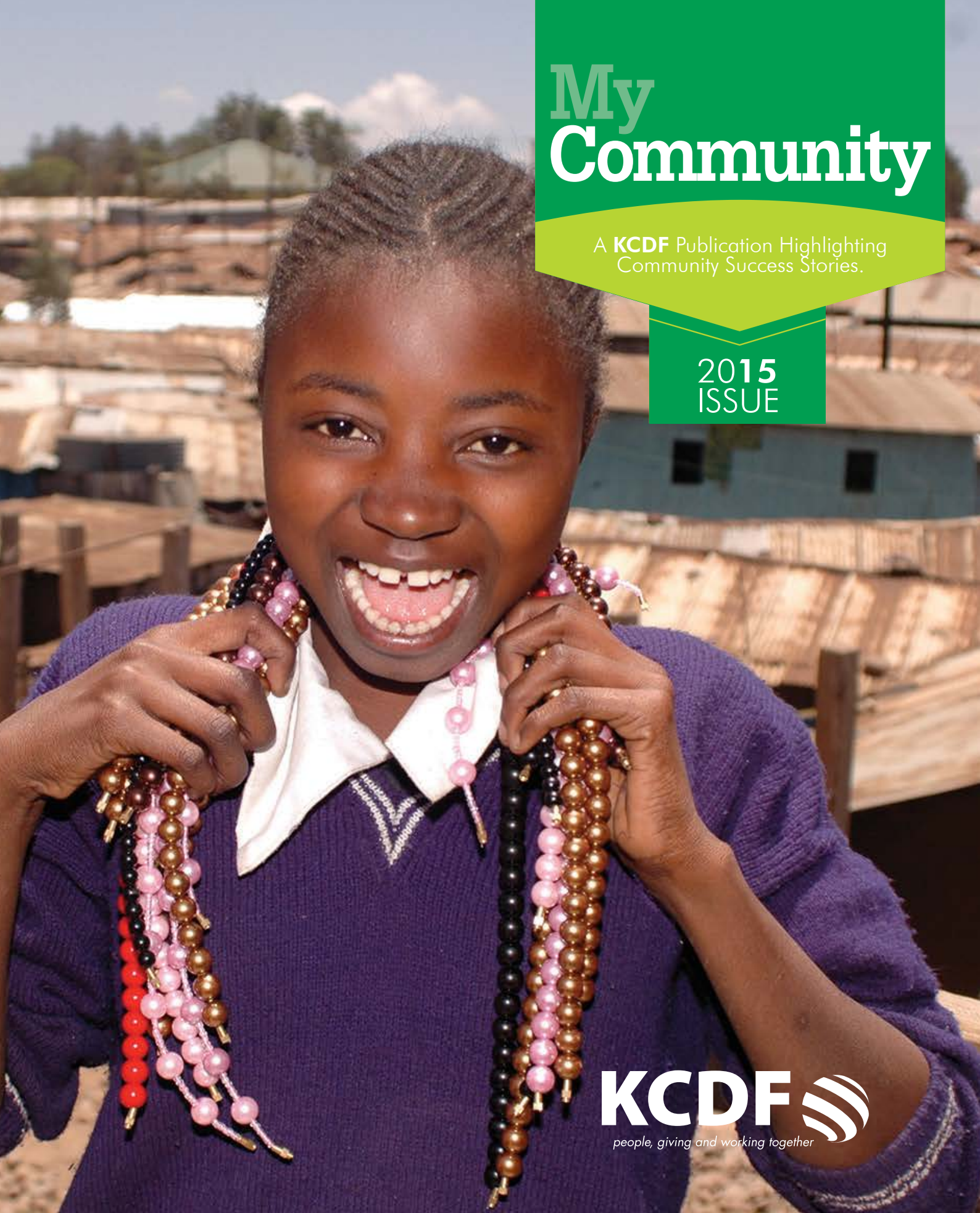


My Community

A **KCDF** Publication Highlighting
Community Success Stories.

2015
ISSUE



KCDF 
people, giving and working together

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KCDF is Kenyan public foundation that supports community development initiatives across Kenya, through grant-making, capacity development, endowment building as well as resource mobilization. Our areas of support cut across diverse development issues that affect vulnerable and marginalized communities, such as Food Security, Education, Youth, Children, The Girl Child, Community Asset building, Policy and Advocacy among others, all in an effort to enable needy and marginalized communities to access their rights and realize livelihood opportunities.



DEAR READER,

My Community magazine is a platform for showcasing communities' efforts in initiating and sustaining their own development interventions by using innovative ways of raising both financial and human resource capital and sharing their experiences with the aim of encouraging other communities to adopt similar approaches.

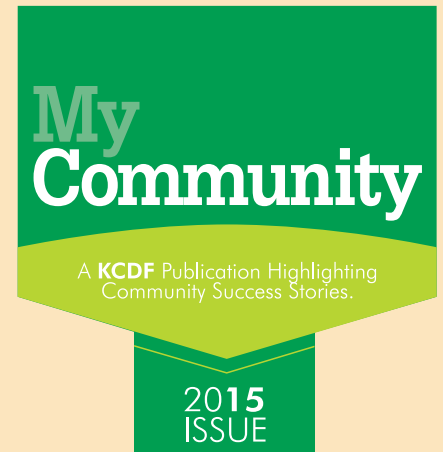
In this issue, we highlight a cross-section of interventions that different communities across the country have initiated through their own community structures as well as with support from KCDF in delivering change. These stories of impact featured speak volumes of the transformation communities have undergone.

We would like to thank you for the support you have continued to give KCDF over the years in its efforts to enable more communities become self-reliant by adopting sustainable ways of initiating and driving their own development agenda.

We invite you to read more by visiting our website on www.kcdf.or.ke and also find out how you can be part of the change.

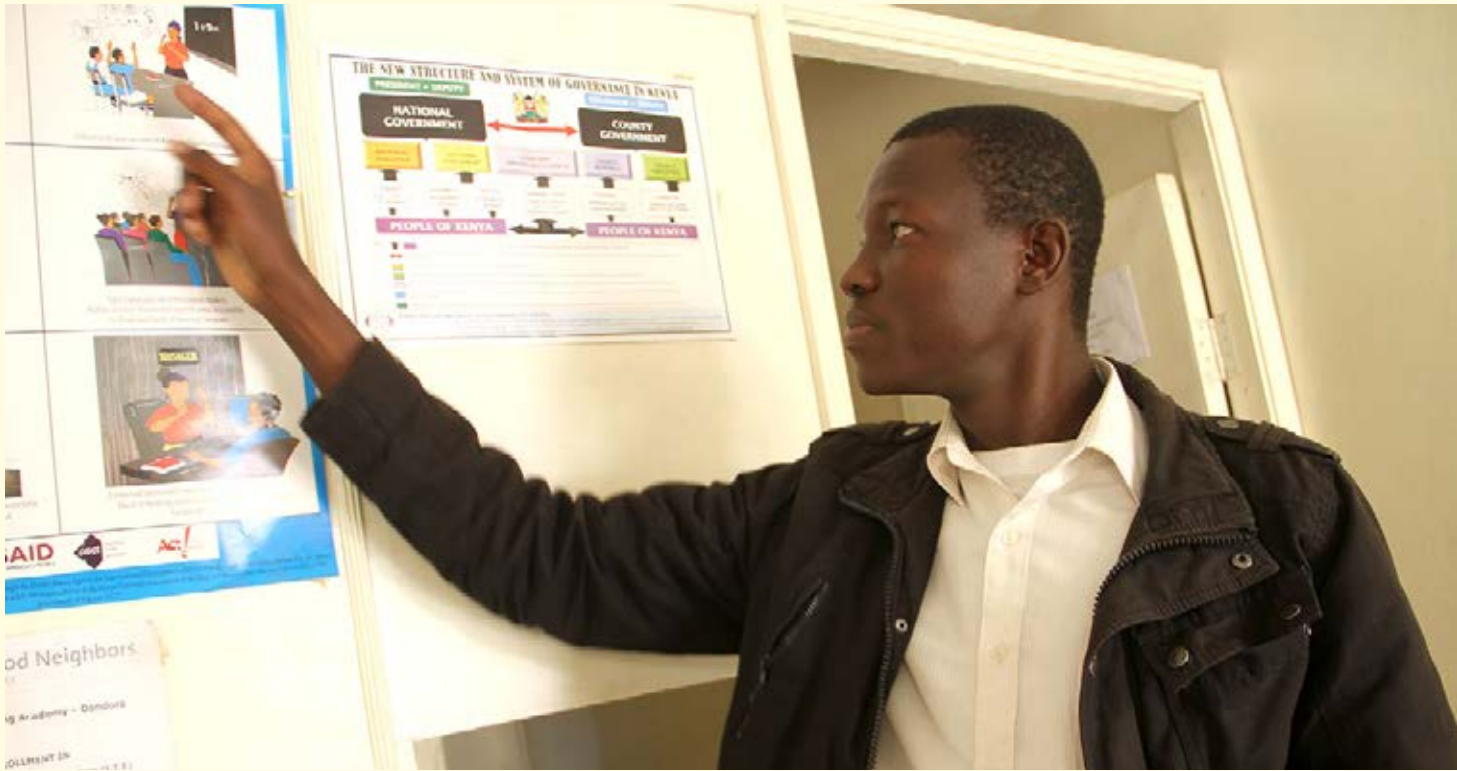
We look forward to a great year; one of opportunities and growth. Best wishes to you for an equally successful 2015.

