Summary Report on
The Day of the African Child
16 June 2012
Theme: The Rights of Children with Disabilities: The Duty to Protect, Respect, Promote and Fulfil
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UNICEF Country Office Summary Reports

Introduction
The Day of the African Child (DAC) is commemorated annually on 16 June across Africa by African Union (AU) Member States, and its partners, as per Resolution CM/Res.1290 (XL)) of the AU Heads of State and Government Summit. The theme of the 22nd DAC, as proposed by the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) and endorsed by the Executive Council of the AU during the July 2011 AU Heads of State and Government Summit in Equatorial Guinea is; “The Rights of Children with Disabilities: The Duty to Protect, Respect, Promote and Fulfil.”

This Report captures the DAC activities as per reports and some photos submitted by 28 UNICEF Country Offices (COs) in Africa. These are, 14 from the East and Southern Africa Region (ESAR) and include, Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Madagascar, Namibia, Swaziland, Uganda, Tanzania, Comoros, Kenya, Rwanda and Zimbabwe; 12 from West and Central Africa Region (ESAR), and include, Central African Republic, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Mauritania, Liberia and Senegal; one (1) from Northern Africa (Algeria); and one (1) from the UNICEF Liaison Office to the African Union (AU) and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), based in Ethiopia.

The DAC events across Africa drew not only children with disabilities, but also high level government officials, including Presidents, First Ladies, Prime Ministers, Ministers, and other high level officials representing UN agencies and other organisations. Most DAC events were organised and directed by children themselves, including children with disabilities. UNICEF Goodwill Ambassadors were also instrumental in attracting large crowds, visibility around DAC events and encouraging the faster dissemination of the DAC message. The ambassadors were involved in events in Zimbabwe, Algeria and Benin. National celebrities and other well-known local artists and personalites also made their mark during the DAC celebrations across Africa.

Innovation
Innovative approaches were incorporated into the DAC celebrations across many countries. For instance, in Botswana, a debate provided children with an opportunity to voice their thoughts regarding children with disabilities, while in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was translated into Braille. In Lesotho, participants were invited to paint their hands on a giant flag as a gesture of their support to people with disabilities.

The African Union-related events in Ethiopia drew children with disabilities not only from Ethiopia, but also from Kenya, Gambia and Angola, who participated actively in a quiz, literature, an art and painting contests and an exhibition. The art and painting, as well as the literature contests were especially instrumental in bringing out the inner skills and artistic expressions of the children with disabilities.

In Senegal, caravans attracted people’s attention and created awareness on the lives of children with disabilities, while in Zimbabwe, prominent personalities such as Oliver Mtukudzi commemorated the DAC with the children as a way of getting more people to support the child rights agenda in Zimbabwe. In Uganda, the U-report posted a question to 100,000 U-reporters that asked: “Do you think the government has done enough to promote inclusive education for children and youth living with disabilities?” 13,000 responses were received as follows: “59% Yes, 30% No and 11% Other Responses.”

In Swaziland, a regional dialogue and conference presented a point of departure from the traditional programmatic interventions where children participate actively and took part in the advocacy interventions, while in Ethiopia, the DAC offered an opportunity for children with disabilities in the country to explore and exhibit their talents, special gifts, and engage with different sporting activities. In Cote d’Ivoire, the participation of children with disabilities in a sports tournament allowed for their integration and a greater social cohesion.
Impact
The DAC was very successful in a number of countries and its impact will be felt by children with disabilities for years to come. For instance, the NGOs in Algeria agreed to reinforce their efforts and collaboration in order to improve the situation of children with disabilities. In addition, various partners agreed to organize follow up meetings to discuss pertinent issues and strategies in relation to children with disabilities.

In Angola, the population used the opportunity to relay their concerns about access to water and lack of health facilities at village level, while UNICEF used the DAC to raise awareness on the nutritional crisis. Similarly, in Cameroon, the DAC helped galvanise some advocacy on the Sahel nutrition crisis, as well as additional advocacy on inclusion on children with disabilities. Following the DAC in Benin, data on each type of impairment on children with disabilities will be collected to better appreciate the scope of the situation. In Burkina Faso, the DAC helped galvanize the 2012 Decree for the law protecting the rights of persons living with disabilities, which was adopted by the Government of Burkina Faso in 2010.

