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INTERNATIONAL YOUTH WEEK REPORT

INTRODUCTION

In line with our objectives set out in the beginning of the year and the overall mission of the group, FOCUS set out to have an activity over the international youth week. The event dubbed **Vipawa Pure II Peace Concert** with the theme **Art –For Social Change** was basically aimed at enlightening and empowering the youth to use their talents in addressing their social economical challenges and thus achieve social change.

Thus set for the international youth week we set out to have week long activities that were to culminate into a youth concert aimed at raising funds to support orphans. The week's activities were thus supported by CCF Kenya, National Bank of Kenya (NBK) and Ministry Of Youth and Sports.

The program of the week was then planned as follows:-

- 11th/08/08 Monday :- Opening ceremony at Gatundu
- 12th/08/08 Tuesday :- Performance at Ruiru Prison
- 13th/09/08 Wednesday :- Public performance at Ruiru Market
- 15th/08/08 Friday :- Soccer tournament at Ruiru stadium
- 17th/08/08 Sunday :- Concert at St Francis of Assisi Catholic church

11th/08/08 Official Launch of the Youth Week at Gatundu

The official launch was done at Gatundu where we were as invited Guests. Initially we had planned for the launch to be at Thika but was changed to Gatundu by the ministry. We thus arrived at the venue at 11.30 am. The activities of the day started with a walk around Gatundu town and back into the stadium for the speeches and performances. The theme of the day was **Youth Against Crime and Drugs**.

Being the day of the official; launch there were many groups and all wanted to have a chance to perform thus there was limitation on the number of items to be performed, we thus

performed one item based on the theme of the day.

Achievements

- Our greatest achievement of the day was entertaining and educating the crowd to the fullest, though it was one verse it was well understood
- We were also able to learn from other performances and got to meet other groups which have similar activities as ours
- We also got to market our activities

Challenges

Some of the challenges experienced during the day were:-

- Lack of proper information about the days arrangements which led to some confusion on our part
- We had to hustle to get a chance to, perform as we were not on the program
- Little time given to perform while some groups had more than enough time and even had to repeat themselves for lack of items
- The change in venue disrupted some of our plans as it was done very late
- Other performances did not pick as we had expected thus we had a challenge to raise the hype of the audience which was rather dull

Recommendation

- Proper information should be given early for proper preparation
- Proper planning should be put into consideration and all attending groups given equal performance chances
- Vetting of performances should be done to know what kind of performances are being done in order no to bore the audience
- Try and intersperse performances and speeches to avoid a walk out of the audience during the speeches.

12th /08/08 Performance at Ruiru Prisons

The second day was targeted at having a performance at Ruiru prisons targeting the prisoners with the following themes

- Crime
- Drug abuse
- HIV/AIDS and health
- Behavior change

We thus arrived at the prisons at 1 pm as the performance was scheduled for 2 pm. The performances were to be accompanied with talks from the youth department officials, these were Theresa Kiema the youth officer and Peter Thuo the youth coordinator.

The youth then performed different items all based on the various themes, these included

verses, dances and skits. These were received with much aplomb by the prisoners much to our surprise for it exceeded our expectations. After the performances we handed over to the officer in charge to give a vote of thanks and wind up the show.

During the show we also donated some soap to the prisoners and pledged to visit again.

Achievements

- We had a very successful performance that even exceeded our expectations which left the prisoners asking for more.
- We had proper interaction between the prisoners and the youth
- We achieved our objectives as the messages were clearly delivered and understood based on the feed back from the prisoners and the warders

Challenges

Some of the challenges we had included :-

- Lack of power which led us to not using the PA system thus making projection a challenge
- No defined stage which led to improvisation
- Fear among some of the members especially the ladies on account of facing the prisoners
- The ladies had a problem with the dressing as that was one of the conditions

13th /08/08 Performance at Ruiru Market

On Wednesday we then had a performance at the Ruiru Market a community outreach that was aimed at educating the community on the following themes :-

- Crime
- Drug abuse
- HIV/AIDS and behavior change
- Environmental management

The events of the day started with a clean up of the market area that was joined by other youth groups some of which were Young Women Initiative (YWI), Sauski, and Rycep among others with support from the Ruiru Municipal Council.

