

### ***Taking Charge-***

#### ***The case of Malindi Education Development Association's (MEDA) journey to Sustainability through Endowments.***

MEDA was registered as a CBO in year 1997 and is an active member of the Star of Hope Network of organizations in Malindi. MEDA is one of the local organizations supporting effective ECD programme work in Malindi district.

Before entering into partnership with KCDF to support a comprehensive ECD programme implementation in Malindi district, MEDA just like most organizations and institutions in Kenya was supporting the ordinary nursery/pre-school programmes for children 4-8 years with emphasis was being laid on increasing enrollments and promoting the physical and cognitive development of the children ignoring (out of ignorance) the other key areas of child development.

When KCDF support commenced, intensive community sensitization campaigns on ECD concept and on the rights of the children combined with capacity building for key programme implementers was carried out. This greatly enhanced the knowledge and skills of the organizations' leaders that led to the design and implementation of a comprehensive, age appropriate, gender responsive and cultural relevant ECD programme for holistic development of children 0-8. Unlike when MEDA support was limited to Malindi town, efforts were made to scale up the programme in other divisions/villages outside Malindi town to reach out to more deserving children. Having been a key programme in the organization, community mobilization was easily undertaken with encouraging results as evidenced by high level of community participation in ECD programmes' initiatives by gender. Soon there was increased child enrollments in ECD programme by gender were being recorded, there was improved services to enrolled children due to increased capacities among teachers and care givers, improved organizational and ECD centre management, production of local teaching, learning and play materials among others. In summary, there was a high demand for ECD programmes' services.

This high demand made MEDA start thinking seriously about the quality of services rendered and the issue of programme sustainability. After several awareness and capacity building sessions from KCDF on programme sustainability and particularly on community endowment fund building, MEDA took up the challenge and immediately developed appropriate strategies for resource mobilization. Luckily, their management committee had experience in development work and had witnessed many projects fail after external donor support and didn't want to see their programs go the same way. Taking the lead role and convinced that building the endowment fund is one of the most effective sustainability strategy, the management supported endowment fund awareness campaigns among the supported communities. With invaluable support from the strong religious institutions and individuals in Malindi town, MEDA is now a proud fund builder with the KCDF with an amount of Kshs 800,000. The organization is still mobilizing more resources to top up this amount so that they can harvest good returns at the end of each year to support their ECD work. Nowadays, many organizations are visiting MEDA each month to learn from their experiences and, borrow strategies and lessons learned in both ECD programme implementation and sustainability initiatives in place.