In his speech, the Minister of National Solidarity, Human Rights and Gender of the Government of Burundi committed to advocate for the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), since Burundi has only signed it. The minister also agreed to support specialized education for children with disabilities. In Comoros, the authorities were sensitized on the need to take into account people with disabilities in national policy development, and which factors the challenges experienced by children with disabilities in the education sector, such as lack of enrolment.

In Mbandaka, DRC, the propagation of the law protecting children with disabilities was promoted, as defined in Article 42 (of the law), while in Bukavu, children with mental illness benefitted from medical care through hospitalization and follow-up outpatient treatment at the Sosame Psychiatric Centre. Young children with speech impairments also benefitted from a tailoring, carpentry, soap and school training at the Pignon Des Jeunes Sourds-Muets centre. The Heri Kwetu Primary School developed a curriculum suitable for children with visual and hearing impairments.

UNICEF Ghana engaged the media with up to date data to enhance reporting and visibility on children with disabilities, while in Guinea, the Children’s Parliament asked for their rights to be fulfilled and their well-being improved by both the State and the society, with their voices expressed without any reservation or difficulty. In Liberia, UNICEF and partners’ advocacy and awareness campaigns on the promotion and protection of the rights of children with disabilities contributed to the Proclamation of 16 June as a National Working Holiday in Liberia.

The launch of the National Agenda for Children in Namibia, during the DAC, generated national dialogue and national and international awareness for children living with disabilities. In Zimbabwe, a strategic partnership was established between the government and NGOs to advocate for the ratification of the Optional Protocol on Disability. In Rwanda, the National Commission for Children (NCC) committed to make a full assessment on children with disabilities, while in Guinea, the Children’s Parliament asked for their rights to be fulfilled and their well-being improved by both the State and the society, with their voices expressed without any reservation or difficulty. In Liberia, UNICEF and partners’ advocacy and awareness campaigns on the promotion and protection of the rights of children with disabilities contributed to the Proclamation of 16 June as a National Working Holiday in Liberia.

According to the Vice President of Sierra Leone, the National Commission for Children and that of the Commission for Persons with Disability will be set up and when fully established and operational they will derive their powers from the 2007 Child Rights Act and the 2010 International Convention on Rights of Persons with Disability. There was enhanced public awareness of the role of technology for development, such as U-report in Uganda, on the extent of government’s intervention to realize the implementation of the policy that serves to protect and promote children living disabilities.

Social Media Visibility
This year’s DAC had an exceptional visibility on “UNICEF Africa” Facebook and Twitter accounts, the UNICEF global website, the UNICEF CO websites and on other social media platforms. A number of UNICEF COs participated in the West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO) and East and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) photo albums on children with disabilities on the “UNICEF Africa” Facebook pages, as well as on the Facebook pages of country offices. They posted compelling positive images that realized a high and steady traffic flow in the number of visits. For instance, the Facebook album, “Living with disability in Africa,” which consisted of photos collected from UNICEF COs in both ESAR and WCAR, became one of the most liked items in “UNICEF Africa” Facebook. The video, “Children living with disabilities in Namibia,” also produced and uploaded
on YouTube, was watched by 1,293 people. Therefore, the DAC had a direct impact on the quick rise of “UNICEF Africa” Facebook and Twitter followers and visits, but also on other country office social media sites.

**Media Visibility and Communication Tools**

This Report also highlights media visibility on the DAC as per the media landscape in each country. The media was instrumental in shaping the DAC agenda and creating awareness among thousands of people who had very little knowledge about children with disabilities. The country offices noted good visibility either in the local, national or international media, and in some cases the DAC events were broadcasted Live on radio and television.

A global press release was jointly prepared by the UNICEF Liaison Office to the AU and UN/UNICEF/WCARE/ESARO/MENARO/NYHQ in English and French and circulated across Africa through the UNICEF LO and the Regional Offices in Africa. A radio interview featuring Shuaib Chalklen, UN Special Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development, and another one featuring Hon. Baba Diri Margaret, Member of Parliament of Uganda and Vice-Chairperson, East African Federation of the Disabled, were produced by NYHQ in collaboration with the UNICEF LO and shared widely. A story on promoting social inclusion of children with disabilities in Africa was written and posted on the UNICEF global intranet.

To assist in the preparation of DAC activities at the country level, as well as other advocacy efforts, UNICEF COs in Africa received DAC Statements by Agnes Kabore Ouattara, Chairperson of the ACERWC and by Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children. The COs also received the DAC Concept Note in English and French as prepared by the ACERWC, as well as received the CRPD Ratification Status Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development, and another one featuring Hon. Baba Diri Margaret, Member of Parliament of Uganda and Vice-Chairperson, East African Federation of the Disabled, were produced by NYHQ in collaboration with the UNICEF LO and shared widely. A story on promoting social inclusion of children with disabilities in Africa was written and posted on the UNICEF global intranet.

