



ORGANISATIONAL HISTORY & TURNING POINTS

1997-2007

1997

Events

- + Movement from soup kitchen on streets to daycare centre.
- Rape of street boys and prosecution of rapists.
- Ridicule and verbal abuse of Mkombozi and street children.

Lessons learned

Street work and building trust with children on their terms and in their environment is fundamental to our approach.

Trust can only be built if the street children see tangible benefits accruing from our work.

Key changes

Mkombozi focuses on building trust with street children and ensuring that we offer them protection as well as a safe space.

1998

Events

- + Children participate in the renovation of the new centre and move in.
- + Bus stand event of music & drama to raise awareness.
- + Establishment of departments.
- + First internal review.
- Caring for children with life threatening illnesses.

Lessons learned

The need to balance planned development and systemisation within the organisation with the practical demand to "fire-fight" children's problems and issues on a continuous basis.

Key changes

Child participation becomes key to our philosophy and approach.

1999

Events

- + Mkombozi founds the NNOC.
- + Quantitative research and analysis of the reasons for child migration to the streets.
- + Some funding obtained from "development" donors:
 - Save the Children UK
 - DFID Small Grants Scheme
 - Irish Embassy
- Struggles with the behavioural issues of older youth.
- Situation of dissatisfied staff member and his discipline issues.

Lessons learned

Working in isolation inhibits our effectiveness.

Key changes

Focus shifts to stakeholder involvement in addressing the causes of street children (not just dealing with effects).

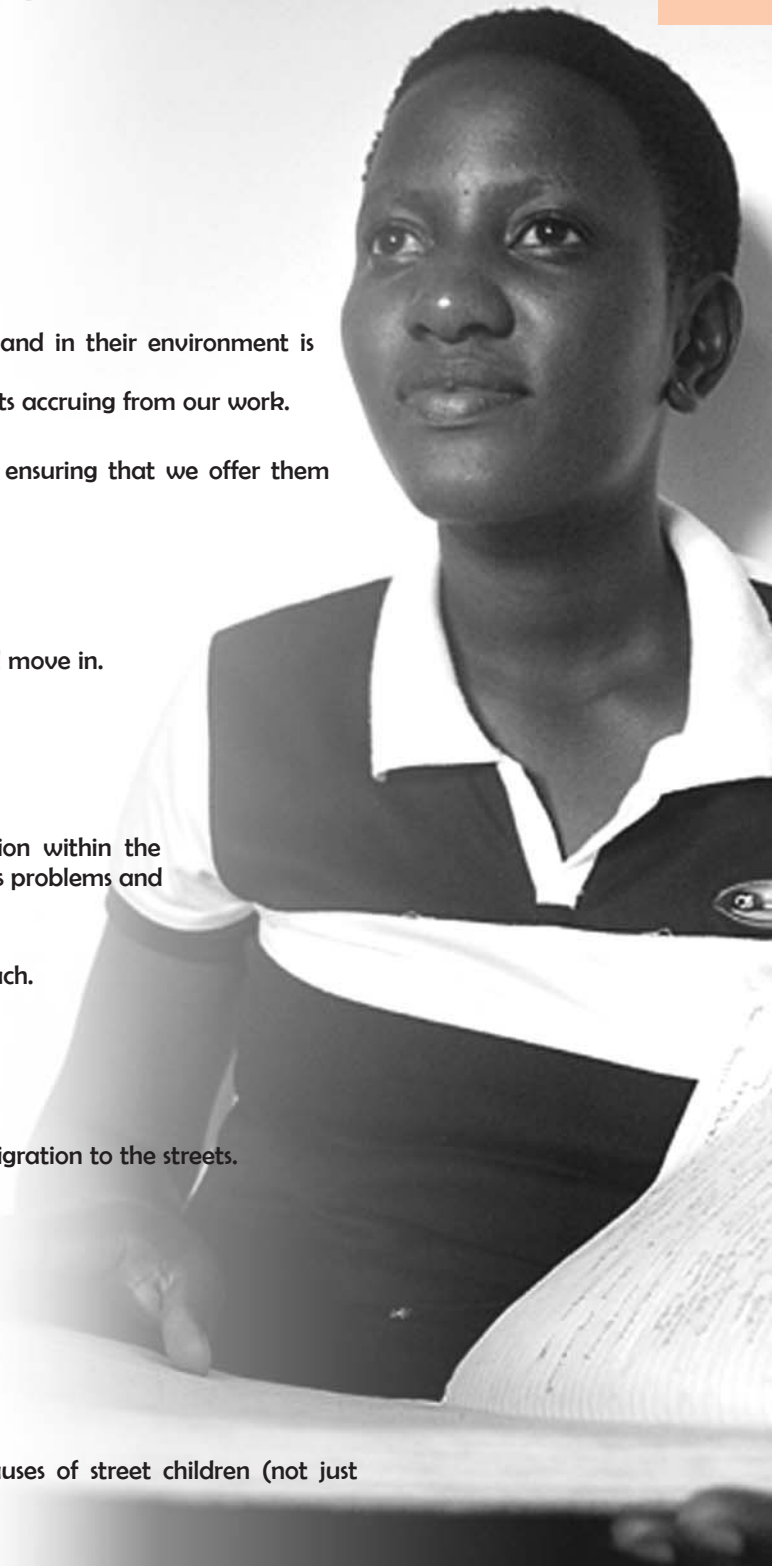


PHOTO: Hamisa resides in Mkombozi's girls group housing in Arusha (opened in late 2007) and is taking a six month course in Hotel Management. In February 2008, Hamisa attended an Empowerment Workshop at the Global Alliance for African Vijana Center where she received "life skills training". In fact, out of approximately 50 other girls at the workshop, Hamisa was awarded the prize for "Best Female Participant".