Editorial Team



Melvin Chibole
Communication Manager

Natasha Murigu
Communication Officer



HEALTH, EDUCATION PROVIDERS Acquire Sign Language Skills to Enhance Services for the Deaf

“If I hadn’t lost my hearing, I wouldn’t be where I am now. It forced me to maximize my own potential. I have to be better than the average person to succeed.”
- Lou Ferrigno

The words by Lou Ferrigno, an icon to the deaf community who overcame hearing difficulties to succeed in film and fitness industries, seem to be the driving force behind the determination of the Deaf Ability Initiative (DAI) to improve the quality of life for the deaf. DAI, a not-for-profit organization, is on a mission to improve the lives of people with hearing impairments by enabling them to demonstrate their

full potential through promotion of social inclusion and economic empowerment.

DAI has faced a myriad of challenges in implementing their initiatives ranging from resource limitations to continued marginalization of its members by their host communities. With a KES 3 Million grant from



Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF), DAI rolled out a health programme targeting deaf and hard of hearing individuals with access to health and education services as well as employment opportunities.

Under the programme, health and education providers were trained on sign language to enable them better communicate with deaf and hard of hearing people in order to provide better health and education services to them. DAI also started an urban agriculture project to create employment opportunities and boost income for the deaf and hard of hearing.

Programme co-ordinator Lawrence Musili, who is also deaf, laments at the challenges the deaf and hard of hearing individuals face in health and learning institutions where service providers are not able to communicate in sign language.

“We do not have health officers trained in sign language who can handle deaf patients and this makes access to healthcare very difficult. The situation is similar in the education sector where the deaf must go to special needs schools for them to learn.” Says Musili through an interpreter.

To overcome communication barriers involving deaf & hard of hearing individuals, and social service providers, DAI with the support from Sign Language Resource Centre (SLRC) started training nurses and clinical officers in select hospitals and schools in Nairobi with basic sign language skills.

Among the hospitals that have benefited from the training include Mama Lucy Referral Hospital, Pumwani Maternity Hospital and Mbagathi District Hospital. The Initiative was also started in Wangu Primary School in Dandora and Kenyatta University.

The SLRC programme coordinator, Lucy Njeri, says the project involves training and deploying of interpreters in health facilities to help deaf and hard of hearing patients communicate with nurses.

“Many deaf and hard of hearing people shy away from visiting hospitals because health providers are not able to communicate and understand the ailments that they are suffering from with ease. The situation is even worse when the patient is not literate and cannot write down his/her medical problem.” Njeri says.

Since the project began, a number of nurses have realised the importance of learning sign language as a communication tool and are willing to undergo the training sessions.

“With more health and education providers acquiring basic sign language skills, the deaf now feel appreciated when they seek services in hospitals and schools.” She says

The SLRC also provides the deaf with resources such as books, charts and brochures with information on a number of issues of interest to the group.

Under the urban agriculture project, about 40 deaf people have been trained on farming, entrepreneurship and project management; and given credit facilities from a revolving fund to set up individual projects.

"With the support of KCDF we have been able to equip many deaf people with skills so that they too can earn sustainable income from farming. This has improved the lives of our members." Affirms Musili during a tour of a poultry project run by the organisation in Utawala Estate, Nairobi.

Musili says they have also learnt from other people who have run similar projects successfully following exchange programmes facilitated by KCDF.

A number of deaf people are employed to work on the project permanently and are now able to earn wages which they use to meet their financial obligations. Musili is upbeat that once the more than 450 hens begin laying eggs, the organisation will earn sufficient income to expand and sustain the project that has won them admiration from the local community.

A number of able-bodied people from the area have been visiting the project site to learn how to breed chicken.

"People think that if you are disabled you cannot earn your own income, but we are proving them wrong as this project has given us opportunity to demonstrate what we capable of." Says Musili.

He notes that those who have benefited from loans disbursed through the revolving fund are repaying loans in good time, a fact that points to how well their income generating activities are doing. Musili says before KCDF came to their assistance, the organisation was only doing advocacy on HIV and Aids issues but now they are able to transform

the lives of deaf people in more meaningful ways. He lauds the partnership, noting that the DIA has been able to build its capacity to manage projects following support from KCDF.

"We have been able to improve the quality of our reports and financial management after the grantor facilitated trainings on report writing and financial planning for our staff." He says

He, however, feels the duration of the projects should be extended beyond the current one year and funds made available in not more than two tranches as opposed to the quarterly disbursements for more impact.

Fact File

KSHS

3,125,430

- Nurses in three major hospitals were trained on sign language
- 40 deaf people trained on poultry farming
- Sign language interpreters deployed in most hospitals
- Deaf people have reported an increase in knowledge on various diseases including HIV and AIDS.
- 450- Number of Chicken reared by the group

"The disbursement of funds is made in four quarterly tranches and when there are delays we experience project interruptions," Says Musili.

Although the funding for programme is expected to last for a year, the organisation's finance officer, Victor Otieno, is confident they will continue with the projects and venture into more activities even after the grant is exhausted.

"The poultry project will bring in money once we begin selling the eggs. Plans are also underway to start a greenhouse project to farm kales, onions and tomatoes, which we will be able to sell to local supermarkets and individuals."

Otieno, who is also deaf, explains through an interpreter. The organisation has established linkages with other organisations, courtesy of KCDF, through which they are able to access more opportunities for funding.

NUTRITION-BASED BUSINESSES power lives of HIV-positive women and youth

We were both diagnosed with HIV in 2002 but my husband refused to accept his status. He also refused to seek Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) and instead opted to marry a second wife. He later became very ill as a result of not taking the recommended treatment and later succumbed to the disease. After his death, his extended family accused me of infecting him with HIV and chased me away from our matrimonial home.

Beatrice says.

It's midday in Kibera and on the sides the winding dirt passage ways in the informal settlement, a group of residents stand around two charcoal stoves with large cooking pots (sufurias) of steaming githeri (boiled mixture of beans and maize) and beans stew.

The group is fighting for the attention of 47-year-old Beatrice Lando, who is serving the cereal meal in polythene bags going for KES10 for every cup she scoops. From the proceeds of her business, Beatrice, a mother of four - will be able to provide food and other basic needs for her family and still save KES100 every week.



From the savings, Beatrice whose husband died in 2002, has bought a piece of land in her rural home in Budalangi, Western Kenya, where she plans to build a home for her family.

Although Beatrice was told the life prolonging ARVs would boost her immunity, life became unbearable for her as she had no proper income to ensure a good diet and on several occasions she defaulted on her treatment as one is advised to eat before taking the treatment. This further exasperated her condition and she became very weak and sick.

Life however took a new turn for her when she was introduced to the Local Community Awareness Programme (LOCAP). LOCAP, a not-for-profit organisation, seek to create awareness on diseases like tuberculosis, diabetes, hypertension and comprehensive care for People Living with HIV and AIDs (PLWHAs). Through the organisation, Beatrice was able to get a small loan to run her business and also benefit from psychosocial support from other People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA).



"We have been mobilized into groups through which we are able to save and get loans to run small businesses to support ourselves and our families. Before one is given a loan, she must attend classes where one is trained on records keeping and other ways of running successful business." Says Beatrice.

With an initial grant of KES1.6 million from Kenya Community Development Foundation, LOCAP began a Nutrition-based Income Generating Activities programme (Nutri-IGAs) to improve the lives of women and youth living with TB and HIV.

The Programme Director, Jackson Mose, says they have been able to improve adherence to ARV and TB medication among 60 women and 30 youth in Kibera slum by empowering them through the nutri-based IGA initiative.

"We used to give business loans to residents under LOCAP but we realized there was a high rate of defaulting. When we investigated the cause of the high default rate, we established that some of the beneficiaries were falling sick and failing to attend to their businesses due to non-adherence to the drugs." Mose says.

With high poverty levels in Kibera, malnutrition, lack of food and consumption pattern are significantly associated with non-adherence to ART, hastening the progression of AIDS-related illnesses on many youth and women.

To address the situation, LOCAP approached KCDF for funding to empower target beneficiaries to start food related income generating activities that would ensure they access proper nutrition as well as earn income for other requisite basic needs.

Through the programme, more than 78 beneficiaries were trained on proper nutrition while 48 were able to establish sustainable nutrition-based businesses.

“Women and youth who registered with the group are now able to earn regular income and get well balanced diet. They no longer depend on other people for handouts or a meal for that matter.” Mose confirms.

The groups also benefit from monthly therapy meetings where the members discuss their achievements, challenges and solutions. To ensure the beneficiaries own the project, they are represented at the LOCAP board by a PLWHA who is able to champion their interests when it comes to setting priorities. Stella Maundu, 30, who is a member of the Eight Mums Group, a member group of LOCAP, says that she has been able to get the much needed counselling as well as motivating and helping each to cope with emotional and social problems that come with living with HIV and AIDS.

Stella, used to do menial jobs in the neighborhood and the meager earning could not afford her a good nutritious meal for her 14-year-old set of twins and herself leading to non-adherence to medication. Stella was able to benefit from the group after receiving a small loan to establish her grocery shed in Kibera’s Laini Saba area.

“I set up this grocery business with the first loan from the group. My business has since expanded with subsequent loans and I am able to do value additions like making fruit salads and juice which I supply to various institutions and individuals.” Says Stella.

Through the business, the single mother can pay school fees for her set of twins who just completed their Kenya Primary School Education (KCPE) in 2014 as well as meet other family basic needs like food and house rent.

“I no longer feel sick as often as I used because I take my medicine regularly and as prescribed.” Says Stella who was

diagnosed with HIV in 2008 and enrolled for ART the same year.

