

Mkombozi

Empower. Engage. Enable.



An event to remember...

Saying farewell and looking into the future

As Mkombozi entered the new year, staff and children planned and hosted the organisation's most ambitious event! Inviting old friends and new, we officially bid farewell to former Director, Kate McAlpine, while at the same time warmly welcoming William Raj, who stepped into position as Mkombozi's new Director at the end of 2008.

Kate was the pioneer and Director of Mkombozi for 11 years, and her departure from the organisation has truly marked a new era for many people. During the event, she made a touching official speech, capturing her experience with Mkombozi throughout the years: "When I think about Mkombozi today, I see so many faces. I see the thousands of children, staff and other people who we have worked with throughout the years." Kate also proclaimed her confidence in William, saying: "Mkombozi is in the best hands possible."

The event, which took place on the 23rd January, started at noon with a lunch for staff and children at Mkombozi in Moshi, followed by games, welcoming speeches and youth performances. As guests arrived in the early afternoon, an educational tour took place around the Mkombozi premises, allowing visitors to learn more about the charity's work. Simultaneously, children and staff were enjoyed eating competitions, face painting, games and music.

When Mkombozi's new Director, William Raj, made his speech, he shared with the audience the two major lessons that he has learnt during his eight years as a staff member of Mkombozi: "First of all, I have learnt that Mkombozi is not just an organisation - Mkombozi is a dream! Secondly, I learnt that children come to the streets because they are not properly cared for by the people who should be responsible for them. The streets do not bear children - people do. These children are yours and mine, and they do not belong to the streets."

Importantly, this day-long event provided a golden opportunity for Mkombozi to recognise and reward the children with whom they work, and to strengthen networking with the surrounding communities. In fact, Mkombozi was pleased to receive some important guests at the farewell event, including representatives from local social welfare and community development departments, target schools, mentors, foster carers, religious leaders, and civil society organisations. Notably, attendees included:

- the Mayor of Moshi Municipality, Mr. Kaaya;
- the Regional Social Welfare Officer, Mrs. Urassa;
- the Community Development Advisor, Mr. Shayo (representing the Regional Commissioner);
- the Community Development Officer Mrs. Isangya (representing the Municipal Director of Moshi Municipality).

Despite the difficulty in saying farewell to Kate, this event reminded the organisation that it has many reasons to celebrate. In addition to welcoming our new Director and winning the STARS Impact Award in late 2008, Mkombozi has certainly grown into the mature, focused, innovative organisation to which it has always aspired.



**Leaders past and present:
Kate McAlpine and William Raj**



Mkombozi staff and youth - Honoring Kate