2000

Events

- + Mkombozi registers as a Trust.
- + Partnership with ChildHope.
- + CS project proposal is developed.
- Difficulty obtaining the necessary funding.
- Role of Kara Kirby as Community Strengthening Director is defined.
- To what degree do we involve all staff in direct care of the children?

Lessons learned

The need to validate work that addresses the “push factors”.

Key changes

Mkombozi's independence increases and its governance, leadership and performance are challenged to be more accountable and professional.



2001

Events

- + Lobbying against the round-ups of street children.
- + Development of joint work with other agencies.
- + Analysing the philosophy behind our work (PAR, Theatre for Development, Training for Transformation).
- Challenges in formalising child participation in the children's committee.
- Strategising how to devolve authority from the Directors.

Lessons learned

The need to engage in advocacy... the challenge being “how?”

Key changes

Strategic decision made to build a pan organisational strength which supersedes that of one individual.



2002

Events

- + Arusha Referral Service is started.
- + New partnerships with Maarifa and Pamoja.
- + Development of Board of Management.
- Donors and partners demand 100% accountability.
- Rapid pace of change within the organisation.
- Challenges of effective collaboration with other CSOs and local government.

Lessons learned

How to undertake systematic change rather than constantly responding on an ad hoc basis.

Key changes

Rapid change resulted in more responsibility and accountability. Mkombozi becomes more reflective in nature.



2003

Events

- + Registered as a UK Charity.
- + Start of quarterly monitoring and planning weeks.
- + Mkombozi conducts first-ever census of street children.
- + Start mentoring programme.
- + Withdrawal of CS Director from daily management.
- Start working with hardcore youths on the streets.

Lessons learned

The need to extend our grassroots development work and explore alternatives to centre-based care for street children.

Key changes

Rapid expansion and change, including increased hands-on management of staff, systematic planning and work monitoring.



2004

Events

- + Strategic planning exercise.
- + Education project funded.
- + External evaluation of Community Strengthening.
- + Work with local government.
- + Officially recognised as a COBET provider under MOEC.
- Restructuring of Community Strengthening Department.
- Police round-ups of street children in Arusha.
- Health crises with two staff.

Lessons learned

Other actors who ostensibly work with children do not necessarily share Mkombozi's value.

Key changes

Organisational shift from ad hoc fire-fighting to strategic planning.

2005

Events

- + EASUN intervention to evaluate Mkombozi's transition in terms of identity, governance, leadership and structure.

Lessons learned

Poor communication and lack of empathy undermines participation and team work.

Respect and care in all situations enables Mkombozi children and adults to express trust and to affirm each others' value.

Cooperation with government, families and communities enhances ability to address the root causes of child vulnerability and migration to the streets.

Mkombozi begins to formalise and strategise its external communications and to proactively establish "brand identity".

Skill-gaps in Mkombozi staff hinders a sense of ownership amongst our stakeholders.

Reflective practice strengthens professionalism, self-awareness and ability to manage change.

Key changes

Link between values and methodology made explicit through documentation of organisational "practice" and systems for staff support and development.

Recruitment procedures improved to ensure we hire staff that uphold our values.

2006

Events

- + Internal Child Protection Policy is developed and put into practice.
- + Inquiry-Based Model introduced into Non-Formal Education at Mkombozi.
- + Mkombozi develops fostering manual.
- + Boys group housing initiated in Moshi.
- + Establishment of new human resource systems.
- + Moving from departmentalised, hierarchical way of working to team-based work.
- + Staff able to better monitor services to children using a new database.
- + Mkombozi conducts second census of street children.
- Pioneering staff member passes away.

Lessons learned

By standardising our interventions for children / youth, and improving the systems in place for both children / youth and staff members, we are able to improve our services provision and grow as an organisation.

Need for purposeful change in mode of working by fitting into different teams, rather than sticking in one department.

Key changes

Mkombozi implements new methodologies and strategies for working with children and create mechanisms for regulating services provision.

2007

Events

- + The "mobile school" is given to Mkombozi and starts to operate as a street work tool for Arusha town.
- + The Arusha office moves to a new and improved location.
- + Mkombozi children participate in the Kilimanjaro Marathon and win three medals.
- + Improvement of recruitment, promotion and reward systems within Mkombozi.
- + Mkombozi starts group housing for girls in Arusha.
- + New M&E approach is piloted; "most significant change" stories collected from Mkombozi's stakeholders.
- + The Arusha Caucus launches the "50%" campaign for legal reform to protect children's rights.
- Mkombozi's Services Coordinator left.
- Mkombozi faces leadership changes as director announces her future departure.

Lessons learned

The need for professionalism in working with new staff members.

The need of strengthening working relationships and performance as well as sharing information within Mkombozi.

Accepting that new methodologies is a key to organisational growth.

Key changes

Organisational growth and trust increases within Mkombozi.