

**Documentation of Models for
Learning and Sharing to Advance
CSOs Financial Sustainability**

Local Resource Mobilization

February 20**23**





CONTENTS

Introduction	04
Case Study Briefs	04
Case Study 1: The Untapped Gold Mine: The Art of Local Resource Mobilization ~ Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF)	06
Executive Summary	07
1. Introduction	07
2. The Art of Local Resource Mobilization	09
2.1 Introducing KCDF's Local Resource Mobilization	09
2.2 How it Works	09
2.3 Structures	10
2.4 Achievements	11
2.5 Challenges	11
3. Lessons Learned	12
4. Conclusion	13
4.1 Conclusion	13
4.2 Recommendations: Steps to developing an effective resource mobilization capacity	13
Case Study 2: Uplifting Communities through Social Enterprises ~ Beacon of Hope	15
Executive Summary	16
1. Introduction	16
2. Beacon of Hope Social Enterprises	17
2.1 The Beacon of Hope Approach to Social Enterprise	17
2.2 How it Works	17
2.3 Successes/Achievements	18
2.4 Challenges	19
2.5 Future plans	19
3. Lessons Learned	19
4. Conclusion	20
4.1 Conclusion	20
4.2 Replication Recommendations	20
Case Study 3: The Shea Butter Story ~ Okere City	23
Executive Summary	24
1. Introduction	25
2. Social Enterprise	26
2.1 Okere City Social Enterprise Approach	26
2.2 How it Works	27
2.3 Successes/Achievements	28
2.4 Challenges	28
2.5 Future plans	29
3. Lessons Learned	29
4. Conclusion	29
4.1 Conclusion	29
4.2 Replication Steps	30

1 Introduction

The Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF) was founded in 1997 as an indigenous southern-based, lead, and community-rooted organization. Since its establishment in Kenya, the foundation has built a strong basis for community-driven development approaches and is unique in Kenya as a pioneer of community philanthropy and sustainable development. Its **vision** is *Flourishing and Resilient Communities* while its **Mission** is *to Promote Social Justice and the Sustainable Development of Communities*.

KCDF has partnered with other East African Civil Society Organizations to create a financial resilience learning and sharing hub that will be delivered through face-to-face and online interactions. The overall objective of this project is to have a financially viable civil society, able to generate, build and manage its resources, to advance its goals. CSOs that enroll in the hub will benefit from coaching and mentorship opportunities as part of experiential learning.

groups, hence the need to push for the development of the necessary policies to support the promotion of a just and fair society, as well as good governance. KCDF is part of the growing #shiftthepower movement that collaboratives seek to support a global shift of power to communities.

Beacon of Hope (BoH) is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) that was registered in 2002. Beacon capitalizes on a holistic approach that supports quality education, spiritual nurture, nutrition, health, and protection as components of community transformation. Beacon's **Vision** is: *'To be a model of excellence in wholesome community transformation'*. Its **mission** is *'To bring hope and catalyze sustainable transformation by uplifting the spiritual, physical, economic, and social well-being of vulnerable individuals, families, and communities'*. Beacon of Hope deploys the social enterprise approach in its education and health-oriented activities. This includes the Beacon of Hope Academy; Beacon Technical Training Institute (BTTI); Healing Balm; and Sifa Christian Guest House. Community members pay affordable and competitive fees for these services. Despite their low cost, efforts are made to offer quality services to its clientele, many of whom are from low-income households.

2.1.2 Uganda

Okere Community Development Project (Okere City) is an ambitious community-based social enterprise with one burning mission --- to transform Okere, a sleepy village in Otuke District, Northern Uganda into a thriving and sustainable city. Commonly known as 'Okere City', the idea is premised on the belief that using an integrated rural development approach based on social-market economic principles to design and implement community development projects can create catalytic rural transformation and sustainable agrarian reforms. Its **motto** "Yamo Akwo Koddo" which translates to "A Living Wind Blows", captures this dream with an African theme. It has a bold **vision** is *'creating economically thriving and self-reliant rural households in Okere Parish'*.

2 Case Study Briefs

2.1 Countries and Organizations Covered

2.1.1 Kenya

The Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF) was founded in 1997 as an indigenous southern-based, lead, and community-rooted organization. Since its establishment in Kenya, the foundation has built a strong basis for community-driven development approaches and is unique in Kenya as a pioneer of community philanthropy and sustainable development. KCDF works through strategic and carefully selected partnerships in Kenya, both at the national and community level, and strongly believes in the ability of communities to identify and prioritize their needs and with a little external support, pursue their solutions to these needs. KCDF also recognizes that pro-poor policies are critical to be able to address some of the systemic challenges faced by vulnerable

2.2 Case Study Overviews

2.2.1 Local Resource Mobilization

Case Study 1: The Untapped Goldmine: The Art of Local Resource Mobilization: Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF)

KCDF has been successful in mobilizing resources from the local market. Though this has not been easy, its success proves that people in Kenya are philanthropic. It also proves that done the right way, organizations can survive on resources mobilized locally. KCDF, on average, raises Ksh 50 million annually. However, this is often more because some grants extend for more than a year. This income has enabled it to diversify its funding which reduces its exposure to funding shocks. It also supports the organization's long-term sustainability. In mobilizing resources locally, it has been able to run programs that benefit communities. Though KCDF is one of the leading champions of local resource mobilization, it is still learning and growing. It proves that local resource mobilization works and there is much that other CSOs can learn from it.

Case Study 2: Uplifting Communities through Social Enterprises: Beacon of Hope (BoH).

Beacon of Hope has successfully capitalized on a social enterprise approach to offer services to communities. Its core services focus on education, health, and youth empowerment. By leveraging a cross-subsidy approach, it mobilizes additional funds from those who can afford to pay to support those who are poor. In addition, it has been able to capitalize on sponsors to support its education program. Its technical education is leveraged against both parents who can pay as well as donor programs. It is an example that shows that social enterprise, well used, cannot only provide affordable and quality services to communities but can also be used to support those who cannot afford to pay. Using the social enterprise approach, BoH has achieved a degree of sustainability. While it would not be able to operate on the same level without some donor funding, it would not collapse. CSOs have much to learn from BoH's social enterprise approach as a sustainability strategy.

Case Study 3: The Shea Butter Story: Okere City

It is not in doubt that communities have resources that can spur their development. The value of these resources is sometimes not appreciated by the community. This is the case with the Shea butter tree whose true worth and value escaped the people of Okere Parish in Otuke District of Uganda until Okere City came along. A tree that had been cut down and turned into what the community thought was good charcoal, turned out to be a valuable pharmaceutical, cosmetic and confectionary tree whose oil was sought after for myriads of uses. While the community was aware of its food benefits, it did not appreciate that it could also be used in chocolate making, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals. Okere City has transformed the communities thinking and appreciation towards the product and is leveraging it to transform Okere Parish. Rather than a typical project, Okere City sought a social enterprise approach that put the community at the center of its development. It chose the cooperative model because it not only gave the community a bigger voice but also enabled them to earn dividends from their shares. The initiative has demonstrated that it can both be sustainable as well as the basis for significant community development in Okere City. It does provide food for thought on how local resources can be used to spur development in communities.



**Local Resource
Mobilization
Case Study 1**

The Untapped Gold Mine: The Art of Local Resource Mobilization

Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF)

Executive Summary

The Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF) was founded in 1997 as an indigenous southern-based, lead, and community-rooted organization. Since its establishment in, Kenya, the foundation has built a strong basis for community-driven development approaches and is unique in Kenya as a pioneer of community philanthropy and sustainable development. Its vision is Flourishing and Resilient Communities while its Mission is to 'Promote Social Justice and the Sustainable Development of Communities'. KCDF works in Kenya with both national and community-based organizations to shift the power to communities, enable prosperity, strengthen a culture of working together, and enable communities to hold decision-makers accountable.

KCDF's local resource mobilization entails seeking partnerships by engaging individuals, corporations, charitable foundations and governmental agencies for socially impactful activities. It focuses on:

- Donor acquisition and maintaining donor relationships.
- Informing, motivating, and facilitating giving.
- Understanding, defining, and communicating all dimensions of need.
- Sourcing for funding both locally and internationally.

The funds are sourced from institutions, individuals including those of high networth, endowments, private sector, philanthropic and corporate foundations. Other sources include events, campaigns, online, friends of KCDF, earned income, training and consultancy. The resources are received in various forms and include funds, time and expertise, goods or in-kind donations, influence, and information. KCDF raises an average of Ksh 50 million a year. This however does not consider that some donations are worth more and cover several years. If this is done, then the amount raised (to be expended over more than a year) can reach Ksh 100 million during some years.

Mobilizing funds locally is not a walk in the park. It requires dedication, commitment, and resilience. Several challenges have impacted negatively on local resource mobilization including inflation and the high cost of living. The post-Covid-19 pandemic effects continue to dampen the local environment for giving and will impact local resource mobilization for years to come. The impact of the Ukraine war on the cost of living is not helping matters. Corruption is a growing challenge given that there are senior staffs who will

want a kickback to contribute to the organization. There is also the issue of elections, every 5 years, which causes uncertainty and a wait-and-see attitude thus affecting resource mobilization. When all is said and done, KCDF has over the years learned to effectively navigate various bottlenecks and emerge stronger.

KCDF has learned many lessons over the years. One of the most important ones is the need to build relationships. People give money to people and therefore relationships are key to successful resource mobilization. Once the funds are received, the organization needs to be accountable and account for all that it receives. Without accountability, there can be no trust. Without trust, there can be no sustainable relationships. One other important learning point is that local resource mobilization is a team effort. It is therefore important to involve both management and staff in the fundraising process. Mapping out donors is important. It enables the organization to save time and resources by focusing on prospects with the highest potential for success rather than engaging in a wild goose chase!

KCDF has been very successful in mobilizing resources from the local environment. Though this has not been easy, it proves that Kenyans are philanthropic. It also shows that if done the right way; organizations can mobilize significant resources locally.

1 Introduction

The Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF) was founded in 1997 as an indigenous southern-based, lead, and community-rooted organization. Since its establishment in, Kenya, the foundation has built a strong basis for community-driven development approaches and is unique in Kenya as a pioneer of community philanthropy and sustainable development. Its vision is Flourishing and Resilient Communities while its Mission is to Promote Social Justice and the Sustainable Development of Communities.

