

Strategic Priority 4

Reaching Out – breaking down barriers and working with all segments of society



The World Organization of the Scout Movement



PROMISING PRACTICES

The Extension Scout Programme in Kenya

The Results

1200 Scouts in Kenya are now part of the Extension Programme for young people who are street children or children living in difficult circumstances, e.g. being AIDS orphans, or through one or both parents having AIDS, or through disability. There are 24 Units set up all over the country, all using the Scout Method to teach young people life skills, vocational skills and to help them to have some fun and be like other young people of their age.



Street Scouts enjoying a meal together

The programme takes a very individual approach to working with the young people. Its aims are to:

- Reunite the children with their parents, families, relatives and well-wishers where possible.
- Enable the Scouts to participate and gain from income generation projects to become self-sufficient (self-supporting).
- To mix with other Scouts in Scouting activities, from local to national and international activities.

The Units are run by well trained Scout Leaders who have attended Scout Leader training courses and have also attended specialised training courses to help them to deal with the particular situation of street children, e.g. counselling skills to help the street children to stop glue sniffing, adolescent sexual health issues etc.

Full records are kept of all the children in the programme so that their progress can be monitored and their support tailored to meet their individual needs, e.g. schooling, developing interests etc. Peter Kariuki, one of the first Extension Scouts

to receive his uniform, is now in Form Three at Kiriani Boys Secondary School. Another Scout in the Extension Programme has attended a driving course, has passed his test and is now a driver.

In addition to the income generation projects that have been set up, a clinic – the Sisi Kwa Sisi clinic (For Ourselves and By Ourselves in Kiswahili) has been installed in Rowallan Scout Camp site. This clinic serves the members of the Extension Scout Project free of charge. It also serves people at the camp and the residents in the shanty town which borders the camp which has a population of around 1.1 million.

Skill development is a very important aspect of the project and members of the Extension Scout Programme can develop their skills on computers donated for this purpose or learn to bake bread in the bakery which has been set up on the campsite. The bread is sold to other campers and families living around the site.

The programme is run by a committee, chaired by Mr Shuaib Adam, an ACC of KSA, and consists of supportive individuals who have been recruited for the professional skills they can offer the programme. The programme is also supported by three full-time staff, a project co-ordinator, a nurse and a cowman.



Kenya: The Kenya Scout Association

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The Reasons

There are reportedly over 60,000 street children in Nairobi and other major towns in Kenya. A street child is someone who does not have a home or any place to go at night other than the street pavements and street shop verandas. The street children survive by scavenging for food in waste bins and rubbish dumps, by begging and stealing and other petty crimes. They sniff glue and take drugs and are always dirty.



Young people living on the streets of Nairobi are recruited to the programme

Children have been forced to live on the streets because society has failed to keep families together. Society therefore has a responsibility to help them to reintegrate into the community. In ten years time the problem will not be children living on the streets but whole families who exist like this.

If a country is to develop it requires its citizens to contribute actively to build caring, stable communities. The Kenya Scout Association is contributing to the development of Kenya through various activities and projects, among which is working with these young people who are disadvantaged. The young people are helped to develop good character through supporting their physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual development and equipping them with knowledge, positive attitudes and skills, useful to themselves and their communities.

Many organisations work with children in particularly difficult circumstances but in the Kenya Scout Association we feel

that we take a different approach because we focus on each young person and their individual circumstances and try to help him or her reintegrate into society by giving him/her a sense of worth and a sense of belonging. Feeling that you are part and parcel of a community is essential for social integration.



Members of Extension Scout Programme having fun at their Jamboree

The Methods

The project was set up in the eighties when world Scouting started facing this issue. It was later developed by the then ACC in charge of Extension Scouting, Wallace Garland, who was at that time Managing Director of Cadbury's Kenya. He sensitised his friends in UK to support the programme financially and materially. Through him the programme reached out to up-country children and it became a truly national programme. Another player joined him, Gavin Bate, Managing Director of Alternatives Adventure, a Company offering young people from the UK an opportunity to come to Kenya for a touristic tour coupled with a ten day Jamboree with street children. The UK young people, some of whom are Scouts, have to raise the necessary money to run the jamboree and support the clinic.

