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MC-Tanzania Commemorates World Oral Health Day

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania - March 20, 2024 - MC-Tanzania, in a collaborative effort with the Ministry of Health (MoH), the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG), and the Tanzania Dental Association (TDA), marked World Oral Health Day (WOHD) on March 20 under the theme "A Happy Mouth is a Happy Body."

Honoring this day, MC-Tanzania started its activities on March 14th, emphasizing the importance of oral health and demonstrating its commitment to comprehensive oral health care across Tanzania.

As part of the WOHD activities, MC-Tanzania extended its support to three key stakeholders: the Tanzania Dental Association (TDA), the Tanzania Dental Students Association (TDSA-MUHAS), and the Department of Clinical Dentistry in Mbeya and Tanga College of Health and Allied Sciences. In collaboration with these partners, MC-Tanzania offered various community oral health services, including oral health education, screening, treatment, and oral health training.

The total number of primary students and those who received oral health education and instruction was 5,352 from six schools. The total number of screened students was 1,396, whereas the total number of students referred for further treatment was 867.

In addition, 54 children in orphanage centers received oral health education, oral health instructions, and free dental treatment.

According to Sara Mtagwa, MC-Tanzania Program Officer, these community services reached vulnerable groups in the Pwani (Kibaha district), Dar es Salaam, and Mbeya region.

"Most of the attendees were referred from previous outreaches. Our team provided transportation for the children with disabilities from Uhuru Primary School for screening and treatment and gave all attendees oral health kits and brochures."

Professional oral and dental practitioners provided invaluable Oral and Dental Health Education during several activities. Importantly, expectant mothers, primary and secondary school students, and centers for children with special needs were equipped with the knowledge and tools to maintain good oral health.

“This initiative, a testament to our collective commitment, is paramount. It aims to provide oral health education, screening, and free oral and dental treatment to citizens from all Councils of the Coast Region and neighboring regions,” says Kambarage Nyamhanga, Program Coordinator, MC-Tanzania.

Lastly, on March 20, the MC-Tanzania team joined the TDA members nationwide by participating in the closing ceremony held at Kibaha district.

The team worked around the Kibaha district's streets, distributed brochures to community members, and participated in free dental screening, where it was involved with the government team from the MoH and other stakeholders such as Colgate Palmolive Tanzania and MSD.

World Oral Health Day is a global initiative commemorated on the 20th of March. Its purpose is to raise awareness about the significance of oral health and promote good oral hygiene practices.

About MC-Tanzania

Established in 2014, MC-Tanzania's projects focus on promoting good oral healthcare services within disadvantaged communities in and throughout Tanzania.

The Dental Therapists' Outreach Training is MC-Tanzania's main project, a year-long project conducted twice a year in the Mbeya and Tanga regions in collaboration with the Colleges of Health and Allied Sciences. The goal is to develop and strengthen community dentistry by improving the ability of dental therapy students to set up and carry out Dental Outreach (i.e., education, screening, and treatment) for primary school students.

MC-Tanzania provides theoretical and practical training in community dentistry and leadership to dental therapy students to better prepare them for preventative community-based oral health care in the country. MC-Tanzania is also a leading national voice in other oral healthcare outreach programs, such as World Oral Health Day campaigns.

MC-Tanzania has five programs, namely the *Dental Therapists Outreach Training, Community Health Fellowship, Oral Health Awareness, Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences - School of Dentistry (MUHAS - SoD) Sustainability Initiative, and 3D Printing for Dentistry.*

MC-Tanzania envisions communities throughout Tanzania living free from oral and dental diseases. Its devoted mission is to contribute to improving oral health and dental care through existing services in promotion, prevention, curative, and rehabilitation.

About MCW Global

MCW Global is a non-profit organization with a vision for communities around the world to achieve greater levels of education, improved health, and increased economic security. Its mission is to address communities' pressing needs by empowering current leaders and readying leaders of tomorrow. Founded in 1999, MCW Global is based in New York with affiliates in Africa (Rwanda, Tanzania, and Zambia). MCW Global offers Young Leaders and Africa Programs. Across all the programs, MCW Global seeks to act with integrity, compassion, accountability, responsibility, and excellence.