As a public foundation, KCDF supports poor, marginalized, and disadvantaged communities to initiate and drive their development agenda by harnessing and growing their resources and securing their basic rights and services from duty bearers.

The foundation works with organized communities that are focused on sustainably uplifting themselves through asset building. KCDF capitalizes on right-based approaches in supporting social justice and sustainable development. The foundation recognizes that pro-poor policies are critical to be able to address some of the systemic challenges faced by vulnerable groups, hence the need to push for the development of the necessary policies to support the promotion of a just and fair society, as well as good governance.

KCDF works throughout the country with both national and community-based organizations to shift the power to communities, enable prosperity, strengthen the culture of working together, and enable communities to hold decision-makers accountable. Its approach to sustainable development is anchored on ensuring communities can identify and act on their most pressing needs by paying attention to the immediate and long-term challenges and crafting innovative and home-grown solutions focused in the areas of livelihoods, education, environmental conservation, and policy influencing.

KCDF's key thematic areas cover education; livelihood; environment and natural resource management; effective governance; and enhancing institutional effectiveness. Headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, KCDF works across the 47 counties in Kenya and significantly in 32 of them through partnerships with like-minded grassroots organizations/ Civil Society Actors. Currently, KCDF has over 60 active partnerships (grantees) implementing projects in Livelihoods, Environmental conservation, education, and governance and social accountability. The foundation's core values are equity, respect, integrity, collaboration, and innovation.

To effectively achieve its mission, KCDF applies the following approaches to its work;

- Community Engagement and Organizing: The KCDF model of delivering its mandate is

through working with organized community groups, associations, etc., as vehicles to scale up desired changes in targeted communities.

- Local Philanthropy: KCDF works to encourage the growth and promotion of organized giving for sustainable development in Kenya. The goal is to move communities and the wider Kenyan public from a mindset of depending on external resources to the effective mobilization of in-country resources towards the implementation of their prioritized projects.
- Institution Building: KCDF's concept of sustainable community-driven development is pegged on the premise that well-capacitated groups are key instruments in scaling up and sustaining continuous transformative change at the grassroots levels.
- Partnerships and Networking: KCDF believes that the challenges of poverty cannot be achieved by one actor hence there is value in working collaboratively with other like-minded organizations in addressing issues that communities continue to face.
- Policy Influencing: Policy influencing refers to the different actions taken by organized groups on an issue of concern, to influence decision-making or to change a policy that brings about lasting change in the lives of disadvantaged people.
- Asset Development: This refers to work by non-profits of building long-term assets of different kinds, aimed at generating flexible funds to further their collective goals to obviate their work being affected when funders change their priorities.

Theory of Change

A foundational belief for KCDF, is born from the fact that enduring change is only possible when communities are able to take charge and find their own solutions for development. This begins with the recognition of all resources in their midst, leverage on the resources from different actors and maximize on a community philanthropy approach to promote long-term development results.

2 The Art of Local Resource Mobilization

2.1 Introducing KCDF's Local Resource Mobilization

Over the years, KCDF has established a formidable resource mobilization capacity. The whole concept of local resource mobilization goes back to its inception and roots as a foundation. Its philosophy is strongly anchored on the need to mobilize resources locally to solve the problems that communities face. In building on its endowment fund, KCDF had to mobilize resources locally to match the funding provided by the Ford Foundation. It is therefore skills and art that it has nurtured and perfected over the years.

KCDF's local resource mobilization entails seeking partnerships by engaging individuals, corporations, charitable foundations, and governmental agencies for socially impactful activities.

The organization's resource mobilization efforts focus on:

- Donor acquisition and maintaining donor relationships.
- Informing, motivating, and facilitating giving.
- Understanding, defining, and communicating all dimensions of need.
- Sourcing for funding both locally and internationally

2.2 How it Works

2.2.1 Approaches

Over the years, KCDF has experimented with various approaches to local resource mobilization. Those that it currently uses include:

One-on-one engagements: This is mobilization through face-to-face engagements. Though time-consuming and painstaking, this approach often leads to sustainable and long-term partnerships. It works well with high-net-worth individuals as well as some corporate donors. The amounts given can also be substantial. It however requires patience and persistence and is not for the faint-hearted.

Crowdfunding: This approach capitalizes on social media and crowdfunding platforms such

as M-changa and Global Giving. Given the nature of social media, it often targets individual donors, both locally and internationally. Most of the amounts given are usually small. However, the large number of donations received can lead to significant amounts raised in a well-designed and executed campaign.

Direct E-Mail: This entails writing to potential prospects, who ideally have been mapped out before. It works best with high-net-worth individuals as well as corporations. The response rate is often low, though this depends on the amount of research done on the donor prospect as well as the effectiveness of the donor mapping.

Peer-to-peer fundraising: This kind of fundraising is done by peers who know, work, or serve KCDF. It includes board members, trustees, management, and staff. They approach the prospective donor, sell KCDF and encourage them to give. It leverages the relationships the KCDF contact has with the donor prospect and usually has a good rate of success. The amounts raised will depend on the kind of donor prospect as well as the nature of the cause.

Phone solicitations: KCDF contacts potential donors by calling them on the phone. A relationship is then developed that may lead to funding. This can be done blind or in response to a recommendation or referral by someone else. Blind prospects are riskier but can produce surprising results depending on how effectively the contact sells the cause. Referrals have higher chances of success but do not always lead to funding.

Sponsorships: This comes from companies as well as individuals. Sponsorships often require time to follow up before support is received. Their success rate depends on how effectively donor prospects are mapped as well as how the cause is sold.

Online donations: Funds are received through the KCDF website. This low-cost approach targets the mass market. It can raise significant funds depending on how the number and type of visitors to the organization's website. It has the advantage of reaching a global audience and attracting funds on a 24-hour basis throughout the week.

2.2.2 Sources

The funds are sourced from:

Individuals: This largely comes from the middle class as well as High Net-worth Individuals. Board members also donate with the highest amount received from a board member reaching Ksh 1 million. Board members also make referrals that lead to significant donations.

Endowments Fund Yields: This comes from partners investing in the KCDF endowment fund. There are 27 fund builders currently. Fund builders are organizations that pool their resources with KCDF for mutual benefit.

Private sector: This largely covers for-profit companies. This includes Isuzu East Africa, NCBD and Standard Chartered Bank. KCDF often targets smaller businesses rather than joining the crowd, which chases the same large companies.

Fundraising Events: KCDF has developed long-term fundraisers that are often held annually to mobilize resources for its programs. These include the KCDF Golf Tournament and the Art Gallery.

Fundraising Campaigns: KCDF develops campaigns from time to time. These are usually short-term fundraisers targeting a particular course. Examples include the Giving 4TheChild Packages.

Philanthropic Foundations: These are foundations that are set up to give funds, usually for specific thematic areas. Donors include the Ford Foundation as well as the Rockefeller Foundation.

Corporate Foundations: While some companies give from the normal business operational budget, others have set up specific foundations. Examples of companies that have supported KCDF include Safaricom Foundation and the I&M Foundation.

Online: KCDF also mobilizes funds from online sources. One fundraising platform it uses is Global Giving.

Diaspora: The friends of KCDF who are based out of Kenya, largely the USA and have been fundamental in mobilizing funds for KCDF over the years.

Earned income, through training and

consultancy: KCDF also capitalizes on opportunities that sell its expertise and programs thus earning fees. This includes consultancies as well as training which it charges fees.

TechSoup Kenya: KCDF mobilizes Ksh 10 million to 13 million annually in unrestricted funding through the technology donation and discounts program.

2.2.3 Kind of Resources Received

The resources are received in various forms. These include:

- Funds
- Time and expertise
- Goods or in-kind donations
- Networks
- Information

2.3 Structures

2.3.1 Resource Mobilization and Communication Committee

The KCDF Board has set up a committee comprised of board members with an interest and expertise in fundraising. The committee has the following roles:

- Holds quarterly meetings
- Has members who contribute their time, skill, and influence to raising money.
- Cultivates potential new members with the specific skills that the organization might need such as strategic planning, legal expertise, and financial management.

2.3.2 Partnerships and Resource Development Department

KCDF has a resource mobilization team that currently has two members of staff. It took the organization 15 years before it recruited its first resource mobilization dedicated staff member. Before that, resource mobilization was being done by several staff members who also had other duties. These are:

- Head of Partnerships and Resource Development
- Partnership and Resource Development Officer

It is important to ensure that the growth of the organization's team capacity is affordable.

It took several years to make any return on investment on the fundraising team. As KCDF grows, it plans to further expand and grow the team so that it nurtures and manages good relations with its current funders while exploring new growth areas. The lean and mean structure increases the return on investment. The limited capacity, though, means that the team must be more focused and careful about the opportunities that it pursues.

2.4 Achievements

KCDF Foundation has achieved much in local resource mobilization.

Funds Raised: KCDF raises an average of Ksh 50 million a year. This however does not consider that some donations are spread over several years. If this is done, then the amount raised can reach Ksh 100 million a year.

Current Partners: KCDF has secured several partners including Safaricom, Total Energies, and I&M Foundation among other corporates. **Program Funding:** KCDF has been able to fund several programs because of local resource mobilization. One example is the 4TheChild Packages.

Sustainability: The local resource mobilization has contributed to KCDF's sustainability. It has enabled it to diversify its funding away from the traditional donors. In doing so, it has had the effect of reducing any potential funding shocks like what happened during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Partnerships: The organization has been able to forge power relationships with private sector institutions and individuals that continue to open doors to future support. The return on investments from these relationships will continue to be felt for years to come.

Expertise: KCDF has been able to mobilize expertise from highly paid and re-known professionals to support its work. It would not have been able to pay these professionals with its modest operating resources. However, through in-kind support arising from local resource mobilization, it has been able to bring them under its fold.

Capacity: KCDF has developed one of the most formidable fundraising teams as far as local resource mobilization is concerned. It is amongst the top market leaders.

Endowment Fund: KCDF has been able to build its endowment fund partly through local resource mobilization. The two matching fund challenge opportunities provided by the Ford Foundation would not have been realized without local resource mobilization. KCDF raised Ksh 65 million for the first challenge and Ksh 100 million for the second challenge.

