

terre des hommes



stops child exploitation

Stories of Impact 2022





About Terre des Hommes Netherlands

Terre des Hommes Netherlands (TdH NL) is an international non-governmental organisation with a mission to protect children by preventing and stopping child exploitation, and by empowering children to make their voices count. Our vision is that children can flourish in a world free of all forms of exploitation.

Our vision and mission are inspired and guided by international human rights instruments and standards, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Council of Europe's Lanzarote Convention, the International Labour Organisation Conventions and aligned with achievement of the SDGs, in particular Goals 5, 8 and 16.

Terre des Hommes Netherlands fights against the exploitation of children in four regions: Asia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East. In Africa, Terre des Hommes Netherlands works in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Madagascar. Our work is focused on preventing child exploitation in all its forms. As such we work with communities, government,

private sector, civil society organisations and children themselves, at the centre, to address systemic and structural drivers that expose children to exploitation. We build the capacity of communities and local structures to effectively prevent, detect, report and respond to child exploitation; we purpose to address systemic and structural drivers of child exploitation. We also collaborate with other actors to influence strengthening of the legal and policy environment for better promotion and protection of children rights.

Over the years, Terre des Hommes Netherlands has been able to document various impactful stories of the support we have provided children through the projects and programmes that have positively impacted their lives. A few selected stories are detailed in this storybook.



We strive to do no harm and act in the best interests of children. To protect their privacy all identifying personal information (including names, locations and images of children) in this storybook have been changed.

Copyright notice



This storybook has been published by Terre des Hommes Netherlands. The contents of this storybook are copyright-protected under international laws. Terre des Hommes Netherlands holds the right to reproduce this storybook; and to authorise others to reproduce the contents of this storybook. No duplication or transmission in any form – print, electronic or otherwise – is allowed without permission. Permission may be granted on a case-by-case basis. For permission write to east.africa@tdh.nl.

Acknowledgement

Terre des Hommes Netherlands is sincerely grateful for the valuable contribution of its donors, all partners (including the respective partner organisations mentioned in the stories), children, communities and other stakeholders in supporting children and providing assistance in developing the impactful stories depicted in the storybook.



Table of Contents

● About Terre Des Hommes Netherlands.....	ii
● Acknowledgement.....	iii

Stories from Kenya

1. Mary in Strong Pursuit of her Education.....	6
2. A Fresh Start for Asha.....	8
3. Zain, a Peer Educator Aspiring to Empower other Girls.....	10
4. Bright Dreams, Bright Future for Agnes.....	12
5. A Reason to Smile Again: Vicky's story.....	14
6. "I had lost hope, but She Leads helped me to be confident".....	18

Stories from Uganda

1. Every Child is ABLE!	21
2. Rescued from the Street Life.....	24
3. Empowered and Unstoppable.....	26
4. A Serene Dwelling Place for Benjamin.....	29
5. "Now I can start a salon and raise money for my child".....	32
6. Napeyok's Safe Repatriation.....	34

Stories from Tanzania

1. Lizy, the Aspiring Police Officer.....	37
2. A Safe Haven for Kamoli.....	39
3. Teddy's Revived Tailoring Dream.....	41
4. Restoring Vickie's Hope.....	43
5. Milka gets Justice: "You have become my voice".....	45

Stories from Ethiopia

1. Safe Spaces for Internally Displaced Women and Children.....	48
2. Hayimanot Finds Her Voice.....	51
3. Anguache's Tale: Surviving Corporal Punishment.....	53
4. Halima's Safe Return.....	55
5. My Rights, My Life: Hirut's Story.....	57

Stories from Madagascar

1. In School, Happy and Living a Better Life.....	60
2. "School helps me to get to know important things".....	62
3. "I love to study, play games and sing in school" Vicky's story.....	64
4. Tinahy (12) Works Hard but Starts the Day Without Breakfast.....	67
5. Tsihoeza (16) Works in a Mine and Sleeps in a Pit.....	69

Stories from Kenya



1 Mary in Strong Pursuit of her Education

Mary, her three siblings and mother live in a one-room rental house made of stone walls and iron roofing in Mtwapa, Kilifi County. The room is shared by Mary's family and also serves as the kitchen. When she was only two years old, her parents separated and her father disappeared. Life became unbearable for Mary's family as her mother did not have a stable source of income. Her only option was to engage in casual labour, which included washing clothes for the neighbours. In a day, she would earn 3.4 Euros which was barely enough to cater for their basic needs.

Irregular school attendance

As days went by, the situation worsened for Mary's family. In most instances, the family could only manage to get two meals in a day. Mary's health deteriorated due to inadequate nutrition and her school attendance became irregular as she was constantly sent home for school fees. In 2020, when in Grade 4, she dropped out of school.



Negative peer pressure

Being out of school, Mary would hang out with her friends until late in the evening. She started accepting free rides from bodaboda riders aged between 18-20 years old who would carry her back home. The men complimented her looks and gave her money (1.7- 4.2 Euros) to buy what she was lacking at home. “We were going through so much hardship to ensure we had food on the table,” Mary recounted. On the other hand, her mother was struggling to make ends meet for the family and did not have time for her children. Eventually, the men started making sexual advances towards Mary. Without her mother’s knowledge, she started meeting up with these men in hotels and isolated buildings and ended up being sexually exploited.

Saved from exploitation

For almost a year, Mary was sexually exploited and there was no way out for her. One day, one of her neighbours informed the area pastor of what was happening. The pastor reported the issue to Mary’s mother as well as the area Child Protection Volunteer (CPV). In February 2021, Mary was identified by the CPV as she fit in line with the criteria for the *Building a Future project* target group.

Back to school

After the assessment, the project’s social workers and the Child Protection Volunteer offered biweekly guidance and counselling sessions to Mary through home and school visits. Additionally, the project supported Mary with scholarly materials, dignity packs, and all school levies to help her continue with her education. Speaking of the support she has received, Mary happily said, “The support I have received has enabled me to attend school consistently without fail. This support is important because I can now focus on my studies.” Her dream is to become a successful business woman and support her family.



2 A Fresh Start for Asha

Asha completed her primary school education in 2020 and joined a high school in Mombasa County the following year. Unfortunately, she could not cope with the new high school life. She had always preferred pursuing a beauty and fashion course, which she was passionate about. In October 2021 when schools reopened for the second term, she disappeared to an unknown location. Her father reported the case to a nearby police station. One week later, she returned home and her father escorted her to the aforementioned police station.

Exploited at a young age

Upon their arrival at the police station, Asha was taken into a separate room for questioning. While interviewing her, the police discovered that she had a smartphone. After going through it, the police officer realised that she had been in communication with several men aged between 25 - 40 years. Thereafter, the police officer in charge contacted the project officer for further intervention. During a separate counselling session, Asha informed the project officer that she had met five of the men physically and slept with them. She met some of the men via online platforms like Facebook. Consequently, she also met other men offline, exchanged contacts and continued with the conversations via WhatsApp before meeting them in public places and private residences. The men would give her money, around 62 Euros, in exchange for sex. "I feel bad about myself. I also feel that I am responsible for all these things because it's me who agreed to meet them all," she said regrettably.



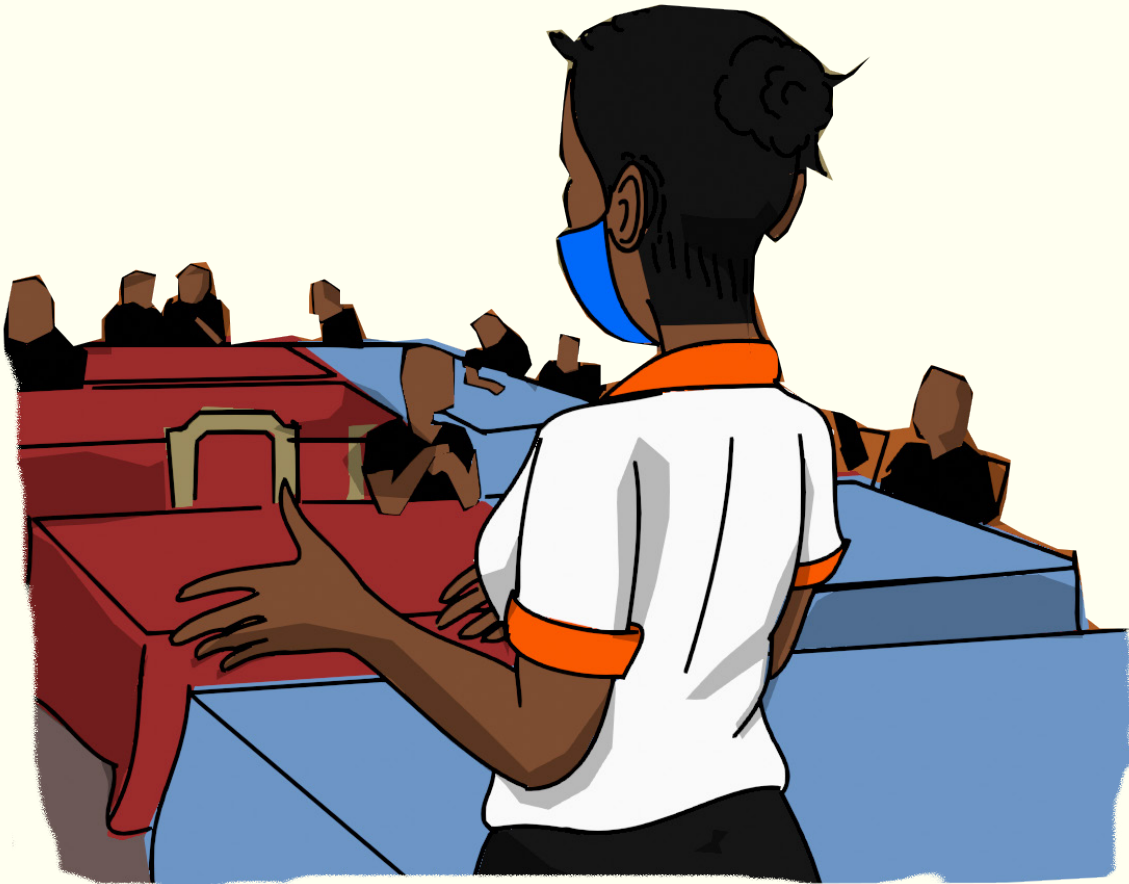
Support

The *Watch* 24/7 project team met Asha and taught her how to avoid online sexual exploitation and how to be SMART while online to avoid such incidents from happening. She was also encouraged to report any cases of online harassment.

Asha's case was reported to the Children's Office and police post in Nyali, Mombasa County in October 2021. The case files and the smartphone were forwarded to the *Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI)* — Child Protection Unit for further investigations, to identify the perpetrators and arrest them. A follow-up is being made by the children's office in Nyali and the child's psychological well-being and progress is being monitored every two weeks. This is expected to continue until the case is concluded. From the Counsellor's assessment the child's behaviour has really improved. She now understands herself better. She however wishes to engage herself in activities that will help her use her time productively like learning the fashion and beauty course that she's passionate about. Asha wants to be a beautician in future.



3 Zain, a Peer Educator Aspiring to Empower other girls



Life for Zain has been challenging. In 2002 when she was six years old, her mother died after a short illness. Following her mother's death, she went to live with her grandmother—a casual labourer who depended on washing clothes as a source of income. In a day, she could make an average of 1.6 Euros, which was insufficient to cater for the family needs. Occasionally, Zain and the family would only have one meal per day. Around 2001, Zain managed to join a local orphanage primary school for her nursery education. She was later transferred to another school in 2007 where she sat for her national exams in 2010. Despite the challenges, her school performance was very impressive.

In 2011, she joined a nearby day secondary school through the support of a good Samaritan who offered to pay her school fees. In her final year, her grandmother was diagnosed with stage four cervical cancer. Day by day, the illness worsened. As a result, her relatives shifted their focus to the ailing grandmother and Zain was left alone with no one to care for her. "I felt that the world was so unfair to me. First, my parents died, then the only person whom I knew as my parent also passed away, this was almost my breaking point, my world had collapsed." Zain explains.

Hardship

Having been abandoned by her family, Zain became helpless and sought help from men (between 18- 50 years). Soon, the men began making sexual advances towards her. At 17 years with no source of livelihood, Zain was sexually exploited. A few months after completing her national exams, she discovered she was pregnant. When her aunt heard of the news, she took her in immediately. Upon her delivery, Zain started looking for jobs to support her child. Sadly, she would wake up, walk for many kilometres in search of jobs and would come home empty-handed. As her quest to make ends meet continued, she fell again into the hands of men who took advantage of her. Occasionally, she used to visit these men in their houses and others she would meet them in the lodges within Naivasha town. "I didn't know this is sexual exploitation I thought they were helping me out, I felt they were good to me as I did not have any source of income to support my child," she said.

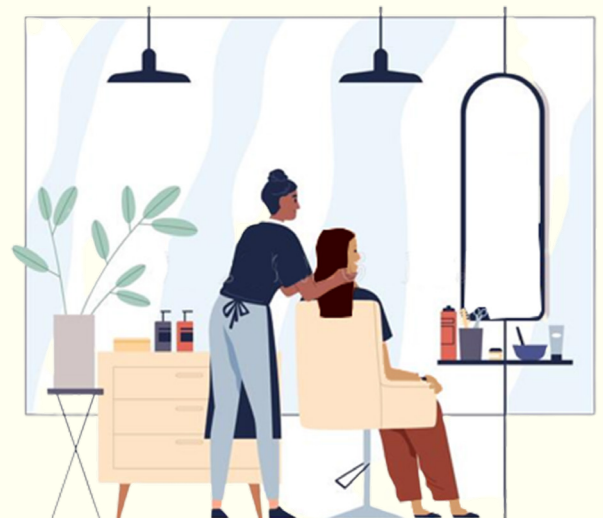
Receiving support

A social worker based where Zain lives identified her and referred her to our partner *KNOTE*. In 2019, she was trained as a peer educator to reach out to other younger female sex workers. Zain was then integrated into the programme in October 2020 and she selected a hairdressing course.

In January 2021, she received a three-day life skills training, reproductive health sessions and job skills training. She also enrolled for a six-month hairdressing course in March 2021 and sat for the *National Industrial Training Agency (NITA)* grade three exams in December 2021. Additionally, she has been supported with a starter kit to open a small salon within Naivasha town.

Future aspirations

Zain aspires to train other girls who have been victims of sexual exploitation and empower them to overcome life's most pressing challenges. "I hope and aspire to be a leading hairdresser in Naivasha and use my skills to reach out to girls at risk of sexual exploitation and help them pick themselves up and move on with life."



4 Bright Dreams, Bright Future for Agnes



16-year-old Agnes and her family (seven siblings and parents) live in Kwale County, Kenya. Her father is the breadwinner and relies on casual labour like weeding and harvesting coconuts. On a good day, he makes approximately 59.82 Euros and 25.64 Euros during the unfavourable coconut season. Her mother, on the other hand, farms vegetables mostly during the rainy season to supplement her husband's earnings. With the little earnings, Agnes and her siblings cannot access even the most basic needs.

