

These awards were made possible thanks to a generous donation by the **Interfaith Alliance for Safer Communities** in support of the annual World Day of Prayer and Action for Children and the Wear My Shoes Campaign.

The Wear My Shoes Award is a modest contribution to the solutions that children and adults have found to solve the most pressing challenges in their communities. The five winners of the Wear My Shoes Award 2022 included:



## 1st - Sri Lanka

**Title:** "Samprity Children with Disabilities Welfare Project"

**Organization:** Child Action Lanka



(CAL) The project began in 2020 and is still ongoing. The purpose is to serve underprivileged and street-connected children who live across Sri Lanka. With the privilege of working in seven districts, CAL serves over 1200 children who belong to different religions, ethnicities, and cultures. Unfortunately, most of these children have gone through many unpleasant life events and experiences in their childhood. Overall, services have been focusing on victims of the 30-year civil war, displacement, and loss of parents, as well as groups of children suffering from urbanization's adverse effects.

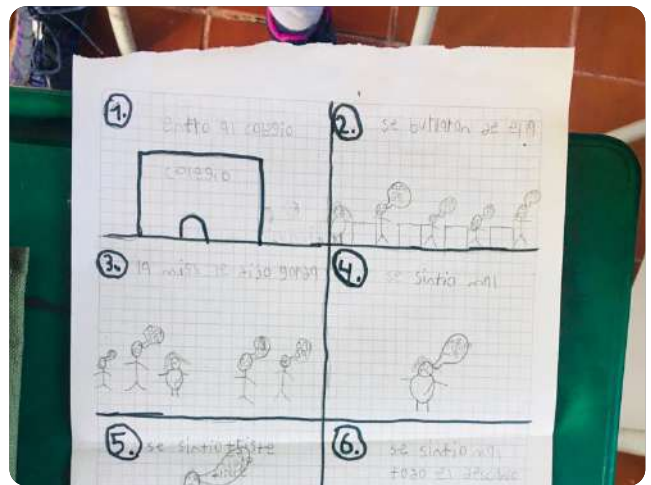
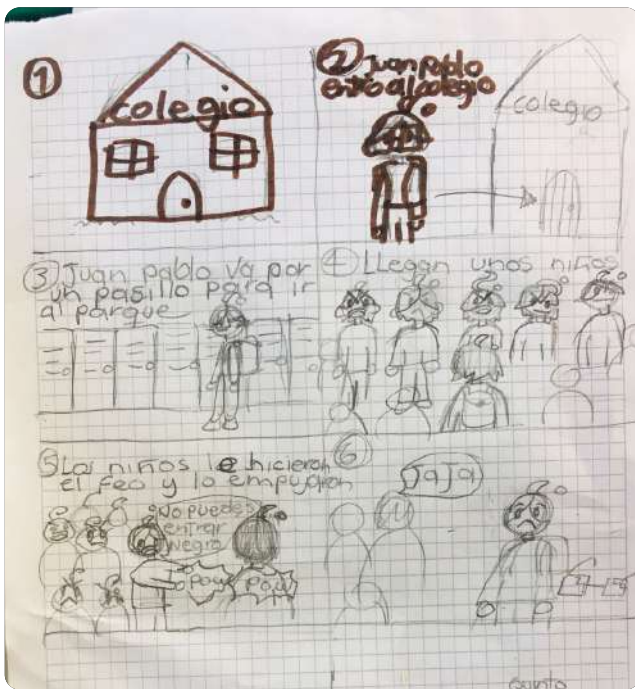




## 2nd - Colombia

**Title:** "Philoscope Shaddai"

**Organization:** Gimnasio Campestre El Shaddai



The project was carried out from August 2021 to August 2022. It sought to activate empathy and recognize human rights in children and adolescents between the first and sixth years of high school at El Shaddai School. The purpose was to seek and integrate students who migrated from Venezuela and who were rejected by some of their peers due to their foreign accents and social stigma. Through creative and child-friendly methods, children discovered they could promote empathy among peers through stories narrated by those who had experienced social exclusion because of their migrant status, skin color, or physical appearance.



## 3rd - Chile

**Title:** "Artistic Project for Social Integration"

**Organization:** Red de Apoyo Solidario



The Project began on September 2021 and ended in January 2022. The project sought to provide a safe space of artistic and cultural expression for displaced boys and girls who had no voice.