2.5 Challenges

KCDF has faced several challenges over the years. Some of these challenges re-occur while others emerge occasionally.

Inflation and high cost of living: This has impacted negatively on local resource mobilization from both the private sector and individuals. In the case of the private sector, increasing operational costs reduce the willingness and capacity of the company to support non-core activities. For individuals, it affects their surplus income reducing their ability to give. The net effect is more organizations and individuals asking KCDF to approach them in the future. Others will hide behind the current environment as an excuse not to give.

Covid-19: The after-effects of the pandemic continue to dampen the local environment for giving. The lockdowns in 2020 impacted negatively on economic activities reducing the number of organizations and individuals willing to give. It also affected resource mobilization activities such as meetings, events and campaigns. The result was reduced funding for KCDF for its activities.

Elections: The national elections held every 5 years often lead to reduced funding. They cause uncertainty, leading to a wait-and-see situation. The result is lost or postponed fundraising opportunities.

Accountability Challenge: Accountability continues to be an issue of concern amongst potential and existing donors. Given the operating environment where money is often misused or directed towards personal gain by those entrusted with it, donors have become more suspicious and cautious. It has become more difficult to build trust and one has to struggle. This is sometimes caused by bad experiences with previous CSOs which makes it harder for others such as KCDF to engage. However, once trust is built, it becomes easier to mobilize resources.

Multinational Corporations: International companies often offer larger amounts of funding than their local counterparts. It is however hard to get funding when the decision is made externally -- in their headquarters. Other CSOs will often have greater influence based on stronger relationships giving them a competitive edge. KCDF has a lower success rate where multinational corporations are concerned.

Thematic Focus: Some organizations have already got thematic areas of interest which may be different from what KCDF wants funding for. This locks out KCDF unless it can creatively link its causes to the thematic areas of interest of the organization. The increasing trend toward focusing on limited thematic areas is reducing the number of potential donors who can be targeted.

Budgets: Some organizations have financial years, and their budgets may have been exhausted or already committed by the time KCDF is approaching them. This focuses on KCDF to defer its requests and fundraising efforts to the next year or beyond.

Focus. While some organizations may have various thematic areas or event funds to support several KCDF activities, it is difficult to capitalize on them. KCDF cannot approach corporations for more than one thing or cause. One, therefore, has to make the most of the one opportunity they get in the given funding cycle.

3

Lessons Learned

KCDF has learned several lessons over its two decades of local resource mobilization. Some of these include:

Build relationships: People give money to people – not to structures. Relationships are key to successful resource mobilization. It is important to invest time and effort in building sustainable relationships that create long-term opportunities for the organization. KCDF has been able to build as well as capitalize on the relationships of its Board members, management, and staff to secure funding for its activities. Maintaining these relationships is a key activity for KCDF.

Accountability: The organization needs to be accountable and account for all the funds that

it receives. Without accountability, future funding opportunities are compromised. Accounting for funds increases the faith that the organization has in you and opens the door to future and larger funding opportunities.

Trust: The frequent news of organizations misusing funds that they were given by corporations and individuals has poisoned the local fundraising environment. Prospective donors have become more careful about who they fund. It is important to get organizations and individuals to trust your organization. This is the basis for a long-term and sustainable funding relationship.

Involve both the CEO and staff: In many cases, an organization is tempted to only deal with the CEO. While this approach may be successful in securing funds, it can lead to other problems. In some cases, staff may sabotage the funding and support meaning that it is either not released or faces severe obstacles. It is important to work with both the CEO and staff for a long-term and successful relationship. This is important for leveraging support and contributions.

Communicate: Organizations are tempted to keep their silence when things are not going well. This tends to undermine and even weaken relationships when the partner or donor finds out what is happening. It is important to let the company know what is happening, even when things are going badly.

Establish structures: While random and opportunistic resource mobilization may produce results, it is not the best way to raise resources. It is important to invest in and build effective structures to support the resource mobilization efforts. It is only by doing this that resource mobilization can be sustainable and able to achieve its full potential.

Time for Preparation: In a fast food economy, organizations often want quick results. This is not the best way to conduct resource mobilization. It is important to allocate sufficient time for the design and preparation of any fundraising initiative the organization seeks to carry out. Ideally, local events for example need a minimum of 6 months to prepare going by KCDF's experience.

Being Unique: Avoid doing what everyone else is doing, especially in events. KCDF has strived to be unique in its activities and avoided the herd mentality for many of its initiatives. This

has enabled it to fundraise from innovative ideas such as the Art Café.

Small businesses: Generally, most organizations target large corporations such as Safaricom, Equity and KCB Bank for funds. This creates intense competition lowering the chances of success. It also becomes difficult to build a long-term relationship with them. KCDF has increasingly focused on smaller businesses over the years. Though often ignored, they can also give and do so sustainably.

Organization Giving: The Board, management and staff need to give to support the cause and the organization's work. In short, if you do not believe in the organization and its causes enough to give as an insider, why should anyone else give you funds? In short, local fundraising begins from within the organization and then goes out. The more the organization can raise internally, the more funding it gets from other organizations.

Anonymous Donors: Some donors want to give off the radar and maintain a low profile. These donors behave differently from other donors. For example, they may contact you at odd hours just to avoid attention. It is important to respect their wish to remain anonymous and protect their identity in the organization's communications.

Donor Mapping: Important to map out appropriate donors. It is better to do more research upfront so that you target the right donors. This saves a lot of time and resources, especially when the organization has limitations on what it can invest in the resource mobilization process. It also contributes to a better return on investment.

Facts: It is important to have facts to support resource mobilization activities. Giving the wrong facts to donors or even the media can severely damage the resource mobilization initiative. On the converse, having the right facts and information increases the confidence that prospective and existing donors have in you and enhances your chances of funding.

CSI rather than CSR: Focus on longer-term relationships through CSI rather than CSR. Avoid companies seeking photo opportunities. It is better to build long-term win-win relationships than seek one-time funding that ends with a single cheque.

Social Media: Provides great opportunities for visibility and branding. It can attract funding from unlikely sources from individuals who saw and appreciated the organization's work and its cause. It however needs continuous engagement

4 Conclusion

4.1 Conclusion

KCDF has been successful in mobilizing resources from the local market. Though this has not been easy, its success proves that people in Kenya are philanthropic. It also proves that done the right way, organizations can survive on resources mobilized locally. KCDF, on average, raises Ksh 30 million annually. However, this is often more because some grants extend for more than a year. This income has enabled it to diversify its funding which reduces its exposure to funding shocks. It also supports the organization's long-term sustainability. In mobilizing resources locally, it has been able to run programs that benefit communities. Furthermore, it has been able to build its endowment fund into the biggest in the country.

Mobilizing resources locally requires deliberate efforts, focus and determination. It is different from mobilizing resources from traditional donors. However, if well done, it can lead to big rewards. Organizations need to invest in the right structures and capacity to tap into this pool of funds. They need to develop the right capacity and skills. Lastly, the Board, management and staff need to buy into the idea of mobilizing resources locally and support it. Beyond this, they also need to be donors to the organization. Though KCDF is one of the leading champions of local resource mobilization, it is still learning and growing. It believes the best is yet to come – as for this only time will tell.

4.2 Recommendations: Steps to developing an effective resource mobilization capacity

Step 1: Organization Readiness: To fully learn about fundraising; it is important to have an in-depth understanding of your organization. That includes its identity, values,

vision, mission, strategy products and impacts. The better you understand the organization, the easier it is to sell it.

Step 2: Secure Board buy-in: The Board needs to understand and support the rationale for resource mobilization. Fundraising is one of the functions of the Board. Unless it takes ownership, it becomes more challenging for management and staff to raise funds.

Step 3: Build the trust of the Board: The Board needs to trust and have confidence in the resource mobilization process and activities that are promoted by management and staff. They also need to actively contribute to the process. If they do not trust staff and the resource mobilization activities that they are promoting, it may lead to many questions and the need for clarifications that waste time and deny the team the required resources. It can also cost the organization valuable funding opportunities due to unnecessary delays.

Step 4: Secure management and staff support: Management and staff need to be fully behind the local resource mobilization efforts. They also need to contribute to the process, not only in terms of time but also in resources. A philanthropic culture must be cultivated within the organization. In KCDF, everyone gives – it is not the amount that matters but the commitment.

Step 5: Develop structures: The organization needs to develop structures that support the resource mobilization efforts. Without structures, resource mobilization efforts become erratic. They tend to depend on individuals meaning that they are not sustainable. Everything can grind to a halt if a key individual leaves. Having structures not only supports capacity building but sustainability as well.

Step 6: Develop appropriate products that appeal to the donor targets: The organization needs to develop products that appeal to the targeted donors. This demands a good

understanding of both the organization as well as the fundraising environment. Organizations need to sell their products in a way that appeals to the interests of the prospective donor and not just assume that the mission will be enough to secure funding.

Step 7: Speak corporate's language: Avoid NGO speaking. Rather speak the corporate language. This includes the use of words such as the return on investment, the beneficiaries and so on. If the corporates do not understand you, they will not support you.

Step 8: Map out donors: You need to understand the target audience. If you have a great idea but market it to the wrong audience, the results may not be what you expected. For example, KCDF's golf tournament was marketed to high-net-worth individuals while the art gallery targeted CEOs. This led to more successful outcomes.

Step 9: Gaming: Understand the social, economic, technological and political environment. The better your understanding, the better you can play the resource mobilization game.

Step 10: Engage in solicitation: Do not be afraid to call and ask, even if you do not have a contact in the organization. You will have to start from somewhere to build relationships.

Step 11: Establish partnerships: Seek partnerships and not quick cheques. Partnerships can open the donor to inaccessible funding. For example, KCDF has established partnerships with the Asian Foundation that helps it access donors. Without these partnerships, it would not have the leverage to capitalize effectively on this donor market.



**Local Resource
Mobilization
Case Study 2**

Uplifting Communities through Social Enterprises

Beacon of Hope

Executive Summary

Beacon of Hope (BoH) is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) that was registered in 2002. Beacon capitalizes on a holistic approach that supports quality education, spiritual nurture, nutrition, health and protection as components of community transformation. BOH's Vision is: 'To be a model of excellence in wholesome community transformation'. Its mission is 'To bring hope and catalyze sustainable transformation by uplifting the spiritual, physical, economic and social well-being of vulnerable individuals, families and communities.