**Theme of the Day of the African Child - 2013**

As per the proposal made during the 19th Session of the ACERWC, held in March 2012, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the Executive Council of the AU, sitting during the Heads of State and Government Summit in July 2012, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, endorsed decision Doc. EX.CL/744(XVI), adopting the theme of the DAC for 2013 as: “Eliminating Harmful Social and Cultural Practices Affecting Children: Our Collective Responsibility.”

**SUMMARY UNICEF COUNTRY OFFICE REPORTS**

A conference on the rights of children with disabilities was held on 21 June 2012 in Algiers, Algeria. The conference was organised jointly by UNICEF, the Ministry for Family Affairs and the Status of Women, the Algerian Network of NGO’s for the promotion and protection of child rights and the Algerian Muslim Scouts. Over 100 people representing governmental and public institutions, UN agencies, national and local NGOs, children and adolescents, were present. Two children with disabilities delivered speeches during the main event and highlighted the needs of children with disabilities. Posters and a Public Service Announcement (PSA) were produced, while press materials were disseminated resulting in good media coverage in the Algerian TV, radio and newspapers.

The central event to mark the DAC was held on 16 June 2012 in Angola. The celebrations comprised an inauguration of a Primary School 5 km closer to the border between Angola and DRC, cultural performances by children and political speeches. The central event was attended by over 100 people, and led by the Minister of Social Affairs, the President of the National Council of Child (CNAC), the Director of the Provincial Institute of Child (INAC), the acting UNICEF Representative, an Angolan parliamentarian, members of CSO and children from different social status and backgrounds. UNICEF prepared and shared media materials with about 30 journalists. Interviews were also conducted. Consequently, media coverage was realized in the Angola newspapers, TV and the Angolan News Agency. Radio Lac, a private radio, broadcasted throughout the day in Luanda.

In Benin, the DAC activities spanned from 12-20 June 2012, and comprised three major events: The International Day against Child Labour on 12 June; the Day of the African Child on 16 June; and the Word Refugee Day on 20 June. More than 2,000 invitees, including 1,500 children with hearing, visual and walking impairments participated in the DAC celebrations in Cotonou, Benin. Presentations included sketches and a heart-breaking call to decision makers to promote a positive attitude towards children living with disabilities. The official ceremony was held in Cotonou, and included the Minister of Interior, Minister of Family Affairs, Minister of Labour, UN Resident Coordinator, UNICEF and UNHCR representatives, donor agencies, NGOs and the UNICEF National Ambassador. In another event at the French Cultural Centre, a children’s show that included children living with impairments showcased poems, songs and sketches. Also, a dialogue between a group of child storytellers and children with disabilities took place in two care centers for children with disabilities in Cotonou and Porto Novo. Information kits
were distributed during the events, while the media were actively involved in promoting DAC. The Minister of Family Affairs and the UNICEF Representative held a press conference.

In Botswana, the national DAC commemorations kicked off with a panel discussion at Tlokweng Community Centre on 15 June 2012. The panelists comprised two children, one with disability, a care giver, a service provider and a teacher. Upto 400 people attended the main DAC celebrations at the Tlokweng Community Junior Secondary School, in Tlokweng, Botswana, on 16 June 2012. Activities during the DAC event comprised poems by a student, a parade, music by the Botswana Prisons Band, dances and songs by children, including children with disabilities, and drama by children. Moderated by two children, the DAC event was attended by the Assistant Minister of Local Government, the UNICEF Representative, (Chief) Spokes Gaborone of Batlokwa, the Acting Director of the Department of Social Services, Voice of the African Child by a Bonolo Mogweemang (child student), the Member of Parliament for South East North and the Deputy District Commissioner. UNICEF disseminated information materials and took part in an exhibition. Media coverage was captured in the Botswana newspapers, radio and on the UNICEF country office website.

Over 3,000 people marked the DAC on 16 June 2012, in Kaya Centre, North region, in Burkina Faso. The First Lady of Burkina Faso presided over the ceremony, which saw a large mobilization of the community, the Minister of Social Action and other national authorities, the Japan Ambassador to Burkina Faso, Plan Burkina, Save the Children, other NGOs and international organizations, including the UNICEF Deputy Representative. In addition to mobilizing communities on children with disabilities, UNICEF made a symbolic contribution of non-food items to 100 children with disabilities, to support actions related to the six key family practices for child survival, which are integrated into the strategy for child health and survival. Information materials were disseminated, while media coverage was captured in the Burkina Faso TV, radio and newspapers.