Social inclusion, respect and dignity were incorporated throughout workshops on creative writing, cinema, theater and improvisation, emotional support for children on the move.





## 4th - Malawi

**Title:** "Education for all children"

**Organization:** Fountain of Hope



The Project was implemented in the Dzaleka Refugee Camp, from September 2020 and ending on September 2022. The intention was to empower refugee children emotionally and physically, through access to education. Dzaleka Refugee Camp has only one primary school and a secondary school run by the Jesuit Refugee Service. They host 7,000 and 2,000 learners respectively while the camp has more than 18,000 children of school age. This emergency school aims to remediate the gap by sensitizing children to attend and participate in school activities in order to build hope in their lives.





## 5th - Bosnia & Herzegovina

**Title:** "Rights and freedom in my shoes"

**Organization:** Mosaik

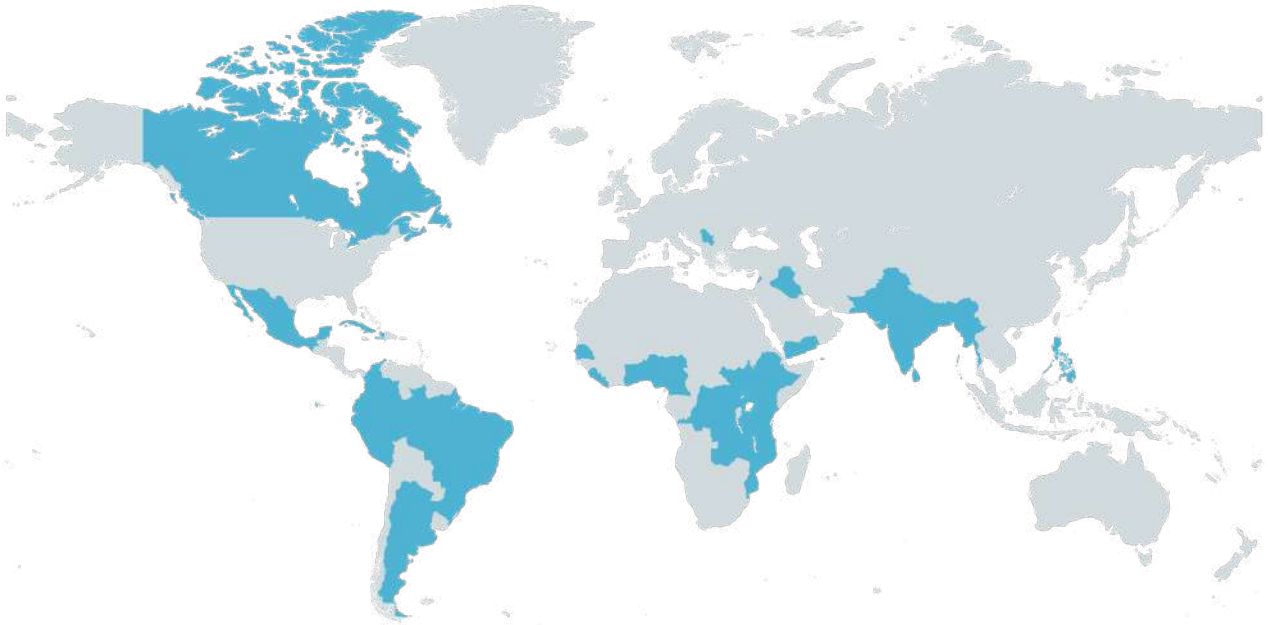


The project began on July 2022 and will continue until September 2023. It arose from the need to prevent stereotypes, discrimination, nationalism, and growing hatred among young people of different backgrounds. Following a Peace School model, this project involved children, parents, religious leaders, pedagogues, and psychologists from different backgrounds, regions, and professions. It focuses on educating teachers on how to include children on the move, migrants, national minorities, and orphans who travel from family to family without parental care and supervision. They provide children with a safe space to learn about their rights, skills, and opportunities. The project gives others an opportunity to build empathy, learn to accept others in the community, and prevent discrimination.





