

## MEDA ECD CASE STUDIES 2008

### **1. Changing from being a recipient to being a donor.**

The initiation of Early Childhood Development programme implemented by Malindi Education and Development Association through Kenya Community Development Foundation grant, Madam. Florence Masha changed her life. Ms. Masha an employee at the capacity of ECD teacher at Creazance Centre in Watamu zone –Malindi attended a 2 day community resource mobilization workshop organized by MEDA at Tawheed Girls secondary school in 2005. During the training, she realized that there were unexploited opportunities in her area and initiated a tree nursery garden as a source of income. She planted casuarina and flowers that were selling well in the area due to the presence of tourists. Later on she discovered that there was an ECD centre known as Golden Chance nursery school that had abandoned as a result of poor management and ECD children were subjected to harsh condition of traveling long distance to reach the nearby ECD centre.

Ms. Masha viewed the situation as both harsh condition and an opportunity for her to use her knowledge and skills to rescue the children and at the same time make a living out of it.

She renovated the place and reopened the ECD centre under a new name as Matano Junior academy named after her son known as Matano. Ms. Masha resigned from creazance and embarked to her new school as the proprietor. Currently, the academy has 39 children and supports other 5 orphans on terms of education, health, food and clothing.

Hence, the ECD programme has helped Ms. Masha to acquire knowledge and skills that has transformed her life from being a recipient (employee) to an employer (proprietor) and helps the needy children in the community such as the orphans to get their basic needs.

On sharing this case study with the community, Madam, Pamela Okoch a TOT in Central zone and the proprietor of lions Junior academy was impressed and took a challenge of sponsoring orphans too. Currently, Ms. Okoch supports 10 orphans at her centre. Last but not least is the Khairat ECD centre in Watamu zone. After learning what was happening to other ECD centres in terms of supporting orphans, the Khairat SMC passed a resolution of supporting unlucky children by ensuring access to education and other basic needs. Currently, Khairat is sponsoring 6 orphans.

### **2. Investing in early years of development.**

#### ***Kaembeni community***

Investing on early years of development in one's life had not been given a priority in most parts of Malindi district. Here is a story of Kaembeni, a village in Magarini zone in Malindi. ECD concept had not been well known to most of the parents and the

stakeholders. A few knew it as a rule by the government but could not under its relevance to the development of the child. ECD teachers were referred as people who pass time with children nothing more than playing and singing with children. Due to the domestication of education for all. Kaembeni primary school had more pupils thereby ECD children were subjected to learn under a tree shade.

The initiation of series of sensitization meetings on ECD concept conducted in the village that involved ECD parents, teachers, village elders and the community at large have beared fruits. In one of the sensitization meetings, the community resolved that STD 6 and STD 7 to learn under tree shades for their classes to be used by the young children in the ECD. Hence, ECD children were given classrooms while their brothers and sisters in STD 6 and 7 moved out to conduct their learning under tree shades as agreed by the SMC.

The hard work of the school head teacher and SMC on resource mobilization strategies managed to building 3 classrooms for the STD 6 and 7. Currently, both ECD children and primary school pupils learn in classrooms.

### ***Kakuyuni community***

Parents and SMC collaborated to build classrooms. 2 classrooms have been built and teachers have enough space to display materials safely. However, initially used to share the same classroom with madrassa that subjected materials to destruction. Note. Kakuyuni is one of the communities that have sustained feeding programme in the district.

### ***Msabaha community***

Msabaha is a famous village in Malindi known for its highest rainfall in the district. The community has invested in early years by initiating an integrated ECD centre in the village in 2007. It started with 60 children while in the year 2008 has initiated STD 1 class.

### ***Mambrui community***

Investing on early years has also been noticed in Mambrui community. Mambrui is a historic village in Magarini zone that is known in East and Central Africa in relation to *Islam*. The various activities that were conducted in the village on ECD concept have enabled the community to prioritize ECD programme over other development programmes as a result of understanding the importance of investing on early years of development of one's life. A tourist who had been impressed by the Mambrui community requested the community to identify one particular project that it would like to be supported. The community out of various development needs identified ECD programme as the most priority. The donor supported building of 4 classroom block for ECD children while MEDA management took initiative of equipping the classrooms with ECD materials to make it a model centre in Malindi district.