In Bujumbura, Burundi, about 200 people participated in DAC events from 12 to 16 June 2012. Of these events included a football match held on 12 June 2012 between children with hearing impairments from Ephphata Centre and children with mental disability from Akamuri Centre. A sitting volleyball match was held on 13 June 2012 between children with disability from the Rehabilitation Centre of the Ministry of Solidarity, Human Rights and Gender, and the Saint Kizito Rehabilitation Centre. The Minister of National Solidarity and the UNICEF Representative conducted visits on 15 June 2012 to three centers for children with disabilities, as well as a primary school where songs and drama were performed by children with disabilities. The official DAC commemoration was held on 16 June 2012, with high level participation by the Minister for National Solidarity, Human Rights and Gender, the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education, the UNICEF Representative, the Acting UNESCO Representative, the UN Mission (BNUB), the Chief of Human Rights and Justice Section, the Archbishop of Bujumbura Diocese, and other partner NGOs such as Handicap International, the Union of Persons with Disabilities of Burundi, the Burundi Network of Disabled People’s Organisations (RAPHB), and the National Federation of Associations involved in Child Protection in Burundi. The DAC events were reported in the radio and newspapers, while further visibility was realized on the social media sites.

The DAC was marked at the Parliament House in Cameroon on 16 June 2012 through the holding of the Junior Members of Parliament Session. 1,000 people were present, including 300 junior parliamentarians, the Prime Minister, Ministers of Basic Education, Public Health, Secondary Education, of Women and Family affairs, Social Affairs, 20 members of parliament, the UNICEF Deputy Representative, CSOs, international organizations and children. The DAC was reported on radio, TV and newspapers.

UNICEF supported the organization of a DAC ceremony on 16 June 2012 in a school for children with disabilities in Bangui, Central African Republic (CAR). The event, which was attended by upto 50 people, provided children with disabilities a chance to deliver speeches and raise awareness. Advocacy was also conducted with national decision makers, including the Minister of Social Affairs, Minister of Health, President of the Children’s Parliament, among others. Other officials that participated in the DAC celebrations included the Minister of Justice, Minister of Education, the mayor, the UNICEF Representative, the CSOs, and the UN country team in CAR. Photos and information materials were shared within UNICEF and the interagency communication group. The DAC event was also covered by the national media.

In Comoros, more than 300 people attended a DAC ceremony held at the primary school Moroni Application “Fundi Said’ Mnemoi” in Moroni, on 16 June 2012, to advocate for children with disabilities. Another DAC event brought together 100 people in Mohéli, where a paraplegic spoke of never to be placed in a position of inferiority. A debate was organised in public schools in the capital in collaboration with the association of people with disabilities, and those responsible for the education sector and students. Also, a field visit was organised to one of the regions that has a high concentration of children with disabilities. The DAC events in Comoros saw the participation of key
Four DAC activities were held from 1 to 8 June 2012, and then on 13 June at media sites. The newspapers also covered the DAC activities.

Acting Director in the Ministry of Women and Childr en’s Affairs, UNICEF Representative, Country Direct or of 500 people who were treated to fun fair, games, spe eches, poems, music and dance. Present in the event were the media, leading to coverage in the national Ethiopian TV and Radio (ERTV) and on its website, and in newspapers.

The Dzorwulu Special School, in Ghana, gathered about 2,000 people in Forécariah, the Palais du Peuple and at the Conseil National de la Communication, in Conakry. The first event in Forécariah involved the planting of 2,000 trees by children and the donation of some agricultural materials to women associations. The second event was the national forum for childhood; a workshop that included children and NGOs, and organized by the Ministry of Social Affairs, with UNICEF’s support. The third event was a face-to-face encounter between children and adult policy-makers comprising the ministries in charge of communication and cooperation matters and bilateral and multilateral cooperation representatives and NGOs working in the field. The fourth event was the official launching of the DAC on the 16 June 2012. The Guinean Children’s Parliament was involved in the organization of the DAC activities, while children with disabilities participated actively through drama, role plays, dances, advocacy songs and poems. The UNICEF Representative was interviewed by the media, while the events were reported on TV, radio and newspapers.

