

Planting Seeds for Quality Education:

# The impact of Harambee Foundation Holland Partnerships in Western Kenya

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By Dr. Auma Okwany  
Erasmus University Rotterdam

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# Preface

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Harambee foundation Holland was officially registered in 2001 as a small NGO with the aim of supporting schools in Western Kenya. After 13 years, the work has expanded tremendously in many ways. At this moment 35 institutions have benefitted from the work of the foundation and our way of working has drastically changed.

Our commitment has developed into a real passion, a life fulfilment. To date we have been able to realise much, and we are particularly thankful to the special support and faith of many people around us in The Netherlands. We could not have achieved so much without their constant and generous support both in a practical way but also in terms of giving advice and ideas. In Kenya too, the cooperation with our local partners is very important. That does not mean it is always faultless and that we do not meet challenges. The cooperation demands much time, energy, understanding and patience, but especially respect, commitment, joy and the enduring personal relationship with the people on the spot. These are in our view, the core values that form the basis of our work. Meeting each other is the important element. That is the basis of our success.

Why do we really do this work? On the one hand, we enjoy doing it. We take great pleasure in realising something essential for people, and we are so pleased that it yields results. When a project in a school has been realised together with the people partners and community members and we see their enormous happiness, gratitude and commitment that makes us very happy. We are well aware that the well-known drop in the ocean actually does contribute towards a better world. On the other hand our motivation has to do with giving a meaning to our lives. We have our house in Kenya and have the opportunity to be there for a longer period. Twice a year for two months we live in what the Kenyan people call “your second home”. This implies that more and more we live in two worlds. It is not easy to handle this and we try not to compare the two worlds too much. The Netherlands is here and Kenya is there. Both worlds are full of abundance and opportunities in different ways and our Kenyan home has some serious development challenges. Reducing these challenges and even aiming to eradicate them especially for children, is our main motivation. We do not think we should try to shape Africa according to western notions, but we do try to work in partnership with communities in Western Kenya to raise their standard of living, and contribute to poverty reduction in our small way. In doing this we believe that the positive indigenous and local ways should be maintained, while challenging and changing those customs that violate rights.

A lot has been achieved for HfH and our partnerships in the last 12 years and it is good to reflect on the complicated aspects of the work and to investigate the collective impact of the work is during the last 13 years.

The foundation is extremely happy that Dr. Auma Okwany was willing to undertake this research. Thank you too Elizabeth Ngutuku for working with Auma on this study. HfH realizes very well that this was not an easy job to do. The foundation grew in an organic way and data was not always easily available. Nevertheless HfH is very grateful for the immense work you have done. "Ero kamano" Auma, you have helped the foundation in a wonderful way! Thank you too Nkindé for the support you have given in this research. Our sincere thanks also goes to the students, teachers, headmasters, community, parents, partners and government representatives. We know that it is only because of their generous and frank contributions, that this report was possible. We are grateful that they have expressed their feelings and worries very sincerely because only then can a clear picture be given about our collaboration and how they experience the input of the foundation's efforts.

We are also very thankful to Ron Schouwenaar. We could again rely on your timeless efforts to make a nice lay out for this report.

Last but not least we want to thank our three sons for their understanding and consistent support and for bearing with their parents being far away in Kenya four months of every year. We always miss each other when we are away but we know the reason why. HfH is very optimistic that our partnerships will benefit from the recommendations given in the report to strengthen our work so that we can contribute to a bright future for children and youth in Western Kenya through the seeds of quality education that we have planted. It is through the spirit of Harambee, that we hope to contribute to this important work.

**Dank u wel**

**Thank you very much**

Ero kamano

Orio mno

Marianne and Roel Meijers

15<sup>th</sup> of April 2014

# Acknowledgements

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The writing of this report has been possible only because of the help and support of many people. I would like to start by thanking Roel and Marianne Meijers for trusting me to tell the very inspiring story of HfH partnerships, I hope that this report has been able to do justice to the impressive efforts of your work. I would like to acknowledging most earnestly the support of Ms. Elizabeth Ngutuku of Nascent Research and Development Organization who walked the journey with me throughout the research and writing process: "Thank you Elizabeth for your ever astute input and for your unwavering friendship. May we walk many more journeys together." I am grateful for the institutional support from the International Institute of Social Studies, of Erasmus University of Rotterdam in terms of time and space to bring the report to completion.

Sincere thanks to the very able research assistants, Beatrice Okwany and Immaculate Ngosia, "Asanteni sana! For your hard work and your efficiency" I am thankful for the unreserved sincerity and passion of students, teachers, principals, Education Officers, chiefs and community members whose insights and voices helped us tell their stories. I wish to thank all the children and youth who participated in this study and who enabled us to get a perspective on the experience of learning. I am grateful to the HfH partners, coordinator, who were very helpful in identifying communities and key informants for the study. Last but not least profuse thanks to Nkindé for your steadfast and generous support and your invaluable computer wizardry.

Auma Okwany



## *Auma Okwany*

Auma Okwany (PhD) is an Assistant Professor of Social Policy at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) of Erasmus University Rotterdam in the Netherlands. She is a core faculty member of the M.A programme in Child and Youth Studies. Her teaching and research interests center on the relationship between policy, practice and theory in childhood and youth more broadly and in education reform efforts in particular with a focus on factors that define exclusion for disadvantaged groups. She is coordinator of the Research component of the Comprehensive Sexuality Education project for Young people in Ethiopia and Uganda Implemented by Save the Children Netherlands and Save the children USA and funded by the Netherlands Government. She is also a team member of the ISS project funded by the Netherlands government, which aims at strengthening the capacity of Higher education institutions in Uganda in Social Development and Social Justice.

# Introduction:

## Enhancing Quality Learning Environments

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The photographs above of two blocks of classrooms at Mukuyuni Primary School depict infrastructural development (renovation and construction) aimed at expanding access and enhancing quality learning environments. The completed block on the right was the collaborative effort of the interdependencies built between Harambee Foundation Holland (HfH), their local partner ICFEM and mobilized local communities who contributed financial, human, organizational and physical resources in a process that engenders ownership and strengthens accountability. In stark contrast, the construction of the block of three classrooms on the left was funded by the state under the Kenya education sector support programme (KESSIP) for primary school infrastructure improvement. Construction ground to a halt and the building remains incomplete and unused because the “funds ran out”<sup>1</sup>. This is despite state allocation of an estimated 4.5 million shillings, which is almost double the amount used to construct the block of six classrooms supported by the HFH partnerships. Planning and construction was done in a top-down manner with no involvement of parents and the local community networks.

<sup>1</sup> Despite the quantitative and qualitative gains made by the KESSIP program a 2011 forensic audit revealed that about 1.9billion had been embezzled. This represents 1% of the 489 billion that had been allocated for school infrastructure. Ideally the program is supposed to be implemented by school's management and infrastructure committees, which should receive the grant. However there are numerous challenges facing the implementation of the KESSIP project ranging from inadequacy of funds, irregular release of funds, and proper oversight and accountability systems to ensure effective and transparent management of resources.

The photo is a visual encapsulation of the distinct difference between the top-down, opaque, (even corrupt) and wasteful government processes, with the well coordinated, transparent and efficient processes of the HfH partnerships. Such bureaucratic and hierarchical state structures continue to constrain efforts to improve education quality in Kenya. In this report we argue that state efforts to improve education could benefit from drawing lessons of community inclusiveness and accountability from non-state actors such as the HfH partnerships. The HfH collaboration is effective because it combines external resources with local resources (human, financial, social, organizational), which are mobilized using a bottom-up approach that gives prominence to the input of parents and community members as key policy actors. This engenders ownership and sustainability in enhancing community involvement in improving quality in education. This study reviews the achievements, possibilities and challenges of these collaborative efforts of Harambee Foundation Holland and its local partners and highlights the implications for strengthening the quality of education for local communities in Western Kenya.

## **The Impact study**

The study, was commissioned by the Dutch non governmental organization Harambee Foundation Holland (HfH), and is an assessment of the impact of the partnerships of HfH and its local partners: a faith based organization Inter Christian Fellowships Evangelical Mission (ICFEM)<sup>2</sup> working in Bungoma county, The Kimilili Parish of The Catholic Church through Father Peter Makokha and an educationalist Mr. John Were in Mumias constituency of Kakamega county and in Ugenya constituency of Siaya county. In 2013 the HfH collaboration instituted a new way of working (*see Annex 5 and 6*) and a new partner Mr. Albert Webale joined the collaborative.

Harambee Foundation Holland focuses attention on strengthening access to and quality of education in the public education system (including early childhood education primary, secondary, special education.) as well as and technical and vocational training in youth polytechnics. This is done in collaboration with local partners through infrastructure development and capacity building activities to enhance quality teaching and learning as well as community support of education. The HfH collaboration including mobilized communities provides a model, which shows that partnerships are an effective way to extend and complement public social services such as education. The study is a review of the impact of the collaboration and is both a review and internal assessment with the main objective of assisting HfH and the local partners to reflect critically on their collaborative activities, extract lessons learnt and chart and strengthen a way forward for their continued collaboration.

<sup>2</sup> While ICFEM has been a significant part of the history and the remarkable journey and achievements of the HfH collaborative as documented in this report, As the HfH collaborative continues its journey under the new agenda the partnership with ICFEM ceased in 2013.

# Background:

## Education and Rural Based Disadvantages

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Education is the key route to social and economic advancement and the right to education<sup>3</sup> is a bridge to other rights. Education enables people to develop their full capacities, participate fully in development and improve the quality of their lives (UNESCO, 2000). It has helped in the elimination of child labour in some countries (Tomasevski, 2003) and according to Oxfam (2004) young people who have completed primary education are less likely to contract HIV. High quality universal schooling for all children ensures capability enhancement and acquisition of socioeconomic skills that will enable participation in an increasingly competitive workplace and a global knowledge economy. Since the Education for All and Millennium Development Goals were adopted in 2000 great strides have been made in Education in much of Africa. These gains include increased efforts in universalizing primary education; increased participation in secondary and tertiary education and narrowing the gender gap.

Despite the significance placed on education and the gains made in improving participation and closing the gender gap, schooling continues to be riddled with unequal access, unequal quality and the unequal distribution of the benefits of schooling. According to the EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR) there are still 72 million children out of school (UNESCO 2010: 1-2). Indeed, although Africa has the world's youngest population of all the world regions, it also has the highest number of children out of school as well as the highest gender disparity rates in education of all regions. In Kenya, the government re-instituted the policy of free primary education in 2003 and since then there have been both quantitative and qualitative gains made in education. However, over one million children are still out of school, with high drop-out rates, low completion rates and according to (MOE, 2009), the illiteracy rate remains high at 38.5 percent.

A key factor defining marginalization is spatial location including residence in rural areas. In Kenya, 79% of the population lives in rural areas and this is the context wherein HfH collaborative projects are located. The majority of children in rural areas face many

3 These rights are enshrined in various treaties and charters ranging from the 1948 Universal Declaration for Human Rights (Article 26); the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, Article 28); regional treaties like The OAU African Charter (Article 11) as well as national bills of rights..

intersecting economic, socio-cultural, school-related and policy factors defining quality including: Long distances to school, direct and indirect costs of education, as well as HIV/AIDS and gender-based retrogressive cultural practices; teacher absenteeism and lack of training and support for teachers (MOE 2009, Oketch and Ngware 2010, Okwany 2010).

In rural areas where the HfH partnerships work, these are compounded by poor infrastructure and inadequate or lack of educational materials. Indeed many developing countries, especially in Africa, still have woefully inadequate levels of rural infrastructure and human capital, and this is a major constraint to their development and to reducing rural poverty (Fan and Methakunnavut, 2004). Socioeconomic conditions and inequalities greatly impact the quality of life in rural locales that are often characterized by poor or nonexistent infrastructure and little or no provisions of critical social services. This negatively impacts the quality of education for children who have to walk long distances to poorly resourced schools. Most of these schools have poor physical environments that greatly impact the quality of teaching and learning. Students in rural areas are disadvantaged by the widespread economic insecurity and exclusion, which includes lack of and/or constrained access to labour markets, credit and other forms of 'capital assets'.

Given these challenges, the underlying goal of universalizing education remains unattainable as significant groups are excluded from the basic right to education with serious implications for equity and for distributive social justice. Additionally, communities who bear a great financial burden for education are mere objects of policy and learning in schools remains de-contextualized from the life world as policymakers and development plans have failed to domesticate institutions such as schooling for the continent's own purposes (Adala and Okwany, 2009, Banda 2009). A critical aspect of domestication and education quality is creating an education system with strong school community links and local involvement. Against this backdrop, Harambee Foundation Holland in collaboration with local partners work to combat the combined and intersecting policy, institutional, and socio-economic barriers to the right to quality education for children and youth in the study contexts.

# Collaborative Project Contexts

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HfH collaborative projects are located in rural areas of Western Nyanza and Rift Valley in Kenya notably in Bungoma County; Mumias constituency in Kakamega County; Ugenya constituency of Siaya County and Kiminini one of the five constituencies in Trans Nzoia County (*See Map Annex 1*)<sup>4</sup>. The counties are geographical units envisioned by the 2010 Constitution of Kenya as the units of the new devolved governance system. County commissioners represent the national government and an executive committee, consisting of a governor, deputy governor and a county assembly, runs each county.

Bungoma County, where HfH collaborative has the most widespread presence, has nine constituencies.<sup>5</sup> The area is a strong agriculture base producing sugarcane, tobacco, vegetables and Maize production in Tongaren and Naitiri, makes the county a vital part of the country's bread basket. However, the county has high poverty levels with 53% of the population living below the poverty line and a high young population with an age dependency ratio of 93.8. Typical characteristics of the population include high unemployment, low participation of locals in commercial enterprises, and high rates of child labour due to high school dropout rate, high dependency ratio, high population growth and a high youth/adult ratio. The circumcision ceremonies are a rite of passage for boys is a significant feature of the socio-cultural context and takes place every two years. These ceremonies have an adverse impact on the education of both boys and girls and they are also a financial drain on households at the expense of schooling.

The HfH collaborative also operates in Ugenya, one of the six constituencies of Siaya County.<sup>6</sup> The poverty rate for Siaya county is 57.9% and 57% of the population is below 19 years of age hence the high dependency ratio of 106:100. There is a high level of child vulnerability linked with both the high poverty rate as well as very high HIV/Aids prevalence for the 15-49 years cohort at 24% compared to the national average of 6.7%. Maternal to child transmission rate is also high at 17%. Sixty percent of women and children live below

4 A new project area Busia County has been added to the HfH collaborative in 2014. (Busia County has five constituencies namely: Teso North, Teso South, Nambale, Matayos, Butula, Funyula, Budalangi).

