

TAPORI NEWSLETTER

Tapori is a worldwide friendship network which brings together children from different backgrounds who want all children to have the same chances. They learn from children whose everyday life is very different from theirs. They think and act for a fairer world by inventing a way of living where no one is left behind.



No. 449

GENDER

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

SCHOOL VIOLENCE

RACISM

September - October 2024

With our Tapori Newsletter, we are inviting you focus on the injustices we see around us. We want to show that girls and boys can **change for the better certain situations** they encounter in their every day lives.

Many children around the world face the challenge of **not existing legally**. **Not having a birth certificate** prevents them from studying, and adds to the shame of feeling different to other people around them.

As Tapori children, **what can we come up with** to make sure this doesn't happen in the places we live?



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My name is **Jafari** and I live in **Tandale**, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Although life in the neighbourhood is not always easy, I am happy to go to school and to take part in the street library every Wednesday under the 'Friendship Tree'.

I want to tell you about something I've had a hard time with: **not having a birth certificate**. This document is not just a piece of paper. It shows my name, my parents' names and where I come from. When I was in fourth year, the teachers asked my mother for my birth certificate so that I could take the national exam. When I realised I didn't have one, I felt invisible, different from my classmates who were proudly showing theirs.

Every time I heard about birth certificates, I felt a mixture of sadness and shame. I couldn't understand why I didn't have one, and although my mother promised me that I would get one 'one day', but not knowing when was a real worry. Not having a birth certificate made me feel left out, but it also caused me problems at school. My name, spelled wrongly in the attendance register, reminded me each time that I was legally invisible.

Things got worse when **I was suspended from school for a time because I couldn't produce a certificate**. My teacher made me bring my mother into school to explain why I didn't have the document. You can't imagine the deep humiliation I felt when, back at school, my classmates laughed at me. Without the certificate, I couldn't prove who I was or where I came from. Without that piece of paper, it was as if I didn't really exist.

One day, during the street library, the facilitators asked who had a birth certificate. I stayed silent, with a lump in my throat. When I got home, I told my mother about it and she decided to look for help. She met with the street library team to share our difficulty.

With their support and my mother's determination, we finally managed to get my certificate. When I held it in my hands, I felt a huge weight had been lifted from my shoulders. Going back to school, I was no longer the child without a name on the attendance register. I was Jafari, with a recognised identity and my dignity restored.

The birth certificate gives me access to my rights as a citizen. It also gave me back my confidence and pride. It made me appreciate my mother's love, what she did for me, and how important it is to fight for what is right, even when things are difficult.

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What do children around the world think about...?

17 OCTOBER

October 17 is approaching, and on that day we celebrate the **International Day for the Eradication of Poverty**, a day that was first celebrated on 17 October 1987 and was officially recognised by the **United Nations General Assembly** in 1992.

Each year has a different theme, and this year's is:
'Ending Institutional and Social Abuse'

We would like you to write to us with your thoughts on the importance of the '17 October' and to share **your views** on this year's theme.

We are looking forward to receiving your contributions!