Out of school

After her primary education in 2018, Agnes lost hope of joining high school.

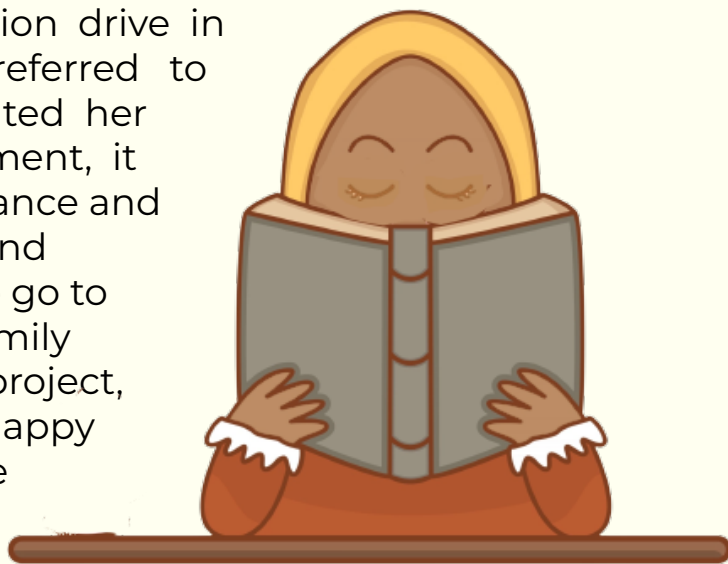
She stayed home to help her mother take care of her younger siblings. Her mother, however, could not let her daughter idle at home. In 2019, she enrolled Agnes to a nearby secondary school without paying school fees. With the family's dire economic situation, she couldn't continue with her studies as she was sent away for a large amount of school fees that had accumulated. "I lost hope of returning to school and continuing with my studies as my parents could not afford to pay for my fees," Agnes recounted painfully. Her dream of continuing with her studies further reached a dead end after the government gave a directive of school closure due to Covid-19. As a result, she stayed out of school for almost a year and a half.

Peer pressure

Life became tough for Agnes and her family. At 14 years old, she was out of school and everything was crumbling. With no constructive activity to engage in, Agnes joined a bad group of friends who were engaging in sexual activities. Due to the tough situation at home, she devised alternative ways to access basic needs, including clothes, perfumes and sanitary towels. As a result, she was sexually exploited majorly by boda boda operators, without her mother's knowledge.

Receiving Support

A Child Protection Volunteer from *Kesho Kenya* was conducting a beneficiary identification drive in January 2021. Agnes was identified and referred to the project by social workers who visited her home for assessments. After the assessment, it was concluded that Agnes needed guidance and counselling to help mould her behaviour and provide academic support to enable her to go to school. "I had lost hope in life due to the family financial struggles and were it not for the project, I would not have returned to school. I am happy I can now continue with my studies and be resourceful through the attainment of education and guidance in my behaviour," she said happily.



Empowered

In April 2021, Agnes was supported to return to school through the provision of school fees, dignity items, uniforms and scholarly materials. Additionally, frequent follow-ups in school and home visits are done by the social workers to identify any emerging issues. During the school visits, her teachers noted that she is now well-disciplined and hardworking. "I have a future after accomplishing my secondary school studies since I am now in Form 4. I hope to progress to the university, study and have a good job which will enable me to live in a well-furnished house, have a car and build my family a better house," Agnes said.

Her parents on the other hand have also been sensitised on child protection approaches to better protect their children from exploitation. Currently, Agnes is very happy and her school attendance is regular. She can now spend her time wisely in school and at home. She not only hopes for a better future but dreams of becoming a role model to other children. "I would like to be an Agricultural officer or a teacher to empower the farmers on productive farming or teach the children and guide them on right morals," she said.

5 A reason to smile again: Vicky's story

Vicky and her siblings were brought up in an extended family. Her other siblings have different mothers and are not living with her father. Vicky's father, the sole provider for the family, is a proprietor and a businessman. On a normal day, Vicky and her siblings would wake up at 6:30 am, take breakfast, go to school, and come back home at 1:00 pm to have lunch. In the evening, they would go to the playgrounds to mingle with other children.

Tough times



When Vicky was 3 years old, the situation at home changed for the worst. Her mother fell ill and she was taken to a nearby hospital. She was treated and later discharged. Days later, the illness persisted forcing her to be readmitted to Matayos Sub-County hospital. Unfortunately for Vicky, her mother's condition did not improve and due to financial constraints, she could not seek further medication attention. As a result, Vicky's mother left her matrimonial home to go and stay with her mother as she recovered from the illness. In 2015, the condition exacerbated and her husband presumed she had been 'bewitched.' A year later, Vicky's mother divorced her husband and tried to get custody of her children through the *Directorate of Children Services (DCS)*. Sadly, her request was not granted as she was found unfit to live with them.

Punishment

With their parents separated, Vicky and her elder sibling (who is deaf) had to walk for more than 15 kilometres from their father's home to where their mother lived. They would sneak out to go see their mother without their

father's knowledge. One day, he noticed their disappearance, became enraged and decided to punish them. Physical abuse coupled with canes and slaps became a norm to them for six years. They missed school, lived in fear and had no one to report the incidences to. "Sometimes they would come to school with bruises on their bodies," said Madam Jude (not her real name), a teacher at Vicky's school. "They tell stories about how they are denied food," she added.

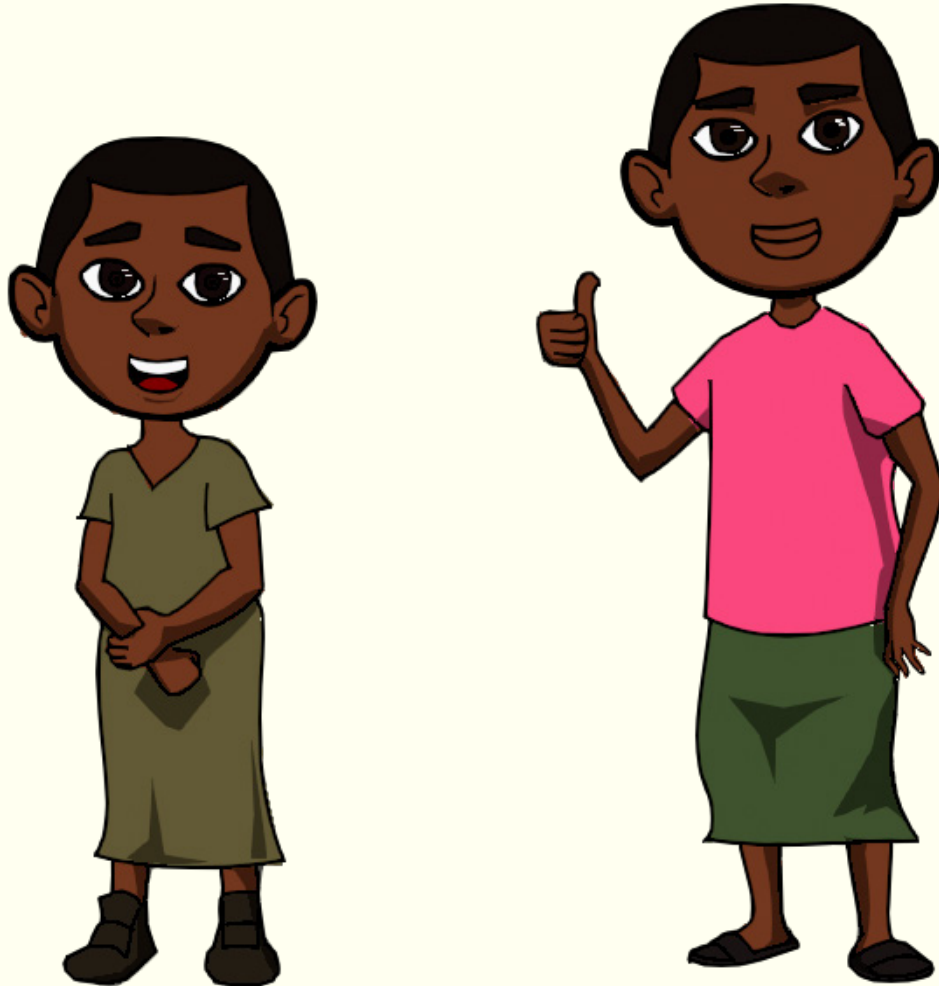


Even with these challenges, Vicky and her sister's quest did not stop. Their growing desire for motherly love pushed them to move from one place to another looking for her. Unfortunately, her mother's mental state made it impossible for them to locate her. On several occasions, the two young girls could be found in markets, during late hours, looking for their mother. Their father never bothered to know their whereabouts. In January 2021, Vicky's mother made a second attempt to have custody of the children. Her wishes were, however, denied again with the *Directorate of Children Services (DCS)* citing her previous medical report. Their father, on the other hand, stopped providing basic needs and also stopped paying school fees when the schools reopened in August 2021.

Receiving support

In December 2021, a Locational Area Advisory Council (LAAC) member met Vicky and her sister stranded at a nearby market late in the evening. After listening to their story, he escorted them home. The following day, guided by the knowledge acquired during the Case Management and Referral training organised by *JOFA*, the Locational Area Advisory Council approached Vicky's father to find out more about the situation. Unfortunately, he was physically assaulted and had no choice but to report the case to the assistant chief for further action.

Vicky's father was arrested and held for 24 hours in police custody and was later transferred to Busia police station. He was charged with neglect and omission of his duties and pleaded guilty to the charges. The magistrate released him on cash bail amounting to 384 Euros or a surety of equal amount and compelled him to discharge his duties to fully support his children.



Back to school

In January 2022, Vicky was placed back to her former school in grade two. Her elder sister was re-admitted to a special school. The court also ordered that the children should have access to their mother, when schools close, an agreement that was actualised by their father. A home visit is also conducted monthly by the assistant chief, chief and the local administrators to monitor their father and ensure he is on his best behaviour at all times. The *DCS* office continuously monitors the progress of the children and their relationship with the father. A report of progress shall be made available to Busia law courts on a monthly basis for the next six months.



Happy and smiling again

Vicky and her sister now have a sense of relief since they can visit their mother freely at their grandparents' home. Currently, Vicky's health has improved, she has adopted her daily routines and is staying together with her father and stepmother. Additionally, both children were linked with guidance and counselling teachers in their respective schools. Speaking after the intervention, Vicky said, "I want to work hard so that one day, I am able to help those who are in need and those with special needs, like my mother."

6 “I had lost hope, but *She Leads* helped me to be confident” Maimuna’s Story

After being enrolled in high school, Maimuna developed a health condition that made her ooze blood from her ears and nose. As a result, life in school became difficult, including making friends. She dropped out of school in her second year, when she was 15 years old. By then, she had a boyfriend (30 years old) whom she met at a wedding ceremony. The two got married, with a Kadhi (magistrate) officiating the ceremony and her parents supporting the union. Barely two months after getting married, Maimuna started facing challenges.

Troubled marriage

Maimuna’s husband got a job in Saudi Arabia, leaving his new wife -who was pregnant at that time- with her in-laws. Soon, her husband stopped communicating and providing for her. It was not long before Maimuna began having issues with her sisters-in-law. Later on, Maimuna’s husband filed for a divorce and asked her to have an abortion, which she did. Her family, friends and the community ostracised her for being divorced. As a result, she ended up being sexually exploited for about six months in order to meet her needs. Fortunately, Terre des Hommes Netherlands, through *Kesho Kenya* and the *She Leads* team, came to her rescue.



Nowhere to turn to

In 2018, Maimuna was enrolled back in high school. Unfortunately, with the programme's closure, all the support offered to beneficiaries stopped which pushed Maimuna back to sexual exploitation. In 2020, at the age of 19, she got married again. The husband, a 31-year-old man, stopped providing for Maimuna and was physically abusive. When she sought intervention from her parents, they requested her to go back to her marriage, stating that they would disown her if she got divorced again. In 2021, Maimuna separated from her husband. Her parents' hostility pushed her to live with her grandmother, where she resides to date.

She Leads

With the launch of the *She Leads* Programme, beneficiaries of its preceding programme (*Girls Advocacy Alliance*) were adopted to be part of the new programme — including Maimuna. She has learnt of her role in taking action towards changing the retrogressive norms. She learnt that preference for boys' education is not right as everyone has a right to education. Learning this contributed to her resolve to go back to school. The programme officer further linked her to an adult learning centre where Maimuna is enrolled and registered to finish secondary school.

The media engagements that she has been part of have encouraged her to speak out about the issues Girls and Young Women face in Kwale County. Through the *She Leads* Programme, Maimuna has been linked to ward administrators for the application of education loans and also with the *Kenya Youth Empowerment Program (KYEOP)* for life skills training. She was selected as the Kwale GYW representative under the *She Leads* programme, a position she says has helped improve her self-esteem and build her confidence.



Empowered

“I had lost hope, but *She Leads* helped me to be confident and make decisions on my own. I'm now confident enough to share my story and right now I have the courage to tell my parents what is right and wrong,” she said. “I feel empowered, safe from domestic violence and I am more focused in life. I am positive towards my life and not allowing anything to interfere with my dreams despite my background and the present circumstances,” Maimuna proudly added.

Stories from Uganda



1

Every Child is ABLE!



Moses lives in a grass-thatched hut with his family of 6 in a village in Lokopo Sub County. Every morning, his parents go to the nearby trading centre to sell firewood in order to earn some money approximately 0.75 - 1.00 Euro per day to feed the entire family. Growing up, Moses spent most of his time at home, watching his siblings play as he looked on. He did not play much with his siblings and the children in the neighbourhood were never allowed to play with him.

Promising shift

Things changed for the better for Moses in September 2021. He was identified by the *Dwelling Places* project team that established community child rights clubs within Napak to strengthen prevention, response, reporting, and follow-up of child trafficking and sexual exploitation cases within the schools and neighbouring communities.

During one particular mobilisation exercise, Moses' parents were approached and requested to allow Moses to join other children for a Child Rights Clubs (CRC) training which was taking place in the community. At first, the parents were hesitant saying he would not be able to do much and that he was

also not used to being around many people. However, the school mentor and the Local Council member informed the parents that Moses was going to be supported adequately. The parents eventually accepted and the child was invited to join other children for the club establishment.



Growing Confidence

Moses had a hard time at first. He was shy and withdrawn, he was not accustomed to mingling with many children. However, with the support of the mentor and how other children cheered him to speak out whenever he was called upon, he was encouraged to participate.