Beacon of Hope deploys the social enterprise approach in its education and health-oriented activities. This includes the Beacon of Hope Academy; Beacon Technical Training Institute (BTTI); Healing Balm; and Sifa Christian Guest House. Community members pay affordable and competitive fees for these services. Despite their low cost, efforts are made to offer quality services to its clientele, many of whom are from low-income households.

The academy offers ECD and primary level of education and is currently constructing facilities for junior high. There are currently 350 students enrolled out of potentially 700 students. The student population declined during the Covid-19 pandemic and is recovering. The school works on a cross-subsidy model where those who can afford to pay higher fees subsidize the costs of those who can't. A ratio of 70:30 is used with 70 percent of the education opportunities going to those who can afford to pay, with 30% being given to those who cannot. In addition, Beacon of Hope has philanthropists who pay the fees for poor and vulnerable children. These sponsors agree to pay for the costs of the children for their entire education cycle – that is until higher education. The school can earn Ksh 70m per year at a full capacity of 700 students. It is however currently earning Ksh 30 million per year following the impacts of Covid-19. Despite this, Beacon's education services are currently sustainable and can be provided in the long term even without donor support. Beacon of Hope has identified and is in the process of acquiring 100 acres of land in Ole Tepesi, Kajiado County. 80 acres of the land will be used to set up a secondary school with the remaining 20 acres used to develop homes for staff.

The Beacon Technical Training Institute (BTTI) offers courses in hospitality, building and construction, electrical engineering, ICT, Fashion and Design and Hair and Beauty Therapy. The courses extend from 3 months to 6 months. The institute largely targets students who can afford to pay for training. The costs

are however kept reasonable as profit maximization is not the goal – rather it is to equip the youth with useful life skills and qualifications. Beacon of Hope also leverages its donor-supported programs to sponsor poor and vulnerable youth for training. By capitalizing on donor funding to sponsor students to its institute, it can use the funds more cost-effectively to provide quality training to the youth rather than rely on more expensive external training organizations.

The Healing Balm, as the health center is known, offers quality, holistic, affordable and accessible health care. It focuses on outpatient and emergency services, comprehensive HIV care and treatment. The center also offers minor surgical procedures for community members. The services are affordable but free for those infected with HIV/AIDS. BOH has begun constructing a new building to offer in-patient services. The wing will have 16 beds.

SIFA hospitality services include conferencing, accommodation and catering, weddings and receptions. It is the newest social enterprise initiated by Beacon of Hope. In addition to accommodating visitors to the organization, it attracts business from other customers thus enabling BoH to capitalize on opportunities in its midst.

1 Introduction

Beacon of Hope is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) that was registered in 2002. Its initial goal was supporting women living with HIV but has since grown to cover programs in health, education and youth empowerment. Beacon capitalizes on a holistic approach that supports quality education, spiritual nurture, nutrition, health and protection as components of community transformation.

Beacon's **Vision** is: 'To be a model of excellence in wholesome community transformation'. Its **mission** is 'To bring hope and catalyze sustainable transformation by uplifting the spiritual, physical, economic and social well-being of vulnerable individuals, families and communities.

To implement its vision and mission, BoH capitalizes on the following approach:

- Spiritual Foundation
- Integrated Model Approach
- Partnership
- Collaboration and Networking
- Community Participation

- Innovation, Knowledge Management, and Learning.

Key initiatives by Beacon of Hope include:

Health: The Healing Balm, as the health center is known, offers quality, holistic, affordable, and accessible health care. It focuses on outpatient and emergency services, comprehensive HIV care and treatment. The center also offers minor surgical procedures for community members. The services are affordable but free for those infected with HIV/AIDS.

Beacon of Hope Academy: The Academy provides holistic, quality, accessible and affordable education. It also provides spiritual nurture and nutrition using balanced meals, health and protection.

Beacon Technical Training Institute (BTTI): The institute offers courses in hospitality, building and construction, electrical engineering, ICT, Fashion and Design and Hair and Beauty Therapy. These largely target youth, many of whom are from the surrounding communities.

Youth Empowerment Program: BoH invests in building new futures by equipping youth to become responsible, productive and contributing members of the society. The Wisdom Centre offers knowledge expansion, talent building, enterprise development, recreation and spiritual nurture.

Sifa Christian Guest House: Offers hospitality services including conferencing, accommodation and catering, weddings and receptions.

2 Beacon of Hope Social Enterprises

2.1 The Beacon of Hope Approach to Social Enterprise

Beacon of Hope deploys the social enterprise approach in its education, health and hospitality initiatives. These initiatives include:

- Beacon of Hope Academy
- Beacon Technical Training Institute (BTTI)
- Healing Balm
- Sifa Christian Guest House

Community members pay affordable and competitive fees for these services. Despite their low cost, efforts are made to offer quality services to its clientele.

2.2 How it works

2.2.1 Beacon of Hope Academy

The academy offers ECD and primary level of education. There are currently 350 students enrolled out of a potentially 700 students. The numbers fell during the Covid-19 pandemic and are yet to recover.

Use of Cross Subsidies

The school works with a cross-subsidy approach where those who can pay help to cover the costs of those who cannot. A ratio of 70:30 is used where 70 percent of the education opportunities are given to those who can afford to pay with 30% going to those who cannot. The 30 percent are on scholarships and have their costs partly subsidized by the 70 percent.

Concerning primary education, the student pays a basic fee of Ksh 18,000 per term but this increases to Ksh 24,000 with additional costs. Annual fees average Ksh 72,000. Borders pay Ksh 43,000 per term totaling Ksh 129,000 per year. Given that it is a private school fashioned as a social enterprise, the fees are low compared to the competition as well as the high standard of education provided. In addition, parents can agree on a payment plan with the school to make the payments more accommodating. The goal is to ensure that communities can access quality education at affordable costs.

For the ECD, parents pay Ksh 25,000 in the first term, Ksh 19,000 in the second term and Ksh 11,000 in the final term bringing the total to Ksh 55,000 per year. It currently has 75 children out of a potential 140. The enrolment numbers were also affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, which saw many parents move away from Ongata Rongai. Others transferred their children to public schools that were perceived to be cheaper. The post-pandemic effects are yet to subside with many educational institutions struggling to keep afloat.

Sponsorships

In addition, BoH has philanthropists who pay the fees of poor and vulnerable children. These sponsors agree to pay for the costs of the children for their entire education cycle – that is until higher education. The Executive Director leads from the front and currently sponsors 10 children. She has mobilized other well-wishers to support vulnerable children as one of the strategies to ensure that no one is left behind. BoH has a strong commitment to communities

and aims to ensure that poor and vulnerable children can benefit from quality education.

2.2.2 Beacon Technical Training Institute (BTI)

The institute offers courses in hospitality, building and construction, electrical engineering, ICT, Fashion and Design and Hair and Beauty Therapy. The courses extend from 3 months to 6 months.

Fee Payment

The institute targets students who can afford to pay for training. Just like its primary school, it capitalizes on a cross-subsidy approach where those who can afford to pay higher fees subsidize the poor who cannot. The costs are however kept reasonable, as profit maximization is not the goal. Rather, the aim is to equip the youth with useful life skills and qualifications that can give them a strong foundation in life. Many of the students are from the middle and lower classes and therefore face some financial limitations. BoH deliberately ensures that its fees are lower than those of other private institutions offering similar training. Despite the lower fees, its standards of training are kept high.

Sponsorship

Beacon of Hope leverages its donor-supported programs to sponsor some of the youth who cannot afford to pay for training. This enables it to leverage on some of its donor funds to cost-effectively provide quality education to the youth at far lower costs than it would with external private organizations. As a result, it can train more youth with the same amount of money. This approach also maximizes the returns to investments from its resource mobilization activities, as it can maximize the impact both on the organization as well as the target beneficiaries.

2.2.3 Healing Balm

The Healing Balm, as the health center is known, offers quality, holistic, affordable and accessible health care. It focuses on outpatient and emergency services, comprehensive HIV care and treatment. The center also offers minor surgical procedures for community members. The services are affordable but free for those infected with HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, HIV/AIDS services are often subsidized through donor grants/projects. When these grants are unavailable, the services are still offered free

by Beacon. It uses the cash flow from other customers to subsidize and support these services.

BoH has also leveraged the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF). Beacon ensures that many of its target groups have NHIF cover, even if it means paying the contributions on their behalf. They are thus able to benefit from NHIF payments, which makes the services even more affordable.

2.2.4 BoH Gift Shop

Products made by beneficiaries of BoH are offered for sale at the shop. Some are exported to interested buyers in Western countries. Using this approach, BoH ensures that its beneficiaries benefit from increased incomes that help raise them above the poverty line. In addition, Beacon benefits from a mark-up of 25% and more that enables it to cover the costs of the enterprise

2.2.5 Sifa Christian Guest House

The guesthouse offers hospitality services including conferencing, accommodation and catering, weddings and receptions. It is the newest social enterprise initiated by Beacon of Hope. In addition to accommodating visitors to the NGOs, it attracts business from other customers.

Management

Each social enterprise has its management and staff. This ensures that they can focus on performance. The teams have been recruited based on potential and mentored and trained into their roles. Profit maximization is not the goal. Rather, Beacon of Hope aims to provide services at affordable rates to the community on a sustainable basis.

2.3 Successes/achievements

Beacon of Hope has had several successes with its social enterprise approach. These include:

Revenues: The school can earn Ksh 70m per year at a full capacity of 450 students. It is however currently earning Ksh 30 million per year following the impacts of Covid-19. Once the economy recovers, BoH expects its income to increase to the Ksh 70 million pre-Covid pandemic levels.

Sustainability: Beacon's education services are currently sustainable. This means that they can

be provided in the long term even without donor support. As for the primary and EDC education, the costs are currently covered through cross-subsidies and sponsorships for 100 children. It does not depend on traditional donor funding. Concerning the institute, courses can be sustained even without the students being sponsored by its donor programs.