5 These are Mt. Elgon, Sirisia, Kabuchia, Bumula, Kandunyi, Webuye, Bokoli, Kimilili, Tongaren

6 The constituencies are: Ugenya, Ugunja, Alego Usonga, Gem, Bondo, Rarieda

the poverty line with maternal and infant mortality rates being among the highest in the county. Women and children bear the heaviest burden of malnutrition, malaria and HIV/AIDS.

Another project area is Kiminini constituency in Trans Nzoia County.<sup>7</sup> This county is nested between Mt. Elgon and river Nzoia and borders Bungoma county to the West, the Rift Valley to the East. The county is largely agricultural with historically large and small-scale wheat, maize and dairy farming and its role in food production making it a national breadbasket. However, the county has increasingly seen soaring poverty levels currently over 50% attributed to a dwindling maize yield, poor livestock production and low milk production.

A HfH partnership also has projects in Mumias, one of the twelve constituencies of Kakamega County.<sup>8</sup> The majority of inhabitants in this county are in the agricultural sector and most of the laborers are female. Kakamega County suffers extreme demographic pressure with a poverty rate of 52% and high levels of child vulnerability with 20% of the population below 4 years of age and primary school dropout rate of 26%.

The HfH collaborative projects are thus located in areas of widespread economic insecurity where there is clearly great need for quality social services including education to promote inclusion and capability enhancement.

## **Study Framework**

The conceptual framework weaves together discussions around state-civil society relations in education and quality education and these are used in the report to analyze the HfH collaborative efforts in planting seeds for quality education.

## **State-Civil society relations in Education**

The collaborative work of Harambee Foundation Holland and local partners is set within the context of widespread economic insecurity and the inability of state institutions to respond to the diversity of local contexts and the needs of different groups and ensure universal basic rights (including adequate shelter, education, security and health). The inadequacy of the state provisioning of universal services has created a development void that is occupied by both foreign and local non-state actors, like HfH and local partners in the provision of education.

7 Other constituencies in the county include : Kwanza, Endebess, Saboti, Kiminini, Cherenganyi

8 The constituencies are: Lugari, Likuyani, Malava, Lurambi, Makholo, Mumias, Mumias East, Matungu, Butere, Khwisero, Shinyalu, ikolomani. Major Towns: Kakamega

Non-state actors are seen as more able to perform with greater ease and flexibility than the state in responding to local needs because they enjoy stronger connections to grassroots and policy implementation processes. However, they also have limited resources and are frequently unable to carry projects to scale. Additionally, non-state actors also have shifting priorities and their own agendas may lack the structural accountability that underpins public education. Indeed as stated by (Samoff, 2007) it is only the state that has the institutional capacity to provide education for all. The state is the key duty bearer and educational resources must be institutionalized within national governments where citizens have an enforceable claim. This means that the state and non-state actors require complementarity of efforts in providing social services including education. While there are arguments that strong non-state actors can undermine state capacity, civil society can enhance the responsiveness of state provision. For instance through *Harambee*<sup>9</sup> efforts, non-state actors in Kenya promoted government legitimacy among large segments of the population in the first two decades after independence. This is because the state built interdependencies with mobilized communities and other non-state actors thereby complementing rather than supplanting or weakening state capacity (Bradshaw, 1993, Ndegwa, 1996). In this study we examined the ways in which Harambee Foundation Holland and local partners collaborate and partner with mobilized communities and local state institutions to strengthen education quality and thereby promote community development.

## **Strengthening State Provisioning**

The study was carried out within a state-civil society framework, which recognizes that non-state actors have a critical role to play in education. Hoppers (2000) describes three types of civil society engagement in provision of education: complementary, supplementary and compensatory initiatives. While complementary and supplementary initiatives add on to existing public education efforts, compensatory initiatives try to offset the inadequacies of government provision by offering services parallel to but often of a poorer quality to those offered by the government leading to permanent marginalization. Indeed, most non-state actors providing education for marginalized groups take on a compensatory rather than a complementary approach. These efforts are often fragmented, limited in capacity and outreach, taking on a project rather than a systems approach and struggling in isolation on the margins of the formal system (Okwany, 2010). The efforts of HfH and partners stand in contrast to these programs because their processes and method of working complement and strengthen state provision of education by mobilizing key stakeholders including parents, communities and children as key policy actors and working within the public schools system.

9 *Harambee* is the national motto in Kenya and means pulling together for the common good (self-help). Cultivated widely as a development ideology since independence, the movement has given rise to thousands of self-help groups.



State-civil society theories are used in this study to highlight the interaction between the state and civil society in providing education and how state-civil society interaction can enhance inclusive education. As innovators of pilot programs, non-state actors show the importance of targeted action, which the state can incorporate into the national system and take to scale. The efforts of non-state actors should ideally focus on highlighting a range of innovations for expansion of educational delivery and strengthening a quality inclusive system. This includes but is not limited to: strengthening schools (infrastructure, teaching learning combating norms); bringing out of school children and youth back to the realm of formal schooling<sup>10</sup>; adult and youth literacy and work programs; boosting community development (through entitlements and opportunities) and strengthening school-community links to hold governments to account by supporting social movements and mobilizing communities to claim their right to education. In this way, they can contribute to the transformation and expansion of education that is inclusive and help create the required foundation for a learning society (Adala and Okwany, 2009). The study draws on this framework to examine the strengths and limitations of the interaction between the HfH collaboration and their local partners including government both local and national in their educational activities and the impact of these activities on quality education and community development.

## **Conceptualizing Quality Education**

Recent research demonstrates quite conclusively that education of a good quality promotes sustained economic growth and can reduce poverty dramatically (Barro & Lee, 2001; Hanushek & Zhang, 2006; Hanushek & Wößmann, 2007). Indeed the poor seem to be more responsive to school quality and demand for education is depressed when educational quality is poor and when parental and community support is limited or excluded (Morrisson, 2002:15). How resources are combined and how they are used is of great importance to promoting quality education. In poor countries, the lack of educational resources in schools makes learning extremely difficult. According to (UNESCO EFA, 2005:47) only an average of 8.7 on a list of 22 desirable resources for teaching were available in the 14 countries studied, and as many as 10% of children (45% in Zanzibar) had no place to sit. Such a lack of basic resources, infrastructure, extreme overcrowding and other teaching learning resources contribute to a lack of quality education in many rural schools. Resources are more widely available in well off-urban than in urban poor and rural areas and according to the World Bank (2004) good teachers avoid poor schools because of the greater difficulty of teaching in schools with poor infrastructure and resources.

For effective poverty reduction, it is important to increase access to education, but also to place emphasis on the quality of such education because the poor suffer most

<sup>10</sup> These range from bridging programs, accelerated programs for overage youth as well as re-enrolment drives.

when the quality of education is weak. In addition, there is a particularly large benefit to expanding both the quantity and the quality of female education. Increasing enrolment requires dealing with both demand factors and supply factors. On the demand side, this can be achieved most easily through reductions in the costs of schooling (for example, abolishing school fees) or subsidies to attend school (for example cash transfers of livelihood skills and income support for families). On the supply side, it is important to build enough schools in rural areas, to provide a conducive learning environment with adequate resources, and to prevent a rapid expansion of demand from completely swamping supply, with the resultant extreme overcrowding that countries such as Kenya have experienced after abolishing school fees. Poor schools also often suffer from having fewer resources, due either to budget limits or to inequitable resource allocation among schools. Additional resources are important, but it is also important to ensure that they are available in the right combinations and that school and classroom organization adjust to use these resources well.

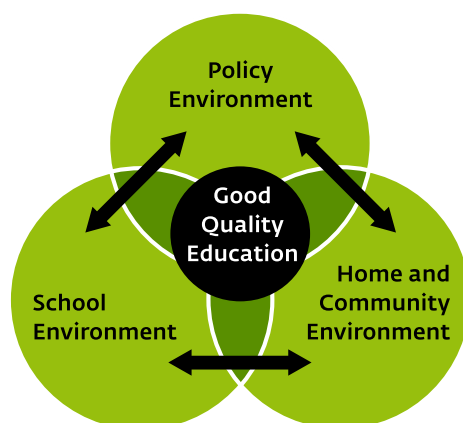
In this study we use the definition of quality by Tikly (2010) who draws from extensive research by EdQual<sup>11</sup> to show that a good quality education is a product of three overlapping environments, namely the policy, the school, and the home/community environments (See figure 1). A good quality education arises from the correct mix of enabling inputs and processes in these three inter-related environments.

Figure 1: Quality Education Framework

### Study Objective

The objective of the study was to examine the impact of the work of HfH and local partners in education. The study sought to provide evidence-based reflection on a range of issues including: how much ground has been gained in their shared objective and the wider relevance and significance of their activities in enhanced education quality. The study highlights the achievements, constraints and challenges as well as pointers for the way ahead and lessons from the partnerships.

### A simple context-led framework for education quality



<sup>11</sup> EdQual is a collaborative research programme of a consortium of six universities focused on improving the quality of school and classroom processes mostly in Africa. Work closely with teachers to develop strategies that work in their local realities and empower them as agents of change, the program funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), aims to generate and promote knowledge to improve the quality of education, particularly formal basic education, for disadvantaged learners.

Importantly the study was also an introspection assisting the organizations to reflect critically on their joint activities.

## **Methodology**

Baseline data is an essential component of effectively assessing how well a project has performed or is performing in achieving its objectives. The HfH model like many small non-state organizations has evolved in an organic manner with their work and collaborations coming about in what Kinsbergen (2014:63) refers to as "happenstance." This refers to a start-up process, which is often rooted in the founders' and local partners' passion and enthusiasm and in which there is often no extensive pre-planning and context analysis. A key aspect of this organic evolution is that there is a lack of a systemic Management of Information Systems including a baseline at the start of implementation activities as well as systemic monitoring and mid-term review data all, which limit the basis for collecting end line data. This lack of structured monitoring and evaluation is a notable risk in the work of small-scale development initiatives such as HfH with the focus of most of the reports limited to descriptive project execution and outputs (ibid.).

We were confronted with this lack of baseline data in designing this assessment of HfH collaboration project impacts. We resolved this by adopting a retrospective approach to gathering past and present information on project impacts to generate information about the situation that prevailed before and after the project activities from a range of stakeholders. We used the elicitation technique of recall through questions for focus-group discussions and key informant interviews. This is consistent with the contention by researchers such as Belli, Stafford, and Alwin (2009); Deaton and Grosh (2000) who note that when carefully designed and implemented, recall can be a valuable tool and means for reconstructing baseline data. Within the scope and limits of the study, our methods were thus designed to capture participants' perceptions of the most significant changes, which happen or are realized by the beneficiaries as a result of an intervention (Davies and Dart 2005). These perceptions are particularly significant because they enable an assessment or evaluation of a project in terms of the changes reported by the beneficiaries themselves rather than only focusing on whether the project objectives have been met by using indicators, which they may fail to understand.

It is important to note that, significant changes reported from beneficiaries and providers' recall are also essential because as noted by Bamberger (2010), the complexity and overlapping benefits from several interventions involved in social service provisioning has an impact on the attribution made to any one project. We thus felt that students, parents/caregivers, teachers and community members were best placed to determine and distinguish the scope and limits of several interventions from which they have benefitted and attribute the correct impacts of project activities from their perspectives.

Data collection was undertaken between July 2012 and December 2012. We asked study participants (teachers, students, parent/caregivers, education officials and project staff) to recall before-and-after factors that defined children's access to, participation and performance in education resulting from the HfH collaborative projects and we did not define the particular domain of change for them. Follow-up and probing questions related to ascertaining their level of involvement and ownership in project activities and influences on well-being. This helped in capturing the most impactful effects of project activities and subjective perceptions of most significant changes. We carried out a lot of 43 focus group interviews with a range of participants including: 262 students from ECD, primary, secondary school and Polytechnics; FGDs with Parents, community members at purposively selected communities and one with the School Management Committee at Hafoland Primary school. Additionally we carried out a total of 22 Key informant Interviews (see Appendix 1 for a more comprehensive list of study participants).

We paid attention to gendered perspectives as well as differences in age groups. The field study was triangulated with a review of secondary data, which highlighted key quality dimensions in the literature on quality of education as well as state NGO-relations in education and debates and discussions around partnerships. Additional information was obtained from the websites of HfH and IcFEM as well as published newsletters and project documents including HfH Annual Reports. The insights gained from this review are referenced throughout the analysis and discussion so as to situate the data within the broader context. In August 2012, preliminary findings were presented to HfH directors and key IcFEM staff.

Data collection techniques included child friendly tools to capture the voices and perspectives of young people as the direct beneficiaries of education. We observed due ethical considerations and took measures at all stages to seek consent and assent. Study participants including children were assured of confidentiality and anonymity in research including reporting and interactions were based on clear and respectful communication. This included consent and assent to take photographs as well as tape recording of interviews. A clear explanation of the aim of the research and time commitment involved included provision for study participants including young people to opt out of the research at any point and to freely express views and ask questions at any point.

The range of people interviewed included the Directors of HfH, Director and staff of IcFEM, Local Partners Father Peter and Mr. John Were, The coordinator, staff and parents of the Education Assessment Resource Center in Mumias, as well as teachers and principals from purposively selected primary and secondary schools, ECD teachers and students from ECD centers, primary, secondary schools as well as youth polytechnics. We also conducted interviews with purposively selected community members parent/caregivers and members of school management committees as well as, Local govern-

ment officials including the district education officers, local chiefs and the area Member of Parliament.

For this impact study we used participatory research as an approach to enable the involvement of multiple stakeholders in the research process (paying attention to power and voice for women and children). The combination of primary and secondary approaches enabled an analysis of the goals objectives, achievements and constraints in planning and participation as well as policies governing the collaboration and to provide historical and current information on the projects. Data has been analyzed qualitatively and presented in themes and care taken to assign meaning to qualitative data.



