

# ANNUAL REPORT 2018

Perspiration and innovation are the path, impact is the destination



## **Introduction**

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We are very happy to present to you the annual report of 2018. It has been another very interesting year for us in which we have made great progress again. Our focus has been both on organizational strengthening and on helping more children in better ways.

In this report we choose to highlight only a few things for you, so that we don't drown you in all the details.

We present to you the 5 biggest interventions we carried out in 2018:

- Macheo Children's Home
- School feeding
- Counselling
- Teenage mothers
- Household Economic strengthening

If you would like more information about anything we have not highlighted in this report, please do not hesitate to contact us directly and we will happily answer all your questions!

## **Our principles**

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Nothing is permanent, but our vision and mission have stayed the same since 2005:

Our mission is to empower and protect vulnerable children and their communities, so that these children can lead a bright future.

Our vision a society where the children live happily in a safe, caring and stimulating environment that promotes the best of their potential.

Our purpose is to release restrained potential in children.

Our volunteer policy has remained unchanged. In Macheo we do not support international volunteers to come in and work directly with children. The few international volunteers that we have, are very useful in carrying out evaluations, research, fundraising, staff training and communication. We welcome mature,

professionals who are willing to contribute to Macheo's growth as an organization.

Direct work with the children shall only be carried out by one of Macheo's 140 trained Kenyan staff members who speak the language and know the culture well. This has been our policy since our start in 2005.

## **Word from the director**

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2018 has been another great year for Macheo which has shown further professionalization of the way we work, and the number of children we can impact.



We have all been privileged to be in positions where we can possibly positively impact other people's lives. To opt out of conversations about privilege and oppression because it makes you uncomfortable is probably the epitome of this privilege. We choose not to seek comfort over impact but be on the ground where lives are being changed!

### **Who do we work for?**

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Macheo works for all the (unborn) children and youth in our immediate surroundings. These surroundings cover an area of roughly 450 square kilometers around Thika, Kenya.

In total Macheo has reached around 20,000 children in 2018 through our different interventions.

### **What do we do for them?**

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Ever since visiting struggling and disadvantaged children in their homes we have realized that it would be a giant violation of the truth to look at their challenges as single issues.

These are complex situations that deserve individual packages of solutions. This also leaves space for individualized participation from the families themselves.

In our work there is an important distinction between relief work and development work.

Sometimes the situations are so stressing and urgent that we can only focus on relieving the immediate need. We can all understand that none of us would have the capacity and peace of mind to focus on the long term when we do not see a way to feed our children that evening. First we need to reach a psychological state of relief from the immediate overwhelming pressures to be able to regain initiative, clarity of mind, ambition and the ability to decide again.

Once that state is reached, our work switches to development and empowerment. In this phase we assist and enable people to chart their own way forward again. This is the most exciting, sustainable and fulfilling part of our work.

### **How do we work for them?**

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While working towards creating a fairer future for Kenyan children we never compromise on the following guiding principles:

- Macheo works for vulnerable children in Kenya;
- This vulnerability is highly complex, and therefore we do not believe in "one solution fits all" approaches, but we believe in tailor made solutions;
- Every child has a right to a safe, loving, caring and stimulating family;

- Wherever possible we cooperate with the local Government, we will not duplicate or compete;
- Macheo strives towards maximum impact, maximum social return on investment.

Empathy is a crucial part of working with vulnerable children and their caregivers. However, we also recognize that empathy and commitment to the cause can negatively influence objectivity.

To create more objectivity and through that also more efficiency and quality for the children we serve, we decided to separate the stages in our process into three phases: diagnosis - service delivery - evaluation.

#### **The diagnosis**

The diagnosis is done by Macheo's Area Social Workers. For this they use the Child Status Index tool. This is a verified tool that looks at children's wellbeing holistically, looking at: care, protection, health, food & nutrition, education & skills, psychosocial wellbeing and shelter. Based on the needs identified through this tool the Area Social Workers will make referrals to usually multiple services that are deemed necessary for the children.

#### **The service delivery**

An Area Social Worker can refer internally or externally. An internal referral is a referral to one of Macheo's colleagues to provide the services. We only provide ourselves if there is no other accessible, effective and/or affordable other service provider.

The services that Macheo provides are described in brief in the second part of this document.