Mose says through the Nutri-IGA project, LOCAP has been able to exert a lot of influence in the community by empowering women and youth who are now looked up to as role models because of their success managing their income generating activities. Because of the success of the programme, one of LOCAP’s board members has been appointed to the state-run Uwezo Fund, which aims at empowering the youth economically. Another group member was also appointed to the Makina Ward Community Development Committee.

“We are now part of the consortium of NGOs in Kibera and our board members get invitations every time to give talks on business management and community health issues at various forums, including local churches.” Says Mose.

Although the funding from KCDF, given in four quarterly tranches, is meant to last for a year, Mose is not worried as they have put in place various measures to ensure continuity of the programme.

“Through KCDF, we learnt a lot of lessons on good governance, resource mobilization and project development which will ensure the programme continues on a solid path. We have also created linkages with several like-minded organisations through which we are able to mobilise funds and learn new ideas.” Mose concludes.

The groups’ savings and loans scheme from which beneficiaries are able to save as little as KES100 every week and take loans at 15 per cent interest rate per year, will ensure there is enough cash flow to keep the businesses on track.

Fact File

KSHS

1,571,608

- 78 beneficiaries trained on proper nutrition. 48 established sustainable nutrition-based businesses.
- KES 100 which beneficiaries are able to save every week through the group’s savings and loans scheme.
- Groups also benefit from monthly therapy meetings where the members discuss their achievements, challenges and solutions.

PHONE APPLICATION

Gives People with Epilepsy a New Lease of Life

Like any public health facility, the first sights that capture attention of visitors at Karen Health Centre are huge posters with health messages pinned on the walls and notice boards, and groups of patients queuing on rows of wooden benches outside several consultation rooms.

However, within the compound there is a distinct group waiting outside a room designed from an old container. Those in the queue show very remote signs of illness, if any, as they chat jovially and exude energy.

This is one of the three epilepsy clinics run by the Kenya Association for the Welfare of People with Epilepsy (KAWE), a non-profit making organization, which addresses issues of people with epilepsy – a condition characterized by recurrent seizures.

The organization, which is a grantee of the Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF), runs two other clinics in partnership with Nairobi County Council in the sprawling slums of Mathare and Huruma.



A medical officer at the organisation, Mr Steve Kimwaki, explains that the clinics, which operate for only one day of the week have been deliberately set up without the usual symbols and health messages that characterize health facilities because of the stigma associated with epilepsy.

“People with epilepsy suffer stigma and discrimination due to a lot of misconceptions and myths about the disease. We neither follow the medical officers’ dress code nor decorate the walls with health messages because we want the patients to feel welcomed and free from the stigma they suffer out there in the society.” Says Kimwaki.

Among the patients in the queue is 16-year-old Kenneth Mutisya (not his real name) who has been accompanied by his elder sister, Agnes Mwikali, 32. Agnes narrates about her brother’s condition - Mutisya, who lives with their mother in rural Makueni District. Mutisya begun experiencing recurrent seizures at the age of five and to date, he has never been taken to any health facility as the family never knew his condition could be treated.

“All we could do every time he experienced seizures is to pin him to a seat where he would pass-out for about 10 minutes. The seizures happen every time he touches cold things or bathes in cold water.” Says Agnes.

Agnes brought him to the clinic following a referral by a friend who confided in her that she too used to suffer from a similar condition but the seizures stopped after starting off on medication. She explains that in their Kamba community, it is believed that people with epilepsy are bewitched or cursed and the only remedy for such a victim is a ritual cleansing ceremony which involves the epileptic patient riding on the back of a goat that is suddenly beheaded.

Mutisya is however lucky not to have gone through the ritual because of her mother’s strong beliefs in Christianity which neither advocates nor condones any form of witchcraft remedies.

Waithera Nderu, 32, was diagnosed with epilepsy at the age of 12 and since then, she has been on medication. She laments the high level of stigma and discrimination meted against her as a result of the condition, which she claims has caused her job opportunities even though she emerges top in interviews.

“People believe epilepsy can be transmitted from one person to the other through close interactions and this always turns away friends; one has to contend with loneliness. Employers also do not want to indulge people with the condition as they are seen as a burden to the company both financially as well as relationally.” Says Waithera, who runs a bar in Kitengela where she lives.

“It was very difficult for me to keep on asking for days off to go to hospital hence I decided to quit my last job as an office manager and run my own business which has the flexibility that I need to manage my disease.” She says.

Before Waithera was introduced to the KAWA epilepsy clinic, her major challenge was drug adherence due to the high costs of purchasing the medication. A tablet costs KES 1 and a patient may spend about KES 1000 for a monthly dose.

“There are several occasions when I failed to take my medication as my single mother could not provide for the family’s basic needs and still spare some money for the drugs.” Explains Waithera who has two siblings.

However, the burden of spending money on medication was lifted off Waithera’s shoulders when she found out about the clinic, which she visits regularly for drugs.

The clinic is part of the second phase of a project aimed at improving epilepsy management services in public health facilities funded by KCDF at a cost of KES 1.3 Million. The project involves enhanced management of patients’ data, training of health providers on epilepsy management and increasing the number of patients accessing effective epilepsy services.

The project’s coordinator, Rosemary Gathara, says 120 clinical officers and nurses have been trained on epilepsy management under the programme so far. But the number

is a far cry since there are over 6,000 health facilities in the country which need such services for health providers. According to World Health Organisation (WHO) there are about one million people with epilepsy in Kenya out of which only 200,000 have access to treatment as there are very few health facilities that take care of people with the condition.

To meet the shortfall, the organization is working with the Kenya Medical Training College (KMTTC) to review the curriculum to include management of epilepsy as a specific area of study. This will enable KMTTC, which has colleges across the country, increase the scope of health provider with skills to manage people with epilepsy.

Although KAWÉ's primary roles are advocacy on the plight of people with epilepsy, research and lobbying- it is undertaking training of health officers and provision of epilepsy medicine to bridge the gap that has been unattended by other health providers and government hospitals.

"Health centers should be able to treat epilepsy the way they treat other diseases. The gap is unnecessary because it is not a cost issue as drugs used to treat the condition are also used for treatment of other diseases and some are on the list of essential drugs." Says Rosemary.

The first phase of the project dubbed M-Kifafa Mobile Technology for Epilepsy Training and Support involved developing a mobile phone platform to support e-learning for primary health workers, epilepsy awareness & treatment compliance information to patients and care givers.

The system, developed in 2013, runs on USSD and SMS platforms, is designed to use mobile phones to help patients manage their epilepsy as well as enable people to

receive information on locations of KAWÉ epilepsy clinics. The system additionally provides first-aid information on how to manage people experiencing seizures. The data mined from the software is sent to the Ministry of Health to aid in the provision of anti-epilepsy drugs to those that need them. The mobile platform is supported by mobile service provider Safaricom.

Rosemary says when the system was rolled out in 2013, the number of patients visiting the KAWÉ clinics doubled. The busiest clinic is the Huruma Health Centre where about 100 patients visit every Friday. Presently, over 13,000 patients are registered at KAWÉ clinics.

The project targeted 800 people with epilepsy (600 children and 200 adults) in Korogocho, Mathare, Kawangware and Kibera slums of Nairobi. It was also expected that 60 health workers would actively engage with the inter-

active platform for epilepsy management training and disseminating information to the target beneficiaries via mobile phones. To make the programme sustainable, KAWÉ charges KES1.50 for every SMS received by the patients.

KAWÉ and its global associates, the International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE) and International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) are currently lobbying to have epilepsy recognized by World Health Organisation (WHO) as a global burden. This will ensure there is coordinated action at the country level to address its health, social and public knowledge implications.

Fact File

KSHS

1,272,920

- **120 clinical officers and nurses** have been trained on epilepsy management under the programme so far.
- The project targeted **800 people** with epilepsy (600 children and 200 adults) in Korogocho, Mathare, Kawangware and Kibera slums of Nairobi. Presently, over 13,000 patients are registered at KAWÉ clinics.
- **60 health workers** would actively engage with the interactive M-Kifafa platform

1,000,000 - Number of people with epilepsy in Kenya but only about 200,000 receive care and treatment.



SEX WORKERS STEPPING OUT AND STEPPING UP

Former Sex Workers Lives Bloom after Leaving the Streets

When Redemptor Nduku, 40, left her husband in 1999, she was determined to give her two children a better life. But as a single mother, Redemptor had very limited options for earning a decent income since she didn't possess any academic qualification to seek formal employment.

The pay from odd jobs available in her neighborhood was also too low to meet her family's needs. After trying her hand in several businesses without success, the streets became the only attractive avenue to eke out a living.

"I had heard of stories of women who were able to create a lot of wealth by selling their bodies to men and I thought my life would change by joining the oldest profession in the streets as a commercial sex worker." Narrates Redemptor, who for more than four years made a living as a commercial sex worker on the streets of Nairobi's Eastleigh estate.

However, as soon as she stepped into the streets, Redemptor realised her condition would barely change as the money she used to make was hardly enough to give her and her children the lifestyle she had hoped for be-



fore joining the trade. Instead, like other commercial sex workers, her life was characterized by physical and emotional hardships and stigma.

“When you are a prostitute, you lose your dignity and self-esteem. People look at you with a lot of contempt and no one wants to associate him or herself with you, you are completely ostracized and perceived as immoral and dirty.” Redemptor says.

Forced onto the streets as a result of unemployment and poverty, commercial sex workers face a lot of violence and are easy targets for the police and city askaris (security) who use City by-laws like loitering to arrest and solicit bribes and sexual favors from them.