*Collaborating to plant seeds for Quality Education*

# The HfH Collaborative: History, scope and goals

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Harambee foundation Holland has an interesting history tied to one of the founders Roel Meijers that stretches back to the 1970s when he was a teacher of mathematics and physics in Kimilili from 1974 until 1976 within the Dutch development cooperation programme. In 1998, Roel, Marianne and their family returned to Kenya after fundraising to help construct classrooms at his former school Kimilili Boys High School and that was the first project for the HFH partnerships. Three years later the next project followed which involved constructing a science lab at Kimilili Boys High School and St. Theresa's Girls Secondary School. The number of schools approaching the founder members for support increased steadily and this prompted the formal establishment of the foundation on 21st June 2001 to create a formal structure and system for providing support with Marianne and Roel as co-directors. In the Netherlands, fundraising intensified and a fund raising committee was formed with volunteers coming on board to assist the organization in mobilising resources. The Foundation developed a structure for disbursement of resources and spelt out their vision with a clear governance system including a board of directors and a transparent financial accountability system. The secretariat is based in Bavel in the Netherlands. They also established cooperation with joint programs of development that support small-scale Dutch development initiatives working in developing countries by co-financing projects and helping improve the quality of the support.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> The support offered by organizations in the Netherlands like COS, IMPULSIS, Wilde Ganzen and Stichting Sukaisa includes matching grants as well as technical advice, strengthening networks and training on important development issues to ensure sustainability of their projects. It is estimated that in the Netherlands there are up to 15,000 private foundations, small scale NGO's and other civil society organizations active in supporting projects all over the world.

# HfH Partnerships Goals: Quality Education for Community Development

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The main objective of Harambee Foundation Holland partnerships is supporting the substantial improvement of quality of educational opportunities as a pathway to raising the living standards of local communities in Western Kenya.

HfH partnerships achieve these objectives with initiatives that target the following quality dimensions of education:

- 1 **Enabling quality-learning environments** – this is done in primary and secondary schools and includes early childhood education and special needs education as well as technical and vocational institutions for the participating institutions. In the project contexts, infrastructural development is a critical first and foundational aspect of quality education and includes the following:
  - The renovation of existing structures including classrooms so as to improve the learning environment by decongesting overcrowded poor quality structures to accommodate increased student populations or to enhance access for those who are out of school.
  - Construction or renovation of classrooms for Early Childhood Education. This is very critical given the limited attention paid to this foundational phase of education in public schools.
  - Construction and renovation of whole schools (for selected projects)
  - Construction of other structures such as libraries, laboratories in schools and workshops in youth polytechnics
  - Construction of sanitary facilities which is proportionate to the student population and paying attention to gender and age differences
  - Construction/renovation of technical and vocational education institutions specifically youth polytechnics. This has involved the revitalization of youth polytechnics to facilitate the training of youth in technical, vocational and entrepreneurial skills in an effort to increase their productivity and equip them with skills to participate fully in productive activities.
- 2 **Supporting capacity building:** HfH partnerships draws from their network of education experts in Kenya to facilitate training workshops for school heads, teachers and parents' committees of the schools supported by the project. The collabora-

tive views teaching and good administration as a key quality dimensions. This also strengthens accountability structures because parents who are engaged can hold providers including the state accountable and demand quality performance and outcomes from the schools for their children.

- 3 Quality Systems are Equitable Systems:** The HfH collaborative is aware that access to education is not equitable and is restricted for many children and there are barriers that make schooling difficult for many girls, very young children and children with disabilities. Early childhood Education (ECE) is restricted for many children because this early phase is not part of the public school system. The partnerships strengthen equity in the following ways:
- Promoting the inclusion of early childhood education (ECE) generally and in the project schools;
  - Supporting and promoting girls participation in education
  - Strong support for the inclusion of children with disabilities (including early detection, assessment, placement, quality services)

Within the promotion of an enabling quality-learning environment, the HfH partnerships promote attention to adequate teaching and learning, equipment and materials including desks and textbooks. In these endeavors, the collaborative makes concerted efforts to promote the use of local materials and labor thus boosting the local economy by mobilizing human and organizational resources as well as working with local artisans carpenters and masons.

It is important to note that with the elimination of tuition fees in primary schools in Kenya, the government supports schools by providing books and other teaching material, as well as paying for the upkeep of the buildings. Consequently from 2005, the HfH partnerships no longer provides teaching materials but the focus of their efforts has shifted to other dimensions of quality specifically infrastructure, school based professional development, stakeholder engagement and enhancing community voice. Marianne and Roel note that the government is gradually involved in and contributes to the HfH partnerships projects and they are increasingly asked by local education officials to support schools in the area.

### **Local partners for meaningful community engagement**

HfH works through local partnerships in recognition that local partners who are embedded in the community are critical to enhancing meaningful and contextually responsive engagement and ensuring the success of projects. IcfEM was the initial partner in Kimilili and Father Peter of the Kimilili parish became a partner for the catholic schools with John Were as the partner in Mumias and Ugenya (and the newest partner Albert Webale in Kiminini).



IcFEM is a faith-based organisation that was founded as an inter-denominational Mission in 1995 and it is based in Kimilili. Their programmes are focussed on rural transformation through their model of integrating spiritual, social and economic development with innovative provision of holistic care. IcFEM aims to enhance self-reliance of people within the rural areas of Kimilili. The mission works through community structures known as Local Transformation Units (LTU). These structures undertake important community conversations on different aspects of development like education, health and agriculture among others. The local transformation unit is the platform upon which issues of education are raised within the community.

The second partner is the Catholic Parish of Kimilili through Father Peter Makokha. The Catholic Church is one of the most prominent stakeholders in education provision, running the world's largest non-governmental school system. In Kenya the church owns some schools and sponsors many others. Father Peter sits on the school board of the Catholic schools in Kimilili, and is also a member of the District Education Board (DEB) in Kimilili. The third partner Mr. John Were is a successful educationalist who was the principal of several high-performing national secondary schools in the region before his retirement. He oversees HfH projects in Mumias and Ugenya and is on the board of several schools as well as being a highly regarded education consultant. The partnerships are depicted in figure 2 below.

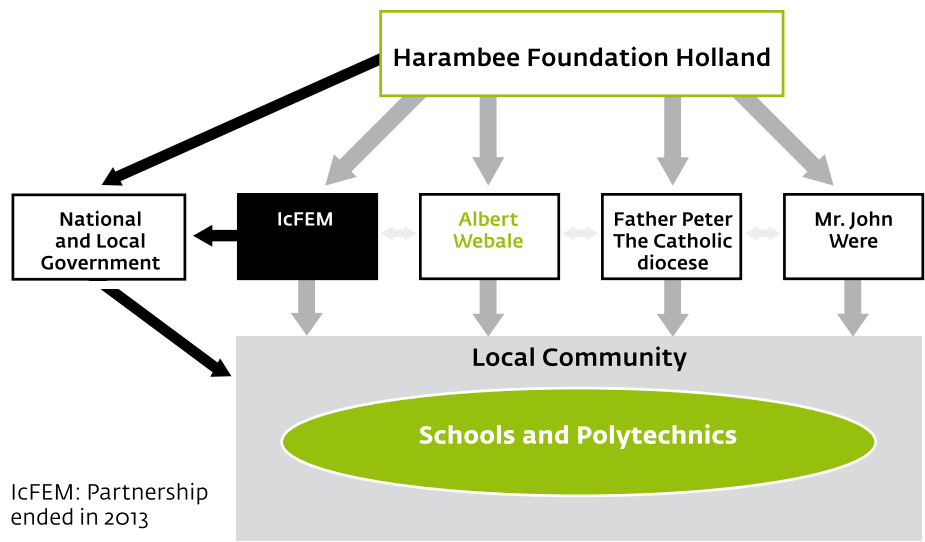


Figure 2: Harambee Foundation and Local Partners

HfH also adopts a hands-on approach to their work. Twice every year, Roel and Mari- anne Meijers visit Kenya for two-month stints for an average of about four months of being physically present annually. This ensures that they are closely anchored to the ongoing

work and can provide input and proactive oversight. It also increases the levels of accountability with both the donors and the community. Since June 2010, the HfH collaborative has a full-time local coordinator who sustains this practical oversight. A retired principal of a secondary school, the coordinator's duties include: coordinating networking and capacity building workshops initiated by HfH. She also holds discussions with head teachers, principals and managers of the youth polytechnics about their concerns and problems at school and she submitting regular reports about these activities to the secretariat.

Resource mobilization is at the heart of their work and the choice of naming the organization Harambee fits perfectly within its core activities and methods of working. Harambee – is a Swahili word that means pulling together for the communal good and is also the national motto in Kenya. During the immediate post-independence period Harambee was the rallying call and a signature feature of national development efforts. Through this ideology of community self-help, the government built partnerships with mobilized communities and used an array of strategies to greatly accelerate social services provisioning including schools and health services. Mobilizing local resources is a key strategy of the HfH partnerships and involves combining resources mobilized in the Netherlands with financial, organizational, physical and human resources through community mobilization and involvement. This engenders ownership of initiatives by community members thereby ensuring sustainability. HfH believes that the small-scale nature of the help they provide is more responsive and inclusive because it is immediate, and participatory enabling local communities to be involved in their own development and education is one of the most direct routes of doing this (HfH Brochure 2012).

### **The modalities of the partnership**

Harambee Foundation Holland works with its local partners to deliver projects that include building and renovating of classrooms, sanitary facilities, at primary, secondary schools and youth polytechnics and the purchase of learning equipment and other educational materials and tools. HfH also supports construction of laboratory facilities to create demand and enhance quality of learning in science subjects. Other projects include initiatives focusing on capacity building and development for teachers including ECD teachers, principals and managers of polytechnics.

HfH works together with local Kenyan partners whose role is to provide oversight for the projects in their locales at all stages from initiation to implementation and monitoring including community contributions and involvement, coordinating and supervising inputs and outcomes and linkages with government officials and initiatives. Working closely with the HfH coordinator, the partners plan activities and advise HfH in the local project context.

There is no formal way of proposing projects, rather projects are proposed to the HfH partnerships in the organic way in which the collaborative has evolved. Discussions with the founder-directors reveal that over the years a kind of spontaneous process has emerged in which schools or individuals approach the partners or HfH to propose a project. There are also instances when the partners have approached HfH directly to propose a project. When a school is deemed to qualify for support, HfH directors and the partners then make an appointment to visit the school and obtain as much information as possible relating to the needs as well as an estimation of the costs that may be incurred in implementing the project. Discussions are held with the institution's management, principal, teachers and students as well as with the board of governors and the parents' associations. The institution is then invited to submit a project proposal and budget, which is discussed and evaluated. Once this is approved a memorandum of understanding (MoU) is drawn between HfH, its local partner and the school board. HfH has a golden rule that 'no request, no project' in an attempt to make the process demand driven. A key requirement is that the project proposal should include information about how the institution will maintain the project after HfH partnership exits.

The HfH collaborative is committed to the core principle of mobilizing resources *harambee* (pulling together for communal good), so while the foundation brings in the lion's share of financial resources, the school (including parents, teachers, students and the community) within which the school is located commit to contributing between 10 to 25% of the total cost of the project both in cash and in-kind. Their contribution goes beyond financial to include mobilization of in-kind resources in form of labour or contribution of building materials such as bricks, sand, wood, fetching water and supporting the construction/renovation as shown in the photos below.





*Community contribution to construction*

Discussions with young people highlight the opportunity costs that women and young people particularly girls contribute to this process. This is in the form of child-care or household chores by girls, which enables the mothers to contribute their labour to the projects. This aspect might not be very well captured in calculating community contribution.

The local partners thus play a major role in identifying and vetting schools and communities in need of support. HFH also benefits from the local partners' embeddedness and acceptance in the community as well as their good relations with the local administration, including politicians as well as government officials and departments such as the education offices. The partners provide a supervisory role and ensure quality control and accountability in the projects.

The HfH collaborative has to date supported over 92 educational projects in four counties in Western Kenya. This includes extensive inputs in strengthening quality education through infrastructural improvement (construction and renovation), capacity enhancement as follows: ECD initiatives, 19 primary schools (including whole classroom transformation in three schools: Ugolwe Primary school in Siaya County, Kimingichi Primary school and Hafoland Primary school in Bungoma County), 11 Secondary schools, and 4 youth polytechnics and 1 EARC in Mumias. This infrastructural support has been followed by more substantive support of capacity building activities including annual workshops to support teaching learning. *(See figure 3 and annex 2 for a detailed list of the projects supported by HFH partnerships to date and their locations).*

Figure 3: HfH partnerships projects at a glance

## **13 years of Harambee Foundation Holland 2001-2014**

### **facts and figures**

92 projects  
direct help to 34 schools  
19 primary and 12 secondary schools, 4 youth polytechnics  
40.000 students have benefitted in Kimilili and Mumias in Western Kenya  
114 new and 55 renovated classrooms  
3 libraries  
6 nursery schools  
108 toilets  
construction of electricity  
tanks for harvesting rain water  
2.440 text books  
47 computers  
2000 three-seating desks  
entire new primary school (incl. ECD) of 19 classrooms  
new assessment and resource centre for handicapped children  
entire new youth polytechnic  
a trauma counselling programme for students  
workshops for headmasters, teachers and parents  
sum total spent € 1.326.000  
smallest project € 250  
biggest project € 114.000  
85 official handing overs of a project  
regular meetings with government representatives in the district  
big involvement of local communities  
3 partners in Kenya: John Were, Albert Webale, Fr. Peter Makokha, IcFEM (until 2013)  
distance to The Netherlands: 6,800 km  
partner in The Netherlands: Impulsis/Edukans  
many good donors who keep supporting us  
enthusiastic committee and volunteers  
circulation of newsletters and annual reports: 400 copies  
69 committee meetings

**more than 90% of donations spent on projects!**

# HfH partnerships: A Remarkable Journey

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The preceding highlights the incredible achievements of Harambee Foundation Holland collaborative since its inception in the project contexts. The foundation has a solid support system of dedicated volunteers (see annex 4 for a list), fundraising in the Netherlands is steadily improving and their reputation for transparency and efficiency is solid. In 2011 the Dutch newspaper *Trouw* reviewed 850 out of an estimated 7,000 NGOs in Holland and drew a list of the top fifty high achieving organizations. They specifically examined financial accountability and transparency processes of the organization to determine how well donations are spent. HfH was ranked number 21 a remarkable achievement. In 2012 they outdid themselves and were ranked in the 10<sup>th</sup> position among the top 50 high achieving charities in the Netherlands. In January 2013, Harambee Foundation Holland received the CBF certificate.

Over a period of 12 years the HfH collaborative has developed from its humble roots as a personal philanthropic initiative with modest support into a small, but efficient, influential and firmly established, reputable organization in educational development. HfH is respected both in the Netherlands by the civil society fraternity and in Bavel where the secretariat is located as well as in Kenya by local government, non-state actors, and community members in the contexts where the projects are located. HfH therefore, constitutes a remarkable success story and exemplifies the impact that a small-scale initiative can have in creating good practice for improving educational quality.

In the next section we examine the achievements and challenges of HfH and its local partners in planting seeds for quality education and draw from these to map the way forward for future work.