The club chairperson supported Moses, especially during group sessions. To everyone's amazement, Moses opened up. He was very active and participated in responding to the views concerning children in his community, particularly views on children with disabilities. He highlighted signs of emotional and physical abuse for children with disabilities during the session. He also mentioned that children with disabilities are culturally believed to be a curse in his community and the traffickers would be less interested in them but they are definitely at risk of abuse in the community, specifically emotional abuse caused by the harsh words that people say.

Active Participation

This opportunity changed Moses' life for the better. He is able to attend the child rights clubs meetings where he receives training on child rights and responsibilities, how to identify signs of abuse in children and the referral pathways. He learned that all children have equal rights, responsibilities and they are all entitled to equal rights without being discriminated against. He also took part in a debate aimed at empowering the children with information and skills to build their self-esteem and their confidence to become agents of change in the prevention of child trafficking and sexual exploitation— including children with disabilities.

“I thank *Dwelling Places* for establishing a child rights club in my community. Through this club, I have been accepted; I am now being loved by people and children in my neighbourhood. Even when there are club activities like practising songs, drama on sensitization about child trafficking and children's rights, the club members consider me first and now that I know my rights and responsibilities as a child, I want to exercise them especially my right to education.”

A Spark Ignites

There has been significant improvement in his day-to-day life. He is now able to play and interact with his siblings and the children in his community. He is able to support his family with home chores like grinding sorghum and sweeping the compound cheerfully and he is not afraid to talk to any visitors in his home.

Through the inclusion of children with disabilities in the child rights clubs, children like Moses are able to feel welcomed, able and confident to pursue their dreams. The community members are now showing Moses respect and love unlike before when they could not even allow their children to play with him. He has been embraced through the club activities and the children are eager to take him from his home to go and start their engagements and still escort him home when they complete their activities. Participating in club engagements has sparked Moses' life. Describing his promising future, Moses states, “I want to be someone great in future so that I support and be the voice to the children in Karamoja, especially those with disabilities.”



2 Rescued from the Street Life

Barnabas stayed in a foster home that comprised 7 children in Moroto, Uganda. He was taken care of by a lady when he was only 5 months old since his mother experienced mental health challenges and could not give him the best care. His foster mother is a nurse, whereas his foster father does casual work in a hospital which earns the family a living. Both foster parents contribute to the well-being of the entire family. Barnabas' routine was normal and his life was good. He would wake up in the morning and help with household chores. Later in the day, he would play with his age-mates around his home.



Despite living a reasonably good life, Barnabas wanted a better, more fulfilling life for himself. One day, his friend informed him of the endless opportunities to earn money by working in restaurants and other fancy places in Kampala, Uganda. Eager to enjoy this amazing promising future, Barnabas and his friend decided to travel by bus to Kampala in December 2020. Since they didn't have money for transport, they hid under the chairs of the bus for the 8-10 hour journey where no one noticed them. They only got out when everyone was getting out. Unfortunately, the two boys separated because of the high congestion of people in the city.

Walking in the streets, sad and alone, Barnabas wondered what he would do to survive. He met other street children who encouraged him to collect bottles for sale and beg for money from people while on the streets. They also advised him to fetch water for restaurants in town to earn a meal and that is

exactly what he did, earning an average of 0.25 to 0.38 Euros. The street life was tougher than he had anticipated. He would get beaten up by the older boys who were asking for money he had collected during the day which attributed to his lower abdominal and scrotal pain. He could not get any treatment for that. He faced a very tough, unbearable life for more than three months. “Life is hard on the streets, it is extremely cold at night and getting what to eat is very difficult. I was sad most of the time,” he explained.

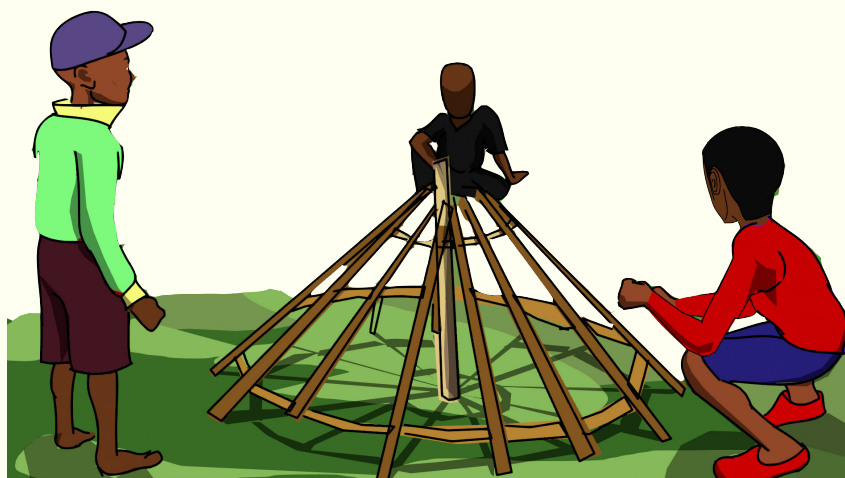
Rescued

In June 2021, Barnabas was rescued together with 161 other street boys through a mass rescue outreach conducted by our partner *Dwelling Places* and other organisations. He was admitted to a primary school and later transferred to a campsite where he received shelter, a comfortable bed, food, holistic health care, psychosocial support, and life skills training.

Barnabas was then taken to a Rehabilitation Home in Buloba after the Covid-19 lockdown where he received shelter, nutrition, catch-up education, health services, and psychosocial support. He successfully underwent surgery to remove fluid that had accumulated in his scrotum which helped reduce swelling and is now pain-free. He became more playful and wears a smile most of the time, which was rare at the point of rescue.

Content and Happy

Speaking about how his life changed, he stated, “On the street, I used to not sleep well, but at *Dwelling Places* I sleep well. I looked for money while on the street and ate but here I take tea during tea breaks and eat food without paying. I was not going to school while on the street but I’m studying while here.” “When I finish school and become a doctor, I want to treat all the people who have no money for treatment and my mother too,” Barnabas added. He is now reintegrated with his foster parents with regular follow-ups done by the project team to ensure he is safe, healthy and happy.



3 Empowered and Unstoppable

Fancy was born and raised in a polygamous family. In 2019, a time when Fancy was to begin her university education, her biological father disowned her and neglected his responsibility as a provider. His argument was that university education was too expensive to waste on a girl. His negligence forced Fancy's mother to take up the duties and provide for the family with her daily income of approximately 7.93 Euros, which she earned from selling peanuts in Kampala, Uganda. As time went by, the situation became overwhelming for her mother and they had no choice but to move to their maternal home in Kampala. As her mother continued to worry about the pressing need of her daughter's school fees, Fancy received good news that she had qualified for a scholarship from *Girl Up Initiative Uganda* —which supports academically excellent disadvantaged girls actively engaging in institutional programmes.

A space deprived of female voices

Ever since her father abandoned her, Fancy felt unworthy. She questioned her potential as a young ambitious woman. She wanted to give her mother hope and assure her that their future was bright, which is why she withheld her feelings. Fancy's community had no space to accommodate female voices. As she grew up, she had a relentless urge to disrupt the limiting social norms and stereotypes that denied girls and young women a chance to speak up and take part: but she was unable to figure out how to address these issues. "I was simply aware that women can also lead but not aware of why, when, or what happens when women are fully involved in leadership and decision-making processes. My attitude towards women's involvement was still stereotypical," she said.

Establishing the She Laws Community

While pursuing her law degree in a Moslem founded university, Fancy couldn't help but notice the stereotypes around female students, especially those that studied law. Her desire to change the false narratives grew stronger until, towards the end of July 2021, when she formed the, '*She Laws Community*' movement — a mentorship association of female students of law in Uganda that aims at enabling female students of law manoeuvre law school. Its purpose is to create a stronger sisterhood in law school in Uganda. Some of the thematic areas that the movement seeks to address include; building one-self, understanding and changing the negative stereotypes and beliefs around being a female lawyer, legal practice, lawyers in



entrepreneurship and the art of reclaiming spaces as young female lawyers in societies. Step by step, Fancy is creating opportunities for women. Currently, the movement has attracted female law students from eight universities, encouraging and supporting each other.



Becoming a She Leads Advocate

As a *She Leads* advocate, Fancy has been exposed to various platforms as a representative of girls and young women (GYW). She was selected to give a keynote address during the grand launch of the *She Leads* Programme on behalf of other girls and young women. She boldly took up the challenge and delivered well. Additionally, she was one of the panellists, representing *She Leads*, at a high-end political forum on SDGs organised by *Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE)*. She also shared her thoughts and expectations of the *She Leads* Programme on UBC television. In a national youth dialogue, Fancy represented GYW at a panel discussion organised by *National Youth Council* in partnership with *Plan International*. Her latest remarkable participation, where she had voices of GYW amplified, was during the *African Union's* summit that was organised by *GIMAC* in Ethiopia.

Receiving Support and Mentorship

Fancy has experienced tremendous growth since she was identified by *She Leads*. She is still a beneficiary of the project and is currently receiving support and mentorship. She is taking the lead in monitoring and supervising the two safe spaces in Kawempe and Ntinda. In her daily routine, Fancy strikes a balance between home care, advocacy work and running her movement. Her Fridays are exclusively dedicated to safe spaces and her human rights training. Her progress is commendable. She has made a laudable leap forward — from being a young girl who allowed the stereotypes ascribed to her, to unapologetically taking up leadership roles and disrupting false ascription of women. “I envision a world where every girl and young woman can receive equal and quality education. A world where we can openly call out negative social norms that limit our meaningful participation in the processes of decision making at whichever level,” she said in a voice of hope and determination.



4 A Serene Dwelling Place for Benjamin

Benjamin was taken to live with his grandmother when he was just three months old, after his parents separated. After a while, he went to live with his mother who was married to another man in the slums of Kibuli, Uganda. Due to the mistreatment he experienced, he ran to the streets and it was tough for him. Luckily, he was identified by *Dwelling Places*, rescued, supported and resettled with his family.

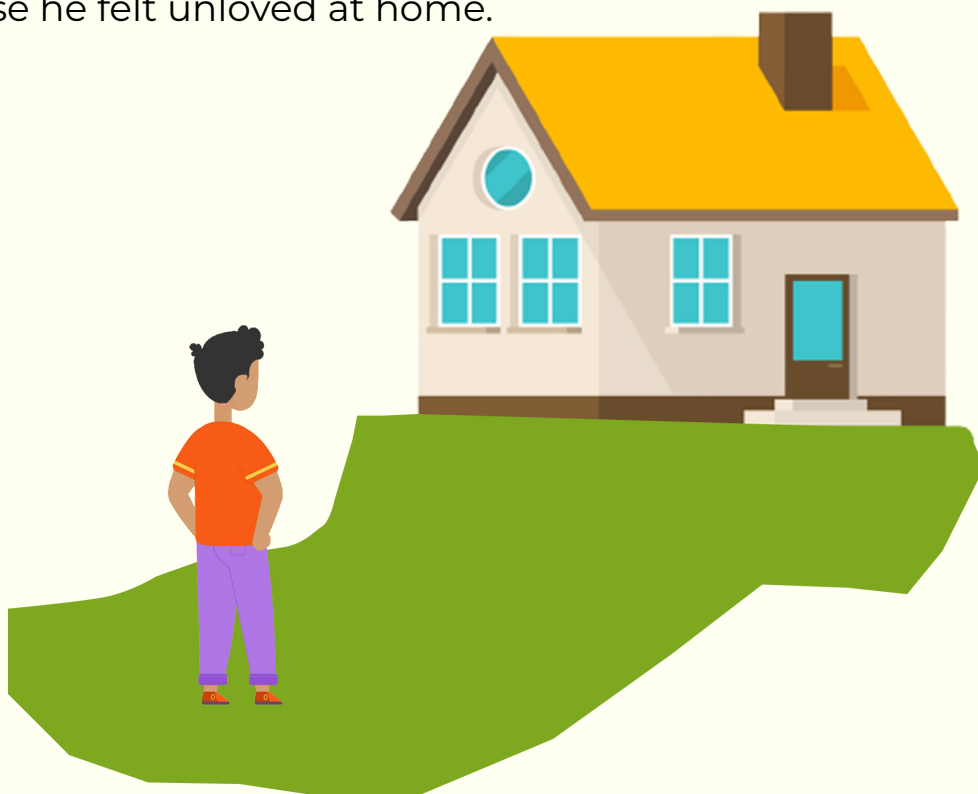


Parents' Separation

Benjamin was left under the care of his maternal grandmother when he was three months old. After his parents had separated, his mother moved to Kalanga, Uganda in search of greener pastures. While staying with his grandmother, he started stealing from her. "I would always regret stealing from my grandmother because every time I would steal, I would go back to the streets and when the money is done I would get stranded and would wish I had not stolen," Benjamin recounted. After staying with his grandmother for a while, his mother returned and lived with them. This marked the beginning of trouble for Benjamin. His mother would beat him mercilessly and not even his grandmother's intervention would restrain her. When it was too much to bear, Benjamin decided it was time to leave home.

His Return

They say east or west home is best. After a while Benjamin returned home since life on the streets was tougher than he thought. He found a few things had changed while he was away. His mother had remarried and stayed at a slum in Kibuli with her new husband. The twelve-year-old boy joined the family and soon learnt the atrocities of his new environment —the slum. Here, young people indulged in drugs and the crime rate was high. It didn't take long before Benjamin succumbed to the influence. He would spend time both at home and on the streets. At home, the situation worsened day by day. His mother, a drug addict, would punish Benjamin and his sister so badly that one day she broke her daughter's arm. This forced him to run to the streets because he felt unloved at home.



Life in the Slum

Benjamin joined the street family in hopes of experiencing change — a different life from the ill treatment he was subjected to at home. Little by little, Benjamin began applying the ideas he had learnt from his peers. He started stealing from his family and every time he would commit this crime, he would escape to the streets to hide. He once stole his uncle's phone and disappeared. When he showed up at home again, his mother thoroughly beat him and he left for the streets again. This time round, he ran away for good. Unfortunately, his survival there grew harder and harder. He sold scrap metal and would make approximately 0.25 Euros to 0.50 Euros. It was a difficult activity to engage in since there was always too much to do with little results. Being a child, it was even worse and he was exploited in the process.

Identified, Rescued and Supported

Benjamin was identified during a joint outreach conducted by *Dwelling Places* and he was rescued from the streets in June 2021. After two weeks of quarantine at a school, Benjamin and other children were taken to Wakiso District for rehabilitation for two months. *Dwelling Places* continued the rehabilitation in August 2021. During this process, he was offered guidance and counselling, catch-up education, health care, life skills lessons, nutrition support and other basic services, including clothes, shoes, bag among others.