After the clean up the groups then converged at Ruiru market for edutainment led by FOCUS and interspersed with speeches from the youth ministry officials, educating the community about the youth ministry and the services they provide, this was done by Theresa Kiema and Peter Thuo.

The youth thus performed a variety of articles all based on the themes of the day. And explanations of each item were given, with pauses to give the community members a chance to ask questions.

The show was quite a successful one as we attracted one of our largest crowds averaging

about 3,000 people. Their participation was quite amazing too as they asked probing questions showing eagerness to learn. The show lasted 3hrs i.e. from 2pm to 5pm.

Achievements

- We managed to hold a huge crowd of about 3000 mesmerized and attentive for the whole time
- Had a very successful performance based on the feed back we got from the audience
- We also had a successful clean up
- The audience got educated on various topics i.e. HIV/AIDS, drug abuse and its effects, crime, behavior change among others

Challenges

Some of the challenges we encountered were

- Had power problems as the power kept on going on and off
- Lack of clean up tools and lunch for the participants
- At one time the audience was so huge that it was a problem controlling them.

15th/08/08 Soccer Tournament

To end the week's community events we had a soccer tournament for the youth teams in the division. For maximum representations we thus had to select teams from the four areas of Ruiru these are Gatongora, Ruiru, Murera and Kwihota. The themes of the day were

- Crime
- Drug abuse
- HIV/AIDS and behavior change
- Leisure and recreation
- Environmental management

The day started with a walk around Ruiru town this was flagged off by the D.O Mr. Juma . the walk was aimed at mobilization and also creating awareness about the youth week and how the community can participate. The walk then ended at the stadium where teams were getting ready for the tournament .

The teams were bid welcome by the FOCUS Director Mr. Mabubi Hilary who impressed upon the youth the importance of youth participation in issues that affect them after which the games kicked off with the first game between Ruiru Youth from Kwihota and Ogopa from Murera. The game ended with a 2-1 win in favor of Ogopa .

The second game between Ruiru United from Ruiru verses Kihunguro from Gatongora it ended in a 2-0 win in favor of Ruiru United setting ground for the final between Ogopa and Ruiru United

After a brief rest and performances the finals then began at around 3pm a hotly contested and entertaining match that attracted a full stadium attendance. The game ended in a 2-2 draw and thus had to proceed to penalties all the teams converted the first five each only for the Ogopa

goal keeper to loose the sixth penalty while the Ruiru United goal keeper converted his handing the victory to Ruiru United at 8-7

After the game the players and other participants then converged for the presentations and performances these were by the FOCUS youth , YWI, among others after which we had speeches from the, the youth coordinator, the youth officer the CCF representative and the FOCUS director who still stressed on youth participation and the importance of supporting youth initiative he also expressed his sincere appreciation to the organizations that supported the event these included CCF Kenya who were the principle sponsors of the event, national bank of Kenya and Ministry of youth and sports for their support. He thus invited the Assistant chief who was representing the D.O. as the guest of honor. He praised FOCUS for taking the initiative to organize a week long event for the youth and also reiterated the government's commitment to supporting the youth.

The awarding was then done with each participating team getting an award which was as follows

- The fourth team got 2 balls
- The second runners up got 3 balls
- The runners up got 4 balls , a trophy and a set of uniforms
- The winner got 5 balls, a set of uniforms, a trophy and medals

The day ended with a word of prayer with FOCUS promising to have more of the same

Achievements

- Had a very successful tournament despite the short time for preparation
- Had very successful, entertaining and educating performances
- We had a very large crowd again of about 3,000 people though it was on a working day
- Good organization and support from other organizations
- We also managed to attract some colleges to exhibit and market their services

Challenges

Some of the challenges we faced include

- Short period of time for preparation
- Limited resources thus locking out a large number of teams that were willing to participate

17th/08/08 Vipawa Pure II Youth Concert

This was the climax of the Youth week's events, the pinnacle of the performances as it aimed at having the youth exploit their talents in addressing their socio economic challenges thus the overriding theme **Art- For Social Change** and thus had the following themes:-

- Crime
- Drug abuse

- HIV/AIDS and behavior change
- Leisure and recreation
- Environmental management
- Supporting community service

The event was thus slated to start at 1 pm and the funds raised from the event were to support OVCs supported by FOCUS and also to facilitate youth outreach programs to Mfangano and Remba Islands that are considered as Hard to reach areas.