Local Philanthropy: Beacon has managed to recruit philanthropists who support 100 children throughout their education cycle. Most of these have sustained their support event through challenging times such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

Affordable and High-Quality Services: Beacon's education and health services are affordable. While it capitalizes on a social enterprise approach, it still seeks to provide affordable high-quality education and health services to the communities that host it as well as those BoH supports.

Assets: Beacon of Hope now owns multi-million shilling property and assets in Ongata Rongai. It continues to develop these assets as it further seeks to achieve sustainability for all its programs.

Growth: BOH has grown significantly since its establishment 20 years ago. It is now one of the leading and most sustainable indigenous NGOs in Kenya.

2.4 Challenges

BOH has faced several challenges. These include:
Resources: It's challenging to secure the resources required to further develop its social enterprises.

This has slowed down its progress.

Covid-19: The pandemic led to the reduction of community members using its education and health facilities. The schools have been the worst affected as some of the parents moved to cheaper locations and withdrew their children from school. Others opted for cheaper government schools. While it has been able to sustain the schools and enjoy a small surplus, it still faces a long road to recovery.

Poverty: Despite the low cost of its services, there are community members who still cannot afford them. This calls for alternative strategies such as scholarships and cross-subsidies to support them. Without sponsors for its education facilities, it would not be able to support so many orphaned and vulnerable children.

2.5 Future plans

BOH has several plans. These include:

Secondary School: Beacon of Hope has identified and is in the process of acquiring 100 acres of land in Ole Tepesi, Kajiado County. The land will be used to set up a secondary school with the remaining 20 acres will be used to develop homes for staff. Ksh 7 million has already been paid towards this venture.

Hospital: BoH is working on building a new hospital building, with construction beginning in November 2022. The facility will support in-patient services and will have 16 beds. It has already been accredited by the Medical Practitioners Board. This will support its health social enterprise by meeting the demand for inpatient services. It will not only further improve the quality of its health care, but also increase its revenues as it taps new markets.

3 Lessons Learned

BOH has learned several lessons over the years. These include:

Committed Leadership is crucial: This is critical to the successful execution of social enterprises. It ensures that the board and management are rallied to the cause and kept inspired to achieve the vision and mission. Without strong and committed leadership, BoH would not have achieved what it has been able to.

Human Resources are at the heart of sustainability: It is important to get the right people. For BoH, a person's 'heart' comes before papers and qualifications. Recruits must believe and be committed to the cause – if not, they are unlikely to stay long. The organization does not offer the high salaries and benefits that international non-governmental organizations offer. Those it recruits are therefore those who have a passion to serve. Some begin as interns and eventually graduate to full-time employment with BOH. In short, Beacon grows its people and turns them into stars.

Social enterprises are about affordable services- if not, they are just businesses under a different name: Working with poor communities using a social enterprise approach can be challenging. It means continuously finding ways to ensure that the beneficiaries can pay for them. Beacon works out payment plans with parents to enable them to afford to pay the fees. The difference between social enterprises and traditional businesses is the focus on the social rather than the profit goal. BoH has to keep reminding itself that its mission is to serve and not maximize profits.

Managing Costs: Achieving affordable services entails controlling costs. Cutting out waste and middlemen can help make services more affordable. For example, Beacon has been able to work with farmers to make the institution's food more cost-effective. This includes buying onions from farmers in Oloitoktok. The same approach is used with its other suppliers. This has become even more important with the rising costs of living that threaten its low-cost model. By cutting back on unnecessary costs in the supply chain, it can pass on these costs to its beneficiaries through better-priced services.

Share your vision with the team: Employees are a valuable and critical resource. In Beacon's words, 'Staff are a gift. Once they share your vision, they get things done even in your absence. They are encouraged to run it like it is their own business or organization. The ownership of the vision is key to the long-term sustainability of the organization and its social enterprises.

Meaningful Staff Engagement: Fully and meaningfully engaging staff is critical to the commitment and growth of the organization. This is even more critical when an organization does not have the resources to engage the more experienced and expensive staff.

Accounts and accountability: It is important to keep different accounts to support greater accountability. This ensures that funds from different social enterprises and donors are kept apart to avoid id commingling of funds. In an environment where corruption thrives, accountability is key to keeping the trust of various partners and stakeholders.

4 Conclusions

4.1 Conclusions

Beacon of Hope has capitalized on a social enterprise approach to offer services to communities. Its core services focus on education, health, and youth empowerment. By leveraging a cross-subsidy approach, it mobilizes additional funds from those who can afford to pay to support those who are poor. In addition, it has been able to capitalize on sponsors to support its education program. Its technical education is leveraged against both parents who can pay as well as donor programs. It is an example that shows that social enterprise, well used, cannot only provide affordable and quality services to communities but can also be used to support those who cannot afford to pay.

Using the social enterprise approach, BoH has achieved a degree of sustainability. While it would not be able to operate on the same level without some donor funding, it would not collapse. Having survived the covid-19 pandemic is a testament that BoH is here to stay. However, despite its current success, there is still much to do and BoH is not resting on its laurels.

4.2 Replication Recommendations

There are several things that those who would want to replicate BOH's model need to keep in mind. These include:

Step 1: Secure Board support: Social enterprise approaches can be controversial, especially when one is working with poor and vulnerable communities. With the understanding and full commitment of the Board, it becomes difficult to make the decisions required to support their success. It is therefore important to secure the full support of the Board.

Step 2: Sell the vision to management and staff: At the end of the day, it is the management and staff that initiative and manage the social enterprises. Unless they fully believe in the approach and are committed to the overall mission, they may not be able to surmount the challenges that enterprises face. Organizations, therefore, have to get their management and staff on board and fully committed to the vision.

Step 3: Identify thematic areas that can be delivered using a social enterprise approach: Not all thematic areas can be delivered through social enterprises. In the case of BoH, it has focused on education, health and youth empowerment. Trying social enterprise on everything could back-fire.

Step 4: Develop your models: It is important to develop delivery models for your social enterprises. BoH uses a cross-subsidy approach to deliver its education and health thematic areas. It uses a 70:30 model where 70% of the services go to those who can afford to pay and uses this to partly subsidize the poor who cannot afford to. In addition, it has a sponsorship model for its education services to ensure that it can support even more students. Thinking about your models before you begin the initiative is critical to success.

Step 5: Develop a business plan: This is useful in guiding the staff as well as potential partners and investors. It helps guide the organization in translating the idea into a successful enterprise.

Step 6: Keep refining your models: Once your enterprises are running, you have to keep refining them. This calls for continuous monitoring and learning. This fine-tuning increases the chances of success for the enterprises.

Step 7: Be creative: Problems need to be solved and opportunities capitalized on. This demands having a sense of adventure. Effectively doing this makes the social enterprise stronger.

Step 8: Manage your value chains: Social enterprises are about mission and not profit. You

have to keep finding ways to manage your costs to offer affordable services. This calls for understanding all your supply chains and constantly seeking ways to make them more efficient and cost-effective.

Step 9: Employ business approaches: At the end of the day, social enterprises are businesses. You need to learn and capitalize on business approaches. This also calls for incorporating business people into your Board and even staff. Social enterprises have to be run as businesses and not NGOs.

A Dream Deferred!



Eucabeth Moraa reminisces on her early childhood. She was born in Kisii, in 1965, barely a year after Kenya became a republic. Tragically, she lost her father at the age of three years-- an age too young to remember him. His passing left the burden of looking after ten children (5 boys and 5 girls) on her mother who struggled to make ends meet. The reality of this burden came to bear when she failed to proceed beyond Standard 7 and join Kamagambo High School – a leading school then -despite having passed well. For four years, Moraa cried frequently, hardly ate, and often prayed for a chance to continue with her education and become a surgeon doctor but it was not to be. Her health suffered as a result. She refused to get married, like some of her friends, stubbornly hoping against hope that her dream to

become a surgeon doctor would be realized. Four years later, with no help available, she deferred her dream and looked for something else to do.

At the age of 25, she found her way to Nairobi to make a living. Moraa worked in a house, doing basic chores. The job did not pay well. A few years later, she opted to wash clothes for a living in the hope she would earn more money. Moraa would be up at 3.00 am, pray, do her chores, and then proceed to work at 6.00 am. She would then work until 3.00 pm when she went to collect her children from school. Her earnings were low – just Kes 100 to Kes 200 per day, hardly enough to survive. Moraa could not afford to eat lunch and opted to save the little she made to share a meal with her children at night.

It was while she was eking a living from washing clothes that she came to know Beacon of Hope. Moraa passed its gate on the way to work daily and admired the sign and clean surroundings. It was not until 2010, however, when she first that the premises in search of a Kindergarten for her daughter. She wanted a school that would meet three conditions, namely; had good education, was clean and provided good meals during lunch. Beacon met all these criteria. Following the visit, her daughter was admitted to baby class where she paid Kes 1,000 per term as school fees.

Despite her meager earnings, she struggled and managed to pay her daughter's school fees until she reached standard four. When she could not make ends meet, Moraa visited Beacon and explained her predicament. After listening to her, Beacon agreed to help. They were able to secure a partial sponsorship leaving her with school fees of Kes 3,000 to pay per

term. This lifted a heavy burden from her shoulders enabling her to look after her son. Her daughter went on to pass her primary exams and join Moi Girls in Isinya she says with joy. However, Beacon was not done with her yet. Through the sponsor, they have catered for the Kes 53,000 annual school fees as well as uniform while letting her focus on the other costs. She tops up this contribution by paying for the fare; shopping, pocket money and other incidentals bringing the total cost to Kes 100,000. Moraa speaks of her daughter with pride, describing her as an 'intelligent girl who wants to be a doctor surgeon'. 'I was not able to fulfill my dream of being a surgeon but my daughter has the same dream and will become a doctor surgeon one day, God willing' she says with a smile.

Her son is studying at the Kiambu Institute of Science and Technology (KIST) and is currently in his second year. His education is partly funded by Kes 45,000 Higher Education Loan Board (HELB) loan. This is far from enough as the fees are Kes 28, 210 per term. She has to pay an additional Kes 5,000 in monthly hostel fees and Kes 6000 for meals giving her additional costs of more than Kes 33,000 per term. He has one year left to finish his studies. Moraa says that she would not have managed without the work she gets from Beacon of Hope.