# Quality Inputs: Achievements and Challenges of HfH partnerships

In assessing the impact of HfH partnerships in strengthening quality of education, we use the framework for implementing quality that draws from the extensive research by EdQual see Tikly (2010:2). In this framework, a good quality education is a product of the correct mix of inputs and processes in three inter-related and enabling environments: the policy environment, the school environment and the home and community environment. The processes are key for ensuring that inputs get converted into desired outcomes (*see figure 4*).

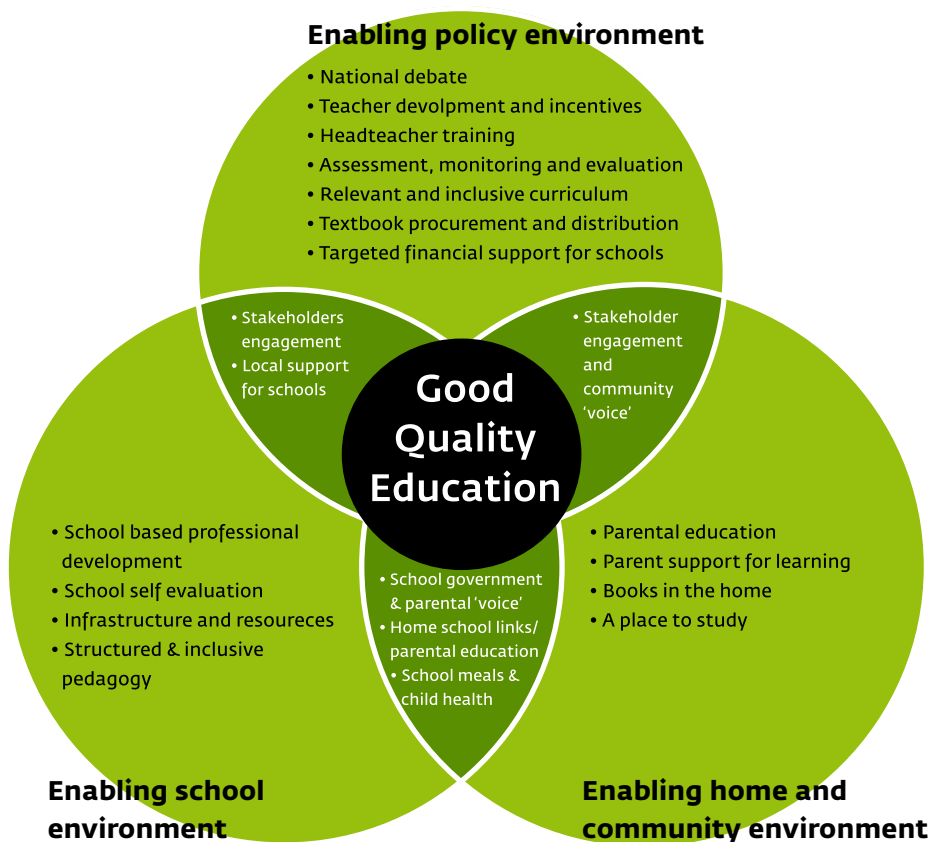


Figure 4: Context Led Framework for implementing Quality, Source: Tikly (2010)



## *School Infrastructure Matters! The Impact of Transforming the Learning Environment*

*"Schools have transformed from mud buildings to brick buildings and learning under a tree has become a thing of the past." (Marianne Meijers, HfH Director)*

A central aspect of an enabling learning environment is quality physical facilities in which formal learning occurs. These have an impact on both learning and the overall experience of schooling including for students and teachers. Data from this study reveals the impact of transforming the physical learning environment through the perceptions of learners, teachers and parents highlighting the sharp contrasts before and after they were transformed within the HfH partnerships. The findings reveal that the quality of school physical facilities influence working conditions including student wellbeing, teacher morale, pedagogical strategies and teaching learning. Focus group discussions with teachers in the schools are illustrative. One teacher from Lutonyi primary noted:

*"I cannot tell you what a difference it makes after years of teaching in semi permanent, dark, dusty and often incomplete classrooms with children sitting on the floor what it means to teach in a well constructed permanent building with a well lit, and ventilated classroom with all the children sitting on desks. I take such great pleasure in my work now."*

Another teacher recalls the period before the project implementation when classrooms were held outside under a tree and he notes,

*"It was a nightmare! The elements defined everything. During the rainy season learning was so erratic often interrupted, stopped or there was no school at all. During the dry season it was too dusty and students could not keep their uniform clean because the ground was very dusty. Parents also complained constantly that it was a bother and it was expensive having to wash the clothes all the time."*

Parents said that the improved infrastructure was a source of pride and they felt a great sense of ownership because they were involved in the planning and construction. One parent stated:

*"I am so glad that the school has permanent structures that are well maintained. There is more space and furniture in the classrooms and my son never misses school like he used to. He comes in very early and can study before school starts." Another one noted that after the construction of the classrooms children no longer fall sick all the time like they used to."*

Both students and teachers said that the availability of permanent sanitation and a clean water supply made an enormous difference and also protected learning time. One head teacher noted:

*“When we had no water and toilets, so students had to leave school and walk some distance to fetch water or use the toilet and often many did not always return to class. Investing in infrastructure and physical facilities has completely changed that.”*

The images below capture these stark contrasts:





Polytechnic before



Polytechnic after





Classroom before



Classroom after



Classroom before



Classroom after





Classroom before



Classroom after

The photos above show the transformation of learning environments. Discussions with students in the institutions reveal the impact of the transformed learning environments on learners, staff and parents. Learners talked about the experience of learning either under a tree (for lower classes) or in semi permanent dilapidated mud structures. Holes on the walls and roofs meant constant leaks during the rainy season. The dirt floor was dusty and uneven and there were no desks. Children suffered health problems and the environment was not conducive for teaching/learning for both students and teachers. Their perceptions about the transformation highlights the qualitative impacts particularly their perceived improved well-being and increased self-esteem, and positive attitudes. Classrooms are now durable, permanent structures. Water and sanitation facilities have been improved and there is a sense of pride in the school community and even in the wider community.

The animated focus group discussions revealed that by transforming the physical learning environments in these schools, a huge step had been taken towards improving the quality of education at the schools. The table on the next page illustrates the perceptions of students in Lutonyi Primary school before-and-after the transformation of their school, which was supported by the HfH in collaboration with IcFEM and local community.

Figure 5: Perceptions of Learners in Lutonyi Primary school

Before	After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semi-permanent buildings and mud floors that meant we were constantly attacked by jiggers</li> <li>• Lower classes were held under the tree</li> <li>• During rainy seasons most classes leaked and we were forced to squeeze in the corners to keep dry this disrupted learning</li> <li>• There were no desks, pupils used traditional stools, logs, learning was difficult,</li> <li>• Indiscipline cases were high because there were only a few teachers and the school had no fence</li> <li>• Drop-out was high</li> <li>• Absenteeism was high</li> <li>• We started off with no latrines so students used the bush, which was unhealthy. Then the few that were built were inadequate and insecure for many children because they were semi permanent.</li> <li>• No Staffroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a huge improvement. It is like a new place!</li> <li>• Permanent structures</li> <li>• Performance has improved</li> <li>• There are more teachers and students</li> <li>• The school looks beautiful, and has a clean and friendly environment</li> <li>• It is a disciplined environments</li> <li>• We now actively participate in sports and extra curricular activities</li> <li>• Conducive environment for learning many of us come early to study and do homework before school starts</li> <li>• There is a staffroom for teachers</li> </ul>
<b>What remains to be improved</b>	

- Two classes unfinished; still not cemented on the floor
- We need a Library
- Some windows have no panes, which means it is cold in the morning, and also pests can come into the classrooms (a snake was killed in one classroom one morning)
- No electricity
- We need a field for sports and storage for equipment
- Insufficient water in the school
- Traditional initiation ceremonies leading to absenteeism and drop-out
- No guidance and counseling (only punishment corporal punishment and verbal violence in the staffroom – especially bad for girls)
- Kitchen and dining facilities should be improved
- Sign on the road to guard children's safety and prevent accidents



In Ugolwe Primary School in Siaya where there has been whole school transformation focus group discussions with students revealed similar perceptions as shown below:

Figure 6: Perceptions of Learners in Ugolwe Primary school

Before	After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The compound was small</li> <li>• Few pit latrines for boys and girls</li> <li>• The school compound was bare and dusty</li> <li>• We had to fetch drinking water</li> <li>• The classrooms walls and floors were mud and they were dark and gloomy. There were not enough desks</li> <li>• There were many cases of jiggers in the school</li> <li>• We had very few teachers and they had no staffroom, they sat under a tree</li> <li>• There was no Electricity</li> <li>• There was no fence</li> <li>• The performance was very poor</li> <li>• Many parents never liked the school and they sent their children to other schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The compound is big enough and there is space for playing. Our school now looks like a real school !</li> <li>• We have enough toilets for both boys and girls</li> <li>• There is grass, plants, flowers and trees in the compound</li> <li>• There is a big water tank in the compound</li> <li>• The classrooms are beautiful spacious with a lot of light, adequate desks and we can come early or stay after school to do our homework</li> <li>• Since the classrooms are cemented there are no more jiggers and students are always neat.</li> <li>• We have enough teachers and they use one of the old classrooms</li> <li>• There is electricity in the school</li> <li>• The school has a good fence and everyone must come through the gate</li> <li>• The mean score of the school has gone up</li> <li>• Many parents are bringing their children to Ugolwe since it is a beautiful, school, with electricity and many things have changed</li> </ul>

It is noteworthy that the transformation in Ugolwe was extensive and involved construction of larger well-lit classes and landscaping of the school compound to radically transform the school environment. This has had a huge impact on the school attracting support including the installation of electricity and elevating its place in the community. The school is now a popular venue for workshops and a central meeting point for the community. It has also been used as a polling center in national elections. A significant impact is the effect on performance that the community, staff and partner attribute to the transformed learning/teaching environment. Between 2008 and 2013 the mean point

average of the school in national exams increased by a 23-percentage point and rising. Teachers, parents and students also noted that beyond the improved learning environment, students also come early or stay late in school to study and do their homework.

### Halfoland Primary: “Is this a University?”

Halfoland Primary School is one of the projects where the HfH/IcFEM collaborative is constructing a whole school from the ground up. The beautiful, well-planned structure is unlike any typical public primary school. The school management committee noted that many people who walk by ask if the building under construction is a university or an office block. This points to a disturbing acceptance that primary schools in rural areas are poor quality facilities often poorly resourced semi-permanent structures. These structures are transforming not only the teaching/learning environments but also changing perceptions and thereby entrenching the norms about quality education including infrastructure.

Similar sentiments prevailed in secondary schools with students noting their perceptions of the transformative impact of improved infrastructure and the impact on teaching and learning environments.

Figure 7: Perceptions of significant change for Secondary students

#### Kimilili FYM Girls Secondary School

Before	After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was no electricity, computer lab and computers</li> <li>• The school was small yet students were many with a few crowded classrooms and some were using the primary classrooms</li> <li>• There was no laboratory</li> <li>• We did not have enough teachers</li> <li>• There was no staffroom and no water in the school</li> <li>• The toilets were few and inadequate</li> <li>• The buildings were plain and bare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school has electricity as well as a computer lab and computers</li> <li>• The compound is big and the classrooms are not congested</li> <li>• We have a laboratory</li> <li>• We have more teachers now even though they are still not enough</li> <li>• There is a big staffroom for teachers and we have water in the school and big water tanks</li> <li>• We now have enough toilets</li> <li>• The buildings look beautiful and attractive even for outsiders</li> </ul>

## What needs to be improved

- Construction of a Library
- Building of a dormitory so that the students may be boarders and save time to catch up with the morning and evening prep.
- There is need for support so that clubs can be formed e.g. Journalism clubs, Straight talk clubs to empower girls
- Increased cases of pregnancy
- Teachers should discipline students to correct not to harm.
- There is not confidentiality between the teachers and students so we are not free to confide in teachers
- Punishment is excessive especially for poor performance we need remedial support not punishment

## Kimabole Mixed Secondary School

Before	After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There were only two building with one semi permanent laboratory</li><li>• The school had no bus</li><li>• There was no computer lab</li><li>• There were fewer students completing high school</li><li>• There was no counseling room</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There are a number of buildings in the school compound with a fully equipped laboratory</li><li>• The school has a big bus now</li><li>• There is a computer lab that is fully equipped</li><li>• The high number of registered computer students for KNEC Exams</li><li>• There is one with a senior teacher as-signed to help</li></ul>

## What needs to be improved

- Construction of a dining hall we have nowhere to eat
- Extension of lights to the girl's dormitories, to increase security
- Construction of Dormitory for boys.
- Purchasing of a backup Generator in times of black outs.
- The lavatories should be renovated.
- Students should have a forum where they can raise their issues or a suggestion box
- The guidance and counseling teacher should be changed as they always disclose stu-dents' problems to other teachers in the staffroom
- Teenage pregnancy is a problem
- Sanitary towels to be given to girls

These findings are consistent with the EdQual Research data gathered from 17,000 grade six learners and their teachers in one thousand primary schools across six countries in East and Southern Africa. The studies found that among the factors positively impacting quality was: Having pens, exercise books, a chair and a desk in school; *Having a permanent classroom building* (our emphasis); Attending a school with access to a computer or television; Attending a school that has a safe and disciplined environment. Indeed, many studies show that quality physical learning environment is strongly linked to dimensions of quality including student performance (Carron and Chau, 1996; Pennycuick, 1993; Willms, 2000).

## *The Signaling Effects of Infrastructure*

According to Branham (2004:113) students that went to schools with poor infrastructure perceive that they are not special, that school is not important and that no one really cares. This is consistent with the findings from our study, which highlight the powerful symbolism and signaling effect of quality infrastructure, as a tangible manifestation of how those within the school perceive their worth. The perspectives of the study participants teachers, students and principals and even community members illustrate this signaling effect when they discuss the perceptions of outsiders regarding the new structures.

The principal of Kimilili FYM Girls Secondary school noted that the new classroom block and laboratory in her school has transformed the appearance of the school campus and raised the esteem and importance of the school considerably prompting many passers-by to stop and enquire about the school. She notes:

*"Since 2011, enrollment has increased because when people see the transformed school environment, they stop and look and a conversations starts. People notice, now that there is a school here." (Principal, Kimilili FYM).*

In Kimabole Secondary School HfH working with IcFEM constructed classrooms as well as a twin laboratory, and provided equipment and furniture. Students were very proud of the transformation and the value and esteem the infrastructure added to the ways in which their school was viewed by themselves and the others in the community. During a focus group discussion they revealed the sorry state of the school before the transformation stating:

*"Our school was so old it was nicknamed Fort Jesus."<sup>13</sup>*

<sup>13</sup> Fort Jesus is a historical monument in Mombasa on the coast of Kenya built in 1591 by the Portuguese. It has been declared a UNESCO world heritage site.