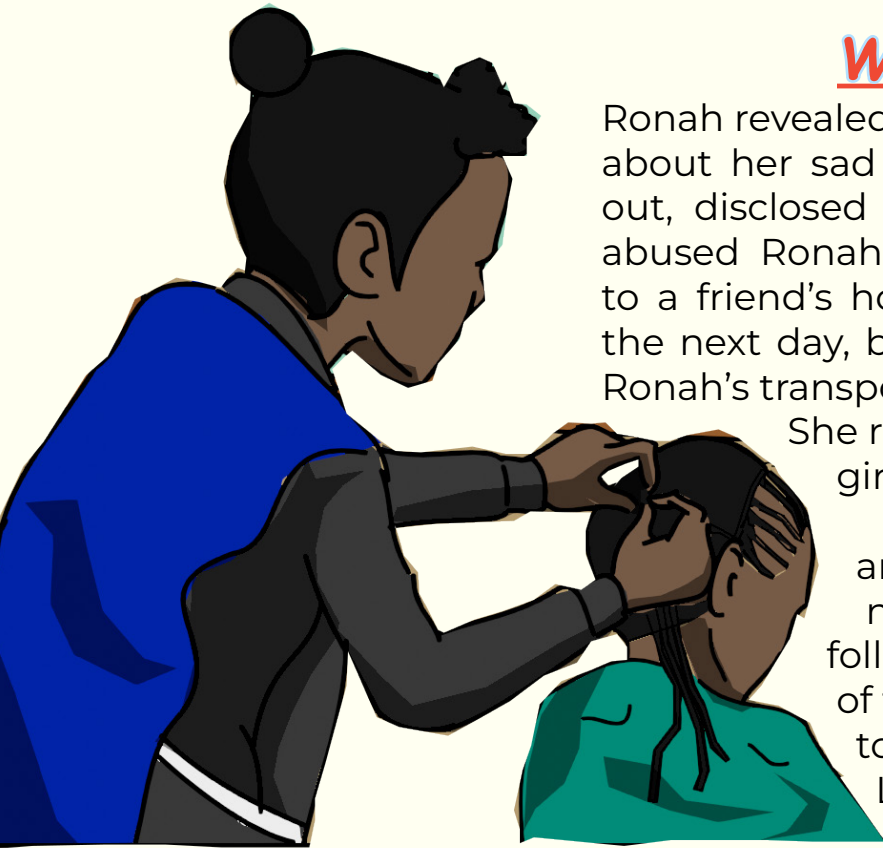
Resettled at home

Through psychosocial support, Benjamin was able to forgive his mother, shared information about his family and sought to be reconciled. The family was traced and he got reconciled with his mother and he was resettled with her. However, when a social worker followed him up after three weeks of placement, he seemed unhappy and withdrawn. His mother recommended that it would be best if he stays with his grandparents. He was resettled with his grandparents, who lived with his only sister, in Kitenga. They were extremely happy to see him again. When asked about how he feels at the moment, he happily said, "I feel good because my grandparents now know that I have changed." *Dwelling Places* has also supported him to go back to school, and enrolled him in primary four. When he grows up, Benjamin would like to be a scout and save lives.



5 “Now I can start a salon and raise money for my child”

Ronah, 18, lost her parents when she was just two years old, prompting her to be in the care of her grandmother. At a tender age, Ronah was responsible for paying her own school fees. She got the money from doing menial jobs such as making bricks, digging in people’s gardens and even fetching water for the constructors. Unfortunately, when she was just 15, Ronah was sent away from school due to fee arrears, which led to her subsequent dropout.



Walking Home

Ronah revealed to her grandmother on the phone about her sad experiences. Her employer found out, disclosed it to her husband who physically abused Ronah. That night, she escaped and went to a friend’s home. She called her grandmother the next day, but she had no money to cater for Ronah’s transport. She then opted to walk home.

She rested at a trading centre and a girl going home from school alerted her that the area was not safe and welcomed her to spend the night at her mother’s home. The following day, Betty, the mother of the girl, who welcomed Ronah to their home, went to the Local Council Chairperson 1 (LC1) to report the case. Ronah’s grandmother was still admitted in the hospital,

so Ronah stayed at Betty’s for 10 months, where she occasionally learnt to sell boiled cassava. From the profit she had made from selling cassava and the little money her grandmother sent her, she was able to travel back home. Two months later, she was referred to work in Entebbe for a lady.

Exploited Sexually

Ronah took care of her poultry-rearing business as well as supplying polythene bags, mostly to male customers. Soon, the men began making sexual advances towards her. After some time, the employer put Ronah in a taxi to travel home alone. On her way, the taxi driver asked Ronah for her phone contact, which she shared. After communicating for a while, the two started staying together. The man sexually exploited Ronah and promised to marry her. A month later she discovered that she was pregnant and the man disappeared.

Lending Hand

“I felt like killing myself when I got pregnant because when I tried to reach out to the taxi driver who impregnated me, he did not receive my calls. I tried tracing him in the taxi park but I didn’t find him there,” Ronah recounted. A health worker based where Ronah went for an antenatal clinic identified and referred her to our partner *UYDEL*. At the centre, she learnt hairdressing and she was offered guidance and counselling. The child protection committee members also started tracing the man who sexually exploited her.

Hopeful

From her hairdressing skills, she is able to get income. “I hope to start working in a salon where I can save money and start up my small business so that I can raise money to take care of my child,” she said.



6 Napeyok's Safe Repatriation

Napeyok, 16, lived in Napak district in Uganda. Her mother is the family's main breadwinner, who earns a living through buying and selling charcoal packed in small colourless polythene bags. Due to financial constraints, Napeyok only managed to study up to primary six. She then dropped out when she was 15 years old and made a decision to go to Nairobi, Kenya.

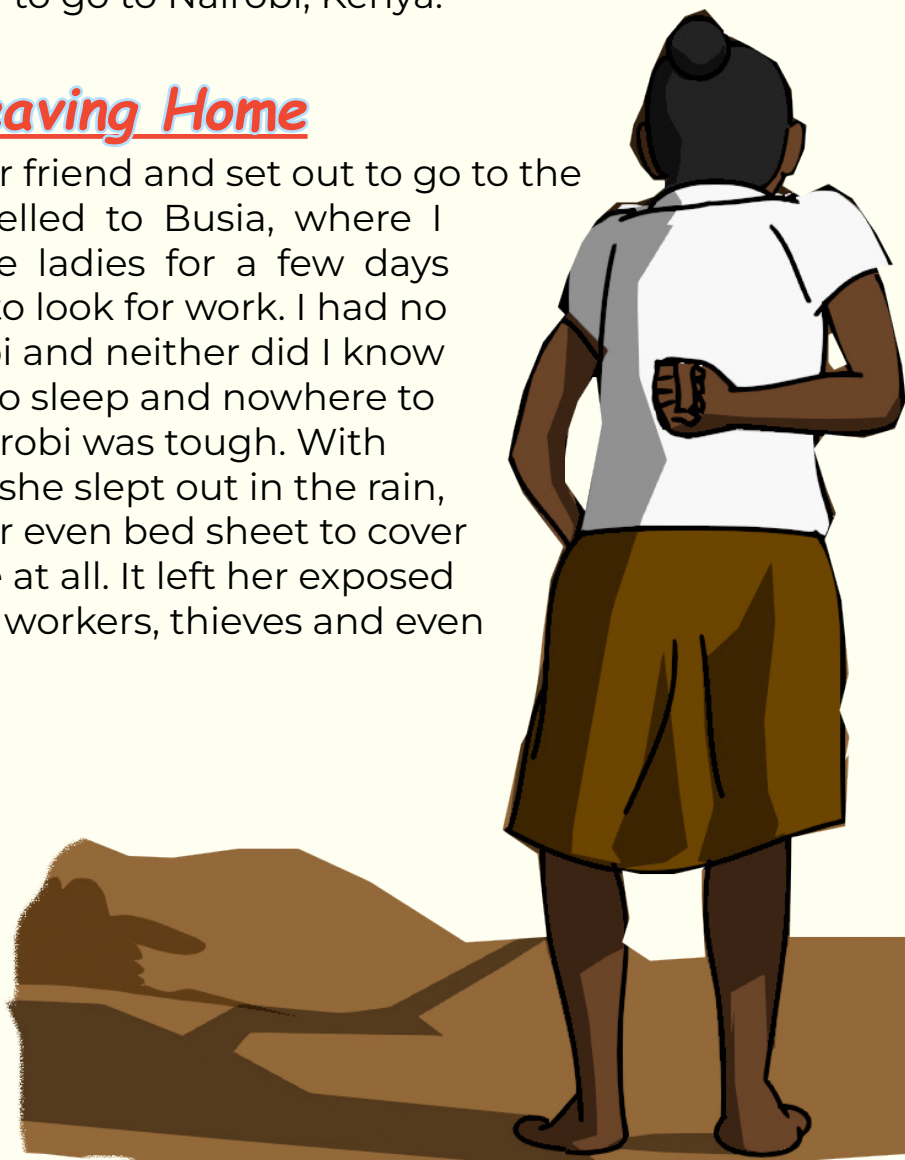
Leaving Home

She borrowed money from her friend and set out to go to the city. "I got the money and travelled to Busia, where I was accommodated by some ladies for a few days before proceeding to Nairobi to look for work. I had no prior knowledge about Nairobi and neither did I know anyone there. I had nowhere to sleep and nowhere to start from." Her first day in Nairobi was tough. With nowhere to seek refuge from, she slept out in the rain, with no sweater, coat, jacket or even bed sheet to cover herself. The place was not safe at all. It left her exposed to all kinds of people from sex workers, thieves and even rapists.

Tough Life

Napeyok later got a job as a domestic worker. She didn't have prior experience with this kind of work, hence it was very difficult for her to perform the tasks. Her work included mopping the

entire house, washing utensils, scrubbing the walls of the house, washing clothes, cooking, buying groceries from the market, preparing children and taking them to school and back. Her employer shouted at her and sometimes threatened to beat her up. Owing to the brutality she experienced, Napeyok ran away and got another job, still as a domestic worker. "My new employer even turned out to be worse. She exploited me so much and could not even allow me to rest or even sleep at night. I would sleep at 2:00 am and had to be up by 4:00 am to start working again," Napeyok narrated about her new experience. She had no choice but to go back to living on the streets.



Safe Repatriation

Fortunately, Napeyok was one of the over 90 Karamojong girls who were identified by *Counter Human Trafficking Trust East Africa (CHTEA)* in Kenya. *CHTEA* contacted *Dwelling Places (TdH NL partner)* for support. *TdH NL* in partnership with *Dwelling Places* and other organisations ensured that Napeyok - and 31 other girls were finally brought home and successfully reintegrated in August 2021.

Back Home

Before their reintegration, the girls were taken to a rehabilitation centre where they were taught life-changing skills like business skills and how to conduct themselves upon reintegration. Napeyok is back home and waiting to be enrolled in a skills training course. "I am very happy to be with my parents and siblings, even if there are a lot of hardships in my family like poverty, hunger, etc. I know that these are for all families, and I wouldn't allow it to make me lose focus of my dream of studying and becoming a nurse," Napeyok expressed her hopes for the future.



Stories from Tanzania



1

Lizy, the aspiring police officer

After the death of her parents, when she was four, Lizy has been under the care of her grandmother. Her grandmother ensured that she got an education, and in September 2020 Lizy completed her primary education at 15 years. As she waited for her results, while still living with her grandmother, her older brother who works as a construction technician sent her bus fare to pay him a visit in one of Tanzania's towns.



Unexpected Turn of Events

Lizy was excited to stay with her brother before the release of her results and later proceed to high school. However, when she got there the brother found a job for her where she'd earn a monthly salary of 11.17 Euros. "My brother told me that he had found a domestic job for me in Ukerewe Island so that I could earn money for my secondary education," Lizy narrated. Disappointed, her brother then put her on a ship and instructed the ship crew to hand her over to a woman once the ship docked. When the ship reached the other side of the island, the ship crew did as instructed.

Unkept Promises

As soon as Lizy got to her employer's house, she was briefed on all the tasks she was expected to do. Her employer had promised her brother that she would take care of her high school expenses as long as she continued working for her. However, even after Lizy got her examination results and passed, months went by without knowing what to do next. After almost nine months of hard work, being verbally and physically abused, Lizy bravely confronted her employer who told her that she had no plans of taking her to high school and that she should continue working. As all this was slowly unfolding, Lizy's brother was not aware. She then made a decision to run away and sought help from a neighbour who referred her to our partner, *Kiota Womens Health and Development. (KIWOHEDE)*

Huge Relief

At the centre, the case was reported to the police and the *District Social Welfare Office* Lizy was admitted to *KIWOHEDE* and provided with basic needs, medical support, counselling, a dignity pack and legal aid since she had not been paid her dues for the nine months she had worked. She was also taught about life skills, child trafficking and its effects.

Aspiring Police Officer

After almost two months at the shelter, Lizy was reintegrated back to her family. Her brother and grandmother were sensitised about child trafficking and its dangers. They were also encouraged to support Lizy with her school especially after she received further educational support. She was enrolled in school and offered scholarly materials. "The assistance helped me to be free from a harsh and abusive environment and to proceed with my studies which will help me to achieve my dream," she said gratefully. Lizy aspires to be a police officer to protect other children from child abuse and arrest those who exploit children.



2

A Safe Haven for Kamoli

Kamoli lived well with her mother, who worked as a small-scale farmer. Unfortunately, her income was not enough to sustain the family and Kamoli had no choice but to drop out of school in 2021 when she was 15 years. Life became unbearable, prompting Kamoli's mother to resort to looking for work for her daughter to supplement the family's income. On that day, she made arrangements for Kamoli to travel to her new workplace in Mwanza. Upon reaching her employer's house, she was welcomed with open arms and started working the next morning.

Hardship

As days went by, life became tough for Kamoli. Any time she woke up late, she would receive a thorough beating. Other times, her employer would quarrel and hurl insults at her. More often than not, she would beat her severely and fail to pay her for the work she did. She was never given a phone to contact her mother directly. She was also warned against interacting with neighbours and playing with other children. This went on for more than six months and Kamoli could not take it anymore.

