

Light of Hope Youth Initiative (CBO)



Light of Hope Strategic Plan 2015-2018

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Light of Hope Youth Initiative Is a registered community based organization in Kenya and it operates in Machakos County.

The organization is run and managed by local youth and women with a mission to Nurture, Empower and Transform local vulnerable young people and women to be self reliant and independent in the community.

For, as to sustain our operational cost we have income generating projects like a public toilet at the Machakos Law Court, We have an ICT Centre offering Internet Service and computer training to the locals.

Machakos County has informal settlement with limited basic human development institutions like primary schools, hospitals and technical colleges thus contributing towards being under developed. Machakos county, has over 600 000 people with more than 70% being young people and women and most of them are unemployed hence engaging in social vices for survival which endangers the future generation, but with our mission we feel all is not lost as we are determined to transform the society in various aspects.

Development of Strategic Plan 2015 - 2018

This is Light of Hope Youth Initiative's second Strategic Plan for period of 2015 to 2018. The purpose of this Strategic Plan for 2015-2018 is to establish the overall strategic direction to guide the staff, Board of Directors, and members of the Light of Hope Youth Initiative over the next three years. This plan will provide the highest level guidance to the Light of Hope Youth Initiative staff and Working Groups as we make choices about program direction, set fundraising priorities, allocate the use of limited human and financial resources, and develop long-term action plans. Good governance by the Board, leadership and management from the staff, and leadership and direction from the Working Group chairs and voluntary contributions will enable us to succeed.

This plan has been developed in consultation with a variety of stakeholders including the Board of Directors, School Headteachers, donors and partner organizations Like VSO Jitolee and Kenya Red Cross Machakos Branch.

A strategic planning workshop was held in December 2014 and was attended by the Board of Directors and key external stakeholders.

They agreed that the progress of this plan will be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors and a mid-term review will be held in 2016.

This strategic plan examines how we can: utilize our comparative advantage as a Community-based organization, prioritize our scarce resources to areas of greatest need and avoid of duplication with the work of other NGOs. This strategic plan also reaffirms the organization's commitment to contribute to the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and is coherent with Kenyan Government policy

PRINCIPLES AND APPROACH

Organizational Values

Light of Hope Youth Initiative sees these values as critical and integral to its work

Transformational – We believe that for positive sustainable transformation to occur it must be addressed at three levels: personal empowerment and responsibility, community revitalization, and societal transformation.

Highly effective - We seek to be catalysts of change to make the most significant positive impact with the limited resources available. This means that we are strategic in how we use our resources, limiting ourselves to addressing a few priority issues and those in greatest need. We also ensure accountability in how the resources are used.

Excellent – We believe that those we serve deserve the best. We shall be an organization that is continually learning and sharing; creating models of good practice that can be replicated countrywide.

Relational - We recognize the importance of good relationships and strong, mutually beneficial partnerships. We seek to put those we are serving first while being humble and learning from others.

Empowering – We seek to strengthen the capacities and address the vulnerabilities of those we serve. This also includes encouraging, development of skills and access to resources for self-sufficiency.

Passionate – We are passionate about those we work for and passionate in all that we do. We seek to be creative and imaginative in finding sustainable solutions to addressing issues of girl child advocacy, Drug Abuse, Environment among Youth and Curbing HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Strategies

- ❖ To enable the participation, engagement and inclusion of the most vulnerable and marginalized youth and young women in our society.
- ❖ To address the underlying causes of vulnerability and strengthen existing capacities and invest in preventative solutions more so on drug abuse, Environment, Curbing HIV/AIDS and girl child Empowerment
- ❖ To address issues of stigmatization and marginalization among those infected or affected by HIV/AIDS as we foster health reproduction.
- ❖ To meet the needs of the vulnerable and most marginalized through effective community-based service-delivery and social protection mechanisms
- ❖ To develop community networks to provide care and support for the vulnerable and most marginalized
- ❖ To curb extreme poverty more the youth and women

Light Of Hope Youth Initiative

Partners and Collaborators

Light of Hope Youth Initiative's strategy of implementation is to work with both local and foreign organizations e.g other CBOs, NGOs, Youth and Women Groups and other partners like VSO Jitolee, ZanaAfrica, Kenya Red Cross Machakos Branch, Donors, The County Government of Machakos and, finally any other like-minded organization that may wish to come on board. We believe good partnerships are vital to the success and sustainability of our work. These relationships are based on the recognition that each party has a distinctive role and contribution to make towards achieving common goals. We choose partners which share our values and beliefs and also demonstrate a commitment to organizational excellence as this leads to strong and effective partnerships.