Moraa's journey with Beacon has entailed much more than support for her daughter. The strenuous clothes-washing work and routine coupled with poor eating habits eventually got to her giving her chest and back pains. In 2015, she decided that she had had enough and started a tailoring business. A sewing machine that she had acquired a decade earlier came in handy. Moraa had purchased it for Kes 2,500 from the proceeds of her work and kept it aside. She however had no idea of how to use it. 'A friend of mine showed me how to press the peddle, string the spindle and saw patches in two days'. With the few tips she got, she placed the machine beside a road in Ongata Rongai and began her tailoring business. Things were not easy though. The dust and sun soon got to her and began affecting her health. Her long hours of work only gave her Kes 100 to Kes 200 a day and she lived from hand to mouth. She struggled to cover the living expenses such as food, rent, clothing and the children's education.

Moraa had however seen tailoring activities at Beacon and again approached the institution to see if she could offer her services. 'I started asking if I could do something at Beacon even if it was just cleaning'. In 2016, she was allowed to produce products on a piece-rate basis. These included table clothes, uniforms, masks, and bags, clothes amongst other products that were exported to the USA and Canada and sold locally as well. Her income changed dramatically and she was able to get Kes 15,000 to 18,000 in a good month and Kes 10,000 to 12,000 in a bad month! This was far more than the Kes 3,000 to Kes 6,000 she used to earn in a month. The income has been valuable in supporting the education of her children in addition to catering for living expenses.

Moraa has had the opportunity to give back to the community. She worked as a Community Health Volunteer (CHV) for three years from 2016 to 2018. Her work involved following up on Beacon-sponsored children in the community - something she enjoyed. She also joined a table-banking group supported by Beacon where she is now the Treasurer. The group contributes Kes 500 per week or Kes 2,000 per month. At the end of the year, she gets Kes 20,000 – Kes 25,000 in returns apart from the loans that she accesses.

'Beacon has brought me from far. It is helping my daughter achieve the dream of being a doctor surgeon' Moraa narrates. While life failed her, Beacon has been there for her. It gives her hope. 'I pray for Jane Wathome and her team, that God may add them more days and bless their lives'. Moraa still wakes up at 3.00 am and begins her life with a prayer. 'Many people are asleep at that time and therefore there is no traffic jam! I can speak to God well', she says with a chuckle. Beacon is a place of hope for Moraa and many others like her. 'It's my family now -- I have no parents'. 'I have brought many people to Beacon and will continue to bring more'. To Moraa, the dream of her daughter becoming a surgeon doctor remains strong – all thanks to Beacon. She works hard to give her daughter the support that she never had and with a friend like Beacon, there is hope.

Hers is a dream deferred!



Local Resource

Mobilization

Case Study 3

The Shea Butter Story

Okere City

Executive Summary

Okere Community Development Project (Okere City) is an ambitious community-based social enterprise with one burning mission --- to transform Okere, a sleepy village in Otuke District, Northern Uganda into a thriving and sustainable city. Commonly known as 'Okere City', the idea is premised on the belief that using an integrated rural development approach based on social-market economic principles to design and implement community development projects can create catalytic rural transformation and sustainable agrarian reforms. Its motto, "Yamo Akwo Koddo" which translates to "A Living Wind Blows", captures this dream with an African theme. It has a bold vision: 'creating economically thriving and self-reliant rural households in Okere Parish'.

The Shea tree, scientifically known as *Vitalleria Paradoxa* (Nilotica), is one of the trees native to northern Uganda. While it may pass on as just another plant, given its commonality in this northern landscape, it is in reality an extremely valuable tree that is worth millions in cash terms. The challenge has been that the community has no idea just what they have been gifted with. Despite its value, the community has over the years cut down this tree with reckless abandon, ignorant of the potential that it holds to transform their lives. As a result, 80% of the trees that once adorned the Otuke district have been destroyed and now face the prospect of extinction. Shea trees are particularly prone to illegal cutting for charcoal because of their hard timber that presumably produces the world's best charcoal product. Yet, the Shea tree is living gold. The tree offers valuable health, ecological and biodiversity functions. For example, Shea butter, especially when raw and cold-pressed, contributes towards hair health by strengthening hair fibres, lubricating cuticles, and reducing frizz. Its value in the cosmetic, pharmaceutical and confectionary industries is not in doubt. Locally, it has been consumed by the community for centuries.

To stem the tide of destruction of a valuable community resource, Okere City initiated a project to protect the shea tree. The project is significantly contributing towards the protection, regeneration and conservation of shea trees by creating greater awareness about its value. In addition, it has established a community of women and built a movement that promotes the sustainability of Shea trees and harnesses their socio-economic and natural benefits for the well-being of the people of Okere Parish.

Recognizing the potential of the Shea tree, Okere City formed and registered the Okere Shea Cooperative Society in 2020. Registered during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown, it was meant to be the bedrock upon which investments in Shea nuts and Shea butter would be based. Through the cooperative, the community has been educated on the value of the shea tree. They now appreciate that oil from the Shea nut is highly sought after to make skin and hair products. Furthermore, Okere City has also constructed office premises and storage facilities for the cooperative. Amazingly, the cooperative has been able to earn and pay dividends to members in 2020 and 2021, despite its young age. Shea butter is now sold in Kampala amongst other areas in Uganda, which is a testament to the determination of Okere City to capitalize on the Shea tree to transform the fortunes of this sleepy village. Despite its young age, Okere She Butter has established itself as a quality cosmetic product in the local market.

Despite its emerging success, Okere City still faces challenges as far as shea butter is concerned. Challenges include illegal Shea tree cutting and other threats to Shea trees in Otuke such as illegal bushfires and expansion of agricultural land. This has resulted in more than 80% of the Shea trees that once covered and breathed life into the region being destroyed. If Shea's re-forestation efforts are not successful, the Shea tree may become extinct in Okere Parish. There are other challenges. It is very expensive exporting Shea Butter to international markets. It has to be airfreighted, due to its temperature sensitivity. This adds to the costs of exporting at a time when freight costs are already sky-high following the Covid-19 pandemic. The stringent requirements for exporting to the EU market do not help matters. Challenges aside, Okere City has bold plans as far as this miracle tree is concerned. These include building a shea butter movement, establishing a Shea Butter Village and working towards positioning Okere Shea Butter as a leading Shea butter product line in the Ugandan market.

On lessons learned, Okere City has learned that listening to local and authentic voices is a key prerequisite for any community development work to succeed. It is therefore important to invest and organize community engagement platforms just to 'listen' because it creates a basis for lasting social change. Communities are often ignorant of the valuable resources they may have. Once sensitized, however, they can be rallied to exploit it for their development.

1 Introduction

The Okere Community Development Project – better known as Okere City, is an ambitious community-based social enterprise on a journey to transform Okere, a sleepy and laid-back village in Otuke District, Northern Uganda into a thriving and sustainable city. Despite its big name, the Okere City project is registered as a community-based organization (CBO) by Otuke District Local Government – underpinning its roots and vision. It is a community-driven movement to transform lives rather than a Kampala-based organization working from the sidelines. As a result, its initiatives are driven by actual community needs and the implementation of project activities led by community members.

Okere City strives to be a community-based social enterprise that creates multiple opportunities for agrarian reforms and rural transformation in Okere Parish. It does this by encouraging open and forward-thinking, mobilizing, organizing and training the rural populace through a series of innovative initiatives that generate practical solutions for the day-to-day challenges they face. It seeks to undertake, influence and direct holistic rural development initiatives to create socio-economic opportunities for prosperity in Okere Parish, Adwari Sub-county, Otuke District.

The Okere City idea is premised on the belief that using an integrated rural development approach based on social-market economic principles to design and implement community development initiatives can create catalytic rural transformation and sustainable agrarian reforms. This belief is aptly captured in this moto, vision and mission:

Motto

“Yamo Akwo Koddo” translates to “A Living Wind Blows”

Vision

Creating economically thriving and self-reliant rural households in Okere Parish.

Mission

To work with rural households in Okere Parish as partners to access and create economic and social opportunities that will stimulate catalytic, holistic, and sustainable rural development

Objectives

Okere City has three key objectives. These are:

- To stimulate holistic and sustainable economic and social development in Okere through partnering with individuals and different rural community groups, leaders, platforms, etc.
- To invest in, consult with, and build the capacity of our partner communities to become economically secure and self-sufficient.
- To create a platform for sharing and disseminating knowledge on sustainable and replicable models of rural development in Africa.

Values

Okere City is guided by a set of core values and principles that influences its organizational culture and contributes to the achievement of the overall strategic plan. They form the word **P.E.R.T.A.I.N.**

Partnership: Okere City promotes collaboration and networking with community members, district authorities and other like-minded development partners. Okere City refuses to use the language “beneficiaries” to describe the people engaged in its projects because the success of its projects necessarily hinges on collaboration with the rural communities its partners with.

Efficiency: Okere City strives to achieve maximum impact using minimal resources, by utilizing and building on existing assets.

Respect: It treats all its partners with dignity and honor by giving them time, space and any kind of platform to fully express themselves. This respect entails humility, patience, and collaboration.

Timeliness: Okere City strives to conduct all project and research activities in a timely and accountable fashion.

Accountability: It strives to ensure openness, honesty, and transparency to all partners, stakeholders and the development community at large.

Innovative: Its holistic approach to community development brings together the resources required for innovative solutions to address endemic poverty. Its innovativeness is driven by research and understanding of the complex realities that rural communities that it works with go through.

Non-Discrimination: Okere City does not discriminate against anyone based on age, sex, gender, race, religion, political affiliation, or physical ability.

Just like all other villages in Otuke District, the suffering inflicted by both the LRA war and the Karamojong cattle raids has been disastrous. The human and material losses incurred by the people can never be quantified. However, what is certain is that, for decades, households and individuals have never been able to fully or even partially recover from such losses.

Because of these political and civic instabilities, Otuke district remains one of the most undeveloped parts of northern Uganda in general and the Lango sub-region in particular. Among other disadvantages, high illiteracy rates, bad roads, and inadequate access to water, and sanitation facilities make life in the area nightmare for the majority. This is also coupled with extreme weather conditions - such as prolonged drought, which is a common occurrence.