Sex workers are also at grave risk of contracting HIV and AIDs and other sexually transmitted diseases. Statistics from a UNAIDS report on the Global AIDS Epidemic postulates that female sex workers are 13.5 times more likely to be infected and living with HIV than women who don’t engage in commercial sex work.

But despite the myriad of challenges faced by a commercial sex worker, Redemptor explains commercial sex work is a trap that is very difficult to escape from. For Redemptor, the opportunity to step out of the streets came after they were rounded up on the streets and taken to police cells during one of the frequent swoops on commercial sex workers in Eastleigh where she plied her trade. They were accused of loitering and ordered to pay a cash bail of KES 5,000, which she did not have at the time.

It is while they had been remanded at the police cells where Redemptor and other commercial sex workers were approached by representatives of Life Bloom Services International. Life Bloom paid their cash bail and persuaded them against going back to the streets.

“Staff at Life Bloom gave us an assurance of a decent life if we abandoned sex work. They further promised to assist us in setting up small income generating activities”. Redemptor quips.

Although some of the women went back to the streets the following evening, Redemptor made a resolve not to go back to commercial sex work.

“I was at rock bottom, I had endured so much while in sex work that I had started becoming numb from the abuse. I was on a downward spiral and death from abuse or through venereal disease was not far from mind. My children also suffered from being discriminated against. The reason why I went into the trade, to support my children, was becoming self-defeatist as I was hurting them more,” Redemptor narrates with nostalgia clearly showing on her face.

Life Bloom through a project dubbed Sex workers stepping OUT and stepping UP which was supported by KCDF sought to build the capacity of women and men in the sex work industry to transform their families through poverty reduction and thus improve

their health and economic status. Under the project, Life Bloom has recruited more than 400 girls and young women from the streets and trained them in entrepreneurship and leadership.

Redemptor is now a proud owner of a retail shop in Huruma that sells household goods that she benefited from the Sex Workers Stepping OUT and Stepping Up Initiative.

Life Bloom's training coordinator, Wanjiru Triza says after the two and a half months training, the women in the project were assisted to develop business plans and given loans from a revolving kitty set up through the KCDF grant. Triza adds that the women were also trained on peer mentorship, report writing and mobilised into smaller groups through which they run a savings and loans scheme to support themselves.

"They have a clear leadership structure in the group and we have assisted them to open a group and individual bank accounts where they save a fraction of what they earn from their businesses," says Triza.

Domtilla, 47, also a former commercial sex worker says the project has restored their dignity as they are able to earn money from hard work and operate freely in the community.

"In the past, we used to wait for male clients in dark corners at night, we would then lock ourselves in houses during the day to escape the judging and stigma that comes with the commercial sex work. Today, we earn a decent income and provide for our families without the fear of being harassed or arrested by the police." Domtilla says.

Redemptor, who is the secretary of Life Together Sisters says the project which targeted 80 former sex workers has also boosted their self-confidence, enabling them to take up leadership roles in the community.

Fact File

KSHS
50,000

- Ksh 50,000 – the amount that Together Sisters have as savings in the bank.
- Over 80 former commercial sex workers have started income generating initiatives and left the streets.
- Female sex workers are 13.5 times more likely to be infected and living with HIV than women who don't engage in commercial sex work – UNAIDS
- Life Bloom has recruited more than 400 girls and young women and trained them in entrepreneurship and leadership.

"In the past I could not address people in public, but since I joined the project my confidence has tremendously grown and residents here look up to me to advise them on health matters." Says Redemptor who is also a voluntary community health worker in the slums.

She says the group has about KES 50, 000 in their joint account from which they get credit facilities to boost their activities. They plan to start a group business enterprise to enhance their income and bring them closer to each other.

Although they still benefit from the revolving fund, the groups says in future, they want to rely solely on their savings and loans scheme so that they can recoup the interest they pay on loans. Each member saves between KES100 to KES 300 every week.



SOLAR PROJECT LIGHTS UP LIVES in Kibera Slum

At 37 years old, Jane Mueni, has been through difficult times in life. Her husband deserted their home in Kibera slum, leaving her to take care of their two children despite having no meaningful source of income.

Although she had a kiosk outside her one-room house where she sold vegetables, her proceeds from the business could barely meet the family's basic needs. Other than taking care of her two children, Mueni is also taking care of her deceased sister's daughter.

Lady luck, however, struck one day when Mueni was introduced by a friend to Riziki Kenya, a community based organization working in the slums to transform lives through provision of an enabling environment for child development and empowering the community for self-reliance.

Today, the three children under her care are being sponsored by Riziki through an education programme targeting children from needy families in the



slum. But what has brought an evident change in Mueni's life is the portable solar lamp project that Riziki Kenya is implementing in the slum in partnership with the Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF).

The project christened Mwangaza Poa (Bright Light) targets 500 homes with school going children attending day school in Kibera's Laini Saba area. Through the project, families in the slums are provided with clean, safe, affordable and bright light through a nano finance funding scheme.

"The Mwangaza Poa Project has helped me save money that I ordinarily would use on paraffin. The solar lighting has also made reading much easier for my children as they can now enjoy longer hours of study." She says.

Residents of Kibera, like those in other slums, live in small overcrowded rooms and mainly with no access to electricity. They rely on kerosene tin lamps popu-

larly known as 'koroboi' or candles for lighting which creates a number of challenges particularly for households with school going children.

For Mueni, the koroboi that she used for lighting was a curse to the family as the poor light quality emitted by the tin lamp hindered the ability of her children to do their homework as well as carry out household activities. The cost of kerosene was also prohibitively high while the noxious fumes produced by kerosene lamps was a health hazard to the entire family.

"I suffered recurrent chest pains due to the heavy black smoke from the cooking stove and tin lamp. With the limited resources I had at the time, raising money for medication became a sticking problem for my family." She says.

But the hard times for Mueni are over as she is one of the community members who have benefited from the Mwangaza Poa project. Riziki Kenya business development services manager, Mr Martin Nkaku, says benefi-



ciaries of the project were mobilized into groups where they save money to enable them purchase portable solar lamps on discounted prices.

“To inculcate the spirit of savings among the beneficiaries, once they get the portable solar lamps we ask them to turn the kerosene tin lamps into a home bank where they save the money they used to spend on kerosene. This makes it possible for them to make weekly repayments for the new lamps without feeling the burden,” says Mr Nkaku.

The dust and shock resistant portable lamps have photovoltaic solar panels which harvest a certain spectrum of sunrays and can charge even during rainy and cloudy weather. Apart from lighting, they solar panels are also used for charging mobile phones. Within the first year of the project, more than 750 households had acquired the lamps. More than 1650 families are currently using the solar lamps for their lighting and elec-

tricity needs.

For Mueni who has already bought two lamps through the credit scheme for her home use as well as her vegetables kiosk; the solar lamps are also a source of income as she uses them to charge mobile phones for her neighbours at a nominal fee.

“I used to spend KES 30 every day on kerosene before I got my first lamp. Today I no longer buy kerosene and I am able to feed my family well and meet other financial responsibilities since I get additional income by charging mobile phones.” Says Mueni.

The project, which has been replicated in other slums and towns across the country had its share of challenges at the beginning. Given the poor living conditions of the target group, it was not easy to sell the idea as many wanted the lamps to be given lamps for free and credit management was an issue. The problem was however overcome through the group model where the group members acted as guarantors for each other.

“The results have surpassed our expectations. It is satisfying to see the social gains that have accrued from something very small. The impact cannot be equated to the KES 3000 that the lamp cost.” Asserts Martin.

With the success that has been realised in the portable solar lamps project, Riziki Kenya has also introduced a new product called Mpishi Bora (A good cook). Mpishi Bora is a solar cooking stove that uses sun-rays to cook food and is meant to complement the lighting project. This, the organization believes, will help households reduce their expenditure on firewood and charcoal by upto 75 per cent.

Fact File

KSHS

1,415,700

- Within the first year of the project, more than 750 households had acquired the lamps.
- More than 1650 families (approximately 9900 individuals) are currently using the solar lamps for their lighting and electricity needs.
- Marked reduction in smoke-related diseases.



ARTISANS DOUBLE EARNINGS as project opens up market opportunities

Kibera, one of the largest urban slums in Africa, has a large population of youth and a high unemployment rate, which contributes to drug and alcohol abuse, prostitution and crime.

The whirring, squeaking and clanking of machines can be heard as one approaches the tin-walled workshop at Makina market in Nairobi's sprawling Kibera slum. Here, 42-year-old Ben Onyango has been cutting, sharpening, shaping and drilling waste materials like bones and seeds into admirable pieces of art, which include beads and animal carvings that have found their way into local and international markets.

Onyango is the lead artist at Bemos Craft Developers, an arts enterprise which aims to improve livelihoods of the youth in Kibera by training them on income generating projects in the crafts industry.

"Bemos empowers these young men and women to learn the craft that utilizes recycled and waste materials. When they are actively involved in arts like carving and bead making, they earn income to improve their lives and have less time to indulge in drugs and crime." Says Onyango, as he tightens a white mask on his nose to protect him from inhaling the swirling dust from the grinder.

Onyango boasts of four grinders and a driller down from one that he started with in the year 2000. Despite the tremendous expansion in his business, the last few years have been very difficult compared to the formative years of his business venture. His products and those of other groups in the sector have been struggling to fetch good prices due to limitations in accessing local and international markets.

"We used to sell beads at KES1 each, with a necklace of 50 beads fetching a paltry Ksh50. Cumulatively, we used to make a profit of KES 3000 which was barely enough to pay wages to my staff as well as something small for my personal need." Explains Onyango, a father of four.