Fleeing

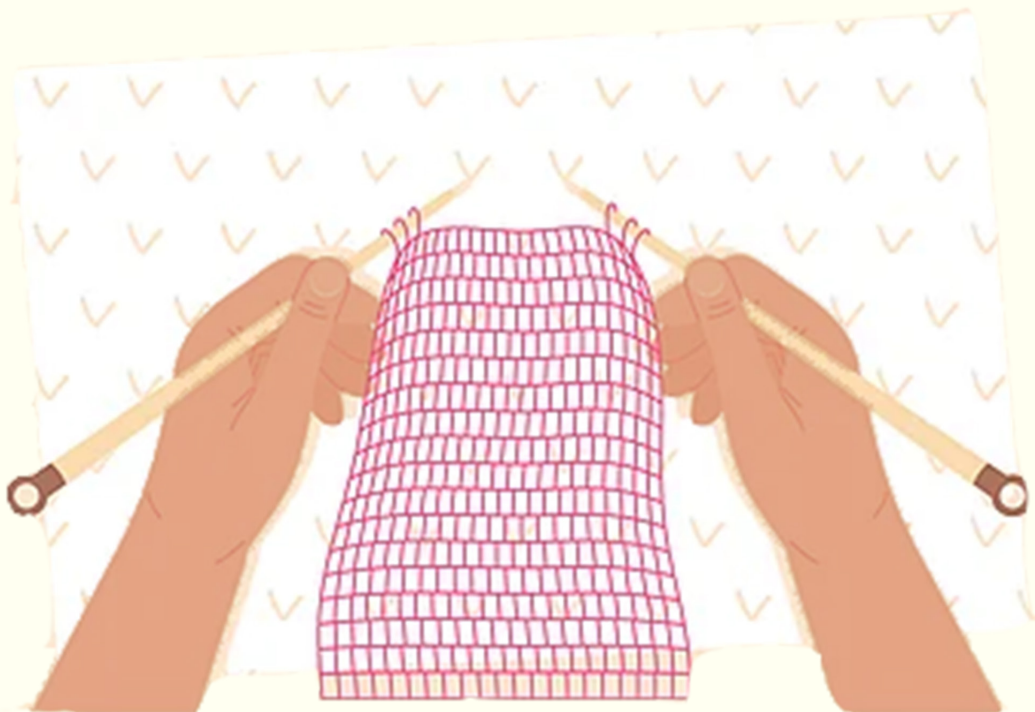
On one early morning, Kamoli finally got the courage to ask her boss for her salary. She completely refused to pay her and instead decided to send Kamoli back home. She gave her 18.9 Euros and took her to a bus conductor. With the help of a good samaritan she boarded a public service vehicle that took her to the port. She then boarded a ferry back home. While travelling, she interacted with one passenger who advised her to report her case to the police so that she can get her wages.

Reporting

Upon arriving at Ukerewe island, Kamoli reported her case to the nearest police station where she explained her exploitative situation to the police officer on duty. “I was overworked, with a promise of high payment which I never received and my employer was abusing me physically and psychologically,” she explained. Her legal case was opened and investigations launched against the employer. The police gender and children desk linked Kamoli with the Ukerewe district social welfare officer who registered and admitted the girl to a shelter.

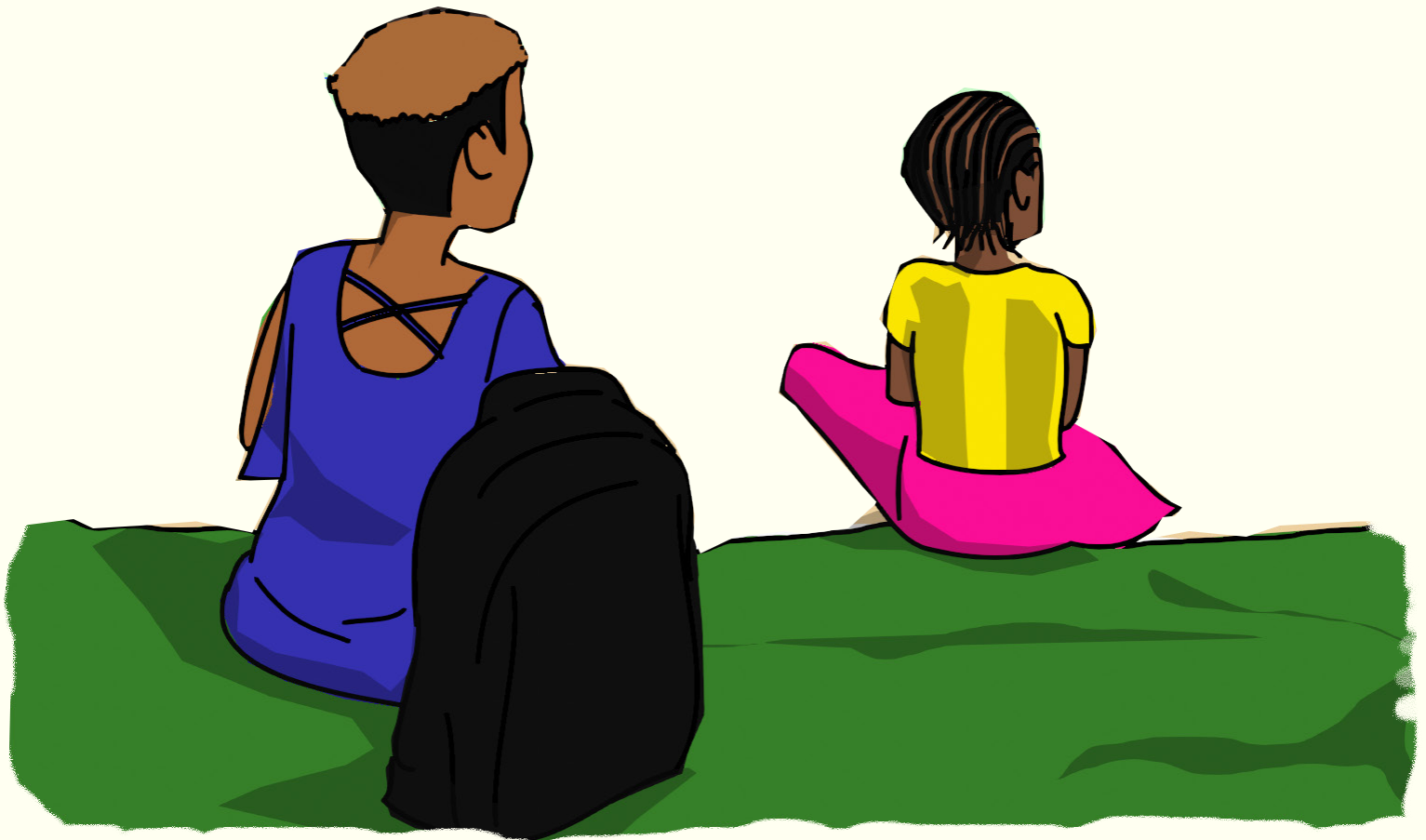
Safe Haven

For about three months, Kamoli felt that she was in a safe haven in the shelter. She was provided with basic needs such as food, clothes, dignity kits, legal aid, received medical checkup and counselling support. Additionally, she was trained on handicraft skills including mat weaving and beading, basic sewing, hair styling and plating. Our partner, Kiwohede traced her family and she was very happy to be reunited with them. “I am very grateful to *KIWOHEDE*, the police and other government officials who helped me with my freedom and new awareness,” she said. I am now able to weave mats, make beads, plait and style hair, express myself, interact and play with my fellow children,” Kamoli gleefully stated. “In future, I would like to empower other girls who were denied education rights and forced into child labor,” she added.



3 Teddy's Revived Tailoring Dream

"My parents separated when I was 4 years old. My mother took off and she has never returned ever since. My father remarried and he is the family's sole breadwinner who earns income from tailoring as well as farming. After I finished school, my father did not have enough money to support me to continue to further my studies. Even though he worked both on the farm and as a tailor, the money was still not enough. He told me that the only option I have was to get a job," 17-year-old Teddy who lives in Tanzania recounted.



Promising Opportunity

"My father had a friend who needed a domestic worker. He was a headteacher and my father assured me that he was a good person who would give me good wages and provide for all my basic needs. The idea sounded great to me because I trusted my father," Teddy said. In December 2020 she went to a town in Tanzania, and started working in her father's friend's house.

Reality

My work included preparing the three children in the house to go to school, cooking, cleaning, doing laundry among other duties. I woke up at 5:00 am and went to bed after everyone in the house had gone to sleep. I ate after everyone ate. My employer's wife denied me food and punished me whenever I made a mistake. She called me names, beat and threatened me with worse punishment if I did not work to her expectations." After three months of enduring this, Teddy decided to take action.

In Luck

Teddy had written down the contact of her employer and handed it to a friend who happened to be a day scholar at her former high school. The girl reported the matter to one of the teachers who had worked closely with *TdH NL's* partner *KIWOHEDE*. He reached out to them and the matter was reported to *KIWOHEDE* who reported the matter to the police and the Ukerewe Social Welfare. They collaboratively called Teddy's employer and demanded that she should be returned to Ukerewe. The employer agreed to do so but did not actually fulfil this promise. Later on, *KIWOHEDE* sent fare to Teddy's employer so that they could allow her to go.

Realized Dream

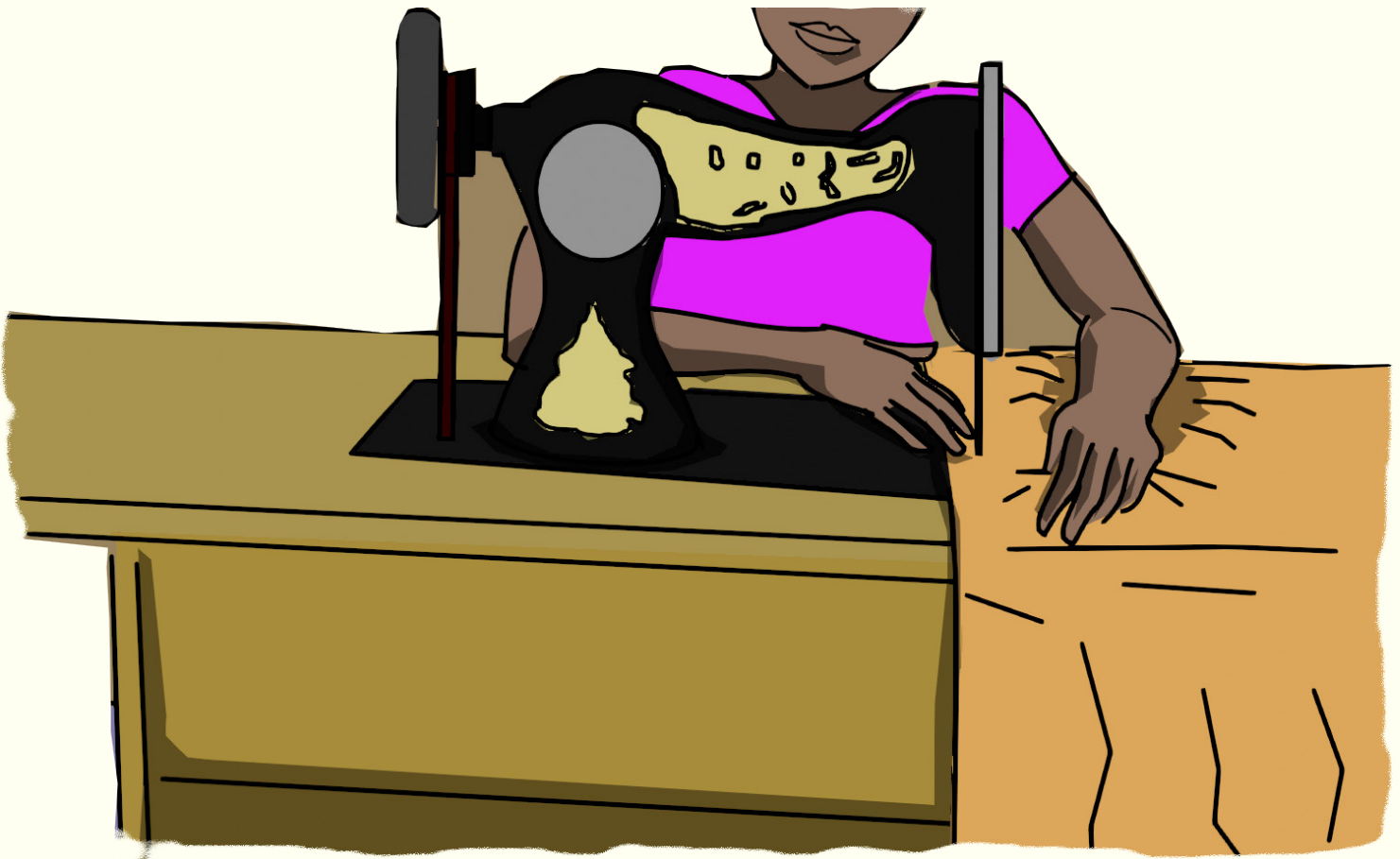
The social workers worked together to admit Teddy at the rehabilitation centre. "I was supported to register for vocational training where I am training to be a tailor for seven months. I have discovered my identity and I am on the path to becoming a professional tailor just like my father. I advise my fellow children not to give up on life or allow themselves to be victims of trafficking. They must complete school and be patient until they get support to further their education or their career paths like how *KIWOHEDE* and *TdH-NL* have saved and helped me revive my dream of becoming a professional tailor," Teddy states confidently.



4

Restoring Vickie's Hope

Vickie, 11, resides in Tanzania. She dreams of becoming a seamstress. Unfortunately, her father's death in 2019 made this dream seem uncertain. Without his income, Vickie and her family could no longer afford basic needs. Consequently, Vickie dropped out of school to assist her mother to get income by selling sardines and pastries. On her regular route to sell pastries, she met a man, who promised her a better job — she would work for his sister as a domestic worker. He added that since the sister lived alone, Vickie's role would entail simple household tasks. Furthermore, he guaranteed her that she would get good wages in return. Vickie was excited about the new opportunity. She asked the man to convince her mother as well by accompanying her home.



Getting Trafficked

Vickie travelled by bus the next day. She was to be received by a lady at the bus terminus. After they met, the said lady later took her to a ship destined for one of Tanzania's islands. The lady had instructed the ship crew to hand over the girl to another woman once the ship docked. This woman turned out to be Vickie's employer.