Inspiration

That in years to come, our rural transformative journey will be a lesson to the whole world because we took a leap of faith, risked, and invested in our people because from the beginning, we knew it was the only path towards prosperity. And that when we look back at that time with our wrinkled faces or gentle souls, we shall rejoice and be glad well knowing that we did all that was within our means to empower our people to exploit as many opportunities as possible, and realize their fullest potential on the road to economic and social freedom.

To date, Okere City has created authentic relationships with the community in which it is domiciled. In addition, it has been at the forefront of implementing several initiatives that focus on early childhood development promotion; ensuring access to clean and safe drinking water; bringing basic grocery goods and services closer to the people; environmental conservation through community forestry projects and campaigns against cutting down of natural trees, among others. In doing so, it is transforming this sleepy and laid-back village, one step at a time.

2 Social Enterprise

2.1 Okere City Social Enterprise Approach

Okere City seeks to be an enabler for the rural community in the parish to be more imaginative, cooperative, creative, innovative, and enterprising. The aim is to enable them to become successful as well as champions of rural poverty reduction. One of the key strategies to achieving this rests on the mighty but unappreciated Shea tree, scientifically known as *Vitalleria Paradoxa* (Nilotica).

Shea is one of the trees native to northern Uganda and eons ago, once covered many of its landscapes. Hiding in plain sight, is this extremely valuable tree, if well harnessed can support a billion-dollar industry in the region. Despite its potential, the community has over the years cut down this tree with the potential to transform their lives, ignorant of this treasure in their midst. As a result, 80% of the trees that once adorned the Otuke district have been destroyed and now face the prospect of extinction. Shea trees are particularly prone to illegal cutting for charcoal because of their hard timber that presumably produces the world's best charcoal product. Yet, the Shea tree is living gold. The tree offers valuable health, ecological, and biodiversity functions. It is sought after in the cosmetic, pharmaceutical and confectionery industries as a valuable ingredient. For example, Shea butter, especially when raw and cold-pressed, contributes towards hair health by strengthening hair fibres, lubricating cuticles, and reducing frizz. Unfortunately, other than a food product, the Shea nut in Okere Parish has ended up being a valued energy source through charcoal and firewood. Yet, the Shea tree takes 20 years to mature and fruit – a period even longer than that required by a newborn baby to become an adult. It is therefore costly to destroy it, both in terms of time and lost revenue opportunities. In 2021, Okere City began a bold initiative to stem the tide. It planted 1,500 trees as a first step towards the restoration of the Shea tree as the crown jewel of the Otuke district.

To capitalize on its immense potential, Okere City adopted a social enterprise approach. In so doing, it sought a structure that would put the people of Okere in the very center of its exploitation. The best way of doing this was by the use of a SACCO as the key vehicle towards the development of a Shea tree industry in Okere Parish. In line with this, the Okere Shea Cooperative Society was initiated on 11th

September 2020 at Okere Community Centre by 120 community members. Ironically, this was at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown, which curtailed movement, and meetings amongst other activities. However, given the excitement following the discovery of what the She tree could do for Okere Parish, the community was not willing to wait. They wanted a vehicle that could enable them to exploit the Shea tree as quickly as possible. 90 of those who attended the meeting went on to become members. The smaller number was not because of the lack of interest, but rather because of the membership criteria by the cooperative. Following its registration in September 2020 by the commercial office in Otuke District, a board of 11 people was established to spearhead its development. Okere Shea Cooperative Society was born.

2.2 How it works

The Okere Shea Cooperative Society was meant to be the bedrock upon which investments in Shea nuts and Shea butter would be based. The community came up with two key requirements that had to be fulfilled for one to become a member. These were:

- Buy a minimum of 1 share worth US\$ 2.
- Provide 100kg of Shea butter.

The 100kgs of Shea nuts were not an in-kind investment though. The cooperative paid for them at the end of the financial year at the price of US\$ 1 per kg. Members were therefore guaranteed of earning US\$ 100, which is a significant sum of money in Okere Parish.

Most members have one to three shares. 350 shares have been purchased by 130 members to date. The slow progress has been due to the 100kgs of Shea nuts that have proved harder to get, partly due to the previous destruction of this valuable tree. The biggest shareholder is Okere village bank which has invested US\$ 60,000 into the cooperative. As a result, it owns 51% of the shares. This investment was used to construct office premises and storage facilities for the cooperative. It also supported working capital and marketing costs for the Shea butter in Kampala.

Given that members have to bring a minimum of 100kgs of she butter, the cooperative does not have to tie down valuable capital in buying raw materials. This innovation has enabled the cooperative not only secure valuable working capital, but it has also done so at zero interest rates. Another innovation concerns labor. Every member has to donate several days during the year in supporting the cooperative. This

enables the save on labor costs while leveraging a widely available resource. Not only does it support working capital, but it also ensures that members remain active in the cooperative throughout the year. The mandatory engagement ensures that they continue to support the activities of the cooperative and don't just appear during the harvesting season and disappear during the rest of the year. Furthermore, it also helps rally and unify the members behind the cooperative. The cooperative uses this labor in the drying, storage and processing activities. Shea butter must be dried every 1-2 months to prevent mould. All the cooperative has to meet is the cost of meals when the members are working.

100kg of Shea nuts worth US\$ 100 provide 36 litres of Shea butter worth US\$ 400. The processing is done by Moo Me Gen, which is based 15km away in Otuke District. However, the packaging and branding are done by Okere Cooperative. 80% of the Shea butter is now sold in Kampala with the rest being distributed to other smaller towns in Uganda. Despite its young age, it has established itself as a quality cosmetic product in the local market. It is one of the top 10 Shea butter trends in Kampala despite being a new entrant.

The financial year runs from July to June the following year which coincides with the harvesting season. Amazingly, the cooperative has been able to pay dividends to members in 2020 and 2021. The first dividends in 2020 were paid just months after its registration.

Okere Shea Butter comes in four different sizes, namely;

- 800g - 40,000 UGX
- 400g - 30,000 UGX
- 250g - 20,000 UGX
- 125g - 10,000 UGX

Okere City appreciates that it needs to restore the Shea tree population if its efforts to build an industry are to be successful. As part of 'Our Shea Project', Okere City has also run a series of sensitization campaigns to broaden the community's understanding of the benefits of the Shea tree. Through the cooperative, locals there have been educated on the value of the Shea tree. They now appreciate that oil from the shea nut is highly sought after to make skin and hair products. With this education, it has become very difficult to cut trees in Okere. Furthermore, community members are becoming more protective of the Shea trees. While

traditionally, it was considered a community resource that was God-given and therefore accessible to anyone, even if it was on one's land, community members are increasingly finding ingenious ways of preventing others from harvesting Shea trees from their land. This is a testament to the increasing value of a tree that was once taken for granted.

2.3 Successes/achievements

Okere City has several achievements down its belt, despite its young age.

Profits: It registered profits of US\$ 2,000 in 2020, from sales of US\$ 14,000 in its inception year. The profits increased to US\$ 4,700 from sales of 25,000 in 2021. This is expected to increase in 2022 given the expanding markets.

Dividends: In 2021, the cooperative gave out dividends with the least shareholder getting US\$ 20 and the highest US\$ 300. US\$ 1,500 was paid in dividends in 2021. The payment of dividends has increased the interest of the community in the cooperative. It has proved through deeds and not words alone, that the Shea tree has money.

Growing membership: 90 members joined the cooperative in 2020. A further 300 have signed up to join – though some are yet to complete meeting the membership criteria. The most challenging of these has been securing the 100kgs required as part of the membership requirements.

Growing Market Share: Sales grew from \$10,700 in 2020 to US\$23,000 in 2021. Given the interest in the product, Okere Cooperative expects to enjoy increased sales over the next few years. It is now one of the top 10 Shea Butter brands in Kampala.

Partnerships: The cooperative has partnered with Moo Me Gen in Otuke to process the Shea nuts into butter. The company is just 15 km away from Okere City. This has enabled it to leverage on its equipment and capacity to grow thus saving it from the heavy investment that it would have required to buy its equipment. The company processes the Shea Butter from she nuts provided by the cooperative and Okere packages and brands.

Media Attention: Despite its young age, Okere Cooperative has been covered by various media including the respected Guardian Newspaper in the UK. This demonstrates the excitement that this innovative initiative is generating well beyond Uganda's borders.

Regeneration of the Shea Tree Population: In September 2020, Okere City began implementing 'Our Shea Project' with a US\$ 3,000 support from CivSource Africa. The project is significantly contributing towards the protection, regeneration and conservation of shea trees. It has also brought together a community of women in a movement that promotes the sustainability of Shea trees and harnesses their socio-economic and natural benefits.

2.4 Challenges

Despite its success, Okere City faces several challenges. These include:

Illegal Shea tree cutting and other threats to Shea trees in Otuke such as illegal bushfires and expansion of agricultural land: Though the destruction of the Shea tree has dramatically reduced since the entry of Okere City, some losses of the tree still occur. If Shea's re-forestation efforts are not sustained, the tree may become extinct.

Freight Costs: It is very expensive exporting Shea Butter to international markets. It has to be airfreighted, due to its temperature sensitivity. This adds to the costs of exporting at a time when freight costs are already sky-high following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Export Conditions: Export conditions make it more difficult to export to western markets despite the large potential they hold. Okere has only managed to fulfill one small trial export order to Italy. It is gradually gaining the expertise and partnerships required to export a sensitive but valuable product such as Shea butter.

Pricing and Costing: It is challenging to cost and price the shea butter product against the competition in the market. Okere has high-quality Shea butter that is not processed. It is therefore different from others that are lower quality but have been processed.

Distribution: This is still challenging given that the cooperative is new. It will take time to establish an effective distribution network in Kampala and other parts of Uganda.

Marketing: Okere has relied on social media and word of mouth to promote its shea butter products. It is expensive and time-consuming to promote a new product. Okere City also lacks the resources required to promote it unlike most of its competition.

2.5 Future plans

Okere City's plans include:

Strengthen the Shea Butter Movement: This will ensure the protection, regeneration and sustainability of the Shea tree which is critical to the shea butter industry that Okere City seeks to create. If the Shea tree is to play its envisaged role in securing the industrial base of Okere City, the tree population has to be restored to its historical levels.