Kenyan musician Juliani and other artists performed at a music concert organised on 16 June 2012 to mark the DAC in Kenya. Also, Save the Children and UNHCR celebrated DAC at the Dadaab Refugee Camp. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development collaborated with World Vision, the Kenya Association for the Advancement of Child Rights and Save the Children. UNICEF Kenya distributed press information and posted them also on the website leading to media coverage on the Kenyan TVs, newspapers and in the online media.

More than 200 children aged between 10 and 14 from San Pedro, Duekoué-Man, Bondoukou, Yamoussoukro and Abidjan gathered at the Place Jean Paul II in Yamoussoukro, in Cote d’Ivoire, from 15 to 17 June 2012 to commemorate the DAC through sports. As many as 200 children from the five regions participated in a football tournament for boys and for girls. The half-time breaks during the tournament offered children the chance to present skits, poems and other activities focusing on their rights. On the sidelines, the Health District of Yamoussoukro conducted free vaccination sessions for children under 5 years old and their mothers. UNICEF also used its mobile medical clinic to conduct consultations and awareness sessions on HIV/AIDS, birth registration, among other areas.

Speeches, drama, an exhibition, traditional music and dance, police marching band, question and answer session, talent competition for children with disabilities and an award ceremony were some of the activities that marked the DAC on 15 June 2012, at the Ethiopia Assembly Hall, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Upto 2,200 participants, among them 1,800 children, were drawn from different sub-cities, and from NGOs such as Handicap International, as well as students and teachers from different government schools. Speeches were delivered by the State Minister, Ministry of Women Children and Youth Affairs and UNICEF. Flyers were distributed, while press materials were sent to the media, leading to coverage in the national Ethiopian TV and Radio (ERTV) and on its website, and in newspapers.

Over 1,200 people participated in four DAC events held on 16 June 2012 in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). At the Centre Simama, in Kisangani, about 200 people that included government officials, MONUSCO, UNICEF and other UN agencies, were treated to poems and skits. The event was organised in partnership with NGOs (ACODEF, Univers d’enfant, Comité d’enfants, Club d’écoute pour enfants), and the Ministère du Genre Famille et Enfant. The second event was held in Kinshasa, where a TV show was used as a major advocacy tool. The event was attended by the government and UNICEF. The third event was attended by 900 people in Mbandaka (Bébé IYONGO Bâtiment Administrative de l’Equateur), where speeches were presented by the government officials, MONUSCO, UNICEF and UN agencies. Other partners present included Divas, EPSP, Parquet de Grande Instance, Tribunal pour Enfant, Divicom, Divigenre, Divinter, APEE, CDPH, Centre Bolingo pour les sourds, Centre BTCD, Centre NDSC, Parlement des jeunes de l’Equateur and Corps d’Ambassadeur des enfants. At the fourth event in Heri Kwetu Centre in Bukavu, a number of games were played and speeches delivered by government officials, UNICEF and other stakeholders. Audio-visual materials were produced and media visibility recorded on TV and radio. A documentary about children living with disability was also shown.

The Dzorwulu Special School, in Ghana, hosted the commemoration of the DAC on 15 June 2012, attended by over 500 people who were treated to fun fair, games, speeches, poems, music and dance. Present in the event were the Acting Director in the Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs, UNICEF Representative, Country Director of Right to Play, Embassy of South Africa, musician Walter Dee and child representatives. The DAC activities were organised by the Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs and partners. Funding was secured for the local musician to launch a CD on child protection. Press materials were produced, while articles were posted on the social media sites. The newspapers also covered the DAC activities.

Four DAC activities were held from 1 to 8 June 2012, and then on 13 and 16 June 2012, in Guinea. The events gathered about 2,000 people in Forcéariah, the Palais du Peuple and at the Conseil National de la Communication, in Conakry. The first event in Forcéariah involved the planting of 2,000 trees by children and the donation of some agricultural materials to women associations. The second event was the national forum for childhood; a workshop that included children and NGOs, and organized by the Ministry of Social Affairs, with UNICEF’s support. The third event was a face-to-face encounter between children and adult policy-makers comprising the ministries in charge of communication and cooperation matters and bilateral and multilateral cooperation representatives and NGOs working in the field. The fourth event was the official launching of the DAC on the 16 June 2012. The Guinean Children’s Parliament was involved in the organization of the DAC activities, while children with disabilities participated actively through drama, role plays, dances, advocacy songs and poems. The UNICEF Representative was interviewed by the media, while the events were reported on TV, radio and newspapers.
In Lesotho, the DAC event was led by the Lesotho National Federation of Organizations for the Disabled. The ceremony was held at the Main Shopping Mall in Maseru on 16 June 2012, and featured performances, including dances by children with disabilities, specifically children from Kananelo School for the Deaf. Participants were invited to paint their hands on a giant flag as a gesture of their support to people with disabilities. The event, which was attended by over 100 people, was addressed by the Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Social Development. Other organisations in attendance included the Lesotho Society of Mentally Handicapped People and Autism Lesotho. Press information was distributed to the media. A special agreement was reached with a local radio station to cover the pre, during and post DAC activities resulting to coverage in the newspapers and TV. Radio programmes were also produced.