But fortunes for Bemos' members changed after they partnered with the Kenya Federation of Alternative Trade (KEFAT). KEFAT is a network of Fair Trade producers in Kenya that aims at improving the livelihoods and well-being of marginalized Kenyan producers through innovative approaches to market access on Fair Trade terms.

With a grant from the Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF), KEFAT is working with artisan groups to improve the livelihoods of marginalized youth and women by creating opportunities through development of sustainable handcraft enterprises.

The project targets youth in Korogocho and Kibera slums in Nairobi County and has benefitted Bega kwa Bega, Heavenly Treasures and Bemos Crafts Developers artisans groups through the grant awarded. KEFAT Country Network Coordinator, Edwin Bett, says the project that is on its second phase is working with the artisans to improve their craft skills for quality products and enhance marketing of their products by linking them to a wide distribution network both locally and internationally.

Edwin says the craft industry has a huge potential for employment creation but majority of youth who venture into the trade lose out due to limited market access and lack of business management skills.

"With the support from KCDF, we trained the groups on product improvement and they were able to develop



new products which we sold overseas and gave them their money. We have also facilitated the groups to participate in various exhibitions and partnered with the groups to produce marketing materials like fliers, brochures and banners which go a long way in advertising their products." Says Bett.

Through the project which started in 2012, the artisans have formally registered their groups which were largely informal and have acquired financial literacy and business management skills. A revolving fund has also been created to assist the participating groups with loans to further develop their business.

Onyango says through these initiatives, the quality of their products have improved tremendously and prices have tripled with beads selling at KES 5 up from KES 1. The products fetch even better prices in the international market as they are able to reach buyers through online marketing.

"KEFAT has also helped us start a group savings and loan scheme where members get credit facilities to expand their workshops. As a result of improved business, I am able to save at least KES 500 every week and get loans to pay school fees for my children as

well as meet all business related overheads with ease.” Says Onyango.

Under the second phase, KEFAT will be working with member groups on various fronts such as continuous product development, development of a website for enhanced access to the market and management of an inventory system.

KEFAT has developed a strategic plan, which captures key elements of growth and sustainability such as resource mobilisation, organizational development and membership development services. The strategy also introduces product branding which will promote the groups handicrafts in the global market. KEFAT has also partnered with Mazuri Kenya, an online marketing platform to help promote the groups’ products at the international market.

“We want Mazuri Kenya to exclusively sell products by KEFAT members through a negotiated revenue sharing arrangement.” Says Bett.

Bett says the project has a knock-off effect in creating employment opportunities for women and youth in the slums to earn income for their families.

Bett notes that the beneficiaries have also been empowered to act as role models in their communities where they advocate for attention to issues affecting marginalized groups. A woman official of Bega kwa Bega group is already a champion of gender and development issues and was invited to address the WEIGO conference on women development held in Indonesia in November (2014).

To sustain its activities, KEFAT plans to transform into a consulting firm that offer business management skills and product development training in craft items.

Fact File

KSHS
1,960,110

- KEFAT is a network of Fair Trade producers in Kenya that aims at improving the livelihoods and well-being of marginalized Kenyan producers through innovative approaches to market access on Fair Trade terms
- The project targets youth in Korogocho and Kibera slums in Nairobi County and has benefited three artisans groups- Bega kwa Bega, Heavenly Treasures and Bemos Crafts Developers
- Artisans have formally registered their groups and have acquired financial literacy and business management skills
- KEFAT has also partnered with Mazuri Kenya, an online marketing platform to help promote the groups products at the international market



BRINGING HOPE to Kibera's single young mothers

In 2007 when Damaris Okong'o, 35, set up a hair salon in Kibera, she was very determined to make a breakthrough and get into the list of entrepreneurs who built business empires from scratch. Damaris knew her chance for a decent living relied on how hard she worked in the salon as efforts to secure a well-paying job had proven futile. Furthermore, she was pregnant and the burden of caring for her child would soon be on her shoulders as she did not have a husband to lean on for support.

"I was very passionate about running my own business and after acquiring skills in hair dressing, I knew it was time to take the plunge and reap the benefits of hard work." She reminisces.

However, as Damaris found out later, running a business was not an easy ride. For about six years, her business failed to grow as she had anticipated. Instead she would suffer losses most of the time, making it difficult for her to maintain the stock of beauty products she required for hair dressing work.

"I used to strain a lot to keep the business running and I thought of quitting on several occasions but I couldn't because the responsibility of fending for my daughter was solely on me." She says.

Tucked deep inside Kibera's Makina market stalls is Rose Achieng's boutique, which she opened nine years ago. Like Damaris, 27-year-old Rose struggled to develop her business without much success.

A single mother of three; two girls and a boy, Rose's stock of clothing materials never went beyond KES20,000 and she was always faced with the challenge of meeting her customers' needs.

"I barely managed to make enough money to feed my family and keep the business running. Sometimes I would use money paid by customers as deposit on personal needs, ending up without capital to purchase more stock." Rose says.

The challenges faced by Damaris and Rose in running a business reflect the plight of many single young mothers in Kibera. The majority of them do not have enough capital or the basic entrepreneurial skills to run their own business. Instead, they tend to resort to easier ways of eking out a living such as prostitution.

Luckily for Damaris and Rose, they have been able to overcome challenges they faced in their businesses following a project targeting single young mothers in the slum. The Kibera Single Mothers Economic and Livelihoods (K-SMEL) project is being implemented by Haki Community Based Organisation, a grantee of the Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF).

It seeks to create opportunities for improved livelihoods of single young mothers through a revolving fund, which enables them to save and get loans for entrepreneurial activities. The beneficiaries who have

been mobilised into groups are trained on business management and taken through a mentorship programme which enables them to engage in income generating activities successfully.

The programme's officer, Mr Martin Hanyagoh, says the K-SMEL initiative was established after it came to the fore that young single mothers were losing out from economic empowerment project that targeted women in the slum due to skill gaps. The young single mothers were disenfranchised because their challenges were different from those of their older counterparts who dominated the projects.

"The women empowerment initiative was based on a group savings and loans scheme but we discovered young single mothers were not applying for loans. The older women who claimed they had numerous responsibilities like school fees were discouraging and even instilling fear to the young mothers from going for loans." Says Hanyagoh.



Through the K-SMEL programme, Haki is able to address unique challenges young single mothers face. Apart from being mobilised into savings and loans groups, they are assisted to identify viable income generating activities based on market demands and one's passion.

The teenage mothers also benefit from psychosocial support as they are able to share their business experiences and get advice from professional counsellors on life challenges.

"Most of the teenage mothers are not able to handle emotional and social challenges, making their progress in business very difficult. We have counsellors who visit them in their groups and prepare them to deal with issues affecting their lives." says Hanyagoh.

The programme, which began in October 2013, currently benefits 10 groups with a total of 159 single young mothers between the ages of 18 and 35 in Kibera. The groups boast of combined savings of Ksh1.2 million (£ 8571) from which members are able to get loans. Through the KCDF grant, members are also able to get loans from a Ksh350,000 (£ 2500) revolving kitty.

Damaris and Rose who are members of the groups say their businesses have been able to grow steadily since joining the programme eight months and two years ago, respectively. They attribute their past failures to lack of business management skills, which they have since acquired from the training sessions held for the groups.

Damaris realised her major undoing was her inability to balance between income and expenses. *"I used to spend more than the meagre profit of about KES300 that*

I made daily, leaving very little capital to keep the business running." She says.

Damaris saves a minimum of KES200 every week and has so far received KES15,000 and KES35,000 in loans from her group and the revolving fund respectively to expand her business. She has since moved to a larger space where she not only does hair dressing but also sells assorted beauty products. She confides that she makes about KES1200 as

profit on a good day, an income that is enough to meet her basic needs and save for her seven-year-old daughter's education.

Rose has also grown her stock from KES20,000 to Ksh50,000 and is able to pay schools fees for her children, including her aunt's high school daughter.

Charles Ogutu, Haki's Chief Executive Officer, says with the success of the revolving fund and the groups savings and loans scheme, the organisation plans to set up a Savings and Credit Co-operative Society (SACCO). The SACCO, says Ogutu, will help mobilise more savings to support the revolving fund for sustainability of the programme.

"This programme has given young single mothers who had lost hope in life the opportunity to earn a decent living and we want to widen the scope to cater for teenage mothers aged between 15 and 40 years." He confirms.

With the support of KCDF, Haki has the capacity to manage huge projects as key staff members are trained on financial planning, report writing and resource mobilization.

Fact File

KSHS

1,200,000

- 159 single mothers in 10 groups reached.
- The groups boast of combined savings of Ksh1.2 million (£ 8571).
- Plans are underway to convert the revolving fund into a Savings and Credit Co-operative Society (SACCO).



