



Contribution of “Malayika Murinzi” initiative to raise Rwandan children in safe and secured environment in Rwanda

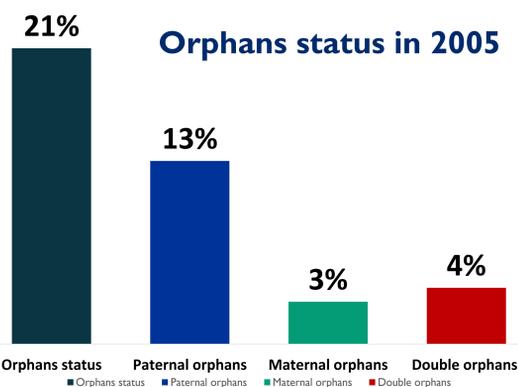


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Issues

- According to DHS-2005, in Rwanda 21% of children under 18 years old have lost one or both parents, 13% of all children in Rwanda have lost their father, 3% of children have lost their mother and 4% have lost both parents.

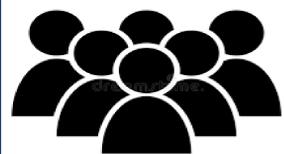


- There was a countless vulnerable children whose rights have been violated and deprived of family care and protection as a result of combined effects, especially the consequences of 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.

- Vulnerable children experiences various challenges such as rejection, lack of love, care and attention, school dropout, emotional and material supports. These seemed to be a great concern to the future generation.
- The Malayika Murinzi (MM) initiative aimed to build on the lessons of the African's First Ladies' “*Treat every child as your own*” campaign to devise a homegrown solution to care for and protect children from harm by taking them as their own, denouncing adults who infect them with HIV/AIDS and break cultural taboos through sexual education.

Description

- Launched in 2007, Malayika Murinzi (MM) Programme known as the “Guardian angels” initiative, the main aims of this programme was to engage adults to protect children against any form of violence, breaking taboos by sexual education and speaking out against adults infecting children.



Key message:

MM has been reinforcing through regular campaigns in the Rwandan context, key messages of compassion and selflessness to adopt and protect vulnerable children:

1. Treat every child as your own,
2. Speak out against adults infecting children,
3. Talk to children about Sex, it can save their lives.

Selection criteria:

MM campaign consisted of identifying and rewarding adults who have shown remarkable compassion and selflessness, by creating conducive environment for vulnerable children, such as adopting and caring, as well as protecting them from various kinds of abuses.

Awards:

The initiative rewarded those who have shown remarkable dedication in that regard, with certificates recognizing their exceptional behavior and an exotic dairy cow, which serves to support MM families and has a strong symbolic value in the Rwandan culture.

- The campaign also mobilizes local and international partners around parallel programs that provide support to foster care families.

Lessons Learned

- In the period of 7 years (2007-2013), IF initiated MM networks in all 30 districts, those networks are in charge of identifying new guardian angels, orphans and vulnerable children to be matched with one another.
- Contribution of Malayika Murinzi programme to create a safe and secure environment for vulnerable children



- Creation of Malayika Murinzi networks has been instrumental to disseminate the key message of the programme: “Treat Every Child as Your Own” to the village level.
- Parents and community should be sensitized and involved to treat every child as their own regardless of the relationships between them, wealth and others charges they may have.

Next Steps

- Experience from Malayika Murinzi programme indicated that a joint efforts and involvement of the community played an important role to the success of this programme.
- IF will continue to advocate for children especially focusing on vulnerable, and it will remain in the technical working group to continue supporting the wellbeing of Rwandan children.

- **Key words:** Malayika Murinzi, Orphans, vulnerable children, child care and protection.

- **For more information:** www.imbutofoundation.org



Malayika Murinzi