#### **The evaluation**

After all services have been given the Area Social Worker evaluates whether the services have created the desired impact. To determine this the Child Status Index tool is used again. The difference is the progress in the child's wellbeing. This is the impact Macheo (co-)created

## Teenage mothers

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Being a teenager is a challenging, exciting and confusing period in every human's life. It is the crucial transition period between childhood and adulthood, with all its responsibilities. During their teenage years the teenagers are exposed to some overwhelming external and internal struggles.

Now imagine not having the time to navigate this period well because there is no smooth transition between childhood and adulthood...

This happens in the case of teenage pregnancies.

This leads to very high risks for both the (unborn) child as well as for the mother. Children from teenage mothers are more likely to suffer health, social and emotional problems than children born to older mothers. Daughters born to teen mothers are three times as likely to also become mothers during their teenage years.

Macheo is committed to helping the teenage mothers because we are deeply concerned about the mother and about the child. There are big risks regarding: psychosocial wellbeing, care, education & skills, health, food & nutrition.

The situation that the teenage mothers face is extremely complex, and many different aspects are influencing each other. This is not only a health problem, or only a problem regarding parental care.

Therefore, Macheo believes it is an extremely unfair simplification to reduce this complexity to single issues. We believe in providing each teenage mother with the particular care *she and her (unborn) child* need at that moment in their life.

This means that this program is best imagined as a "tool box" full of different possible interventions that the social worker can apply depending on each girl's individual situation.

### A success story: Catherine

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Catherine is a 17 years teenage mother of one little girl currently living with her aunt in the Kiandutu slums. Catherine lost both parents while at a younger age in their rural home in Nakuru County. She stayed with her brother who sometimes could not manage to pay for

their upkeep. Life became tough as she could rarely get food and manage to pay for her studies. Ultimately, Catherine dropped out of school and got pregnant. Her brothers were disappointed by the news and consequently chased her away. The person responsible for her pregnancy also refused to commit thus making Catherine helpless.

Catherine travelled to Kiandutu slums to stay with her expectant aunt. Life became unbearable, they could go for days without food and Catherine had no place to sleep. Catherine was later identified by Julie, a Macheo service provider who learnt that she was in need of emergency food package, mattress and blanket which was then provided. Further, Catherine had never attended clinics and did not have any information on prenatal care. Julie empowered Catherine and took her to the clinic. At the clinic, Catherine was diagnosed with Rh sensitization which is a condition that occurs during pregnancy if Rh-negative mother is pregnant with a developing baby (foetus) who has Rh-positive blood. According to the doctor at the clinic, the condition would cause the baby to be anaemic or have more serious complications. The doctor advised that Catherine would need two injection at a cost of ten thousand shillings for her baby to be safe. This news disheartened Catherine. She got worried about her unborn baby and had no idea how to raise the money. Fortunately Macheo supported Catherine who finally gave birth to a healthy a beautiful, healthy baby girl named Angel. Catherine is presently doing well with her child and desires to start a business that can boost her ability to raise her child.

Julie says Catherine has been progressing well with her baby girl. She adds that if it were not for Macheo's support, Catherine could have succumbed to depression and eventually affect her emotions and mental health.



### ***Macheo Children's Home***

The children's home has only one function: to serve as a temporary safe haven for children, while we work on the quickest possible safe reintegration. During the time the children spent in the children's home the biggest emphasis is on their psychological healing. The main question we ask ourselves with regard to possible reintegration is "how do we make it possible for the biological families to welcome these children back where they belong?"



That is why we say "Through Macheo Children's Home we repair broken families".

We are striving to be able to reintegrate children safely back to their families after 6 months, in 2018 we were able to do this safely on average in 12 months.

Macheo reintegrated 57 children back to their families or into domestic adoption in 2018. 26 Children were placed with other family members before they were even admitted into the children's home.

Once reintegrated the children and their families are still being supported by Macheo, depending on their individual independence and situations. In total Macheo expects to support 175 reintegrated children in their families in 2019.

Also in 2018 Macheo has remained committed to child protection and several trainings were carried out to maintain the high level of staff we currently have.

### ***A success story: Peter Akuom***

Peter, a 12 years boy live in Kiandutu slums with his two siblings and their mother who is the bread winner. Though she is a drunkard but engage in casual job to support family. In 2017,

Peter was involved in a horrific accident that left him severely injured on his legs. He was rushed to Thika level 5 hospital but little was done about his condition since there was an ongoing nurses' strike. Due to lack of money Peter was not able to look for better services elsewhere but opted to return home.