Students in the youth polytechnics noted similar sentiments and said that they were very proud of the new and improved look of their institution and people had renewed respect for their polytechnics viewing them as serious institutions of learning. Discussions with teachers, students and the community revealed that the improved infrastructure is attributable to increased enrollment while accommodating the new enrollees. The population of schools increased after they received support to ease their fee burden. Focus group discussions with head teachers in the study sample and community members in the Chesikaki LTU revealed that parents could bring in kind transfers if they did not have money for instance bringing farm produce and firewood to the school instead of money. The increased enrollment in the project schools has however not resulted in a quality-quantity trade-off as the improved infrastructures is able to accommodate the increase in enrollment. They also noted the impact of the new laboratories:

*"Students are now science centered especially the girls, unlike in the past because of the construction of the laboratory."*

Others noted that the laboratory project started in 2004 has been transformative because it enabled students to develop a positive attitude of learning within the community compared to earlier where most students opted to study outside the county because of inadequately resourced schools. In Kimabole secondary school, a teacher noted:

*"After construction of the laboratory in our school, enrollment shot up. Before the lab, none of our students were pursuing science subjects at university but now we have three."*

The effects of the changes brought about by the infrastructural boost signals a need for high quality education. For example community members in Chesikaki LTU reported that the governmental had proposed construction of a vocational training centre in the community to match the gains offered by increased participation in secondary school. The principal noted that: "Quality teachers are also applying for a chance to teach in the school" This not only benefits the schools supported but others in the area too. For example members of the Chesikaki LTU note that schools in the neighboring areas come to their school to undertake practical subjects in science.

*"The area Member of Parliament has promised 600,000 Kenya shillings in order to purchase land for the construction of a technical training center to absorb those graduating from school. Other partners are also offering support e.g. 48,000 Kshs was given by a partner to provide food for orphaned children. Another partner gave 51,000 Kshs for constructing the gate."*

The efforts of the HfH partnerships in planting seeds for quality education are evidently bearing fruits in a variety of ways as demand for education increases. Infrastructure is thus a critical pathway to mobilizing further resources for increased support.

# Hidden No More: Planting seeds of Inclusion

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The photo above depicts the Education Assessment Resource Center (EARC) in Mumi-As, which was constructed by HfH with the local partner Mr. John Were in collaboration with parents and the government. The Center targets children with disabilities between 0 to 18 years and improves their wellbeing by providing services in the following areas:

- Early detection;
- Early intervention and placement;
- Enabling environments in schools and homes (prioritizing locally available resources);
- Mainstreaming of children into appropriate schools/institutions
- Parental support
- Advocacy
- Peer group sensitization.

In addition to the responsibilities of identification, evaluation and referral of children with disabilities the staff is also tasked with weekly assessment days at the center, and supporting special education classrooms as well as sensitizing communities, teach-

ers and families about children with disabilities. Additionally, the EARC team in Mumias under the guidance of the coordinator has introduced community based rehabilitation (CBR) playgroups, which have been set up to address children's occupational therapy (OT) requirements. According to the occupational therapist, these sessions serve as the perfect venue for psycho-social interventions including nutrition education and a range of developmental issues. Importantly, the groups provide an interactive avenue for developing the skills of community based CBR volunteers<sup>14</sup> who provide a critical link between communities and the EARC.

Data from focus group discussions with the staff at the EARC in Mumias reveals that they too started off in a small office within an administrative building. They also noted that this sends a very strong message about the minimal attention paid to special needs issues in the country. It is noteworthy that while there is an EARC in each district countrywide, the center in Mumias is the only one in the country that has its own premises as a result of the efforts of the HfH partnerships. The rest of the EARCs countrywide are often housed in one room within a ministry or a school in their locale.

During another discussion with a group of parents of deaf children who meet regularly at the center, they said that the beautiful building with its well kept compound signals the importance of children with disabilities and enhanced their status in society. They narrated the difficulties they had experienced in accessing services from the small cramped office within the ministry before the center was constructed. One parent profoundly noted:

*"Children with disabilities are often hidden because of some retrogressive cultural beliefs that mistakenly views them as a curse. When we went to the small cramped office in the ministry to get services for our children, the message that we were still hidden and unimportant was reinforced. However, with this beautiful building, the services and its place in the society, what was hidden is now in the open we feel that our children are important."*

These parents also said that the quality of services had improved considerably and services were more accessible at the center. This is borne out by the staff who attested to the fact that people who came for services travelled from all over the country from districts far beyond Mumias. Indeed the records at the center showed that people coming in for services were from all over the country and even from outside the country as far as Angola and South Africa. Staff also said they had received e-mail enquiries from as far as Cameroon.

<sup>14</sup> Most of these CBR volunteers have children with disabilities and so are best placed to provide mentoring and support to parents whose children have children.

The mobilizing effects of the seeds for quality education planted by the HfH partnerships are evident in various ways in this case. According to the coordinator, this EARC has become the most outstanding EARC nationally and a model in the whole country. The government has provided all the furniture and pays utilities and staff salaries on the EARC premises in Mumias. HfH continues to fund-raise for equipment for a new workshop. In May and June 2013, the HfH directors Marianne and Roel walked from their home in Bavel/Breda Netherlands to Lausanne in Switzerland, a distance of 870 km and raised 13,000 Euros (1.3 million Kenya Shillings) toward this initiative. The center also receives support from Yellow House, a US community based multi-disciplinary child development service organization, in form of professionals who volunteer their services at the center on an ongoing basis. A Dutch based foundation called Liliane Foundation is financing a workshop for making adaptations, providing wheelchairs as well as repair and adaptations of assistive devices including crutches among others. One room has been set aside for The Dutch Eardrop Foundation to provide hearing aids and another Dutch NGO, Tools 2 Work, will provide the tools.

### *Planting seeds for Quality Technical and Vocational Training*

*"When we initiate an activity in a school, it is like we set good practice because the government also does something complementary. This has been the case especially in youth polytechnics." (Roel Meijers, HfH Director)*

The above quotation is an indication of the important place of youth polytechnics in the work of HfH partnership in the intervention areas. The situation for these institutions before the intervention was very grim as supported by HfH baseline information in 2009.

*The institutions (polytechnics) express a very low level, they are not inviting, they are not well kept and looked after. There are hardly any flowers, plants or trees. On the whole they are very depressing. Trainees are sometimes form 4 leavers, sometimes Standard 8 leavers, sometimes drop-outs. Trainees have a very low self-esteem. They feel to be looked upon as "fools and failures" by everybody. This gives them no motivation at all, even though they try despite the challenges they face." (HfH baseline notes on polytechnics in Bungoma North 2009)*

This analysis paints a bleak scenario of polytechnics that bolstered HfH partnerships input and transformation of youth polytechnics. There was an overall low opinion of the role of polytechnics in imparting students with key skills for the job and livelihood market and a feeling that vocational training was only for "fools and failures" (Discussions with two polytechnics graduates).



Even the government did not provide adequate support to the institutions. HfH and local partners collaborated with parents, students and staff to provide infrastructural support to the polytechnics by constructing buildings, providing water tanks, as well as landscaping. These changes enhanced learning environment and quality and contributed to increased demand, which has boosted enrolment. Discussions reveal that the support of two institutions in Kimilili namely Kamasielo and Sosio have changed the mind-sets of the people and even the government's attitude towards the value of polytechnics.

*"They are not just for those who did not make it in school. Before the infrastructural improvements there was just one building but now we have more, and we also have electricity and the physical environment has improved and the compound looks very nice. The young people are therefore attracted to it since it looks like any other institute." (Chief, Sosio Location)*

Discussions with parents and community members reinforce these views and they noted that young people who have successfully gone through the institution and are engaged productively in the community. These young people were role models because some had started their own business enterprises and were providing employment while others are in employment in the formal and informal economy.

Instructors from Kamasielo polytechnic support the fact that perceptions on polytechnics have changed by noting that they have requested for a space/sheds in the local market where their students can display the products they have made to get an income as well as attract more people to the institutions. Sosio polytechnic is planning to assist the students to be more marketable by establishing an exhibition within the school to showcase the products made by the students. This will create demand for their services within the community and beyond. In both institutions enrollment has improved and in Sosio for example, the number of students by the time of research had risen to two hundred from fifty before the intervention. The institutions have also acquired a new perception amongst prospective students as former students reveal.

*"I had passed well in my form four exam and I came to Sosio for a course in Motor vehicle management. Initially youth polytechnics were inferior and we never had exchanges with the other institutions. However, now we have cross visits with other technical and vocational institutes and are able to share experiences and undertake learning challenges where we even out-perform them."*

Data from focus group and key interview discussions reveal that the infrastructural changes have even made it possible for other youth like *Boda boda* (commercial motorcycle operators) to attend classes on scheduled hours as they go about their businesses. Discussions revealed that this impacts positively on the lives of many young people in the community and provides a pathway for growth and progression in education and profes-

sional development. This has also invited the support of the state that assisted in Sosio by providing electricity through the constituency development fund (CDF).

Data from focus group discussions with students from Socio polytechnic reveal the perceptions of quality they felt they would receive from their transformed institutions and the impacts on future prospects as shown in figure 8 below.

Figure 8: Perceptions of Youth from Sosio Polytechnic

Idle youth	Youth who attend Socio Polytechnic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will not gain skills,</li> <li>• Will not have ideas,</li> <li>• Will not overcome challenges, lack of entrepreneurial skills</li> <li>• No technical skills</li> <li>• Can easily succumb to negative social habits</li> <li>• Unemployment</li> <li>• Vulnerable to negative influence (early marriage and unwanted pregnancy,)</li> <li>• Dependent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will gain skills and knowledge</li> <li>• Will have a vision</li> <li>• Will be self-reliant in the community</li> <li>• Will overcome challenges facing youth</li> <li>• Will be social and have ideas</li> <li>• Entrepreneurial skills</li> <li>• Employable</li> <li>• Improve economy by creating employment, being self employed and improve the lifestyle of the community</li> <li>• Reduction of poverty</li> <li>• Youth employment tackled</li> <li>• Can cope with turmoil</li> <li>• Productive member of society</li> <li>• Not idle</li> </ul>
What needs to improve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase boarding facilities</li> <li>• Food and beverage workshop needs to be equipped (gas cooker, equipment)</li> <li>• More courses- diversify</li> <li>• More materials for practical's Motor Vehicle Mechanics</li> <li>• Edutainment –leisure activities can still be educational</li> <li>• Improve facilities eg library</li> </ul>	

It is also noteworthy that while the students and faculty appreciated the changes and were generally optimistic, they also noted areas that could be improved further. Managers and instructors in the polytechnics indicate that there is still a problem of salaries for instructors because only a few of them are civil servants employed by the government while others depend on the irregular payment of fees by the students. There is therefore a need for more engagement with the government in this area. Additionally, there is also a need for enhancement of employment networks or industries where these students can be placed on attachment to hone their skills. There are still challenges that include both quantitative and qualitative inputs to improve teaching learning. In Kamasielo polytechnic for instance discussions revealed that learning was still hampered by a lack of training materials like motor vehicles for practical lessons and at the same time, there were courses, which had no teachers allocated.

# Planting seeds for quality foundations: Supporting Early Childhood Education

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HfH and its local partners have taken a life cycle approach to learning by recognizing the important role that Early Childhood Education (ECD) plays in the growth and development of children. ECD plays a vital role in laying the foundation for future learning and has an important role in ensuring successful transitions to primary school. ECD has however been neglected in policy and practice and this critical role not clearly acknowledged.

Discussions with a range of stakeholders reveal that the efforts of HfH partnerships in strengthening this critical foundational phase of learning has played an essential role in elevating the place of ECD which has started taking an important position in the conversations about quality education within the project contexts. Before the intervention into ECD, very young children were a neglected category as the officer in charge of ECD in Kimilili notes:

*"In some of the schools, these children sit in neglected classes because people don't value ECD, there is no specific allocation for this level so children end up even learning under a tree."*

The same point is stressed by one of the ECD teachers whose school has benefitted from support of HfH and she notes that:

*"Our school started in 1999 under a tree and we battled with the challenges of dust, rain and wind as the very young children studied under a tree for five years. The ECD class was moved on to a semi permanent structure that was not any better; it looked like a tobacco barn and was not child or learner friendly. We were temporarily given a "class" in one of the churches but it was not long before we were sent away because it was alleged the children were spoiling the floor of the church. When HfH in partnership with IcfEM came on board, parents supported the construction and now we have two classes" (Teacher Lutonyi ECD)*

The learning environments for this foundational levels in supported schools has transformed from sitting under trees to decent buildings as shown in the photos:



In addition to HfH partnerships supporting these schools with construction of ECD classes, they have offered training workshops in various aspects of ECD including motivation, inclusion, mobilization of community and parents. These efforts have also included strengthening teacher training and supporting quality teaching/learning including support to teachers to work with locally available materials.

As a result ECD teachers interviewed indicate that this has elevated their status, raised their morale and boosted the value of early learning as an important phase. ECD teachers report being recognized as part of the faculty by other staff in the primary schools where they are located. As noted by one teacher:

*"We were not seen as part of the teaching staff and we would never even have tea with the primary school teaching staff, our status was very low. After participation in the activities supported by the HfH partnership; we are now recognized as equal colleagues and we have space in the staffroom and duties in the school like other teaching staff." (Lutonyi, ECD).*

The DICECE officer supports this and her observations indicate that due to the training offered, not only have ECD teachers become better timekeepers, they are more inclusive in their interactions with children with special needs and are networking more with each other thus enhancing learning in their ECD centers. ECD teachers have also learned the importance of using materials within their environments in enhancing the learning of children.

*"We used material that required to be purchased like manila paper but after the training we received we are adopting and using available material in our environment and we are no longer constrained by a lack of resources." (FGD with 6 ECD teachers in Kimilili)*

Children in one of the supported schools indicate that they are happy with the changes brought about as a result of the support to their school:

*"Our parents help us to make materials at home, we like our teachers and are happy that we take porridge every day." (ECD student, Lutonyi primary school)*

Despite these changes, the salaries that ECD teachers get for their services is a major hindrance to the gains realized and there is more ground to be covered by the partnership. Focus group discussions with the teachers indicate that some of them are paid very little money and others complained that the head teachers of the primary schools they are attached to do not release the fees paid by the pupils to the teachers but use it for other purposes within the primary school. They also stated that parents argue that they are poor and cannot afford fees for their young children. Discussions with young children at the ECD centers indicate that one of the things they dislike is being sent home

every other day to collect school fees. There is a need for sustained engagement with the parents on the need for supporting ECD teachers and at the same time, the government needs to put in place a system for remunerating teachers. This process of government support was reported to have started in some areas of Kimilili but it was argued it was still quite minimal.