Light of Hope Youth Initiative's connects with local CBOs, Youth and Women Groups at a grassroots level with partners and networks which have specific expertise and can support and strengthen our capacity e.g. Benevolent Institute of Development Initiatives (BIDI) when our focus is on of curb HIV/AIDS

The combining of the strengths of various partners leads to effective and sustainable community transformation.

Light of Hope Youth Initiative and our partners are committed to collaborating with both national government, County Government and other civil society actors and integrating within national development frameworks, such as Poverty Reduction Strategies.

Light of Hope Youth Initiative also recognizes the multiplicity of other development actors and the importance of working with and learning from them if we are to achieve our goal of transforming the lives of the most vulnerable and marginalized people

VISION

Light of Hope Youth Initiative envisions a society where youth and women are self-reliant and active in decision making in developing our community and our county and reach out to other marginalized communities.

MISSION

To nurture, empower and transform local young people and women to be independent and crucial players in the community.

GOALS

- ❖ To ensure the educational right to local vulnerable young people.
- ❖ To equip young people and women with effective entrepreneurship, vocational and business skills to promote generative income activities.
- ❖ To create citizen awareness through education on HIV/AIDS, DRUG ABUSE, LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE, VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, PEACE COEXISTENCE, ENVIRONMENT and HYGIENE & SANITATION.
- ❖ To nurture young people skills by creating opportunities, training and teaching in order to improve performance.
- ❖ To prepare and facilitate event platforms for positive, campaigns, social and economic empowerment for the young and women in Machakos County

To achieve our Mission we have developed 3 programs namely:

Nurturing Program, Social Enterprise Incubator Program and My Community Program

INITIATIVES

1. Nurturing Program

The objective of this program is to ensure and improve education to local vulnerable young children in the community thus giving them a chance for a scholastic career, to be competitive and access better opportunities in life. Nurturing program involves working with local vulnerable children by ensuring they excel in academics hence it's through two projects. **Inua Sanitary Pads** and **Inua Back to School club** this program benefits 500 vulnerable primary school children annually but targeting about 2500 pupils to benefit with this initiative in future, through this program vulnerable girls attend school during menstruation, young children have a reading culture and general performance of the beneficiary in the exams.

1.1 Inua Sanitary Pad Project

After an assessment of several schools in Machakos County, it was discovered that many girls do not attend school during menstruation period. Some young girls are forced to stay at home the whole week because they do not have funds to acquire the necessary sanitary pads. As a solution some girls use hazardous materials like newspapers or old rags, putting their health in danger exposing themselves to infections. As a consequence, this lack of attendance affects their academic performance as the girls cannot reach even the average of the class.

“TNUA ”; is a Swahili name which means uplift.

Inua Sanitary Pad Project-Aims at providing sanitary pads to local vulnerable young girls in primary school on a monthly basis in order to reduce absenteeism during menstruation days and poor performance at school.

Furthermore, with a purpose to make local young girls more aware about their body changes and relevant topics during the provision of sanitary towels, Light of Hope Youth Initiative organizes meetings to train them about HIV/AIDS, Reproductive Health and Personal Hygiene.

This project has been running since February 2013 in local public primary school in Machakos County. Where close to 500 girls are benefiting from the initiative but our target is reach out close to 2500 girls per month

As sign of positive impact in our community Zana Africa has joined this Initiative and it will be giving us 350 sanitary towels and Inner pants for a period of on year, this serves a big boost to this noble initiative

Incoming project

Production of Reusable sanitary pads

Light of Hope Youth Initiative purpose of future is to procure reusable sanitary sewing machine and start training girls to produce reusable sanitary pads by their selves using low cost and safe materials. The aim is to discourage them to use improper items and make them more independent and willing to go to school during “special days.”

1.2 Inua Back to School Project

The local children in Machakos county lack basic school supplies like school uniform, pair of shoes, bags, writing books, pens and pencils thus, most of the time they are send at home hence loitering on the streets and because their parents are poor, majority don't go back to school thus high rate of school dropout. These young people who drop out of school engages in social vices for economic survival.

Inua Back to School – Project aims at supporting the vulnerable children with school uniforms, school bags and shoes at the beginning of academic year (January) and supplement school supplies like books, pencils pens at the begging of every semester (January, may and September).

Incoming project

To ensure significant results, Light of Hope Youth Initiative is currently working on establishing a place where local children can spend their spare time instead of being in the streets. The main aim is to create a “Reading centre “where they will have the opportunity to continuously access a wide variety of information to be supported with computer literacy, home work by the volunteers and the trained staff and thus improving their knowledge and school performance.