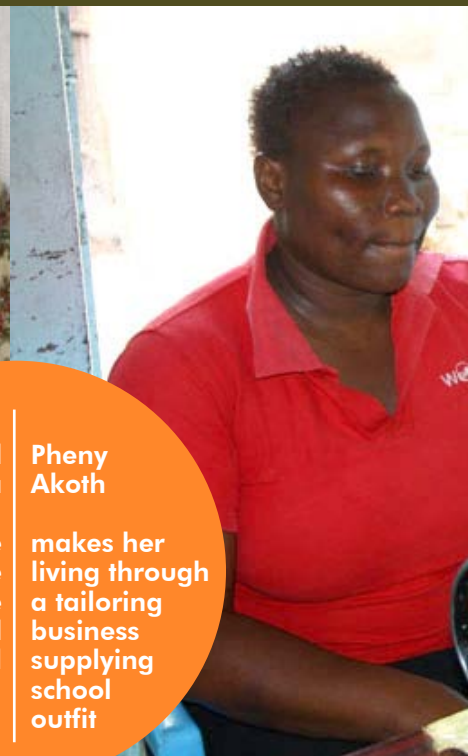
Richard at work in his barber-shop in the lakeside city of Kisumu

I AM IN CONTROL OF MY OWN LIFE

Building PWDs Self-Reliance in Kisumu

In the lakeside of Kisumu, Kisumu Self Help Disabled Group (KSHDG) works with people with disability to improve their living standards through income generating activities (IGAs). The organization supports beneficiaries through entrepreneurship training and supporting them to access capital. KSHDG has also integrated health and HIV/AIDs in their work. With high HIV prevalence rates in the region, poverty and

HIV are interlinked making it necessary to address the health aspect. KSHDG trains PWDs, both young and adults through business skills, technical skills (apprenticeship) through mentors before providing them with capital. The beneficiaries are followed up for two years, a period in which most manage to get established and manage on their own. Overall, there has been good progress among the beneficiaries.



Mildred Auma with the hand make products she makes and sell

Pheny Akoth makes her living through a tailoring business supplying school outfit

According to Joseph Omondi, the Project Coordinator at KSHDG, it is important to engage the disabled because they are a group that are faced with economic setbacks due to the challenges in fitting in within a competitive environment. It is usually difficult for PWDS to access job opportunities and capital in the open market. By empowering them to engage in business, they get opportunities to be productive. There are jobs but it's difficult to fit in many contexts.

KSHDG runs a revolving fund that allows members to access interest free loans, which on repayment, is passed on to other members. So far 40 beneficiaries have received the funds that range is between KES1,500 to KES20,000.

One such beneficiary is Richard Omunyu Maina, 35, a barber. He remembers his walk to work every morning three years ago. As a person earning very little, he could not afford bus fare.

Due to my disability, I was forced to walk for a long distance. I would be late and have disagreements

with my boss. Yet it was not easy to find another option. I would knock other places looking for work and I got the same answer—there is no work—and I know the main reason is because I am disabled.”

In 2012, Richard heard about KSHDG. With support from KCDF, KSHDG has been working with people living with disabilities providing training on business development and providing business funding. This allowed different PWD beneficiaries to engage in various business activities.

“I received a loan totalling KES 10,000 and I was able to open my own barbershop and buy equipment. In eight months, I had repaid the loan. Today, my business is good because it is allowing me to get my daily bread and support my family. I have a wife and two children. I am also at peace because being self-employed means I am in control of my own life”, Says Richard

Richard adds that before he received a grant, it was difficult to make ends meet and support the fami-



my business since it is not a given that your business will do well”, he adds.

Having established his business, Richard is now planning to add vocational training to his skills. “I was not able to go to secondary school and enlighten myself.”

Richard appreciates the support he has received. “I am glad that KCDF was able to facilitate our grant through KSHDG. Without that, I would still be struggling.”

Midred Auma, 45 and a mother of two is a beneficiary and also the chairlady of KSHDG

“Before I joined the KSHDG I did not have any knowledge on entrepreneurship or HIV and AIDs. Today, I am enlightened and I am able to train others. KSHDG has also raised my living standards. I am able to do my own work. Beyond entrepreneurship and basic computer skills, I was trained on how to make handicrafts.”

For Pheny, “This project is very important to me. They took me from zero where I didn’t have any basis for income. Now I am a tailor and I have my own business. I am also able pay school fees for my daughter and raise rent. I am now self-reliant.”

ly. Being employed as a barber was tough because payment was by commission.

“I could barely afford to pay school fees and decent shelter.”

Beyond the capital to start business, Richard points out to trainings on entrepreneurship that beneficiaries received before receiving the funds as an important component. *“We went for training on entrepreneurship which was very helpful. This is what opened my eyes and I realized with some capital, I could have my own business. In addition, I am more responsible in*

Fact File

KSHS

1,750,555

- KSHDG has been working with people living with disabilities providing training on business development.
- KSHDG runs a revolving fund that allows members to access interest free loans, which on repayment, is passed on to other members

These are the experiences of many beneficiaries who are living with disabilities in Kisumu. Evidently, the efforts by KSHDG with support from KCDF’s Comic Relief are important in building PWDs self-reliance and allowing them to compete in the market.



OASIS OF HOPE

for Kibera's Vulnerable Children

When Mary Adinda moved to Kibera slum in 2005, all she wanted was a place to call home and run a small business to facilitate a decent living for her family of five. However, after a fire accident razed down several shacks in her neighbourhood in November 2005, she resolve to provide shelter and ensure that other people don't suffer as she did after being left homeless with nothing on her name other than her five children.

"I was left with nothing. All my earthly belongings were burnt to ashes. I was however fortunate enough to escape with my life and those of my children. My next door neighbour was not lucky enough, two of her children were burnt beyond recognition as their mother was out fending for them" says an emotional Mary.

Today, Mary- a 42-year-old woman living with disability is the Director and "foster mother" of 350 children learning at the Bethel Outreach Children's Centre in Gatekwa

Village in Kibera – one of the largest slums in Africa. Mary founded Bethel Centre, a centre whose name is borrowed from the Bible connoting house of God, which provides day care services to many mothers who are unable to tend to their children when they go out to look for jobs.

Most women in the slum depend on meagre earnings from doing menial jobs such as working as house helps, petty traders or waiters in restaurants. Whatever they get is not enough to provide for their basic needs let alone pay for house assistants to take care of their children while they are away. It is little wonder that the number of children at the centre grew from two at the beginning to 32 in only two months as many of the women sought day care for their young ones at a nominal fee of between KES 30) and KES 70 a day.

Currently, the centre caters for orphans and vulnerable children from the day care level to class seven. This progress, however, has not been easy as older pupils who have been at the centre from its inception paint vivid pictures of how life has been difficult due to lack of basic sanitation facilities like toilets.

While pupils in lower primary and early childhood education (ECD) classes were provided with small polythene bags known as peepoo toilets, those in upper classes like 13-year-old Dennis Odhiambo were forced to walk for about a kilometre to community run biogas latrines. The centre would pay KES 200 every month for the pupils and children to use the toilets.

“Teachers had to accompany us to keep away drunks from harassing us along the way as well as convince the people running the toilets to give us preferential treatments as there were long queues to the latrines that are used by other residents.” Says Dennis with a chuckle.

It was also not easy for pupils to concentrate during lessons as more than two classes of different levels would be lumped together and taught in one large room which always turned chaotic as teachers and learners shouted for attention.

Dennis and other older pupils, however, have a reason to look back at their early years in the school and smile. Although the situation is still far from ideal, the centre now has a two-door pit latrine being shared by teachers and pupils while several classrooms have been constructed and equipped with more chairs to ease congestion.

With KES 1.5 Million grant from the Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF) the school environment is changing for the better. The grant was used to construct a two-door pit latrine and additional classrooms and installation of two 10,000-litre water tanks. The grant also bought energy saving cooking stoves as well as purchase of e-learning materials for the children.

“We used to spend KES 1300 on firewood every week to prepare meals using the ordinary stoves. After the purchase of the new energy saving stove, which uses saw dust and firewood, the centre spends half of that initial amount within the same period.” Says George Olouch - the school’s Head teacher.

The school also used part of the grant to put up a gate which has helped secure the compound and enhance the pupil’s safety by controlling movement in and out of the school.

“Our records show that between the first and the third term, there has been a positive deviation of 40.78 points in the school’s mean score. I am very confident we will do much better in the coming years as the effect of the improved facilities have just started to show.” George confirms.

To ensure the maintenance and expansion facilities under the education development project goes on, the Centre has ventured into business to supplement the funds received from parents and other well-wishers. The Centre is currently running a poultry project. Broilers from the project located out of the school compound are being sold to locals and profits used to boost the community’s contribution to the school.

Fact File

KSHS

1,556,874

- 350 children have benefited.
- KES 50- The subsidized cost of day care services per day. Sustainable income generation for Bethel Outreach Children’s Centre.
- Improved facilities for the day-care children.
- Improved cooking area with energy saving unit to cut the cooking expenses.



POWERING THE LIVES of People Living with Disabilities

For the past two years, Blind and Low Vision Network (BLINK) has been advocating and advancing the welfare of visually impaired persons while preventing future occurrence of total blindness of visually impaired people in Machakos County. The group was supported to initiate an advocacy and economic empowerment project for people with disabilities. The project also sought to facilitate information and service provision in health, mobility and legal rights issues for persons with disabilities.

Originally BLINK started as a group catering for the visually challenged. Today, BLINK incorporates all people with disability due to the high need for such services. Blink partners with 13 organized groups that include people with disabilities ranging from physically disability, the visu-

ally impaired, caregivers for mentally handicapped children as well people with hearing impairments.

Ten years ago, James Makau was an abled young man with big dreams ahead of him. A motor vehicle accident brought a dark cloud in his life leaving him severely paralysed after a spinal injury.

"After the accident, I was instantly converted into a beggar because I could not move, let alone work. I would beg for everything from food to clothes." James narrates.

Accepting a state of helplessness is a big challenge for people who loose bodily functions abruptly. James

had to go through the motions for him to even begin to accept his predisposition in as far as his physical ability was concerned for him to start thinking of how he could eke out a living for himself and his family. It was only after joining BLINK that he started becoming optimistic about life.

“When you are in a group, there is a lot of sharing. I eventually learned that being disabled does not limit one’s ability and potential. There is still a sense of stigma from the community which still exists sadly. In the African culture, being disabled has been associated with poverty which further leads to discrimination. But since we came together, we have been able to educate each other, and give each other the confidence to move on with life.” Quips James.