The reticence to acknowledge the critical role of ECD in building a foundation for learning is also still persistent even in the schools supported by the HfH partnerships and is an indication that there is further ground to be covered in mobilizing the community on this. In some of the supported schools for instance, it was reported that in a secondary school and a primary school the ECD classes had been taken over for use by the “upper” classes, which were evidently deemed as ‘more important’. In the secondary school, the class had been taken over by a form one class. In one school they noted that “parents had made the request and we just acquiesced.”

Discussions with Local transformation units (LTUs) which are the avenues that IcfEM works with to enhance community conversations about education among other community related issues indicate that ECD is still not on the agenda in their discussions and is subsumed under primary school. As study participants in one LTU noted:

*“We have not discussed issues of ECD and this discussion today is an eye-opener”  
(Chesikaki, LTU).*

These views are collaborated by IcfEM staff who stated a need for continued engagement and support of ECD. One of the suggestions offered is to support model ECD units in each of the 40 LTU's working with IcfEM so that demand for quality ECD can be created in the communities.

# Community ownership:

## Nurturing and supporting demand for quality services from below

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Communities are at the heart of the activities supported by HfH and its partners. Whilst HfH provides the bulk of financial resources required for the projects. The community provides about 10-25% of the total costs. This cost is either through labour in the construction, or building material like bricks or wood. This enhances ownership of the projects as the community strives to maintain quality. Due to this sense of ownership, demand increases as parents and caregivers are favorably predisposed towards taking their children to school. As some parents noted:

*"We feel the percentage the community pays is enough and we would not want it any other way for when you are given something for free, then you will not take care of it." (Kibingei LTU)*

*"One man offered free land and HfH offered to assist the community in constructing some classes for the school. Parents contributed in-kind contributions while children brought water. We all participated it was women, children and men" (Lutonyi, ECD)*

*"The projects by HfH are not many but they are good and are setting an example of good practice that should be emulated by the rest." (DC, Kimilili).*

Data gathered from discussions with students revealed that they were very aware that the infrastructural transformations were the results of collaboration between a range of actors including the HfH partnership in their context in collaboration with their parents, teachers, school management committees, as well as the community. The young people also pointed out ways in which they contributed to the projects ranging from direct support in the form of volunteering their labour to the support they provided by taking over child care or household or livelihood chores to enable their parents/caregivers to participate.

Despite this reported sense of ownership reported above, the research notes a need to engage more with the communities from them to have a sense of entitlement as opposed to viewing the support as charity. For example discussions reveal that some community



members perceive HfH and partner IcFEM as a “savior” with such a word featuring in community discussions. In some cases, some requested that HfH/IcFEM should continue “helping them” and “carrying them.”<sup>15</sup>

The partnership with IcFEM draws on their work, which aims to enhance dialogue on development through Local transformation Units (LTUs). Within each village a Christian fellowship is formed with at least 25 members; who hold weekly community prayer meetings. During the third meeting, they undertake community focused actions like helping a widow on her farm, repairing a house, etc. An area (a location) has approximately 100 villages and when there are at least 40 fellowships in an area they form a Local Transformation Unit. Twenty Local transformation units will form an Area transformation unit. Representatives elect the leaders of the area transformation units from the village fellowships that also set local goals and priorities. Each LTU has several goals which interact with each other and one of which is education.

The dialogue within LTUs shows that they provide a critical avenue for addressing factors within family and community that affect education quality. This includes socio-cultural practices key of which is issues around circumcision. Focus group discussions with members of the three LTUs that participated in the research indicate that education is one of the key aspects of the weekly conversations within the fellowships. Members of the Kibingei LTU noted that they make efforts to track children who do not go to school regularly and identify their needs. The LTU is also an important structure for mobilizing community to support the school improvement activities of HfH partnership. Some LTUs have tried to have at least one member on the school management board in different schools in the community.

### *Tackling sociocultural barriers around circumcision ceremonies*

In many parts of Africa circumcision is practiced as an initiation ritual into adulthood. The traditional practice is overseen by traditional practitioners and conducted under non-clinical settings as opposed to medical/clinical circumcision. Traditional circumcision rites for males are prevalent in three of the project contexts<sup>16</sup> and are carried out each even year. Aspects of the ceremonies have negatively impacted the quality of education in the area. Many pupils in day schools boycott classes to attend and participate in the ceremonies and the massive absenteeism of students means that most schools in the region are forced to close before the expected end of the school term. This has a great effect on performance every circumcision year. Community members of the Kibingei LTU stated:

<sup>15</sup> Harambee News vol 7 number 16 June 2011

<sup>16</sup> Bungoma, Trans Nzoia and Busia Counties

*"The children start preparing for circumcision as early as June and this profoundly affects their attendance and performance in school."*

The rites are also expensive and place a heavy financial burden on households. According to IcfEM, which has substantial experience working to combat the negative effects of these rites in the area, between 22,000 and 26,000 boys are initiated every season with an average expenditure of about 40,000 Kshs (US \$600) per household. This is despite the fact that most parents argue that they cannot afford money for their children's education. The HfH directors narrate how a parent told them that: "for the costs of the circumcision ceremony, I can pay school fees for four years for my boy!" The high cost and impact of circumcision ceremonies on education and on households is encapsulated in the personal experience of a key informant who recalled the profound impact the expense of his circumcision wrought on their household:

*"I know first hand the domino effects of circumcision ceremonies on households. I stopped attending school in May the year that I was circumcised to prepare for the ceremony. The expense to my parents was so immense that by the end of the year after I had undergone the ceremony they could not afford to pay my brother's school fees even though he performed exceptionally well and was admitted into a very good national secondary school. My brother had to repeat class seven and re-sit the exam the following year. Fortunately he did very well and was admitted to another very good school. I had to repeat class six and could not go on to class seven because I had missed most of the year, and besides the two of us could not sit for the exam in the same year because of the cost of joining secondary school and for this reason my younger sister also had to repeat class five."*

For many young people repeating a grade or missing school for long periods often leads to poor performance and drop-out out. Indeed according to Mukhongo (2003); Mbachii and Likoko (2013) these ceremonies have an impact on attendance and performance in education and contribute to high school dropout rates during the even years when the ceremonies are conducted.

Data gathered for this study including discussions with staff of IcfEM, reveals that the rites not only disrupt the education of boys but also pose great sexual and reproductive health risks to adolescent girls'. This is because the ceremonies which were traditionally, regarded as an essential means of imparting social norms and cultural knowledge to young men so they can adopt a more socially responsible approach to life has been eroded over the years. Discussions revealed that there is currently a disturbing emergence of a norm in which circumcision is regarded as a pathway to indiscriminate sex. Consequently, young men feel that they have undeniable and unrestricted rights of access to sex and masculinity is defined by the numbers of sexual partners one has. In this context after initiation many of these young men have a disruptive attitude to schooling and are un-

disciplined because they feel that they are now “men”. Additionally, it creates an insecure environment for girls who are vulnerable to sexual violence and coercion. Discussions with staff at the District Education Office during this study revealed that at the beginning of every odd year, (following the circumcision ceremonies), there is a steep increase of school dropout for girls due to teenage pregnancy.

IcFEM address value systems and attitudes by facilitating the LTUs spaces for important conversations in the community about alternative circumcision rites, which do not interrupt or impact children's education or performance in school. Indeed, IcFEM runs a health center-based program for circumcision at a highly subsidized nominal cost of 300 shillings (\$ 4.5) (compared to the exorbitant cost incurred by households of 40,000 Kshs (\$ 600)! This low cost alternative provides a safer health based option but tries to maintain important cultural aspects by including the offer of important social skills and guidance counseling on youth sexuality and reproductive health. This has had a huge impact on the dramatic reduction in number of children being circumcised traditionally compared to earlier years as one chief notes:

*“My twins, who I had circumcised in hospital, are now in University. Circumcision greatly affects performance in school and though there has been progress, we still need a lot of advocacy in this area.” (Chief, Kibingei location).*

There is thus still a need for sustained advocacy around this issue to ensure children's rights to quality education is not compromised.

These discussion with the LTUs however also reveal a need for the LTUs to own the discussions they hold in the community as some LTU's noted that they report cases of children who do not attend school regularly to the 'headquarters' (IcFEM) for possible support. There is a need to empower the LTUs to take appropriate action in supporting children's right to education without seeing their role as forwarding cases to the office of IcFEM. The Kamukuywa LTU was enthusiastic about looking for alternative funding to support the activities in their LTU without overly reliance on IcFEM.

### *Local partnerships as key to HfH accountability and sustainability*

In enhancing quality education, the quality and nature of partnerships is very important. Quality partnerships also enhance sustainability of gains made in promoting quality education. The research therefore sought to understand these partnerships and how they enhance accountability, sustainability as well as integration of services. Discussions, with the founder directors, partners, communities, as well as school staff and the

Member of Parliament indicate that working with local partners is one of the greatest strengths of HfH. This is because while the role of HfH would be seen more as a donor, the local partners ensure that there is accountability for resources given by the foundation. It is these local partners who act as a link between the communities, the schools and HfH. The coordinator acts as a link between HfH and the local partners and the founder directors' extended proactive presence for two-month stints twice a year enables hands-on support to the different project activities as well as supporting monitoring activities. The different partners also meet once every quarter to share experiences, successes and challenges.

HfH partnerships have network links with the ministry of education in the project contexts in the implementation of different projects. This include district education offices as well as Local district administration which has been involved in monitoring the progress of the projects and also in assessing the work of the collaborative. As noted by the District Commissioner of Kimilili:

*"We have a file for HfH in our office, and they do not implement projects without letting us know."*

In addition before the schools are selected, it is the ministry that has to give a go ahead and therefore there is a commitment from the government in partnering for quality education in the region. In addition to these partnerships, the different schools and communities have partnered with the different members of parliament to supplement the work of HfH. According to the Member of Parliament (formerly for Kimilili constituency, currently for Tongaren) the work of the HfH partnerships is invaluable in terms of creating good practice for the state to take to scale but also in complementing the efforts of the state. The local partner John Were gives an example of how the interdependencies of mobilized communities, and the HfH model works so efficiently that they are often showcased as an example of how CDF funds could be effectively used rather than the actual CDF initiatives. As earlier noted, some of the schools and polytechnics supported by HfH partnerships have been able to solicit successfully the local constituency development fund to supplement their efforts. The HfH collaborative is therefore seen as a legitimate partner complementing the work of state as rather than supplanting it.

## **Conclusions**

The research set out to examine how HfH collaboration was working with local partners, communities and schools in Western Kenya to enhance the quality of education. Since its inception, HfH partnerships have supported an impressive array of projects, which collectively constitute a remarkable attempt to plant seeds for quality education in project sites. Data collected for this study reveal that the seeds are sprouting and providing a platform for strengthening quality education at all levels from early childhood

education through primary, secondary and technical training. In some secondary schools supported with science labs, teachers reported that the performance improved and these services were benefitting more schools in the vicinity.

The preceding analysis shows that the collaborative has been successful in strengthening quality inputs in a number of ways including: targeted financial support for schools; capacity building in the form of teacher development and training of principals and managers of polytechnics; parental support for learning, improved enabling school environment – infrastructure and resources, and the workshops to support structured pedagogy and school based professional development. These efforts have played a major role in improving school governance and parental voice, paving way for strengthening home school links and planting seeds for stakeholder and community engagement and local support for schools.

# The sprouting of a crucial platform: A promising collective impact

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The seeds for quality education planted by these initiatives of the HfH partnerships are sprouting in various ways. The schools supported by the collaborative have organically evolved and in 2012 organized themselves into networks called “families” to form a community of practice. There is a family each of ECD teachers, primary and secondary school teachers and principals as well as managers of youth polytechnics. Each family has regular meetings to discuss ways of strengthening quality education in their institution, exchange ideas on solving professional or personal problems as well as prepare and administer common mock examinations for their schools. It is also through the network that the heads put pressure on each other to perform as opposed to being pushed by HfH. The foundation has responded by formally supporting these families of practice and funds formal annual capacity building activities and discussions to enable participants to draw lessons about best practice on school improvement. The networks also discuss and advice HFH on key issues and capacity gaps that require training for school heads, teachers and parents’ committees. Discussions with the directors, coordinator and partners reveal that these networks are emerging as a crucial platform and space in which a range of education issues can be raised and discussed as well as a channel through which new projects can be proposed and vetted.

## **Taking a life cycle approach to education**

Supporting holistic education for all and for capability enhancement means that education has to be viewed beyond the narrow focus that lays disproportionate emphasis on one level of education, over other levels. Support to education must take a life cycle approach that encompasses all levels right from early childhood education, primary, secondary, vocational, adult and tertiary education. The HfH collaborative can be said to take a rights based approach to education by adopting this more expansive view of education which supports different levels of education - ECD, primary, secondary, polytechnics. Study participants were appreciative of the support of different levels of education including youth polytechnics and they noted: “Many donors don’t prioritize polytechnics.” Indeed our findings reveal that there is a change in attitude about polytechnics linked to the HfH collaborative’s support of community based job-oriented skills training for youth. While this is commendable there is room for elevating vocational education even further

by paying special attention to female youth and their specific needs as well as diversifying course options at these institutions in line with the .

The stakeholders also reported that despite their modest coverage, the collaborative was setting a good example to be emulated by both the government and other providers as the district commissioner noted:

*"A key aspect of the model is that communities who are used to handouts are partners in school improvement and they are able to see services as something they can contribute to and have ownership in not just as financial resources received often from external donors."*

The example of Mukuyuni Primary school illustrates powerfully how the seeds sown by the activities of the HfH partnerships not only transforms learning environments but the mobilization that starts with infrastructural development blossoms into a process that engenders local involvement and ownership and a social movement that allows parents and community members to hold providers to account and to claim their right to quality services from the state. Their mobilization as they contributed to construction in the school stimulated such a sense of ownership that when performance did not improve they demanded to know from the principal why and when they did not receive a satisfactory response they marched to the education office and demanded the removal of the principal. When the new principal did not improve things they held a protest march and demanded his replacement as well. The third principal is the current head and has worked hard to improve performance in the school so much so that the school is currently one of the designated model schools in the area. These findings thus reveal that in the HfH model infrastructure is a pathway to transforming the learning environment but equally importantly, is a catalyst for mobilizing further support for strengthening quality education.