The **Wear My Shoes Award 2022** doubled the number of applications received in **2021**. Since its establishment in 2021, the Wear My Shoes Award raised interest from **40** countries including:



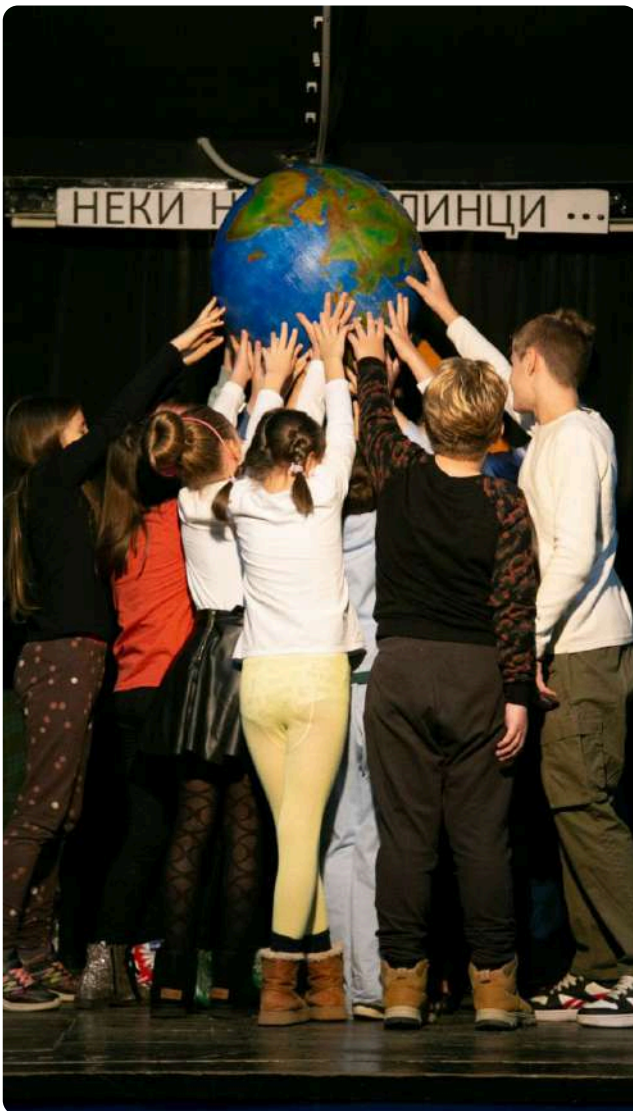
	<b>Argentina</b>		<b>Ecuador</b>		<b>Malawi</b>		<b>Sierra Leone</b>
	<b>Bangladesh</b>		<b>Ethiopia</b>		<b>Mexico</b>		<b>South Sudan</b>
	<b>Benin</b>		<b>Gambia</b>		<b>Mozambique</b>		<b>Sri Lanka</b>
	<b>Bhutan</b>		<b>Ghana</b>		<b>Myanmar</b>		<b>Tanzania</b>
	<b>Brazil</b>		<b>Haiti</b>		<b>Nepal</b>		<b>The Philippines</b>
	<b>Cameroon</b>		<b>India</b>		<b>Nigeria</b>		<b>Togo</b>
	<b>Canada</b>		<b>Iraq</b>		<b>Pakistan</b>		<b>Uganda</b>
	<b>Colombia</b>		<b>Kenya</b>		<b>Peru</b>		<b>Yemen</b>
	<b>Congo</b>		<b>Lebanon</b>		<b>Senegal</b>		<b>Zambia</b>
	<b>Cuba</b>		<b>Liberia</b>		<b>Serbia</b>		

With Gratitude, The Planning Committee of the World Day 2022 wishes to sincerely thank all the applicants for their interest and the eighteen judges for their support and commitment to review and score the **54 applications** received this year.

“

*“From our academic and educational work we are aware that to strive for a safer world for all, it is imperative to work with others; and to share our best practices, experiences, and insights, with people from different religious denominations and convictions. This World Day of Prayer and Action for Children is a unique opportunity for all of us to reconfirm our commitment to make safeguarding a priority within our different social and religious spheres of influence.”*