The DAC activities relating to the African Union Commission in Ethiopia were organised by Chachi International and Wings Education and Media, in collaboration with the Department of Social Affairs of the AUC, CSOs, the UNICEF Liaison Office to the AU and UNECA (UNICEF LO), and other partners. A Pan African Inter-School Quiz Contest, which drew over 100 students, was held on 14 June 2012. Children from Kenya, Ethiopia, Gambia and Angola were among the contestants, sponsored by ChildFund International in partnership with the Addis Ababa University, the UNICEF LO, FENAD, an Ethiopian poet and writer and Plan International-Ethiopia. Hundreds of children with disabilities also participated in a literature contest comprising creative poetry writing and short stories, and with winners awarded prizes. In addition, children with disabilities also participated in an art and painting contest that displayed their unique creative expressions to a wider audience. The artworks formed an exhibition at the AUC. The official DAC commemoration was held on 15 June 2012 at the AUC Headquarters. Present at this event were the Special Advisor to the President of Ethiopia, the State Minister, Women, Children and Youth Affairs, representatives of the AUC, the ACERWC, UN agencies, ChildFund International, Plan International, among others. Cultural dances, songs, drama, acrobatic and martial arts were presented by various groups. An Awards Ceremony reception was held at the AUC Headquarters on 16 June 2012 and drew over 50 guests, some recognized for their support to children with disabilities through the DAC events. Among the dignitaries were the Commissioner for Social Affairs of the AUC, the Ambassador of South Africa to Ethiopia and AU, the Special Advisor to the President of Ethiopia, diplomats, UNICEF LO, Plan International-Ethiopia, ChildFund International, the President of the Ethiopian National Associations of Persons with Disabilities and representatives of children with disabilities. The audience was entertained by an impressive children’s choir and poems from children with visual impairments. Media visibility for the AUC-related DAC events in Addis Ababa included coverage in the local newspapers, TV and radio, as well as in a Special Magazine showcasing the three-day celebrations in Addis Ababa.

The DAC event was observed on 16 June 2012 in Liberia, including those in the four Ivorian refugee-affected counties of Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Nimba and Maryland. The celebration in Monrovia and River Cess counties drew approximately 1,000 people, including children with disabilities. In Monrovia, the Minister of Education made a proclamation of the DAC as a National Working Holiday. Addresses were delivered by the UN Resident Coordinator, UNICEF, National Commission on Disabilities, Human Rights and Disabilities Task Force and government ministers from ministries of youth and sports, gender, education and health. Songs were presented in sign language by children from the School of the Hearing Impaired, Brewerville. Children with disabilities also participated in a national essay competition and drama on the “I Am Able” theme, to which winners received prizes. A football game was also organised for the children with visual impairment. In River Cess County, a mile-long parade, accompanied by a live band, was attended by the county superintendent, central and local government officials, village and religious leaders, representatives from UNICEF, Save the Children and other national NGOs. A sensitization programme on the salient features or the main clauses of the Liberia Children’s Act 2012 was conducted by the Ministry of Gender and Development. UNICEF produced some communication materials and released media information resulting in coverage in the newspapers and in the national and local radio stations.

Upto 600 people were in the stadium in Antananarivo, Madagascar, and thousands more watched the DAC celebrations on national TV on 16 June 2012. Performances included dances by children and youth, including the physically challenged. A marionette theater relayed messages against exclusion. The event drew representatives from the government, UNICEF and NGOs working in the field of inclusion including the CEMDELAC (Centre malgache pour le développement de la lecture publique et l’animation culturelle) and Association Kilokolo. A media package was disseminated and a film produced and posted on the web and other social media sites. There was media coverage in the newspapers, radio and TV.