Towards the end of the nineties, the Ivy family joined the group of supporters and with them a strong group of supporters has been set-up in UK. They raise money and also collect some second hand articles which are very valuable to the project. Recently Ivy's daughter Lesley managed to send two containers for used items, among them two cars for co-ordination, and many computers which have helped set-up computer classes for Nairobi area and enabled us to give a computer and printer to each Scout Unit. This is something that even the other Scouts do not have!

Scouts of New Brunswick of Scouts Canada are also excellent supporters of the project.

This support has enabled the project to become well established in the Kenya Scout Association.

- Activities have been developed by the Unit Leaders, which help the Scouts to develop skills and interests and are also appropriate for the local circumstances, whether it is baking bread, chicken rearing, zero grazing or developing computer skills. The Scouts are also fully integrated into the life of local Scouting and there are opportunities for them to attend camps and each year at Rowallan Camp Site, they have their own camp.
- Sponsorship has been provided by a variety of donors, Scout Groups, individuals, Churches and the World Scout Bureau, Africa Regional Office.
- Effective management and reporting procedures have also been put in place. There is a management team that meets monthly and regular reports are produced for the donors. The Unit leaders are responsible for providing the programme co-ordinator with the necessary information and receipts for the support provided so that the reports can be compiled.

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Now we have inspired and supported Uganda Scouts which has now embarked on a programme for street children. This year there will be one Jamboree in Nairobi and another one up-country so that the children know the country better.

We are also supporting Uganda Scouts Association to stage a Jamboree for street children this summer.

Our Learning

Sustainability



A Scout baking bread at Rowallan Campsite

The need to develop programmes for children in especially difficult circumstances in Kenya is immense. There is however a danger that the programme could be overwhelmed by a vast increase in young people wanting to join projects. As the purpose of the programme is to reintegrate individual young people back into society it is important that it develops in line with available funding and the recruitment and training of Unit leaders.

Sustainability at the local level is also important. Initially the Scouts were provided with food but this became very expensive. Now, through the income generating projects, the Scouts take on

responsibility to earn money and benefit individually.

Accountability

The importance of openness and transparency is paramount. Donors receive regular reports on how their money is being spent and all requests for funding are put before the committee. One of the key tasks of the programme co-ordinator is to visit the projects and prepare reports for the donors and the committee.

Sharing ideas and good practice

Each Unit has very individual characteristics and individual needs and they must be able to develop projects that meet their individual circumstances. However sharing amongst the Scout Leaders is a very important element of the programme. DANIDA – the Danish Development Agency sponsored a seminar for the leaders of the Extension Scout Units which enabled a lot of sharing and learning to take place.

The need to promote the programme more widely

The programme is primarily supported by donors outside Kenya. As one of the aims is to achieve more support from the local community it is important that it is promoted more widely in Kenya and particularly in Nairobi. To help to achieve this a photo-journalist, Khamis Ramadhan, has recently been recruited to serve on the committee.

The need to involve people with the necessary skills and train leaders

The people on the committee all have skills and influence which can help the programme which has been a very important aspect in developing the programme. Two doctors sit on the committee to support the running of the clinic, the Vice-Chairman of a Catering School also sits on the committee to support the running of the bakery and the Deputy Commissioner for Prisons has been recruited to the committee recently.

The skills of the Unit Leaders are also important. In addition to Scout Leader training the leaders also need relevant skills to work with the Scouts in their Unit, e.g. skills to work with street children and children with disabilities.

Our Future Plans

Vocational training

As the members of the programme get older and there are older young people on the streets, the need for vocational training increases. It is important to have people with the skills and the necessary facilities in place before vocational training can be offered. There are plans to set up a tailoring project at Rowallan Camp Site.

Raise the profile of the work

There are also plans to raise the profile of the project in the local community and also to raise some money. Ideas that are currently being explored are: a sponsored walk, a dinner dance, a high profile event in Nairobi which will attract all the street children and prominent people in the community.

The programme is committed to offer a new chance to as many Kenyan children living in especially difficult circumstances as possible. To do that it needs support from donors locally and further afield.

For further information on Extension Scouting, please contact Philip Kiprono or Poppin Misoï at kenscout@africaonline.co.ke

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STRATEGY
ACHIEVING
OUR MISSION

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Organisation Mondiale du Mouvement Scout



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