# Recommendations and Way forward

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Given the above findings, the research makes the following recommendations to enhance the efficiency and performance of the HfH partnerships.

## **Supporting ECD Work**

The research identified that despite the fact that the HfH partnerships has been supporting work in the area of ECD, the importance given to this critical foundational phase within the public school system in Kenya is still very low. This is evident by the way ECD classes constructed by the project are sometimes taken over by the schools in which they are located and the low status of ECD teachers. We propose more advocacy activities to lift the status and importance of this critical foundational phase. There is need for more training for ECD teachers as well as sustained advocacy including mobilization of school heads and communities to support ECD

## **Supporting Girls participation in education**

Data from discussions with girls reveal that there are challenges specific to their gender that require special attention. This includes support around empowerment programmes within schools and communities to improve the experience of learning for girls (including information and support around menstruation, sexuality and reproductive health education to prevent teenage pregnancy), support for student mothers and their children and skills training programs in polytechnics that offer marketable and transformative skills for female youth.

## **The need for a local coordinating structure**

HfH has a very strong board and secretariat based in the Netherlands, which ensures the smooth running of the organization. At the local level, the organization is currently working with three partners who provide oversight and monitoring of project activities in their respective areas. We assert that there is need to have a solid locally based coordination and oversight mechanism to support the activities of the partners, as well as those of the local coordinator. There are concerns around the fragility of the current arrangement, which is reliant on individual entities as partners for implementation of projects with the implementation contexts. This arrangement raises concerns around succession and sustainability of impacts. We strongly recommend the institution of a coordinating



structure in the local contexts anchored within an organizational not individual framework. This will ensure that the activities of the organization are nested within a structure and will also enhance organizational and institutional memory as well as preserving the integrity of the HfH model. Having an institutional framework will also ensure legitimacy for initiating and mobilizing local fundraising as part of ensuring financial sustainability as well as political and sustainability of impacts.

### **Improving the organization's management of Information Systems (MIS)**

The HfH partnerships have done extensive work and there have been great efforts on the part of the secretariat to document the processes of these efforts in form of newsletters and annual reports. Indeed this openness is part of the strength of the foundation and it shows their transparent processes and desire for strong accountable systems. This indeed is what motivated the founder-directors to commission an impact study. Despite the commendable efforts to document their work via newsletters and their annual reports, the organic evolution of the HfH collaborative means that there is a lack of institutional knowledge in the form of a systemic Management of Information Systems (MIS) including a baseline at the start of implementation activities, and systematic monitoring and evaluation data. We contend that the current informal largely people based institutional knowledge is fragile because while some of it is translated into processes and policies, most of it remains in the heads, hands, and hearts of individuals within the collaborative. There is need for an explicit strategy for maintaining institutional memory to document and support the existing knowledge base.

We recommend a move toward establishing a system for ongoing data collection, documentation and continuous research. This requires developing a reliable, comprehensive and readily usable community-based database for tracking children, teachers, principals, schools and projects in the HfH collaborative and documenting community efforts in supporting projects. This data will be fed back to the projects and will be crucial for identifying problems, seeking collective solutions and monitoring and documenting outcomes. The database should be supported within the local coordinating base and should include the use of technology to create a process by which knowledge about procedures, historical moments, and project successes and stories is continually captured and curated.

### **Enhancing bottom up and Horizontal Accountability**

One of the strongest features of the HfH collaborative is the very strong upward accountability to donors as demonstrated by a strong board and secretariat in Bavel that provides oversight for project activities and utilization of funds. This translates into the very high regard with which the foundation is held in The Netherlands. This is also demonstrated by donor reporting mechanisms, which ensures there is transparency and efficiency in HfH functioning. This strong upward accountability needs to be matched by an equally strong downward accountability to community and beneficiaries including parents and children. For example, signing up for Codes of Conduct and accountability char-

ters with the beneficiary communities would make non state actors especially the formal ones cede some of their sovereignty and this can be in exchange for the collective value of complying with negotiated standard (Biekart and Fowler, 2013). Downward accountability therefore involves beneficiaries owning the interventions, holding providers and state accountable and being able to negotiate their inclusion into social programmes.

There are questions pertaining to downward accountability (to communities, schools and ultimately the children) within the HfH partnerships. For example, it is not clear if there are modalities or spaces where the communities can hold HfH partnerships accountable and demand their rights. This is compounded by the lack of a local institutional structure and/or an advisory board in the project contexts. In line with goal of community development within the new way of working there is need for the HfH collaborative to reflect on a critical questions such as: What is the space for communities to ask questions or reflect on the quality of services being provided? How to counter the danger of propagating a charity approach where the community may not demand their rights from the state as an entitlement? We therefore propose consideration of clear guidelines on how the community can express their grievance and hold the partnerships to account.

The new way of working (*see annex 5 and 6*) is a commendable effort to provide a framework for increased community involvement and an avenue for tackling issues of downward accountability. It is thus important to define spaces where community voice is located within this way of working to make it everyone's new way of working and not a set-off top-down guidelines. For example, while schools and their heads can act as proxy representatives of community voice, it cannot be assumed that talking to school heads represents the real voice of the community, as this would reduce them to mere recipients of support. HfH and partners should ask critical questions about how to include community voice in truly inclusive ways. Community voice should be sought in areas like the percentage of contribution to the projects. During the research, some community members expressed a wish to have graduated contributions based on the ability of the different communities and for this to be revisited for different projects.

The new way of working seeks to stimulate locally responsive development rooted in societal involvement and strong school-community links with strong involvement and ownership by community members. It has the potential to streamline accountability systems and enhance transparency while ensuring the integrity of the HfH model and we contend that this requires a strong local structure, which will also support the strong secretariat in Bavel. The shape of this coordinating mechanism as well as an advisory board requires continuous and extensive thinking and discussion by all stakeholders.

Horizontal accountability refers to accountability and collaboration with other non-state actors who are working in the same area as HfH partnerships. While HfH partners

have regular meeting to exchange ideas among themselves it is not clear how these partners collaborate horizontally with other non-state actors to complement/supplement services and enable cross-pollination of ideas and best practice. Collaborating with similar organizations would ensure that efforts are taken to scale and experiences and lessons learned are shared. The research did not find evidence of such collaboration but perhaps it is because of lack of a local structure. A critical dilemma of the HfH collaborative is whether to expand into more schools or focus attention on the current supported schools and intensify support on strengthening quality inputs. Horizontal linkages can enable collaboration with initiatives that can help non-state actors to move together in a common agenda. Importantly, these efforts can also to extend and intensify the efforts of ongoing HfH collaborative projects to plant and nurture the seeds of quality education in Western Kenya.

### **A successful Collective Impact**

According to Samoff (2007) only the state has the institutional capacity to provide education for all. NGOs have a role to play and they should complement rather than supplant state efforts. According to Wazir (2000) what non-state actors in education can realistically do should be assessed along three dimensions namely: creating good practice; agenda setting and mobilizing social movements. Measured against these dimensions, the HfH model is working within a realistic framework along all three measures and as the findings reveal great gains have been made in supporting a range of quality education indicators including targeted support to transform learning environments in educational institutions and capacity building workshops to improve teaching learning, but this can be strengthened much more to sustain impacts.

The findings reveal that since its inception, Harambee Foundation Holland collaborative has realised many projects of varying sizes in schools, polytechnics and communities in the project contexts. In the process, they have gained substantial credibility and legitimacy in strengthening educational quality both in the Netherlands and in the study contexts. Their collective impact in the form of building interdependencies with mobilized communities including children around infrastructure construction and support are paving way for further quality improvement and local ownership of initiatives. This is exemplified in the case of Mukuyuni primary where the school community was able to claim their right to quality educational services and leadership. The study highlights numerous other examples where the seeds of quality inputs planted by the collective impact of the HfH partnerships are blossoming when other actors including the government supplement and complement these efforts. The scope of their achievements and the potential of the ongoing efforts shows that even a small-scale organization like Harambee Foundation Holland and partnerships have enormous potential to act as catalysts and accelerators of change in education and can sustain efforts which have a significant impact on strengthening quality education.

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# Annexes

## *Annex 1: Study participants*

A total of 43 focus group discussions with a range of study participants including: 262 students broken down as follows:

- ECD students aged 3 -7 years (28 student drawings and discussions on the drawings) and 6 ECD teachers from 2 schools (1 Male and 5 female)
- Primary Schools - 14 focus group discussions (8 students per group) Total 112 students (60 boys and 52 girls)
- Secondary Schools - 10 FGDs with students (8 students per group) Total 80 students (30 males and 40 females) from two schools
- 32 Teachers: Primary schools - 3 FGDs with 12 teachers (7 female and 5 male); Secondary - 2 FGDs with 7 Teachers (5 male and 2 females)
- One FGD with the Hafoland School Management Committee - 12 participants (6 female and 8 male) and 4 focus group discussions with parents and community members.
- One FGD - The team of EARC in Mumias
- Key informant interviews with the following:
  - 6 Principals (3 primary and 3 secondary school)
  - 2 Managers of Polytechnics (1 male and 1 female)
  - 1 Coordinator of the EARC (female)
  - 2 Chiefs (1 male and 1 female)
  - 3 Graduates of Youth Polytechnics (2 males and 1 female)
  - 1 Member of Parliament – Dr. Eseli
  - IcFEM director and 2 deputy directors
  - Two HfH partners (Mr. John Were and Father Peter)
  - HfH Coordinator
  - HfH Founder Directors – Marianne and Roel Meijers

## Annex 2: HfH Project Overview

Harambee Foundation Holland Projects 2001 – 2014 (Bavel, 6<sup>th</sup> April 2014/MJH+RJM)

### Bungoma County

#### 1 ECDE and Primary Schools

##### ***Dreamland PS – partner IcFEM***

2002: purchase of cooking pots in the lunch room

2006: building of 4 extra classrooms and a library

2007: donation for furniture in the new building

##### ***Hafoland IcFEM PS – partner IcFEM***

2011: building of a new school: 16 classrooms, offices and toilets

2012: building of 3 ECDE classrooms

2012: purchase of tables and chairs for the ECDE children

##### ***IcFEM Khalayi Nursery School – partner IcFEM***

2002: purchase of cooking pots for the kitchen

##### ***Kamusinga PS – partner IcFEM***

2005: construction of 5 new classrooms and office facilities

2009: donation for desks

2009: construction of a library

2010: donation for desks and furniture

2011: construction of dormitories, kitchen and a dining hall for the orphans

##### ***Kaptola PS – partner IcFEM***

2013: purchase of desks

##### ***Kibunde Primary School – partner Albert Webale***

2014: construction of 4 classrooms

##### ***Kimilili RC Boys PS – partner Fr. Peter Makokha***

2001: renovation of 5 classrooms and sanitary facilities

2002: donation for textbooks

2003: donation for textbooks

2003: renovation of 3 classrooms

2004: donation for desks

2006: construction of 2 ECDE classrooms

2009: renovation of 2 classrooms, building of water tanks and toilets

##### ***Kimilili RC Girls PS – partner Fr. Peter Makokha***

2001: renovation of 5 classrooms

2002, construction of a nursery with two rooms

2002: donation for textbooks

2004: donation for desks

2007: renovation of 8 classrooms

**Kimingichi PS – partner IcFEM**

2006: phase one: 6 classrooms, 10 toilets and 200 new desks

2007: phase two: 4 classrooms, offices and 10 toilets

**Lunyu PS – partner IcFEM**

2008: construction of 4 classrooms

**Lutonyi PS – partner IcFEM**

2003: finishing of 3 classrooms (phase 1)

2004: donation for furniture of the staffroom

2005: completion of 8 classrooms, school desks, construction of new sanitary facilities (phase 2/3)

2007: furnishing of the library

2007: construction of 2 ECDE classrooms

**Luuya PS – partner IcFEM**

2008: construction of 4 classrooms

**Makunga PS – partner IcFEM**

2008: construction of 4 classrooms

2012: construction of 3 ECDE classrooms

**Mukuyuni PS – partner IcFEM**

2008: renovation of 6 classrooms

## **2 Secondary Schools**

**Beulah Education Institute – partner IcFEM**

2009: rebuilding the school hall and several classrooms

**Kaptola Secondary School – partner Albert Webale**

After 2014: building of a kitchen (future project)

**Kimabole Secondary School – partner IcFEM**

2003: donation for maths books and educational equipment

2004: construction of 2 classrooms for physics and chemistry.

2007: donation for furnishing of the science block

2009: furniture for the library

**Kimilili FYM Girls Secondary School – partner IcFEM**

2009: construction of 2 classrooms

2011: construction of 2 classrooms

**Moi Girls Kamusinga High School – partner IcFEM**

2012: installation of gas, water and electricity fittings

**Mukuyuni Secondary School – partner IcFEM**

2008: renovation and equipping of 2 science classrooms

**St. Joseph's Kamusinde Secondary School – partner Fr. Peter Makokha**

2013: building office block, toilets and completion of 4 classrooms



**St. Luke's Boys High School – partner Fr. Peter Makokha**

2001: Millennium project, construction of classrooms for physics and chemistry

2003: contribution to furnishing of these classrooms

**St. Theresa's Girls Secondary School – partner Fr. Peter Makokha**

2001: Millennium project, construction of science classrooms and a library

2003: plumbing for physics and chemistry room

2008: construction of 2 classrooms

2012: construction of a school hall, kitchen and store

2014: construction of classrooms, toilets, offices

### **3 Youth Polytechnic**

**Kamasielo Youth Polytechnic – partner IcFEM**

2010: building of 2 workshops with offices and water tank

2011: construction of electrical fittings

2011: donation of tools and machines

2012: visit of Skill Heroes

**Sosio Youth Polytechnic – partner IcFEM until 2013/Albert Webale**

2010: construction of 2 workshops, water tanks, furniture

2011: installation of electricity

2011: donation of tools and machines

2012: visit of Skill Heroes

2012: donation of paint

2014: building of a girls' dormitory

**Naitiri Youth Polytechnic – partner Albert Webale**

2014: water harvesting and construction of a borehole

### **4 Other projects**

**Trauma counselling in Kimilili – partner IcFEM**

2008: "Trauma Counselling Programme" for children and teachers

## **Kakamega County**

### **1 ECDE and Primary Schools**

**Ebubole PS – partner John Were**

2003: donation for textbooks

2004: building of a nursery and offices

2005: building of 4 more classrooms

2007: construction of electrical fittings

**Ebwaliro PS – partner John Were**

2006: building of classroom and office

2007: furnishing of staffroom, school desks

***Indangalasia PS – partner John Were***

2003: donation for school books

2003: renovation of the roof

2013: construction of 4 classrooms and a staff room

**2 Secondary Schools**

***Bukolwe Secondary School – partner John Were***

2009: purchase of 20 computers and 2 printers.