The DAC was celebrated from 16 to 24 June 2012, in Nouakchott and Nouadhibou, in Mauritania, and included the participation of children and the media in advocacy, an information workshop, cultural and artistic events and expositions. The events drew over 100 participants that included the Minister of Social Affairs, Childhood and Family, the Deputy Minister of Social Affairs, Childhood and Family, the UNICEF Representative, the President of the National Network for Disabled Persons, the President of the Parliamentarian Group for Childhood, the President
of the Imam’s Network for Child Rights, the Children’s Parliamentarians from Nouakchott and Nouadhibou, the National Forum for Child Rights, UN agencies and CSOs. Audio-visual materials were produced, while the radio, TV, newspapers and other news sites highlighted the DAC celebrations.

As part of the commemoration of the DAC in Namibia, the National Agenda for Children (NAC-2012-2016) was launched by the R.H. Prime Minister on 15 June 2012. In attendance were over 100 people among them, the Deputy Minister of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW), the Director of Child Welfare Services of the MGECW, and the UNICEF Representative. A boy and girl from the More Son School for Mentally Impaired Children participated as Directors of Ceremonies, while children from the More Son School also graced the occasion with a performance. Over 3,000 people attended the DAC event on 16 June at Pioneers Boys School in Windhoek, along with other high level government officials. A person with disability delivered a motivational speech to the audience with the motto: “Disability is not Inability.” Songs and cultural dances were performed by the choirs of More Son School, Pioneers Boys School and Dagbreek School. After the official event, four schools for children with disabilities participated in different sports competitions and games, with the winners awarded trophies. Both events on 15 and 16 June included children as the main organizers and participants. Communication materials and a media package, including an advocacy web video, were prepared and shared. The UNICEF Representative was interviewed by the media with further media coverage recorded in the newspapers, TV and radios. Online visibility was also realized, including on UNICEF websites.

The official DAC celebrations were organised from 14 to 16 June 2012 in Talibou Dabo Centre, in Dakar, Senegal. Present at the celebrations were the Minister of Women, Children and Women’s Entrepreneurship, the UNICEF Representative, the representing of the Federation of Associations of Persons with Disabilities, and the National President of the Children's Parliament of Senegal. Events and funfair included theatre, singing, dancing, poetry recitals dealing with vulnerable children, with the further involvement of renowned artists such as singer Aïda Samb, actors Ibrahima Mbaye "Sope" and Kader Pichinimico. A series of conferences and events were also organised in cities across Senegal and which drew large audiences. UNICEF and the Department of Protection of the Rights of the Child organised an information and awareness session for journalists. Information and communication materials were produced and shared. The DAC events were covered in the radio, TV and newspapers as well as in the UNICEF social media sites.

In Rwanda, the DAC was marked along with the World Day Against Child Labour and the International Day of the Family. UNICEF worked with partners to lead a campaign to raise awareness of families and communities on the rights of children with disabilities. The National Commission for Children (NCC) initiated weeklong advocacy activities that comprised the launching of the week at Muhanga District, on 11 June 2012 by the Chairperson of the NCC. The DAC celebrations at Rwamagana was held on 16 June 2012 and officiated by the Minister of Public Service and Labour, the Chairperson of the National Commission for Human Rights, the Chairperson of the NCC, and the acting UNICEF Deputy Representative. Local authorities, school directors and children were also present. An exhibition incorporating specialized materials for children with vision impairment from the Gatagara institution was organised. The children performed a play, shared testimonies, and performed a song with a guitar. Urunanana Health Communication also worked on a series of programmes for the Umuhoza radio magazine on children with disabilities. Radio and TV messages were also broadcasted during the week before 16 June.

A number of events were held in Sierra Leone to remember the DAC on 16 June 2012. More than 500 people congregated at the Miatta Conference Hall, Freetown, while up to 350 people were present at the Saint Edwards Secondary School sports field, Freetown. Some 300 children from various schools also participated at a parade in Freetown. The DAC addresses were delivered by the Vice President of Sierra Leone, the Minister of Social Welfare, Gender, and Children Affairs, the Deputy Health Minister, the UNICEF Deputy Representative, and from a student with vision impairment. The performances, role plays, sports, games and parades included children with disabilities. The national network forum for children was involved in choosing people and organizations to make speeches, the kind of sports and games that they want to play, or play a part at the events. A press release was shared. The DAC featured in the newspapers, radio and TV, as well as in the Cotton Tree News broadcasts through 27 community radio stations across the country. The DAC was also published by the national news agency and online.