**- Father Hans Zollner S.J. Director IADC–Pontifical Gregorian University**



# Social Media Impressions

## Twitter

### Top Tweet

1,368 impressions



### Top media Tweet

1,173 impressions



### Top Mention

67 engagements



### Top Tweet

1,070 impressions



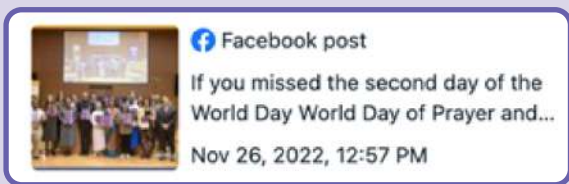
### Top media Tweet

1,230 impressions



## Facebook

# Page Reach



# 2800 Link clicks





*“The UN Refugee Agency recognizes the unique role that faith communities and interfaith collaboration can play in the protection of children’s dignity and of their rights. Faith and faith-based communities give children and their families solace, concrete support, the ability to be more resilient, and of course, to retain hope. They can promote core values of humanity and respect.”*

**- Ms. Gillian Triggs. UN Assistant Secretary-General and UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection.**



*“We must stand with the oppressed and we have to make sure that they get justice. We also must use the religious institutions and structures that we have within religion to address the plight of children, and more so children on the move. As faith leaders, can we strongly advocate that there should not be double standards when responding to the situation of people and children on the move?”*

**- Sh. Ibrahim Lethome. Secretary General, CSCR.**





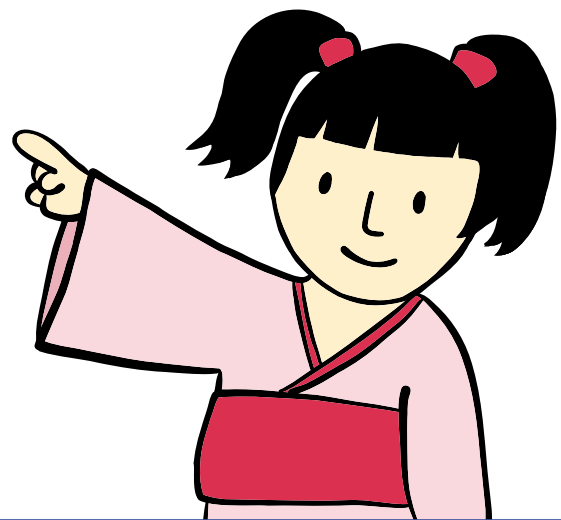
## THE WORLD DAY IS NOT OVER!

1. The World Day Planning Committee will continue supporting spaces for the Wear My Shoes Award winners to showcase the impact of their work and to explore opportunities to increase awareness raising on children's rights and well-being.



2. The World Day Planning Committee will follow-up on the action plan of the Faith Action for Children on the move; to continuing providing care for children on the move, combatting xenophobia and easing the way of displaced and migrant children, and working together to increase children's protection.

3. Arigatou International pledges to continue promoting the World Day for the Protection and Healing of Child Dignity annually on November 18, by inviting partners around the world to collaborate and create activities that amplifies the message of this important resolution.



4. Arigatou International will continue the collaborating with award-winning documentary filmmaker and journalist **Jeff Oppenheim** and his team. During the World Day of Prayer and Action in Rome he chronicled the gathering by filming many of the activities and interviewed key stakeholders. The film, tentatively titled: "A Million Feet From Home: A Call to Action for Children on the Move," will

explore the ever-growing global humanitarian crisis of forced migration. The filmmaker seeks to contribute to the awareness of the factors that cause worldwide displacement and share how and why faith-based groups respond to the needs, creating sustainable models. By continuing our strategic partnership with filmmaker and journalist Jeff Oppenheim, we will leverage digital assets captured as part of our expanded social media and marketing strategy. We will create short-form content featuring excerpts from the conference and interviews filmed as part of the ongoing documentary project.



*"It is critical to remind all stakeholders that children do not lose their rights simply because they are on the move. There are countless examples of actions by faith communities, faith leaders, and faith-based organizations at upholding the rights of children on the move. We just need to consolidate and scale-up, and in doing so we should make the Convention on the Rights of the Child central."*



**- Dr. Benyam Dawit Mezmur. Member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.**



“

*“It is our moral duty to speak to those who do not welcome children on the move and try to change their minds. Every time I have the chance, I talk to my school mates and tell them how big of a difference it is for a child that is forced to flee their country and live in a foreign country to be welcomed as a friend; and how much of a moral boost that gives them.”*

- Tudor. Child, GNRC Romania.







## Contact Us

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 Prayer and Action for Children - New York

 Arigatou International - Prayer and Action





World Day of  
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