***Munzatsi Secondary School – partner John Were***

2008: construction of a borehole and the water pipes to the school

**3 Youth Polytechnic**

None

**4 Other project**

***Educational Assessment and Resource Centre (EARC) – partner John Were***

2007: complete new building for the centre

2009: completion and furnishing of the new building

2014: construction of a workshop (joined project with Liliane Foundation and Eardrop Foundation)

2014: equipment and furnishing new workshop

**Siaya County**

**1 ECDE and Primary Schools**

***Ugolwe PS – partner John Were***

2007: construction of 4 classrooms and offices

2009: contribution of furniture and desks

2009: construction of 2 ECDE classrooms

2012: renovation of 4 classrooms

2014: building community library and staff room

**2 Secondary Schools**

None

**3 Youth Polytechnic**

None

**4 Other project**

None

## **Trans-Nzoia County**

### **1 ECDE and Primary Schools**

None

### **2 Secondary Schools**

None

### **3 Youth Polytechnic**

*Sikhendu Youth Polytechnic – partner IcFEM until 2013/Albert Webale*

2011: construction of 2 workshops, water tanks and electricity

2014: tools, machines and equipment

### **4 Other project**

None

## **Busia County**

### **1 ECDE and Primary Schools**

*Ikapolok Primary School – partner Fr. Peter Makokha*

After 2014: construction of 5 classrooms

### **2 Secondary Schools**

None

### **3 Youth Polytechnic**

None

### **4 Other project**

None

## **General / for all Harambee supported schools**

### **1 General projects**

*Capacity building school heads, school committees and teachers*

2008: training for teachers

2010: workshops and trainings for ECDE teachers

2011: support for carpenter teachers at youth polytechnics

2011: workshops and trainings for ECDE teachers and headmasters

2012: workshops, trainings and guidance for all school leaders and teachers

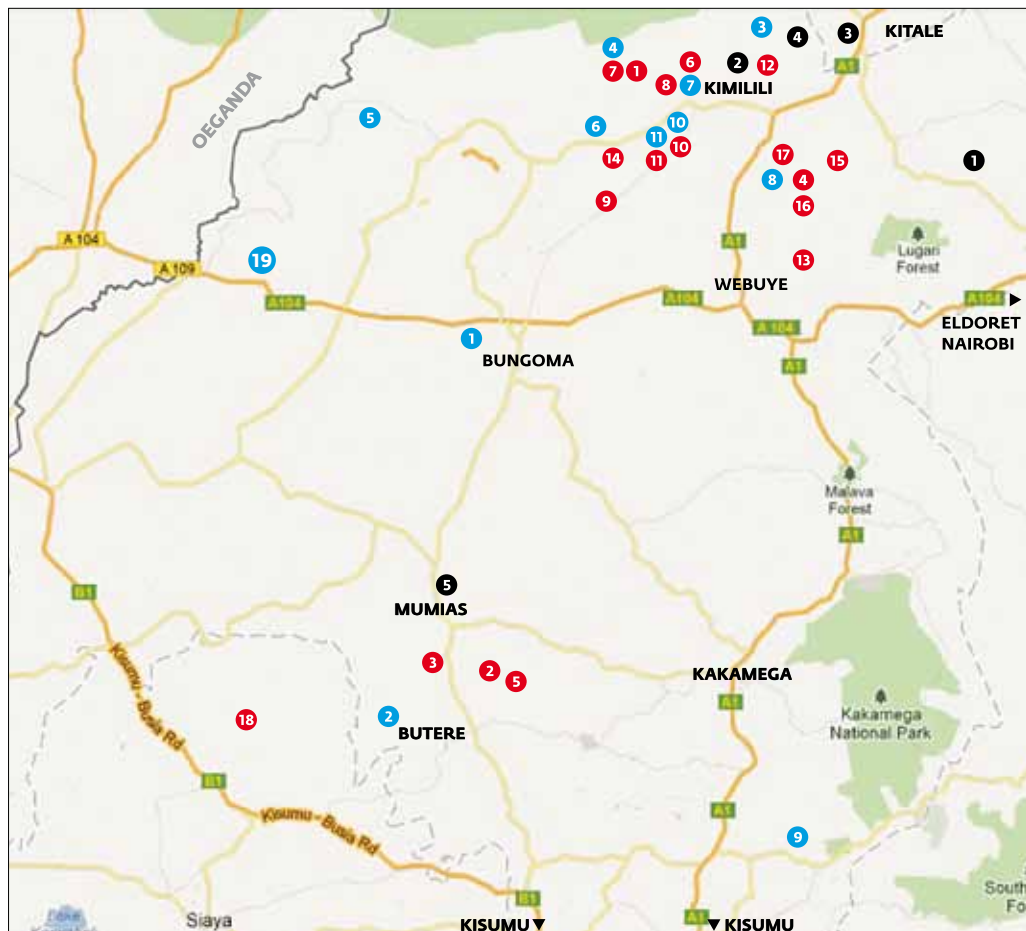
2013: workshops, trainings and guidance for all school leaders and teachers

2014: workshops, trainings and guidance for all school leaders and teachers

*Impact Study about the work of Harambee partnerships*

2012: impact study

## Annex 3: Map Showing Projects Areas



### Nursery- and primary schools

- |                         |                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Dreamland [I]         | 11 Kimilili RC Girls [P] |
| 2 Ebubole [W]           | 12 Kimingichi [I]        |
| 3 Ebwaliro [W]          | 13 Lunyu [I]             |
| 4 Hafoland [I]          | 14 Lutonyi [I]           |
| 5 Indangalasias [W]     | 15 Luuya [I]             |
| 6 Kamusinga [I]         | 16 Makunga [I]           |
| 7 Kaptola [A]           | 17 Mukuyuni [I]          |
| 8 Khalayi Nursery [I]   | 18 Ugolwe [W]            |
| 9 Kibunde [A]           | 19 Ikapolok [P]          |
| 10 Kimilili RC Boys [P] |                          |

### Secondary schools

- |                            |
|----------------------------|
| 1 Beulah Girls             |
| 2 Bukolwe Mixed [W]        |
| 3 Kamusinde Mixed [P]      |
| 4 Kaptola Mixed [A]        |
| 5 Kimabole Mixed [I]       |
| 6 Kimilili Girls FYM [I]   |
| 7 Moi Girls [I]            |
| 8 Mukuyuni Girls [I]       |
| 9 Munzatsi Mixed [W]       |
| 10 St. Luke's Boys [P]     |
| 11 St. Theresa's Girls [P] |

### Polytechnics schools (YP) and others

- |                    |                                |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Naitiri YP [A]   |                                |
| 2 Kamasielo YP [I] |                                |
| 3 Sikhendu YP [I]  |                                |
| 4 Sosio YP [I]     |                                |
| 5 EARC Mumias [W]  |                                |
|                    | [I] project with IcFEM         |
|                    | [W] project with John Were     |
|                    | [P] project with Father Peter  |
|                    | [A] project with Albert Webale |

## *Annex 4: List of HfH Volunteers and Partners*

### **Founders and directors**

Marianne and Roel Meijers – van Eijndhoven

### **Board of Governors Harambee Foundation Holland**

Chairlady:	Marjolein Rojo
Secretary:	Henriëtte van Zuthem
Treasurer:	Sjaak ten Hove
Member:	Ad van Ardenne
Member:	Johan van Uffelen

### **Volunteers Harambee Foundation Holland**

General activities:	Annette Schormans
Website:	Lex van de Vliet (Tjuna) and Dick van Craaikamp
Translations:	René van Eijndhoven
Printing:	NPN Drukkers
Lay-out:	Ron Schouwenaar
Advice:	Jos Coumans (Baco consult)
Accountant:	van Oers Audit
Notary:	Mr. F.D.E. Sulzer

### **Comittee of Recommendation**

Mr. P.A.C.M. v.d. Velden	Lord Mayor of Breda
Mr. Mukhisa Kitui	Former minister of trade and industry of Kenya
Mr. Paul Rosenmöller	Television programme maker
Mr. Koert Lindijer	Dutch journalist in Nairobi

### **Fundraising**

Maddy van den Corput	Sukaisa Foundation
----------------------	--------------------

### **Partners in the Netherlands**

Impulsis in Utrecht  
EDUKANS in Amersfoort  
Wilde Ganzen in Hilversum

### **Cooperation with other organisations**

Tools 2 Work in Teteringen  
Eardrop Foundation in Apeldoorn  
Liliane Foundation in 's Hertogenbosch

## Annex 5: Letter – New Way of Working

To all partners of Harambee Foundation Holland in Western Kenya

Attn. Mr. John Were, Mumias  
Fr. Peter Makokha, Kocholia  
Mr. Solomon Nabie, IcFEM Kimilili  
Mr. Albert Bakasa, Kiminini  
Cc: Mrs. Tryphosa Nandasaba

Bavel, 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2013

Dear partners,

After our last stay in Kenya from 27th of August until 29th of September 2013, we decided to write a letter to you all. After we returned to the Netherlands, we immediately consulted our Board of Governors and had a meeting with them. We like to share our conclusions with you all.

In the last few months we have been thinking about our way of working in Kenya. The reason of this is that we have been facing increasing challenges in the work. These challenges were about transparency, accountability, communication, information, openness; in general we talk about trust. Because of this, we feel that the communities are the victims of this situation.

On the other hand Harambee Foundation Holland has developed in the Netherlands as a very trustworthy small scale organisation, which is seen in the number 10 in the top 50 of best NGO's in Holland and a certification which was given to us for our transparency and accountability.

In consultation with our Board of Governors, our partners on the ground and several other people, we have decided on a new way of working in Kenya in future.

Three principles are vital to us:

- 1 The beneficiaries of the projects are the parents/communities/students; they are the owners of the project. For that reason the working method has to strengthen their ownership. They are at the centre of the project.
- 2 The new working method helps to get maximum openness, transparency and accountability. We feel that these have to be improved extensively.
- 3 A uniform way of working is necessary; all partners are equal.

We have discussed the contents of this new way of working with all partners. All of you have agreed that the communities are playing the central role in the project and that it

should be reflected in the way of working. We therefore expect that all partners will agree with this new working method. We are very much aware that we cannot discuss this issue endlessly and therefore we have to continue with the projects as soon as possible.

The Board and Directors have decided to inform all who are concerned in the work of Harambee Foundation Holland in Western Kenya about this new way of working. This means that the new working method will be sent to:

- All our partners;
- The management team and Chairman of the Board of Governors of IcFEM;
- All schools supported by HFH through the chairmen of the Harambee families of Primary schools, Mr. Peter Situma, Secondary schools, Mrs. Jane Wasike and Youth Polytechnics, Mr. David Limo;
- To government officials concerned in Kimilili, Bungoma North and Mumias district.

Attached you will find our new way of working and a format of the Memorandum of Understanding to be signed for each project.

We hope that this way of working will lead to a better education for the children in Western Kenya.

Yours sincerely,

Marianne and Roel Meijers  
Directors Harambee Foundation Holland

Board of Governors Harambee Foundation Holland  
Marjolein Rojo (chairlady)  
Henriëtte van Zuthem (secretary)  
Sjaak ten Hove (treasurer)  
Ad van Ardenne (member)  
Johan van Uffelen (member)

## Annex 6: Memorandum of Understanding

### Memorandum of Understanding for..... School

**Participants:**     *Headmaster ... School*  
                          *Chairman BOG/SMC ... School*  
                          *Partner Harambee Foundation Holland*  
                          *Marianne and Roel Meijers, directors Harambee Foundation Holland*

**Date**                 ...

---

Participants have agreed to the following:

#### **A Project plan**

- 1 Together they will realise a project for ... School consisting of:
  - a ...
  - b ...
  - c ...
- 2 For this project the headmaster has handed over a project proposal including estimate. The total estimate is Ksh .../-.
- 3 The project will be divided in ... phases, the value of each phase is ...
- 4 The project will be financed by:
  - a A contribution by the parents and community in material and labour, worth of Ksh ..../-
  - b Harambee Foundation Holland, Ksh .../-.
- 5 For this project ... is the partner of HFH. The actual work in this partnership will be carried out by ....
- 6 The physical planning of the project is approved by the County Works Office.
- 7 The headmaster will inform the MP ..., the DEO ... and the area chief about the project.
- 8 It is planned that the project will be completed by ....

#### **B Organisation**

- 9 The parents/community are the owner of the project. The project will be realised under responsibility of headmaster/BOG/SMC.
- 10 The project manager is the headmaster of ... School and will be assisted by ..., member BOG.
- 11 The project will be realised under a labour paid contract with the builder.
- 12 The headmaster will organise an official handing over of the cheque of HFH after the whole contribution of the parents is on site and before the start of the project.



### **C Funding by HFH**

- 13 For this project the school has opened a separate bank account at ... Bank, ... Branch, account number ... in the name of ... School, (postal address).
- 14 Money can only be withdrawn from the account with a cheque signed by 4 signatories: the headmaster, treasurer, chairman BOG/SMC and partner HFH. The headmaster and partner HFH are mandatory signatories.
- 15 Before the project can start the whole contribution of the parents in kind (....) must be on site and checked by the county works officer, chairman SMC and partner HFH.
- 16 HFH will send her contribution in ... phases:
  - a Phase 1: Ksh ... million at the start of the project
  - b Phase 2: Ksh ... million after phase 1 has been completed and been reported including finances to HFH
  - c Phase 3: Ksh ... million after phase 2 has been completed and been reported including finances to HFH etc.

### **D Monitoring and reporting**

- 17 The monitoring of the quality of the materials to be used will be done by the county works officer. The county works officer will be invited by the headmaster through the DEO.
- 18 The monitoring of the progress of the project will be done by BOG/SMC and partner HFH.
- 19 The headmaster will report to HFH (including financial report about the expenditures according to the format given by HFH):
  - a At the end of each phase before the money for the next phase is sent;
  - b At the end of the project.
- 20 After completion of the project the headmaster will:
  - a Send a final report including financial report about the expenditures according to the format provided by HFH;
  - b Organise an official handing of the project when Marianne and RoelMeijers (and if possible the donor) are in Kenya. Before this the facilities can be used provided they are maintained properly.
- 21 After completion of the project the partner of HFH will organise an evaluation.
- 22 Participants will do their utmost to realise the project in the best way possible.

Signed, ...(date)

Headmaster

Chairman SMC/PTA

Partner Harambee Foundation Holland

Harambee Foundation Holland