In Swaziland, more than 500 children from schools, as well as teachers, parents, government officials and members of the local community took part in a 3-km march that kicked off from Matsapha Shopping Complex and ended at the University of Swaziland’s Sports Emporium. Children rendered different poems, drama and speeches that raised awareness about the plight of children living with disability, at the same time advocated for positive response to those challenges. The event was graced by the Deputy Prime Minister, and delegates representing organisations that
support people with disability in Swaziland and other parts of Southern Africa. The DAC events were held on 15 June 2012 in Kwaluseni and Ezulwini, in Swaziland and attended by at least 1,000 delegates. A three-day conference on the education challenges faced by children living with disability was convened by the Ministry of Education and Training at Ezulwini. The conference, which brought together representatives from the government, NGOs and children’s groups, was supported by the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, the National Children’s Coordination Unit, UNICEF and the Secretariat of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities. In addition, a regional consultation dialogue was facilitated by the National Children’s Coordination Unit (NCCU) and supported by UNICEF in Shiselweni region, southern Swaziland, where the issues of children with disabilities were discussed by the different communities in the region. Communication materials were produced. The DAC activities were covered in newspapers, the UN Swaziland newsletter and within UNICEF.

Though Tanzania did not specifically commemorate the DAC, the theme of the Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) was closely connected with the DAC theme. The GNRC took place in Dar es Salaam from 16–18 June 2012, under the theme “Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: INSPIRE. ACT. CHANGE.” Over 250 participants were present, including representatives from different religious constituencies, representatives from the UN, the AU, multi-lateral institutions, CSOs, government officials and children from around the world.

In Uganda, a number of DAC activities were organised during the week, 11-16 June 2012, and held at the Crested Crane Hotel, Jinja District, at the Katalemwa Cheshire Home for Rehabilitation Services and at the Parliament of Uganda. Over 3,000 people and children participated in a Youth Truck for mobilization and sensitization drives for members in the communities of Jinja District from 11–15 June 2012. The Youth Truck also participated in tree planting together with the children of Jinja, and held children’s athletics activities designed to educate them on the DAC theme. A visit to Katalemwa Cheshire Home for Rehabilitation Services, Ntinda, Kampala, by Members of Parliament was held on 14 June to equip MPs with an understanding of how institutions were providing special care for children living with disabilities. The visit comprised 100 people and children. On 15 June, some 20 children presented a petition to the Speaker and 15 MPs requesting for the fast tracking of the implementation of the child policy for children living with disabilities. A total of 100 people and children were present. On 16 June, Mukidisa carried out a tree planting exercise at Makerere University Business School football grounds in Kampala attended by upto 1,000 people of which 700 were children. The event also included speeches by the Minister of State for Youth and Children, UNICEF and USAID. The national event showcased an exhibition, children’s parade, round table meeting, a launch of the Child Protection Curricula (publication), songs, music, poetry recitals, dance and drama by children, as well as free health services. Officials that attended all the DAC events in Uganda included the Minister for Youth and Children, Acting Commissioner for Youth and Children Affairs, Assistant Commissioner for Children, Acting Secretary-General, National Council for Children, representatives from Jinja Municipal Council, MPs including MPs representing disability issues, child rights advocacy, UNICEF Deputy Representative, CSOs and NGOs. The DAC media coverage was realized in the newspapers, radios and TVs. A video, feature articles and stories were also posted on the UNICEF websites and social media sites. More than 500 children and 200 adults were hosted at the UNICEF office in Harare. Zimbabwe, on 15 June 2012 to mark the DAC. The guests, including children, were treated to a number of fun activities that comprised market place displays, songs and dances, poems, skits, drama, artworks and craftwork, dance lessons, jumping castles and clowns, art lessons and face paintings. Present at the UNICEF event included the Zimbabwe First Lady, the Minister of Youth Empowerment, Indeginisation and Development, the Minister of National Healing, the Deputy Ministry of Health and Child Welfare, the UNICEF Regional Goodwill Ambassador for the Eastern and Southern African Region, Oliver Mtukudzi; and the UN Resident Coordinator. The opening of the Zimbabwe Junior Parliament and the discussion in Parliament on the situation of children living with disability drew more than 5,000 children and 300 adults, at the Harare International Conference Centre on 16 June 2012. This event was attended by the President, Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Ministers, and Vice President. Information and communication packages were produced and shared. Media outreaches, media visits and awareness campaigns were held and which resulted in the DAC coverage in newspapers, TV and radio stations, online newspapers and in the international media.