Joseph Muinde, a Person Living with Disability feels that belonging to the group has resulted in a lot of sharing and learning.

“What I know is that when you are alone, you are afraid and have little confidence. When you come together as a group, you get to know what is happening around you. When you are empowered on how to get around and working with other people, you get a different heart. You become excited and optimistic about life. One breaks the barriers of self-imposed restrictions. That’s what BLINK has done for me,” stresses Muinde.

Other than creating confidence for People Living with Disabilities, BLINK has also economically empowered its members through provision of skills as well as seed money to engage in income generating ventures. The trainings have ranged from animal husbandry, business development and value addition activities such as confectionary making, farming among others. This has helped the members to transition into a productive life.

Mary Mbithe, 42, a mother of four and is physically disabled has been a member of BLINK for the last two years. Mary runs a tailoring business in Machakos town.

“I have benefitted from a loan that allowed me to expand and diversify my business income. With the money, I was able to stock my shop with fabric as well as started selling plastic utensils. Before the seed money, I would make about KES 300 a day from my tailoring work but I am now able to make atleast KES 600 a day. Being in the group has improved my position, I am knowledgeable on business matters and my colleagues have continued to challenge me.” She says.

For many members of the groups affiliated to BLINK, the story highlighted is common. It’s a story of finding strength, hope and growing personal and collective efforts in bettering their lives. It’s the confidence they get that they can get in the world of business ultimately be able to support themselves and their families.

Kennedy Siocha, the founder of BLINK adds that it’s not only about growing the confidence of PLWD, but also empowering them to access their constitutional rights which has been trampled upon for many years by the society.

“The rights of people with disabilities are clearly enshrined in the constitution but they are disregarded with impunity across many areas of their lives. Sadly, the biggest perpetrators of this impunity are family members and close friends. As BLINK, we have done a lot of advocacy campaigns to reverse this trend in our catchment areas.” Says Kennedy.

Out of the advocacy campaigns carried out by the group, members have become stronger in fighting for their rights. James Ndunda, who is visually impaired has benefitted immensely from the advocacy training.

“My land had been taken away by my elder uncle after my parents passed away and left the document under his care as a custodian. I had no avenue of pursuing this injustice and it’s only after I got to know and understand my rights and took the necessary actions to compel my uncle to return back the land through the legal mechanism available to me. I now have my land back and a valid title deed.” Concludes James.

James Makau is also following up on his compensation from the accident that left him paralysed.

“After the accident, my lawyer swindled me off KES 2 Million from the accident payment claim. I was afraid to pursue since I did not have money to pay for a lawyer. But with the group’s encouragement as well as the para-legal advice given to me for free, I have started pursuing the case and hope to get the money owed to me.” Adds James.

BLINK’s activities have extended to take advantage of government efforts. In Machakos County, BLINK members are sitting in government committees where they have a member in The Uwezo Fund¹ Committee as well as The Constituency Development Fund (CDF).

Part of the challenge that BLINK is facing is increased demand beyond their area of operations. The group is receiving different referrals as many PWDs are sent to the group. Where they can, they are conducting training and other capacity building activities to

ensure that the PWDs groups are able to implement their own activities in different parts of Machakos County and beyond. This increased demand shows the organization’s work is being felt and also the continued need to work with PWDs. The group is however taking this in stride.

Fact File

KSHS

1,746,843

- There is a reduction of stigma for People Living with Disabilities
- Members influence decision making at the county level as they sit in most of the influential committees as required by the law.
- Close to 400 people have benefitted from the project both directly and indirectly



¹ **Uwezo Fund:** A loan facility set up by the government for the express purpose of providing loans to women and youth.



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PROJECT BOOSTS LIVELIHOODS for Young Urban Farmers

Traders shouting for attention of passers-by, loud music blaring from tin-shack bars, drunken men staggering on the roads and rivulets of raw sewer flowing in every direction are easily evident as we make our way through the densely populated Nairobi's Mkuria Kayaba slum.

The noise and chaos outside, however is a sharp contrast to the silence inside one of the rooms constructed atop a concrete block housing a community toilet and water kiosk. Here, members of the Jitegemee Kenya Pamoja Youth Group are undergoing a training session on value addition for farm produce offered by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Victor Obote, 22, the organizing secretary of the group says they have been practicing urban farming in the slum and are learning about rabbit rearing and making fruits

jam. Victor's past life reflects that of many youths in the group – it is a story of street life characterized by drug and substance abuse, crime and hopelessness.

"I dropped out of school after sitting for my Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCSE) examinations due to lack of school fees for secondary education. Life became worse when my parents relocated back to our rural home leaving me with my cousin who didn't have the means to provide for our needs and was forced to join a group of boys in the streets." Says Victor.

Like his friends, he would walk through the slum and nearby industries collecting waste materials like empty cans, plastic bottles and scrap metals for sale

to dealers at KES 2 for a kilogram. On a good day, they would make up to KES 50, which they spent on food, industrial glue which they used to sniff, marijuana and cigarettes

Today, Victor is lucky to have been rescued from the streets after he joined the Jitegemee Kenya Pamoja Youth Group. The group practices urban agriculture that include poultry and rabbit projects as well as engaging in performing arts which they use to raise awareness on various issues affecting their community as well as to improve livelihoods of unemployed youth in the Mukuru Kayaba informal settlement.

Through the group, Victor got a sponsorship for his secondary education and sat for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) in 2013. He is now fully involved in the group as an official and an employee under the urban farming project.

"I am in charge of the feeding, slaughter and sale of the rabbits which earns me an average of KES 6,000 per month which I spend on house rent and other basic needs like food and clothes." He explains.

The group is a beneficiary of a project dubbed Mtaani Initiative which seeks to create sustainable income generating activities for unemployed youth in Viwandani (an informal settlement scheme around Nairobi's industrial area). The initiative, currently in its second phase, is managed by U-Tena Group - a KCDF partner.

U-Tena works with 20 youth groups, which they engage by linking them to entrepreneurship opportunities. The groups are also assisted to register and meet other legal obligations for doing business as well as being trained on financial literacy, entrepreneurship and leadership skills.

Project's officer, Mr Peter Mokaya, says through a grant from KCDF, U-Tena has connected a number of groups, including Jitegemee Group, to markets by creating linkages between the participating groups and other institutions who provide training on value addition. Through the linkages, they are now able to sell rabbit meat to high-end hotels in Nairobi like

Ole Sereni with plans on course to open their own butchery to serve a growing demand for rabbit meat to local residents within the slum.

The chairman of Jitegemee Kenya Pamoja Youth Group, Mr Peter Machoka, says through Mtaani Initiative, the group's entrepreneurial activities have steadily grown as a result of mentorship that they get from successful entrepreneurs.

Machoka says in the past, the group operated without a bank account but they are now able to accumulate savings and apply for loans from government sponsored funds such as Uwezo Fund to expand their income generating activities.

The group has also benefited from the Njaa Marufuku Kenya programme, which was aimed at improving the livelihoods of young people through capacity building and provision of cash-grants to enable them to fully participate in income generation activities centered on agricultural production.

"We have benefited from very many initiatives by the government as we are now able to demonstrate capacity to run projects as opposed to the past where we would get money and share it among ourselves instead of putting it on the intended uses," Says Machoka.

With membership categorized into gold, bronze, diamond and silver - Jitegemee Kenya Pamoja Youth Group is able to cater for several interest groups in the slum, with each exploiting talents in various projects.

One such group comprises single young mothers who are engaged in hair dressing, cyber café and moulding energy saving briquettes for sale. Mukuru Kayaba has one of the highest numbers of single mothers, majority of who do not have enough capital or basic entrepreneurial skills to run their own business or requisite certification to get decent jobs.

"Poverty has seen a rise in teenage pregnancies in our slum and many of the single young mothers tend to indulge in drug/alcohol abuse, crime or prostitu-

tion in order to earn a living. We thought it wise to come up with activities that would help them earn a decent living," explains Machoka.

The group plans to start a Savings and Credit Co-operative society (SACCO) and a micro-finance institution to provide members with credit facilities to run individual income generating activities. The group is currently exploring on a mobile phone application platform to give loans to the members.

As for U-Tena, Mokaya says the partnership with KCDF has enhanced its capacity to manage projects and

mobilise resources after their staff were trained in financial management, fund raising, proposal and report writing. He says the grant they received from KCDF increased the organisations visibility in the community as they have been able to work with a number of youth groups to undertake various activities that have touched lives of many people in the slums.

"The youth in the slums see U-Tena as an important source of information not only on market opportunities but also various issues that touch on their lives," says Mokaya.

Fact File

KSHS

998,976

- 20 youth groups have benefited from the entrepreneurship programme.
- Sustainable income generating opportunities created for 20 youth groups in Viwandani.





STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY ORGANISA- TIONS for Prosperity Mukuru Fuata Youth Association

As a group of KCDF officers park their vehicle along the busy Enterprise Road in Nairobi Industrial District to access the 'Fuata Nyayo' Slum, the usual 'security precaution' checks in subconsciously. Its common knowledge to all Nairobians that Fuata Nyayo slums have one of the highest crime prevalence rate in the city and caution while traversing the informal settlement has become second nature. Benedict Kariuki,

an officer with YIKE notices the apprehension exhibited and is quick to assure the team that they are safe. "You can carry your bags, this is currently one of the safest if not the safest informal settlement you will find in Nairobi." Quips Benedict.