The event then commenced at exactly 1pm and was very well coordinated with the youth very orderly as they entered the hall. By 2 pm the hall was packed to capacity with about 3,000 but there were still more youth coming, the event saw groups come from as far as Thika, Lmuru, Nairobi, Mathare, Kibera, Tinganga to perform and pass a message to the youth.

The climax of the event was the appearance by the appearance of the actors from a very popular TV soap Tahidi High. These were Oj, Melvin, Johnnie and Freddie. Who then took over as MCs and drove the crowd crazy all the time passing educational and motivational talks to the youth.

FOCUS was also not to be outdone as they also carried the day with very inspirational performances and gigs that left the audience mesmerized and asking for more. The event ended at exactly 6pm as we had to extend the time due to the audience though they still wanted to stay.

Achievements

- The day was quite a success it was well planned and well executed
- We achieved all our objectives and even exceeded our targeted amount to raise
- There was good cooperation of all the people involved
- We had very successful performances and had the crowd entertained throughout the show to the point of asking when the next show will be
- Support from the other groups and the church was also quite helpful and very motivating

Challenges

The challenges faced during the day included

- The hall was small as we had it filled to capacity and still had a very large audience outside
- Lack of proper communication among some of the members during the show that may have been caused by overwhelming duties and such a large crowd that there was no space to pass through
- Too many duties and a limited staff also strained the members

OVERALL SUMMARY

The youth week event was charged to a committee in FOCUS of seven members chaired by Mr Charles Mwangi. Their mandate was to coordinate, organize, budget, execute and oversee the events of the week. The committee then went ahead and organized a very successful week, guided and based on the thematic areas of the ministry of youth and sports and also the organizations objectives.

The committee managed to get support from various organizations and these included

- Christian Children's Fund Kenya (CCF) who were the principle sponsors
- National Bank of Kenya
- Ministry of Youth and Sports
- Ruiru Catholic Church

Challenges

The challenges that were experienced during the planning and the execution of the event included

- Poor time management by some of the members of the committee
- Improper distribution of labor among the members
- Fatigue and exhaustion among the members due to intensive rehearsals
- Poor flow of information to the members
- Limited resources thus making us improvise
- Conflict of interest among some members

Achievements

Despite the challenges we had a very successful week and the achievements included

- Good marketing and sales for the show
- We had enough articles for the performances
- Good publicity for the FOCUS team
- Enhanced capacity building for the members
- We had a very successful and educative week, that improved our relationships with the youth and sports ministry office
- Being our first event of such a kind we believe we had a very successful event

Recommendations

After the successful week and in view of the challenges we had we would thus like to have the following recommendations

- There should be continuity of such events in that this should not be the first and the last one
- Proper funding will also expand the activities and also have more groups participating
- More support from the Ministry of Youth and Sports will be very helpful

- Marketing to colleges and should be done in time
- Time keeping should also be adhered to
- It is important to also have larger labor base to avoid overwhelming the members with a lot of duties

Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge and appreciate the support given to us by the various organizations in making the week a success, these include :-

- Our thanks to the Ministry of Youth and Sports through the Divisional youth Officer Theresa Kiema for their support materially and also to the youth officer for having been with us throughout the whole week
- National Bank of Kenya for their donation of T Shirts and also their Financial donation towards the success of the Prison visit
- Ruiru Catholic church for their support in giving us rehearsal space and also for helping market the show. Special thanks to the Father in charge for his material support
- To CCF for their sponsorship of the event as the principal sponsors and especially in making the soccer tournament a success. Thanks also to the CCF youth Officer Miss Joan Nganga for having accompanied us throughout the whole week.
- FOCUS members for the dedication, commitment, hard work and cooperation in making the week a success
- Finally our thanks to all those who worked with us to make the whole week a success

In the same spirit lets all say

TWaweza; yes we can

ROMAN N KARIUKI

FOCUS YOUTH INITIATIVE