### **3. Formalized structure for ECD teachers associations.**

There has been groupings of various professionals in terms of associations such primary and secondary school teachers have the school heads associations & SACCO while there has been none for the ECD teachers. The ECD programme implemented by MEDA through KCDF grant found the idea of ECD teachers zonal associations and strengthened it. The zonal leaders were taken through group dynamics, leadership and governance training workshop. As a result, 4 zones namely, Central, Kakoneni, Kakuyuni and Watamu have developed constitutions and registered at the department of social services as ECD teachers Zonal Associations. For instance, Watamu Zone ECD teachers association has about 100 members and has started saving in order to initiate a bookshop in the area as income generating activity for the association.

The various zonal ECD teachers associations in the long run will be used as paying points for the ECD teachers' salaries instead of SMC. Other envisaged outcome is to provide voice for the ECD teachers' welfare and interests as it is happening to other professionals in other associations in addition of providing standardized high quality services to the children for their holistic development in the zones.

### **4. Increased stakeholders support on ECD programme.**

In Malindi district, ECD issues were only left to ECD teachers and the DICECE however with the introduction of the ECD programme funded by KCDF; stakeholders have started appreciating ECD concept relevance in development. Therefore, to mention but a few examples, provincial administration has been including ECD concept agenda in their regular public barazas, assisting ECD TOTs in mobilizing the community to participate on ECD forums and in facilitating formation of ECD village committees. Secondly; Dicece office and children department have tremendously changed many children's life by reaching the teachers and giving technical support in order for them to render their services to the children in the ECD centres and in the community. Additionally; Children officer has taken the initiative of supporting the implementing officers in arresting the teachers who have no materials in their ECD centres, because they are abusing children's rights. Last but not least; the religious leaders are also encouraging the congregation on complying on the child rights for holistic development.

### **5. Realization of need of quality ECD services**

People have been joining the ECD teaching professional without undergoing through training and it's only a few that were trained. Some of the reasons that most ECD teachers were joining the profession as untrained were high cost associated to transport and living expenses as there were no ECD teachers training college in the district among other reasons. The nearby ECD teachers training college was Kilifi DICECE in Kilifi district.

The various sensitization meetings that were conducted on ECD concept helped the community to understand the importance of having qualified ECD teachers to assist their children to develop holistically. As a results; untrained ECD teachers faced great challenges and through their conversation were heard saying that they have not trained due to lack of ECD teachers training college in the district. Later on, New Horizon was established in 2004, Malezi in 2005 while Talea in 2007. Hence; a total of 3 ECD teachers training colleges have been established with many ECD teachers enrolled for certificates and diploma courses.

For the first time in Malindi District Watamu zone ECD teachers' association leaders involved in assessing ECD centres in material development, class arrangement and display cleanliness of the centre, teacher child interaction and professional records if they were in order. Consequently; best ECD centre were awarded trophies, shield and other gifts on the day of celebration of zonal prize giving day in watamu zone which was held on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2007 at Gede primary school. This means that community is striving to provide quality services to the ECD children.

## **6. District ECD resource centre**

For a long time Malindi district has been lacking a resource centre on education. Establishment of ECD programme by MEDA created a demand for an ECD resource centre. The centre was established in 2006 through KCDF and community support. Currently; it serves as a reference point for information on early childhood development in the district. Parents, ECD teachers, ECD children, DICECE officers and other stakeholders are the regular users of the centre. To mention but one incidence, DICECE boroughs training materials from the resource centre whenever they have training on material development in the district. Other organizations implementing children programmes such Madrassa resource centre in Mombasa has brought parents, SMCs and teachers from Kwale, Taita, Kaloleni and Mombasa districts to Malindi to learn more on ECD programme.

## **7. Supporting children holistic development perpetually**

MEDA programme management unit (PMU) has acknowledged the impact created by the ECD programme supported by KCDF and has shared the findings with the management committee. The management committee resolved to build endowment with KCDF to support children holistic development perpetually. Hence; MEDA has transferred Kshs. 800,000/- for the ECD endowment building to KCDF. The possibility of increasing the endowment fund is still a priority to MEDA.

### **Emerging issues**

- Request for teaching and learning material exhibition per zone in an open air.

- Headmasters and school management committee training on ECD concept/child rights, transition planning and management of ECD centre, child participation and involvement right from the womb to early adult age (0-18 yrs).
- Develop a referral form in order for every child case to be handled properly.