Build a Shea Butter Village: This will be the backbone of the shea butter industry. It will include the capacity, skills and expertise required to make Shea butter the backbone of Okere City. The cooperative realizes that it has just begun to scratch the surface. To exploit the full potential of the Shea tree, it has to develop an ecosystem that entails growing, harvesting, processing and marketing this valuable's tree's products. This requires the acquisition of the appropriate knowledge and capacity that will turn Okere City into a renowned She Butter Hub, not just in Uganda but the world as a whole.

Market Leadership: This will involve positioning Okere Shea Butter as a leading Shea butter product in the Ugandan market. It will require significant investments in marketing in large cities like Kampala. There is also a need to build and strengthen the Okere Shea Butter brand and visibility not just in Kampala but in Uganda and the East African region as well.

3 Lessons Learned

Okere City has learned several lessons over the years. These include:

Building on existing community assets is key for community development: This includes natural resources such as Shea trees as well as cultural and social activities that bind the community together. Okere City has capitalized and invested in them as key ingredients for its success.

Always listen to the authentic community voices: Listening to local and authentic voices is a key prerequisite for any community development work to succeed. It is therefore important to invest and organize community engagement platforms just to listen because it creates a basis for lasting social change.

Leadership: This is important in inspiring and organizing communities so that they can exploit existing resources for their development. Without good leadership, the people perish.

Having a vision: Establishing a strong vision and sharing it with the team and community is critical for success. The vision has to respond to community needs and be owned by them. It is this vision that enables the leadership to rally the community to support innovative ideas and initiatives.

Creative Thinking: Devising innovative ways of addressing social challenges and creating wealth is critical to sustainable development. Okere City is not the first development actor in Otuke District. Neither is it the only one. Its unique value proposition has been its innovative approach to tackling social and economic challenges that face the community.

Branding takes time and effort to establish a well-known brand in the market. Okere City still has much to do in securing the expertise and support required in building a strong and successful Okere Shea Butter brand.

4 Conclusion

4.1 Conclusions

It is not in doubt that communities have resources that can spur their development. The value of these resources is sometimes not appreciated by the community. This is the case with the Shea butter tree whose true worth and value escaped the people of Okere Parish in the Otuke District of Uganda until Okere City came along. A tree that had been cut down and turned into what the community thought was good charcoal, turned out to be a valuable pharmaceutical, cosmetic and confectionary tree whose oil was sought after for myriads of uses. While the community was aware of its food benefits, it did not appreciate that it could also be used in chocolate making, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals. Okere City has transformed the communities thinking and appreciation towards the product and is leveraging it to transform Okere Parish.

Rather than a typical project, Okere City sought a social enterprise approach that put the community at the center of its development. It chose the cooperative model because it not only gave the community a bigger voice but also enabled them to earn dividends

from their shares. Through initiatives in 2020, it has managed to generate profits in 2020 and 2021. Its membership has grown from 60 members in 2020 to 130 members in 2021 with another 60 members seeking to join. It registered profits of US\$ 2,000 in 2020 and US\$ 5,000 in 2021. The initiative has demonstrated that it can both be sustainable as well as the basis for significant community development in Okere City.

What is more, the initiative is led by sons and daughters of Okere Parish. People who came back to make a difference in the community. They did not return as old people at the end of their professional careers, but rather as young people, fully inspired and itching to make a difference in their communities. Their energy and ideas are already transforming this sleepy and laid-back village. It is no longer business as usual but unusual. Rather than depend on external ideas, Okere City has rallied the community towards identifying and solving its problems. For Okere City, the sky is the limit.

4.2 Replication Steps

The replication of the Okere City/ Okere Cooperative Shea Butter Model would require:

Step 1: Rally the community and listen to their voices and needs: Real and effective development begins and ends with the community. If the initiative is domiciled on real community needs and solutions, its chances of success are significantly enhanced. The community is not stupid – they will know when they are being taken for a ride. Any engagement with them has to be genuine and based on mutual respect.

Step 2: Develop a shared vision, mission and values: Communities are brought together by shared values and interests. To succeed, it is important to take the time to develop a shared vision and mission to guide the initiative. It is not about dictating what you want to do, but rather letting the community shape their future. Furthermore, if this vision is based on their culture and traditions, then it has a higher chance of success. Okere City and its cooperative have been able to leverage the social capital of the people to build a successful enterprise.

Step 3: Establish a team to spearhead the implementation of the vision and mission: The ideas are stillborn unless they are implemented. It is important to establish a competent team that works with the community in translating their dreams and aspirations into reality. One has to remember that there have been many other ideas

that have remained just that – ideas. Having the right team to steer the idea into reality can make the difference between failure and success.

Step 4: Get Board buy-in for the vision and mission: Good governance is key to the success of the venture. Many great ideas and aspirations have died at the altar of greed and poor governance. Getting the board to buy into the bigger vision and mission is therefore paramount. This ensures that they sacrifice their interests for the greater good. Since they work as volunteers, their full support and commitment are critical in maximizing their input into the intervention. If they do not lead from the front, then it may undermine the success of the initiative.

Step 5: Make the community a critical part of the process: Working with the community should not end at inception. In short, it is easy to forget the community along the way once the initiative is running. The community must be part and parcel of the entire journey. In reality, their contribution and ownership of the intervention process must grow and strengthen over time rather than wither and die. It is important to ensure that they fully participate rather than appear to receive reports. In Okere Shea Butter Cooperative, they capitalize on the enterprise through their 100kgs of nuts and provide labor that ensures that the business thrives. It is therefore important to continuously find ways to keep the community productively engaged in the enterprise.

Step 6: Identify community resources and assets that can be deployed to spur its development: Communities have myriads of resources that can spur their development. Many times, it is just that they have lived with them for so long that they take them for granted. At other times, it's ignorance of just what they have been gifted with. Rather than rush out for external resources, development initiatives need to start by identifying resources that can be harnessed for the community's development. Seeking external resources must be one last resort, not the first and only option. Furthermore, they need to complement the use of local resources and not replace them.

Step 7: Do your groundwork. Research the opportunities that you want to pursue: It is important to research and learn more about what you want to do. In Okere's City's case, it is only when they researched about Shea tree that they realized that they were sitting on gold. It is this realization that inspired them to found the Okere Shea Cooperative despite the challenges heralded by the Covid-19 pandemic. In short,

knowledge is power.

Step 8: Develop strategic plans to guide what you want to achieve: Irrespective of how good one's ideas are, they may not be achieved if they are poorly executed. Developing strategic plans not only act as a guide to how these ideas can be effectively and successfully executed but also help in selling the initiative to other well-meaning partners. This is captured by the management mantra that failing to plan is planning to fail.

Step 9: Capitalise on business plans to guide social enterprise activities: Social enterprises are businesses with a social mission. Business planning is therefore crucial to their success. Okere City has a business plan to guide its Shea Tree activities. This not only enables it to use its limited resources more effectively but also to plan for the growth and development of the enterprise. Business plans make it easier to attract other investors to support the initiative.

Step 10: Sell the vision to potential partners and investors and rally their support: Development requires the involvement and support of many actors. It can never be a solo project. Okere City

and its Shea Cooperative continuously sell its grand vision and mission to potential investors and supporters. While it has taken significant efforts to convince people that there is great potential in the sleepy parish of Okere, more investors are gradually buying into the vision. Their support is important in mobilizing the long-term investment that Okere City needs to achieve its grant dream.

Step 11: Think Creatively. Think of new ways of capitalizing on resources, solving social challenges and exploiting opportunities. As Einstein said, you cannot solve problems using the same old approaches. Solving the problems and challenges of Okere Parish or any other area requires new and creative thinking. This demands courage and the willingness to think outside of the box.

Step 12: Keep the faith. Believe in the process and rally the community and partners to support it. Things will not always move as quickly as you want them to. There will also be those who doubt the potential of ideas and attempt to drag you down. The leaders need to rally the community to keep the faith and keep going until success is achieved.



“Okere Shea Coop has lifted me” Ajacin

Jacinta Awor, a single mother of six children, is a member of the Okere Women's Shea Cooperative Society. Over the past five years, Ajacin, as she is profoundly called, has taken investment in Shea nuts as a top priority to increase her household's source

of income and ultimately improve the standard of living. Every year, she collects over 200 kilograms of Shea nuts and also buys shea nuts from other women in the neighborhood.

In 2022, Ajacin brought 300 kilograms of Shea nuts in addition to the 200 kilograms she had collected/harvested herself giving a combined total of 500 kilograms of Shea nuts. As a member of the cooperative society, Ajacin brought her annual membership contribution of 100 kilograms, sold 200 kilograms, and saved 200 kilograms with the coop. This makes her the biggest contributor in terms of the Shea nut share value in the cooperative society.

Jacinta received \$150 when she sold her Shea nuts to the coop in 2022. As she waits to recoup the dividends from her investment in Shea nuts in June 2023, which is projected at \$300, Jacinta is excited about the significance of investing in Shea nuts. But before that, selling her Shea nuts to cooperative society at a price that almost doubled what other middlemen were offering to the collectors was a relief to Jacinta's household. "The coop society is preventing us from being exploited by the middlemen who traverse our village offering exploitative prices," she says. "The money I got from selling the Shea nuts to

Okere Coop lifted my family because I used it to pay school fees for four children, in addition to helping me to meet medical expenses", Jacinta recollected.

But beyond the money, Okere Shea Coop which also invests in providing adult education to its members has helped women like Jacinta to learn basic numeracy and literacy skills. "The functional adult classes I attend as a member of Okere Shea coop has enabled me to plan and budget well from the money I get from selling Shea nuts", Jacinta said.

After realizing immense benefits from her first year as a member of the coop, Jacinta now hopes to borrow money from Okere Village Bank to invest in buying 1 ton of Shea nuts this coming season. She expects to use the profits and dividends generated from the sale of Shea nuts to build a semi-permanent house so that her children can always be guaranteed a good roof over their heads now and tomorrow.





Kenya Community Development Foundation
Morningside Office Park, 4th Floor, Ngong Road
PO Box 10501-00100 Nairobi, Kenya
Telephone (+254 020) 3540239/8067440/1/2
Office Cell (+254) 722 168 480/736 449 217
Fax +254 20 806 7440 | Email info@kcdf.or.ke
Website www.kcdf.or.ke