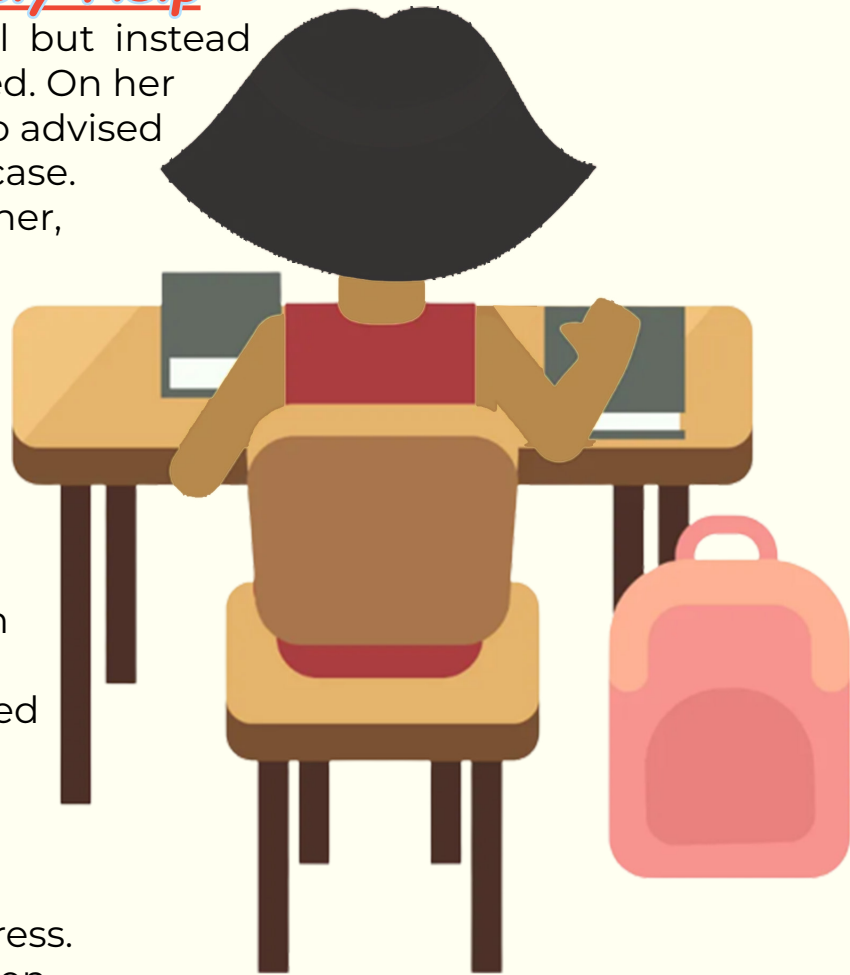
Fabricated Lies

Contrary to what Vickie had been told, her employer had a big family and the workload was double. Her employer complained about her slowness in completing tasks. She constantly abused Vickie physically by slapping her and beating her. She also hurled nasty insults at her. “I was feeling bad and stressed as a result of the beating and insults from my employer,” Vickie explained. By the tenth day, Vickie was physically and emotionally exhausted and began planning her escape.

Timely Help

One day, Vickie woke up as usual but instead of proceeding to work, she escaped. On her way, she met a good samaritan who advised her on where she could report her case.

Vickie was later referred to our partner, **KIWOHEDE**, who reported the case to the police station. The case is in progress and it seeks to bring to book the recruiter, traffickers involved and Vickie’s former employer. At **KIWOHEDE**, the girl was counselled and sensitised on child trafficking and child labour. She was also reintegrated back with her family. The project collaborated with education officers and managed to re-enrol the girl in school. Additionally, she was supported with education materials and is currently in grade three. “In future, I would like to be a cook and seamstress. I would also like to help other children who are victims of child abuse by empowering them with life skills,” Vickie concluded.



5 Milka Gets Justice: “You have become my voice”

Trafficked and exploited in child domestic labour, 16 year old Milka from Tanzania was sexually exploited by her boss. The next day, he threw her out of the house. With no place to go, Milka was idling at the bus station, hoping she would somehow get help to go home. As it happened, our partner *KIWOHEDE* was holding an awareness event at the bus station, to sensitise the public on child trafficking for domestic labour. Milka reported her own case, and got taken up in *KIWOHEDE's* rehabilitation programme. The programme supported Milka with shelter, medical services, counselling and legal aid.



The Court Case

After filing the defilement case to the police, the accused was arrested. Investigation was done and the case was taken to the national prosecution service. Court proceedings took place in Mwanza resident Magistrate Court. “He called me to the sitting room and when I got there he forced me to enter. I refused but he forced me and he raped me. He threatened me that if I told anyone about the incident he would kill me,” Milka narrated her ordeal.

KIWOHEDE assisted Milka with court representation. After a series of hearings and witnessing sessions in court, the case was ruled on the 30th November 2020. The accused was found guilty and was sentenced to thirty years imprisonment. “Before my stay at *KIWOHEDE* I was unaware of my basic rights. You became my voice by pushing my case to the court of law where my abuser was punished for his inhuman action.”

Tailoring Business

Milka has since been reunited with her family in her home village. While in the shelter, she was trained in tailoring. We have supported her with a sewing machine and seed capital to start her own tailoring business. This has enabled Milka to earn a steady income of around 2 to 5 Euros per day. “I am happy since I have a permanent and dependable source of income. Moreover, I am happy knowing that the person who abused me was convicted.”



Stories from Ethiopia



1

Safe spaces for internally displaced women and children

The recent conflict in Ethiopia posed a major threat to the wellbeing of children and women alike. In order to restore a sense of normalcy and continuity to the children & women whose lives have been disrupted by conflict. We established a protective and promotive environment; *CFS* and *WGFS* friendly spaces.



Child Friendly Spaces

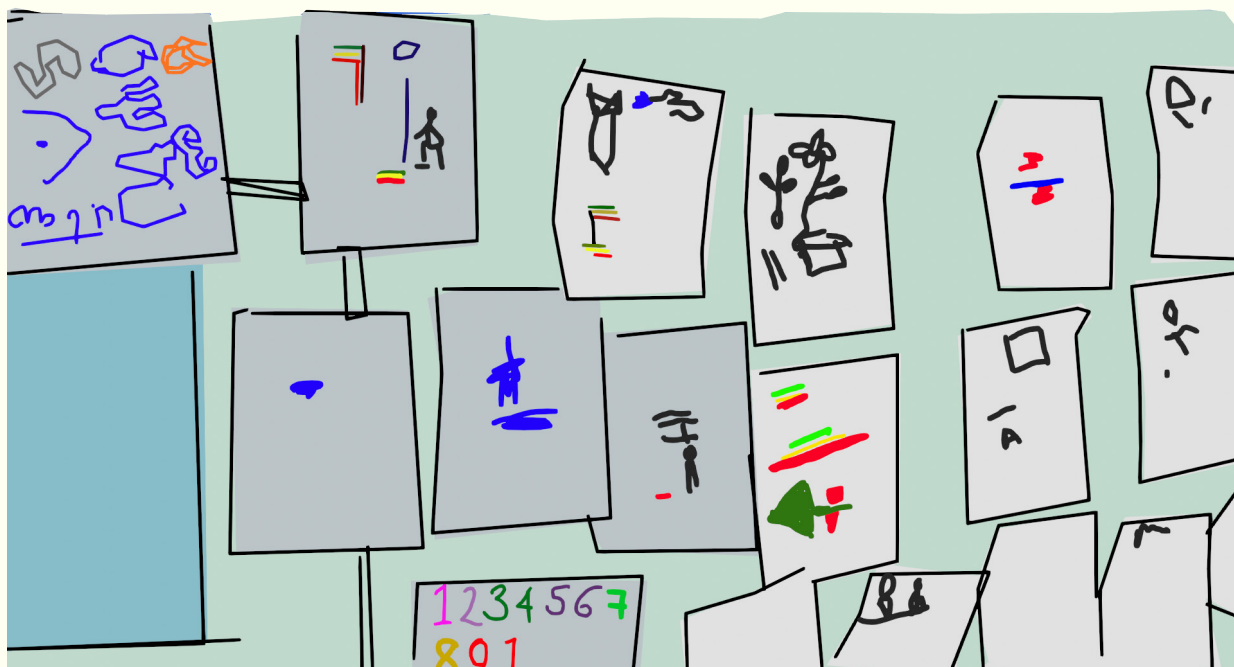
Child friendly centres/spaces (CFS) were established in Shewa Robit, Ethiopia with the aim of preventing internally displaced children from further protection risks through creating meaningful routine daily activities to reduce their daily stresses and prolonged distress resulting from the disaster of war and conflict. The spaces have helped children develop their self confidence, build meaningful and positive social relationships, improve on their positive coping skills, manage daily stressors and build/strengthen their resilience. Children are also protected from abuse and exploitation as they are supervised on a daily basis by professionals.

The constructed one semi-permanent *CFS* structure equipped with play and recreational items is occupied by children aging from 3-5 years (pre-school), 6-8 years (early school) and adolescents (9-17 years). In the centre, they learn literacy and numeracy skills, engage in sports and recreational activities including dancing, storytelling, volleyball, domino, drawing, drama making, and also receive emotional support from social workers and training on hygiene and sanitation.

To date, more than 5,015 children have accessed the centre and benefited from the structure's activities. A total of 254 children (138 male and 116 female) are using the *CFS* for education, play and recreation activities on a daily basis.

Terre des Hommes Netherlands helps the children, affected by conflict, to improve their psychosocial well-being through engaging them in structured activities that reduce their daily stressors and in turn improve their emotional well-being.

Ever since the child friendly spaces were set up, there has been significant positive change in children. They are happier and actively participate in different constructive activities. They have regained their sense of confidence in their self-efficacy through learning activities. The children are well protected in the structure and can attest to a sense of normalcy in their lives.



Women and Girl Friendly Spaces (WGFS)

In Ataye IDP site, a safe space/centre for women and girls has also been established. They can go to feel safer, access information and support, participate in activities, build their networks and strengthen relationships with peers. Additionally, they have access to a wide range of information and support from their peers, have access to discrete clinical care (especially for GBV survivors) and sexual and reproductive health services.

Every week, the girls and women jointly meet up at the center. They hold open discussions and share views and experiences on GBV prevention and mitigation responses, harmful traditional practices, how to ensure confidentiality, how to support GBV survivors including referral mechanisms, positive parenting skills, and how to resolve conflict. They also take part in the coffee ceremony and share their skills and knowledge with each other such as spinning cotton, crocheting, and making coffee mattes.

“Now we have a place to come together to discuss our issues and help each other. Our mental well being has improved significantly and we are empowered. Thank you *TdH NL* for helping us restore our lives,” one of the women shared.

Through these friendly spaces, children are able to play, learn and socialise and express themselves as they rebuild their lives whereas girls and young women are able to socialise, re-build their social networks, acquire and focus on enhancing relevant skills, learn about reporting & referral of cases, and access multi sectoral GBV response services & information. The intervention in Ethiopia has brought about a positive impact among children, adolescent girls and women at risk. We are slowly helping them restore their lives after severely being affected by the conflict.

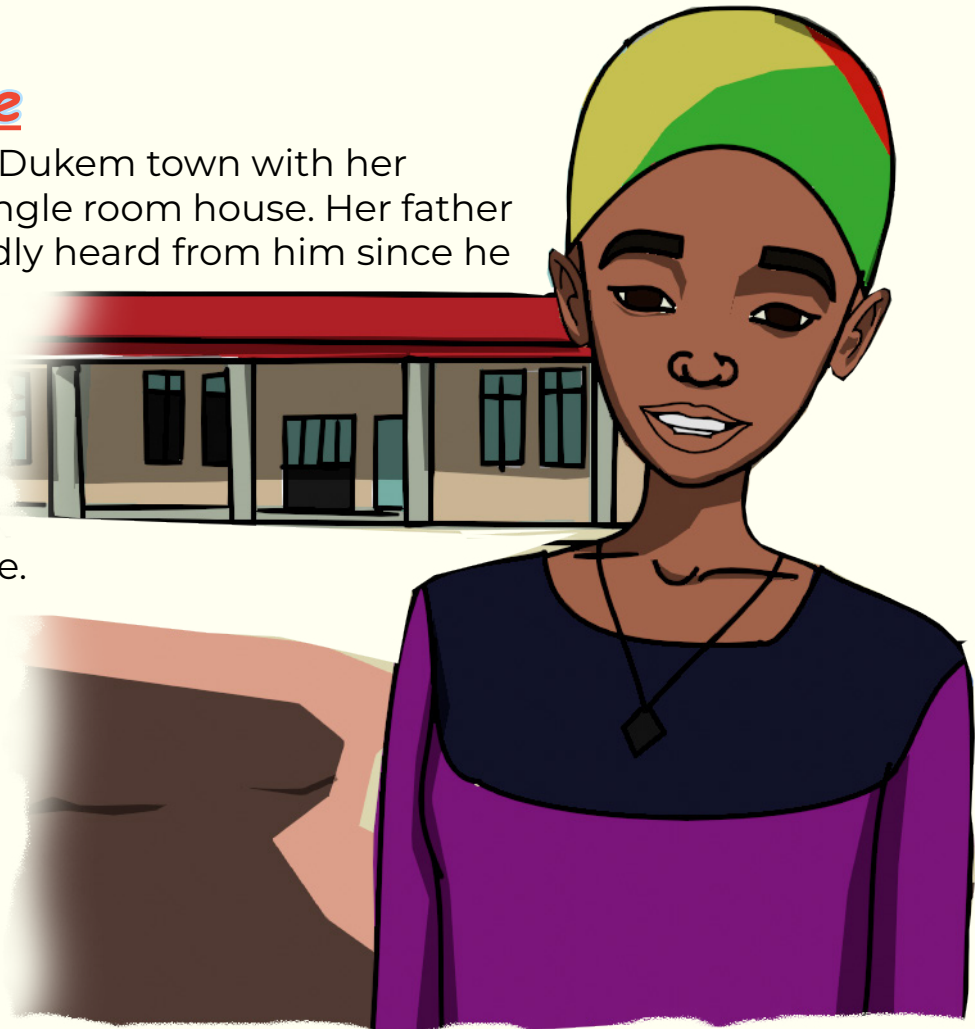


2 Hayimanot Finds Her Voice

Hayimanot's parents separated when she was ten years old. After their separation, her mother became the sole provider for the family. She earned up to 6 Euros per month from washing and cooking meals for other people. They managed to have one or two meals a day (most of it was not balanced), from the little money she made. Hayimanot's high school education was interrupted from time to time, since she had to help her mother with work. She is currently attending school although sometimes she misses school to help her mother.

A Life of Silence

Hayimanot, 18 years, lived in Dukem town with her mother and sister in a tiny single room house. Her father lived outside town. They hardly heard from him since he cut communication with them. Even though Hayimanot's mother worked hard to provide for them, lack of access to water and sanitary materials was a daily struggle. In their community, it is very rare for girls to freely express themselves. Also, girls and women lack the freedom to explore their full potential and achieve their dreams.



She Leads Enrollment

For a long time, Hayimanot's voice didn't matter until she joined the *She Leads* programme. In July 2021, she was identified through the *Women and Children Affairs Office* and the Kabele Administration. She was selected during the identification process of girls and young women, both from and out of school. Hayimanot attended different trainings including par law (equality laws), how to use the internet to gain knowledge about gender based violence (GBV), how to speak in public, how to use social media platforms

properly and advocate through them and so much more. Through practice, she was able to build her confidence and she can now boldly express her ideas and perspectives.

Learning Exchange Enrollment

The *She Leads* Programme offered her a safe space where she found her voice. “I have realised that I can speak out for myself, say no if the community denies me my rights and neglects me. I am a girl who can lead and change my life, that of other girls and young women in my community and the country at large,” she said. Towards the end of October 2022, through the *She Leads* programme, Hayimanot got an opportunity to share her experience with like-minded girls and young women (GYW) group in the area. During the experience, the girls’ efforts helped her learn that economic independence and access to resources is a gateway to gender parity.

