

# Mkombozi

Empower. Engage. Enable.



## Dialogue with Moshi Council...

### Increased commitment for vulnerable children

As an organisation which serves and empowers children on the streets, Mkombozi knows that sustainable solutions for this vulnerable group can only be reached within governmental and communal structures. Considering the prevalence of child vulnerability and migration to the streets in Northern Tanzania, increased commitment of local authorities on grassroots levels could lead to positive impact in the lives of many children. Thus, Mkombozi engages government leaders on municipal and ward levels in dialogue on a regular basis. In these meetings, children's issues are communicated as a priority for budgets and policy.

Notably, just this past July, Mkombozi hosted a workshop for municipal councilors and department heads in Moshi - the goal was to explore the situation of children in the area. The primary impetus for the July workshop was for Mkombozi to lobby the council to budget for most vulnerable children (including children who live in the streets), and also to discuss possible strategies for how the funds can best reach implementors on the ward and street levels of the local government authorities.

In fact, the workshop led to the members of the municipality announcing commitment to collect data on the prevalence of child vulnerability from the ward level and, even more significantly, to introduce a special desk in the council. This new desk shall be designated to coordinate all efforts related to children. In other words, the municipality displayed an increased commitment and sense of responsibility concerning the provision of social services to children who live in hardship. After facilitating the creation of these initiatives at municipal level, Mkombozi's present task is to follow-up and ensure these new commitments become reality and are put into practice.

Notably, during the workshop, the following issues, comments and challenges were expressed by the representatives from the municipal council:

- The role of the council should be to meet basic needs of MVCs (Most Vulnerable Children) such as education, health services and to provide for their general development.
- The implementation of local child-protection policies are hindered by the fact that there is a lack of cooperation between sectors responsible for children, and also because prevailing policies are not always known to the average local practitioner.
- In order to ensure that clear budgets and targets are in place for MVCs, NGOs and the municipal council should work together to obtain clear statistics, identify the needs and problems of vulnerable children, then prepare a strategic budget for provision of services at community level.



Municipal Council workshop, July 2009