Mukuru Fuata Nyayo is one of the three Mukuru Slums in Nairobi, all bordering Nairobi industrial District. Located

off Enterprise Road, it is hard to tell from the busy road that a sizeable segment of the city population calls the informal settlement home. Up until around 2008, the Fuata Nyayo Slum was an extremely dangerous place to be in just like many informal settlements across the country. Cases of crime were commonplace and it was reported that every 11 minutes, there was a crime incident taking place ranging from petty crime such as mugging to murder; this was a way of life for many young people in the slum. Any young man or woman growing up in the slum would easily be sucked into criminal activities due to poor role models as well as access to legitimate opportunities for the young people to eke out a living.

Jackson Osore, 26 was born and bred in Fuata Nyayo slum. He is one of the founders of a 24-member Mukuru Fuata Youth Association (MFYA) who have worked and continue to work hard to improve young people's standards of living in the slum.

MFYA is a beneficiary of a leadership and mentorship programme ran by Youth Initiatives Kenya (YIKE), a community based Non-Governmental Organisation that works with youth in informal settlements across Nairobi. The group was awarded a grant by Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF) support to work with 10 youth groups/organizations in strengthening their structures and systems in implementing entrepreneurial activities to increase their income.

"The mentorship programme by YIKE helped us to expand our thinking in coming up and managing viable income generating activities. Other than coming up with IGAs, we were also taken through group dynamics; money usually breeds contempt in young people especially the disadvantaged youths and we did not want to be like the many groups who die as soon as there is a windfall". Says Jackson.

"YIKE also facilitated linkages with a number of credit facilities including the Government to access cheap seed capital for our IGAs". Adds Jackson.

Through the mentorship, members of MYFA are now engaged in multiple income generating activities and service provision. MYFA currently operates a sanitation block that consists of toilets and bathrooms where users are charged

a nominal fee to access their services. The group has also constructed four single-roomed rental houses, a hall which they hire out and a rabbit-rearing project.

The group has built systems that have improved the way they manage their activities thus contributing to positive results.

"We have learned about transparency and accountability in managing our organization. We have learned how to document our processes and activities. In all our meetings, we write minutes, something that we never used to do. Our processes are formal. We have proper record keeping and through this, we are able to demonstrate to the members how we spend our resources and remain transparent." Jackson affirms.

"Beyond the innovative and productive activities that the group is involved in, the fact that they have managed to stay afloat and continue to grow year after year is an achievement. Many past efforts to engage the youth in the slums have failed due to mistrust and lack of focus. MFYA's investments are increasing mainly because of the transparency and accountability they exhibit in their dealings both with themselves as well as with creditors. Through the mentorship activities they continue to receive from YIKE, other youth groups can only marvel at their achievements in turning their lives around both collectively and as individuals."

MYFA has also started a Poultry Project to supplement their already existing income from their business interests. The group started as an off-shoot of the Government sponsored Njaa Marufuku (Ending Hunger) initiative. They applied for a small grant and were successful. The poultry project, though still in its formative stages, gives them a net income of KES 9000 a week. Its anticipated that once all the chicken are mature, they will be able to make at least KES 20,000 per week from sale of eggs.

With the help of YIKE linkages to access other loans, the group is planning to convert the rental rooms into additional chicken rearing spaces. In their estimation, such a project will not only be more prof-

itable but each of the four rental rooms can create direct employment for four members. There is demand for eggs ranging from a neighbouring bakery to the community and shops.

The group has immediate plans to develop a welfare system for the members. They are working on modalities to be contributing to hospital insurance and a pension plan for the members.

Fact File

KSHS

1,301,095

- 10 Youth Groups (approximately 200 youths) in slum areas have benefited from the project
- The mentorship and skills training initiative focused on leadership, accountability and institutional strengthening



YOUTH EXPLOIT ART TALENT to Earn Decent Living

We have inspired many unemployed young men and women in the slums to engage in income generating activities as well as participate in arts. This has helped boost their income levels and reduce crime and other social ills in the neighborhood.

Says Odinga.

At 30 years old, Daniel Odinga, has been able to inspire other youths in Nairobi's sprawling slums of Kariobangi and Korogocho to realize and exploit their talents for improved livelihoods.

Through Kamash self-help group, where he is the secretary, Odinga has been in the fore-front in organizing events like Kariobangi Hood Festivals, which brings together young people from the slums to showcase their talents in the various categories of arts. The group also organizes education debates for children aged 18 years and below to interact, learn and share ideas through drama and arts.

Odinga is one of the 30 youth grassroots development coordinators under Initiative X Slum Edition, a project initiated by the Youth Arts Development and Entrepreneurship Network (YADEN). Initiative X Slum Edition aims at empowering the youth with talent in arts to address social issues affecting their communities.

The project, funded by the Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF), involves 15 youth groups which acts as platforms of opportunity for more than 300 youth.

According to YADEN finance officer, Edna Eshikhuyi, the project applies a community engagement model through which the youth groups are used to reach out to fellow youth and their communities through creative arts.

“Initiative X, Slum Edition recognizes that the youth are at cross-roads, so we bring them together to share their challenges and inspire each other through various art forms like drama, discussions and skits.” Explains Eshikhuyi.

The project, whose first phase was carried out in Kibera, Korogocho and Mathare slums between August 2012 and July 2013 involved the selection of 15 youth groups based on the activities they engage in, which were trained and empowered to influence positive change in their respective communities.

Eshikhuyi says the youth, churches and community elders were used in selecting the groups from which the 30 youth grassroots development coordinators were identified after training.

More than 300 young people are involved in various income generating activities through participating groups. YADEN also used part of the grant from KCDF to set up a revolving fund through which the groups can get loans to boost their entrepreneurial activities.

Eshikhuyi says they have been able to sustain and scale up the project because once they have empow-

ered the various youth groups to engage in art as a form of entrepreneurship, the beneficiaries use their facilities at a fee to undertake their projects.

At the Liberty Building in Pangani Estate, where YADEN is housed, the organisation has a recording studio and an auditorium where artists produce their music. The organisation also has public address facilities and vans that are hired out to performing artists to help them reach out to the communities.

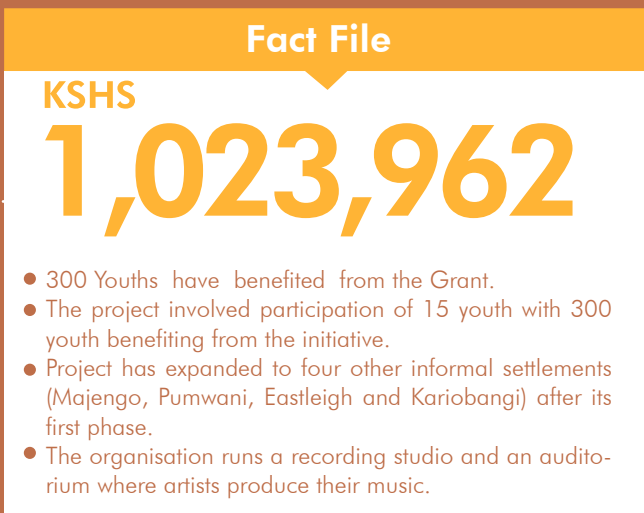
Following successful implementation of the slum edition, YADEN is currently implementing Initiative X; Eastleigh Edition. The initiative covers additional slums like Majengo, Pumwani, Eastleigh and Kariobangi and aims at countering violence and extremism in the target areas which have seen rising cases of youth radicalization.

“We have built on the Initiative X; Slum Edition to be

able to undertake a broad range of activities aiming to counter the drivers of violence and extremism through livelihood training, community debates on sensitive topics.” Says Eshikhuyi.

YADEN, which was registered in 2003 as a youth drama group before being transformed into a non-profit organisation in 2007 has also benefited immensely from its partnership with KCDF.

Eshikhuyi says through KCDF’s training and mentorship, they have enhanced their capacity to manage projects through training on finance and project management.





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MEN STAND UP TO
BE COUNTED
SUPPORT THE BOY CHILD

MENTENDA 
MEN TAKE ACTION



Wangari Maathai Scholarship Award - Second Recipient

Sylvia Jemtai Rotich is the second recipient of the Wangari Maathai scholarship fund award. The 23 year old is a fourth year student at Nairobi University is pursuing a BSc. in Environmental Conservation and Natural Resource Management. Sylvia has a passion for environment and through her engagement with environmental conservation back at her home, she has planted over 2000 trees. Sylvia plans to continue planting trees at Kessup Forest in Elgeyo Marakwet which has experienced a high rate of deforestation as well as planting at her former primary school, Kiptingo Primary School

MENTENDA-Boy Child Initiative

KCDF launched its Boy Child initiative dubbed MENTENDA (MEN TAKE ACTION) on November 25th 2014.

MENTENDA is an initiative that is inspiring the society to move from inertness to action on the pressing challenges facing the boy child in Kenya. Through this mentorship program, KCDF targets to reach 20,000 in-school, secondary school level boys directly in 20 secondary schools across Kenya within two years.



Tax Incentives Philanthropy Report

KCDF in collaboration with Strathmore Tax Research Centre (STRC) launched a Philanthropy Report that looked into deepening the understanding of creating an enabling environment for philanthropy through tax incentives. In an effort to understand the current tax provisions with respect to philanthropy, several Kenyan PBO's came together as a Philanthropy Working Group to gain understanding of the policy and legal landscape and how that relates to the growth and sustainability of philanthropy for development.



1997

18+
YEARS

2015

For more information, contact:

The Chief Executive Officer, KCDF

P.O.Box 10501-00100 Nairobi

Tel: +254 20 3540239/ 020 8067440, 020 8067441, 020 8067442

Office Cell: +254 722 168480/ 736 449 217

Fax: +254 20 8067440

www.kcdf.or.ke