Her Aspirations

After the knowledge sharing visit, Hayimanot shared with her colleagues the lessons she had learnt. At home, she started preparing and selling sandwiches with her colleague. The business earned them about one euro per day. Feeling happy and empowered, she said, “I and the GYW with me have a dream to be successful women entrepreneurs to equalise the balance that is dominated by our counterparts.” Hayimanot wants to become a judge in the future.



3 Anguache's Tale: Surviving Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is a widely debated topic today. It violates children's fundamental rights to dignity and bodily integrity. For children like Anguache, corporal punishment was something that she had to deal with in her everyday life. As a result, she was forced to ultimately make one risky decision: to run away from home.



Severe Corporal Punishment

Anguache comes from rural Ethiopia where she lives with her extended family. Her father is the breadwinner, who earns from agriculture and livestock breeding. For Anguache, life became hard after her mother died. At 10 years old, she began facing the wrath of her father who used severe corporal punishment as a way of instilling discipline. Other than this, she was also burdened with heavy chores for a girl who was barely a teenager. Eventually, she dropped out of school. Together with other girls from her rural home, she fled in search of a better life to a town in northwestern Ethiopia.

Leaving Home

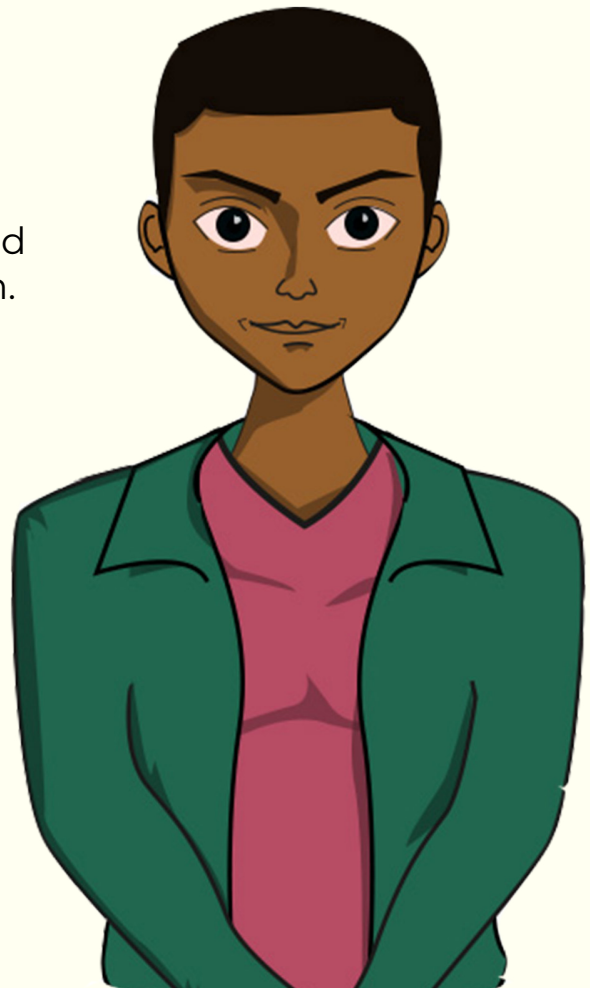
Anguache left home and got a job working as a domestic worker in a brothel. For two weeks, she would be forced to work for up to 10 hours with no pay. At the brothel, men began to sexually harass her. “What I have witnessed in the brothel was very horrible.” One day, a customer visited the brothel and saw what was happening. The customer reported the case to a social worker attached to *Mahibere Hiwot for Social Development*, an organisation working together with *Terre des Hommes Netherlands* to implement the *Paths to Safer Childhood* (Phase II) project.

Receiving Support

Anguache received counselling and was taken to a temporary shelter for further assistance. At the shelter, she received medical, psychosocial and legal aid. Before being reunited with her family, Anguache’s father was also supported with positive child disciplining techniques to employ when his children commit offences. He was also educated on the negative effects of corporal punishment which have the power to make children vulnerable to all kinds of hazards including unsafe migration and trafficking.

Reunified

Anguache was reunited with her family and no longer has any thoughts of re-migration. “The assistance provided has saved my life and changed my father’s life for the better. I want to be a legal officer as I want to support girls who experience abuse and harassment,” she said.



4 Halima's Safe Return

15-year-old Halima comes from the rural Amhara region in Ethiopia. Her mother is the sole income provider who supports the family through agriculture and livestock rearing. Halima was tasked with cleaning the house, herding, milking the cattle, fetching water from remote distances which put her safety at risk, as well as other duties that were imposed on her. The workload became too much that Halima was forced to drop out of school in January 2021. Feeling frustrated, exhausted and alone, Halima ran away from home four months later.

Fleeing

Halima fled to Metema, a town in Northwestern Ethiopia to escape the heavy chores that were borne on her. She roamed the streets in search of a job as a domestic worker for about two weeks, only for her to experience the worst. A trafficker put her to work in a café that is located in Gallabat, a marketplace in Sudan that borders Ethiopia. The workload was not any lighter. For 10 hours a day, Halima cleaned, took out waste materials and performed other duties with little to no pay.



Helping Hand

Halima decided to seek help from the Ethiopian immigration workers. They placed her in a temporary shelter as she waited to be reunified with her family. She was not only given accommodation, but also psychosocial support and counselling. Her trafficking case was also reported to the police and investigations are ongoing. Luckily, after successful family tracing, Halima was re-integrated back home.

Addressing Root Factors

Halima's mother was informed about the risk of heavy chores on children and how it subsequently can lead to their trafficking. Through the help of partners like Mahibere Hiwot for Social Development, Halima's mother has changed the way she distributes chores among her children. Halima and her siblings assist with chores that coincide with their ages and capacity. Halima is now in school and enthusiastic about her future. "I want to be a psychologist as I want to counsel girls who need strong support and guidance," she said.



5 My Rights, My Life: Hirut's Story

Hirut lives with her siblings and both parents. Her father works as a farmer on animal husbandry and crop production and has been able to provide basic needs for his family and educate his three children. Hirut was happy with her life, she was fed, taken care of, helped with household chores, attended school, and was part of a child rights club. Everything was going on well until she received some disheartening news.



Risk of Early Child Marriage

The family farming business was improving each year and the income was getting higher. While speaking to some of his relatives in a family gathering, Hirut's father was advised that it was time for him to marry off his two young daughters as part of their tradition. The relatives arranged for two men to visit the family. They asked for Hirut's and her sister's hand in marriage. Hirut's father decided that it was time to talk to them about the marriage proposals.

After explaining the situation to them, they were shocked and were completely against it. All they wanted to do was to be heard and to continue with their education up to college level.

Seeking Help

Briefly after learning about the proposals, Hirut and her elder sister went to school and decided to inform their school director and the *She Leads* project facilitator about what had transpired. They both wanted help so that they can continue to live their lives as children. The project facilitator strongly advised Hirut and her elder sister on their rights and that they should not be married at such an early age. The facilitator, accompanied by the community police officer, went to their parent's house to find out more about what was happening. They had intense discussions with them about the rights of children, the Ethiopian law and the family code, criminal law and the value of education on the life of a child. Additionally, they sensitised them on the impact of early marriage and its negative outcomes on the family.

Her parents listened attentively and started to reconsider their decision to marry off the girls. After further discussions, they decided that it was best for both daughters to continue going to school. The marriage plans were cancelled and the girls were happy.

Back to Normal

Hirut is glad to continue her education and take part in the Child rights clubs. "I am very happy that my parents are encouraging me to attend school and study effectively," she said. She was also offered support in guidance and counselling. Her plan is to be a medical doctor and give health services to women in particular and people in general.



Stories from Madagascar



1 In School, Happy and Living a Better Life

Born and raised in Tatabe, Madagascar, Vony started working in the Mica Mines when she was a toddler. A look at the traces of metals on her hands, told a saddening story of the horrible situation she endured in the Mica Mines. Whereas most children her age would go to school, Vony would work in the mines everyday. Fortunately, she was identified and rescued. With our support, she is now attending school and she is even able to read and write.



Growing up in the mines

As other children would wake up to prepare for school, Vony would wake up at sunrise, go to the kitchen to make a fire for her mother to make coffee or tea, then proceed to the Mica Mines. It was from these mines that the family sourced an income of 26 Euros per month. They had been in the mica mining business for 20 years, and children had to take part in mining activities to supplement their parents' income. This was in addition to their income of 128 Euros, which they earned from farming rice and cassava.

Endangered

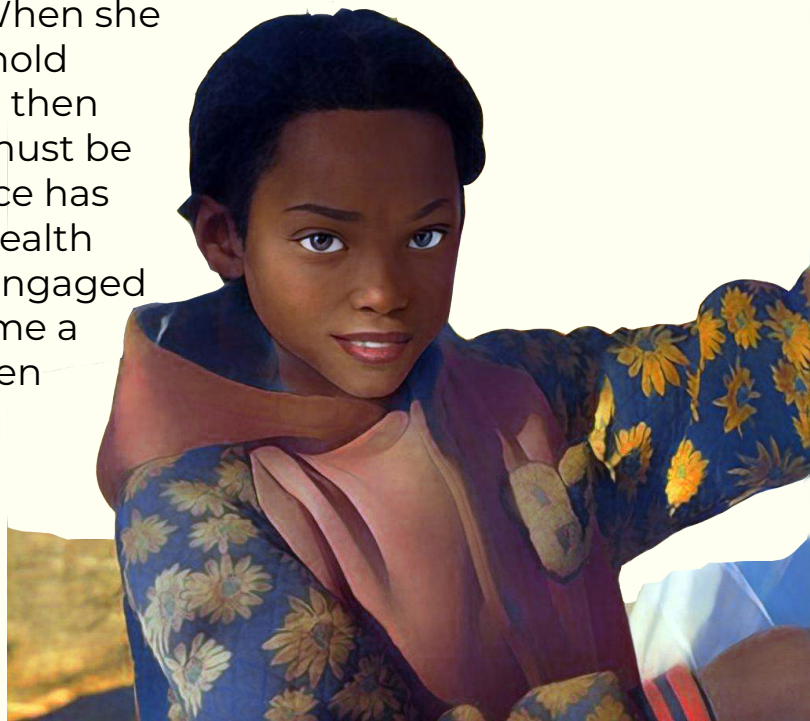
Vony had worked in the mines since she was a toddler. Considering that there was no school around, she had no option but to follow her parents and siblings to the Mica Mines. Her daily visits to the mines made Vony a victim of child labour. Bearing the heavy and weary mining practice, the 9 year old girl would often fall sick. The traces of metals on her hands, as a result of lacking personal protective equipment, was evidence enough that the Mica Mines was and is a dangerous place for children. “In other villages, I saw children going to school and I wished that I was also going to school instead of working,” Vony sadly narrated her situation.

Identified and Supported

After what seemed to be the fate for her and her family, all was not lost for Vony. She was identified in January 2022 by our project partner, *ALT*, whom we are working together with to eliminate child labour in Madagascar. With our support, she was enrolled in school on 16th May 2022. She was also provided with copybooks, pens, a slate to write on, chalks and meals. “I am happy to go to school and have lunch everyday,” Vony said happily. “The support given is important to me as it has changed my life for the better,” she added.

Living a Better Life

Life has changed for Vony. She no longer goes to the mines. Instead, she wakes up at 8:00 am, goes to school until noon, then takes her lunch at the canteen. When she gets home, she helps with light household chores such as washing the dishes and then goes to play—a right that every child must be accorded. Her regular school attendance has enabled her to read and write. Vony’s health has equally improved since she is not engaged at the mines any more. “I wish to become a doctor so that I can treat my family when they are sick,” Vony said, hoping for a better future.



2 “School Helps Me to Get to Know Important Things”

Rosia is 10 years old and lives in a small village in Madagascar. She lives with her single mom (39 years) and her two younger siblings. Her father left the family when she was a baby. Rosia now attends the third year in primary school. Before that, she was working in the Mica Mines with her mother. The school that already existed in the village, received support from *Terre des Hommes Netherlands* as of January 2022: with school bags, books, materials and (part of) the teachers' income. The village also receives support from the *Dutch Relief Alliance*: food that is shared among the families and served as lunch in the school canteen.

Rosia's Day: Many Different Activities

Rosia says: “I get up at 6 am, and then first wash my face. Then we eat some breakfast: cactus, fruit or maize. After that, I help my mother do the dishes, light the fire, and cook. Then, before I go to school, I play football a bit with my friends and all kinds of ball games”. Rosia goes to school from 12.30 pm to 16.00 pm. She says she really likes school, and likes every subject she learns. “I want to learn more and be smarter: school helps me to get to know important things”. Lunch is served during lunchtime around 1 pm, and as there are too many children to



fit in the canteen, the group is divided into two smaller groups. “We eat rice, meat, maize, greens, cassava leaves and sweet potatoes, I like it.”

The Work in the Mica Mine

Rosia used to work in the mine since she was 8 years old. She supported her mother, who has to take care of three children on her own. “I did not like to work in the mine. I was often very tired. And I did not learn anything in the mines. I would always choose to go to school, so I am very happy now”. Rosia received items namely a school bag, books and pens. And the daily lunch. She is glad her mother now doesn't have to pay for that.



Future Dreams

Rosia knows what she wants to be later: a midwife or a nurse. “I want to help people and especially my mother if she ever gets ill and needs treatment”. Furthermore, she says about the future that she hopes that the food distribution will continue...and that she can be going to school as she loves it.

3 “I love to study, play games and sing in school” Vicky’s story

Vicky, 10 years old, lives with her parents and 6 siblings in Benato, Madagascar. Her family has been working in the Mica Mines for more than 15 years. She started working in the mines when she was only 7 years old to support her family. Three years later, we rescued her from a life of misery. She is not working in the mines anymore. She is now back in school and determined to finish her studies.