Light of Hope Youth Initiative has already started to collect books for the centre and computers from well wishers

2. Social Enterprise Incubator Program

Social Enterprise Incubator Program; aims at training local young people on business, vocational and life skills in order to enable them to start and manage income generating activities and link them with industry players.

In line with this purpose we promote income generating projects through two phases; Skill Training and Enterprise Incubator

Skill Training

In this phase young people and women acquire skills in various fields

Vocational and life skills Training

The vocational training is only for the trainees who have successfully finished the business training. During this phase young people and women are equipped with skills on making jewels and household mats and also sensitized about life skills such as communication and persuasive abilities.

Enterprise Incubator

This project aims to make the trainees from the skills training more competitive by understanding the dynamics of the industry and linking them to industry players.

In this final phase Light of Hope Youth Initiative will work as a bridge between the producer and the buyer facilitating their entrance in the market.

Incoming Project

Vocational Training Centre

Light of Hope Youth Initiative intends to open a “Vocational Training Centre” as a permanent training structure in the area of Machakos town.

The staff of the centre will be composed not only by the local, international volunteers and navigator Kenya members, but also by the trainees who have successfully attended the whole training process.

Light Of Hope Youth Initiative

ICT Mashinani

Study indicates that, despite Kenya's rapid ICT growth there is danger that some sections of the masses, especially in rural areas, could be left behind. While this phenomenal growth of the ICT sector is envisioned to serve as an engine for economic growth in the 21st century.

Based on the study **Light of Hope Youth Initiative** being proactive has decided to play a pivotal role in Kenya ICT growth, where our concern is to focus on rural areas that study shows they lag behind as far as ICT is concerned.

Our ambitious plan is to develop ICT Centres in Rural areas, where the community around get Training in ICT, access internet services among other related services.

For this ambitious program to be a success story the main constraint is funds, where by we have already established areas to roll out the Centres, but with this financial constraint we have been submitting proposals to different donors to help in purchase of the required equipment to four (4) operate ICT Centres in the following sub-county areas of Machakos County Kenya Kathiani, Matungulu ,Ndithini and Yathui Sub-counties.

Also through a Partner organization in United Kingdom U.K called Tools With a Mission (TWAM) have agreed to donate computers and printers to our organization, but we settle the freight charges which amounts to close Kshs 250,000, this remains a challenge but we are sourcing for funds to settle the same.

3. My Community Program “Mtaa Yangu”.

Objective

The program aims at creating platforms where local young people can interact with each other and have contact with like minded organizations. In this way they can be informed and sensitized about different topics such as leadership, HIV/AIDS, Drug Abuse, Environment Conservation and Entrepreneurship in order to be active in the development of their own community.

The desire to value the local environment is also clear from the name of the program which comes from Swahili words “Mtaa” Meaning “Community” and “Yangu” which means “My.”

In line with this purpose Light of Hope Youth Initiative organizes 4 annual events

- Machakos Annual Soccer Tournament event----April
- Machakos Annual Clean-up event-----November
- Machakos Talent Search event.....August
- Machakos Tree Planting event.....All round the year

Machakos Annual Soccer

The purpose of Machakos annual soccer tournament is to mobilize local young people of both genders through the context of soccer games to participate in the competition and especially to offer those resourceful inputs and information on leadership, HIV/AIDS and Drug Abuse in collaboration with local and international organizations.

In the event we wish to provide opportunities to register for identity cards, moreover involve local organization in training sessions in family planning issues and counselling and mentorship.

Machakos Annual Clean-Up & Tree Planting

This project is held annually and it's an occasion in which the local young and women are sensitized on how to conserve their environment and to be nature friendly.

After a brief training and the provision of necessary tools participants are involved in planting trees, cleaning the community through garbage collection, cleaning drainage system and slashing the bushes.

Machakos Annual Talent Search

This project is held in August and it creates a platform for the local young people to showcase their various talents to entrepreneurs and potential employers.

The highlight of the event is the "Mr. and Miss Machakos county contest. It is a very rewarding event filled with entertainment and attended by important corporate and local leaders.

Growing and Diversifying Our Funding Base

One of the top organizational challenges that Light of Hope Youth Initiative faces for the 2015-2018 period is fundraising.

A tremendous challenge lies in finding fund to run our events, projects, purchase equipments for ICT Mashinani Project and purchase enough sanitary towels as the demand keeps on raising

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