Survival through mica mining

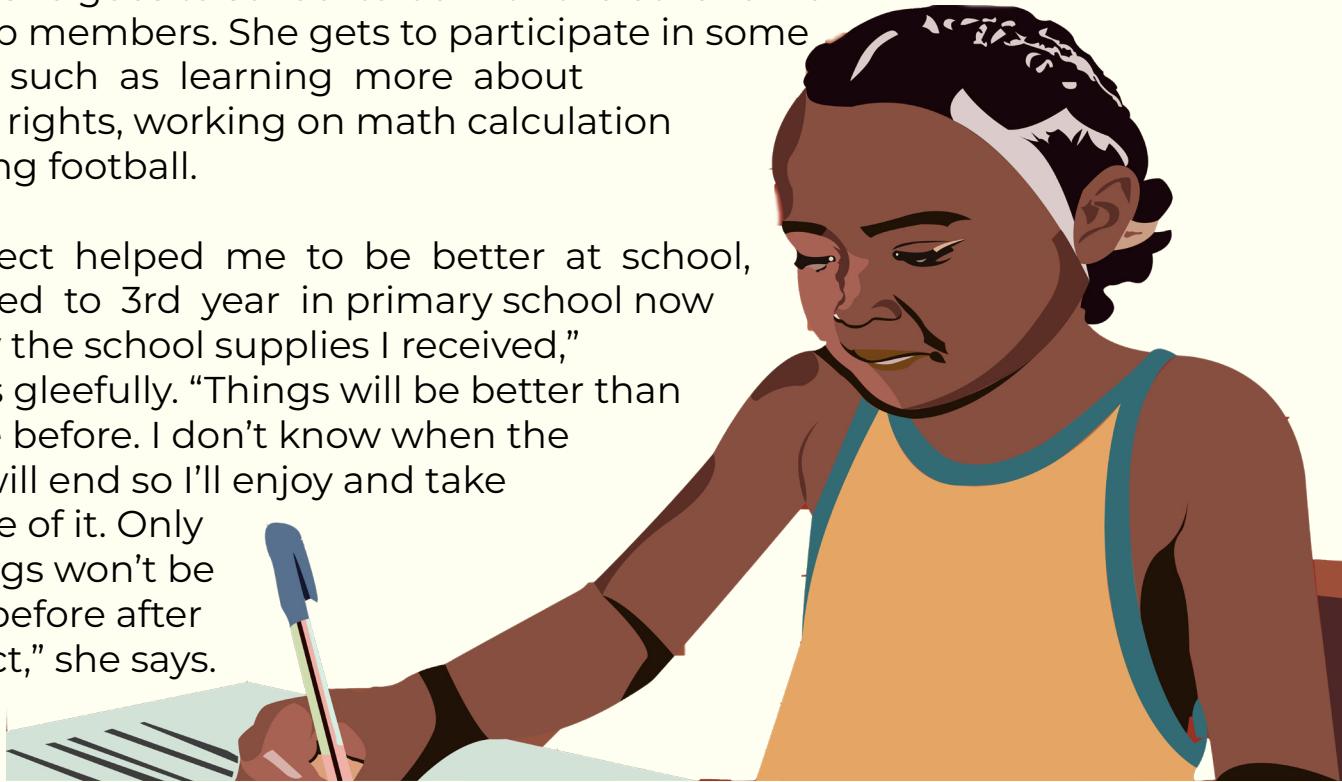
Vicky and her family live in a small house with a small bedroom, where they all sleep together on the floor, and a kitchen where they cook food, if they can afford to buy any. They fetch water from the public well. The children do not have much space to play within the compound.

Vicky’s family has been working in Mica Mines for more than 15 years. Her father and mother worked there to support the family. Back then, they would earn approximately 44 to 132 Euros a day from extracting mica in a new quarry and selling it, which was enough to cater for their basic needs and buy extra essentials such as clothes and sheep. Sadly, there hasn’t been a new quarry for years. They now only make 0.88 to 1.77 euros a day if they’re lucky enough and this would be used to buy food (rice or cassava with greens) for dinner only. Life was very difficult for the family and they had no choice but to ask the children to help in the mines so that they could earn extra money to cater for their growing needs.

Back in school

Vicky was finally able to go back to school and she was extremely happy. She now wakes up at 6 am, eats breakfast (rice mostly) and helps her mother to do house chores first since she only has classes in the afternoon. At 11 am, she goes to the school canteen for lunch and doesn't return home since she has to study at 12:30. She studies Malagasy, French, history and maths. During the break she plays elastic games, and uses rocks to tell stories. Then she goes back home at 5 pm where she helps her mother with babysitting as her mother has to prepare and cook for dinner if there is any food available. Every Saturday, she goes to school to be with the other child rights club members. She gets to participate in some activities, such as learning more about children's rights, working on math calculation and playing football.

"The project helped me to be better at school, I graduated to 3rd year in primary school now and enjoy the school supplies I received," Vicky says gleefully. "Things will be better than they were before. I don't know when the support will end so I'll enjoy and take advantage of it. Only hope things won't be as it was before after the project," she says.



Improved family life

The project team follows up on her six days in a week checking her school attendance. After 3 years of being a victim of child labour, and after 9 years of going to the mines, Vicky is now attending school regularly. Her family's life has improved. Her parents are now selling items that people need in their daily lives earning approximately 15 euros per month. Through the project support, they are now breeding chicken and will sell them later once they multiply. Additionally, Vicky's father now buys and sells sheep. He is no longer worried about buying school supplies for his daughter anymore since the project provided her with a backpack, copybooks and pens.

Vicky loves to be at school studying, playing games like football and elastic games with her friends, and singing. She hopes to buy a big stoned house when she succeeds in life." I want to be a nurse or mid-wife so I can support my family in future." she concludes.

No choice but to work in mica mines

Vicky has been going to the mines since she was 1 year old. When she was 7 years old, her parents asked her if she could help them, that is when she first touched mica. She did not know what it is or what it is used for. All she wanted to do was help her family. On a normal day, she would filter mica and fetch water for parents with other children. She never got injured or sick in the mines. Sadly, with her new routine, her school attendance became irregular as she had to wake up at 6:00 am to go to the mines.

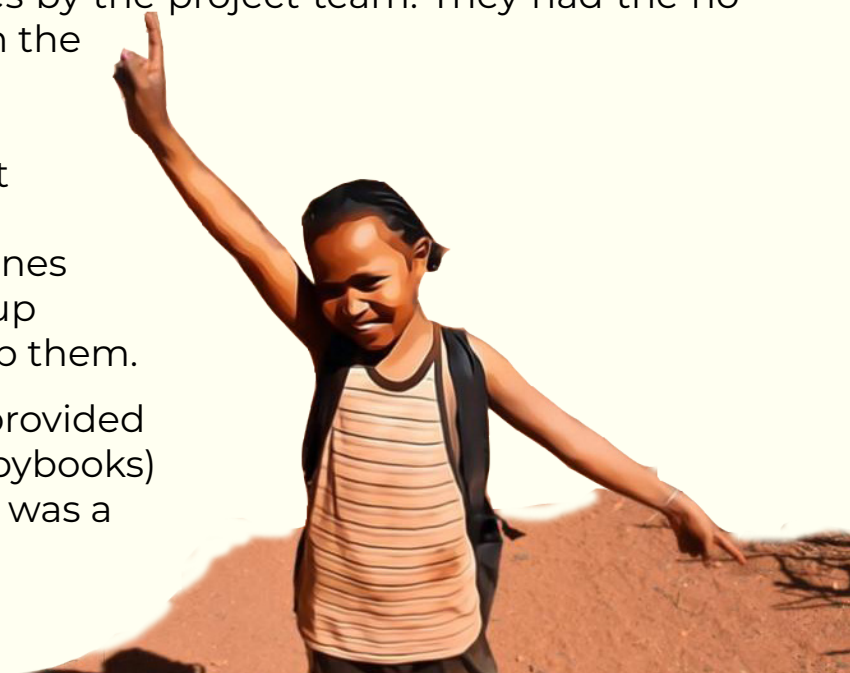
“We got nothing to eat so we had to follow our parents to the mines to get more mica to sell. Reason why I couldn’t attend school regularly, although I wanted to study, my parents couldn’t even buy copybooks.” Vicky narrates. Amidst her misery, Vicky was still determined to pursue her education and work hard to help her family get out of poverty and live a better life.

Millions of children like Vicky are subjected to a life in the mines in order to support their families, extracting and sorting mica everyday. They are constantly exposed to dust, which poses a health risk to them. They also lack the appropriate tools to go into the narrow shafts, working for long hours everyday. Young girls are often vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Growing up in the mines instead of growing up in school, affects their promising futures.

Sensitisation and changed perception

Luckily, in February 2022, when the *FAMAHA* project was set up in the area, Vicky’s life changed for the better. Her parents were sensitised on the dangers and effects of children working in the mines by the project team. They had the notion that the more mica they mine with the help of their children, the more money they would earn. Fortunately, after the sensitisation sessions, they realised that mica mining is indeed harmful to their children’s health and working in the mines would not help their children to grow up and develop well, but school would help them.

Knowing that their children would be provided with school supplies (backpack and copybooks) along with lunch at the school canteen was a huge relief for them.



4 Tinahy (12) Works Hard but Starts the Day without Breakfast



Twelve-year-old Tinahy walks proudly with a flashlight on his head. "That's not my lamp, it's my brother's," he says. In his hand he holds a piece of mica: a raw material that makes products shiny. For example smartphones. In the Netherlands, many boys of his age already have one in their pocket - not Tinahy. That won't change if he has to continue working in the Mica Mine. There he earns about 25 euro cents a day: just enough for dinner, but not for breakfast.

Up early every day

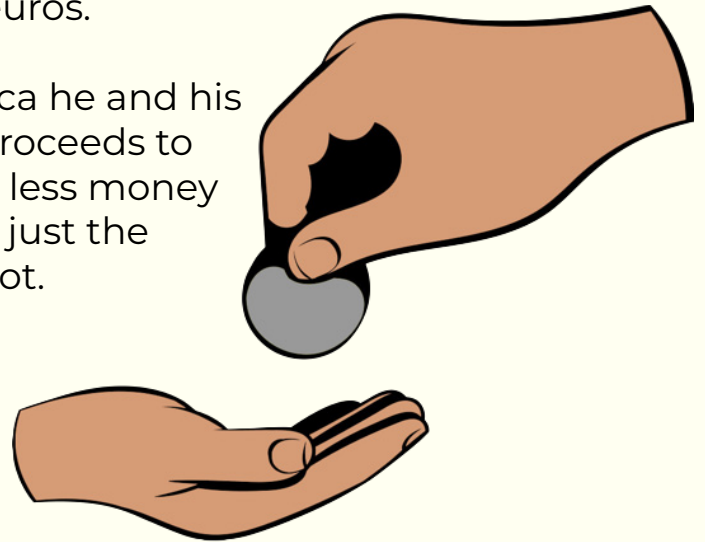
In Madagascar, almost half of all children between the ages of 5 and 17 work. About 10,000 children work in Mica Mines. They help their parents, because otherwise the family would not earn enough to survive. Fathers and teenage boys dig mines and collect the stones. The mothers, girls and young children stay upstairs to chip and clean the mica. It is one of the worst forms of child labour: hard, unhealthy and dangerous work.

Tinahy also has to get up early every day to work. He walks with his family to the mine, where they stay until about three o'clock. His brother is 18 years old and goes down with a flashlight. Tinahy is still too young for that. "I don't go deep underground because I do the triage," he says. This means sifting the mica chunks to remove the soil and other waste.

Unfair pay

Tinahy leaves home without breakfast. During the day he complains of stomach ache and hunger. He only eats in the evening and then mainly rice. Despite that, he manages to process about 5 kilos of mica every day, earning 1000 Ariary. This amounts to about 0.25 euros.

Tinahy's father is not happy. Of all the mica he and his family bring up, he must pay half of the proceeds to the owner of the mine shaft. That means less money to buy food. And for his children perhaps just the difference between having breakfast or not.



No school

Tinahy has never been to school. The chance that this will happen (without help) is small. After all, Madagascar is one of the top 5 countries with the most uneducated children. When asked what he wants to be when he grows up, he replies: 'Doctor.' When we ask him if he would rather be a photographer, pointing to the man with the camera around his neck, he says, 'No, because I wouldn't know how such a thing works.'

Terre des Hommes Netherlands stands up for children like Tinahy. We make sure they can go to school. We are also working on fairer remuneration for the mica, so that families have more income without their children having to work.

5 Tsihoeza (16) Works in a Mine and Sleeps in a Pit

Tsihoeza does not go to school because she has to work. Every day she goes deep underground into the mine to dig for mica. She doesn't know what it is or what it is used for. She only knows that she earns a few cents per kilo: money that her family desperately needs to live on. Tsihoeza is not afraid of falling or being crushed by a stone. She does go to bed every night with fear. "Often I am afraid at night, when I sleep outside the mine."



No breakfast

Tsihoeza is 16 years old and lives in Madagascar. She lives with her little brother (11 years old) and her parents. Her little brother goes to school, but Tsihoeza can no longer do so. She has to help her father, because the family has no money. During the rainy season they live in the village and both her parents work the land. Now it is the dry season and father and daughter go into the mine every day in search of the raw material mica.

When the sun rises, they get up and walk from the village to the mine. There,

Tsihoeza goes down without a helmet or protection and only with a flashlight. “I go deep into the mine to find mica,” she says. “I take the mica pieces to the others who process them. When I’m tired, I take a rest.”

The work in the mine is hard. Tsihoeza doesn’t like it either. Still, she has to do her part every day, even on an empty stomach. “Often we don’t eat breakfast because there’s just nothing to eat.”

Afraid of the dark

When there is a lot of work to do or the buyer comes by to buy the mica, Tsihoeza and her father sleep at the mine at night. “We don’t have a tent, like some other families. I sleep outside, with my best friend, while my father sleeps somewhere else, nearby.”

Tsihoeza is often afraid at night. “I get frightened everyday just before dark because of animals. There are also people who kidnap children, and we do not know what happens to those children” Her father (43 years old) confirms what his daughter says: “These stories are not only told here but also in the villages. People who take children away: we don’t know what they do with them. ”

Future dreams

Tsihoeza is not afraid of getting hurt while working at the mine, because accidents “actually never happen,” she says. Only recently an adult man was injured by a stone falling on his head, but he has recovered. “That’s why I want to become a doctor. I want to give people injections and make them better”.


Tsihoeza doesn’t know what mica is used for. But she does know the work of doctors and nurses. “I hope I can go back to school so I can learn. And that I can help my mother in the fields. And when I have some free time, I can skip rope together with my female friends.”

Terre des Hommes Netherlands is working hard to support children like Tsihoeza to get out of the mica mines and go to school to get good education so that they can live better fulfilling lives.




Contact Information:

Kenya

 Terre des Hommes Netherlands, Kenya Country Office

Riverside Lane West

P.O. Box 76340 00508 | Nairobi | Kenya


 +254 722 209 581

 kenya@tdh.nl

Uganda


 Terre des Hommes Netherlands, Uganda Country Office

P.O. Box 73435 | Clock Tower Branch | Kampala | Uganda


 +256 414 599 960

 uganda@tdh.nl

Tanzania


 Terre des Hommes Netherlands, East Africa

P.O. Box 76340 00508 | Nairobi | Kenya


 +254 722 209 581 / +254 786 209 581

 east.africa@tdh.nl

Ethiopia

 Terre des Hommes Netherlands, Ethiopia Office

7th Floor Duki Building, Meskel Flower Square Addis Ababa | Ethiopia


 +251 11470 2140/41


 ethiopia@tdh.nl

Madagascar

 Terre des Hommes Netherlands, Madagascar Country Office

2nd Floor Maison LAHA Ampamakiambato | 614 Taolagnaro | Madagascar

 +261 343 915 905

 east.africa@tdh.nl

terre des hommes
stops child exploitation



www.terredeshommes.nl



@tdhnl_africa



TdHNLStopsChildExploitation



Terre des Hommes Netherlands in Africa