While at home, Peter's condition worsened because the wound dressing was badly done and did not have alternatives. This prompted a neighbor to report the case to Macheo social worker who referred the case and Peter was later readmitted at Thika level 5 hospital. Peter's mother did not visit him at the hospital and that made him feel very lonely and neglected. Peter was attended to through the support of Macheo and later the case was reported to the children's department, Thika sub-county. The children officer recommended the child to be placed in a safer place after being in stable condition and discharged.

Peter was then placed at Macheo Children's Home after he was discharged from the hospital where he could get care and treatment. Mary, the caregiver was assigned to monitor Peter's progress through nurse supervision. While at Macheo, Peter had difficulties in walking therefore was filled with pain, trauma and became suicidal as he recovered. Through the support of Macheo counselor Peter was able to feel encouraged. This eventually made Peter regain self-esteem, stabilize and become jovial. The counselor also talked to Peter's mother and brought back their relationship which had deteriorated. It is through the process that Peter was integrated back to his family in Kiandutu. In addition, Peter's mother stopped drinking and was supported to start a business through Macheo's assistance. Peter is currently in class one and able to walk to school and back by himself. Macheo is continuing to visit Peter at home to make sure he keep on developing well, and that the family is now stable.

Joan, the manager of Macheo Children's Home is happy to see Peter at home with his mother, fully recovered and able to walk again. According to her, the depression Peter faced could have really harmed his mental wellbeing in the long term. Having also been able to adjust to the home environment and connect well with the mother and two of his younger siblings is one thing that Joan is very happy about. After all, his future lies within his family, and not with the institution. Macheo has helped the mother with gaining the necessary parenting skills. If it wasn't for the neighbor who alerted Macheo to

the situation, Peter could have died because of excessive bleeding and the open wound.

In 10 years from now, Joan hopes to see Peter happier, confident and having progressed well in education despite having undergone a lot of stress and depression in the past. Joan further advocates that consistent care for Peter and his family can help him in advancing his future dreams.



## School feeding

By providing school feeding programs we positively impact retention of children in schools, improve access into schools, improve school performance and contribute to higher wellbeing levels in health, food & nutritional status, protection and psychosocial wellbeing of children.

One of Macheo's goals is to get children into school and retain them until they complete their primary school education. Provision of subsidized food for lunch is one of the feeding interventions that Macheo uses to achieve this objective. This intervention is provided in schools where Macheo has introduced the feeding program. Parents who can afford contribute to the costs of the meals.

Nursery school children are the chief targets of the porridge intervention due to the added nutritional advantages although the upper class children also benefit. This feeding program is inclusive of a balanced diet which is available to all the students in the schools with priority to the most vulnerable cases. Along with this intervention, we provide protection to students whose families we visited and encountered more than one cause of absenteeism.



For 58 year old James, life has been one hurdle after another. He has faced poverty, unemployment and social exclusion. James lives with his family in the low-income settlement of Kaloleni, in Makutano. His is a story of survival, determination and resilience as he struggles to provide for his family of eight children against all odds.

When the Macheo social worker first met him, James was going through a hard life, what you can truly call a peasant life. James and his 8 children; Francis, Michael, Hanah, Maria, John,

Annah, Peter and John lived from hand to mouth, unable to afford basic necessities like food and school fees which led to poor school attendance. James could sometime take odd jobs to make a living for his family but more disturbing was that period of homelessness and hunger. He recalls the time range of 6 years (2008-2014) when he had to fight poverty on his own and spent months surviving at the mercy of neighbors and relatives. This further led to James' five children drop school for lack of school fees.

Despite his circumstances, James did not despair. He was determined to rise above his circumstances. In 2015, James got an opportunity to work with Macheo as a cook in Gatuanayaga primary school, one of the school supported with the feeding program. This was a life changing opportunity as James was able to rise above his circumstances and improve on the quality of life for his family. James was also supported by Macheo to construct a house for his family through the improved living condition program and his children benefited through the school feeding program in Makutano primary school. James has made it to take all his children to school. As a result, Francis scored C plain in secondary school examinations and will soon be joining college while 3 other; Michael, Hannah and John are doing well in high school.

James is happily living with his family and has also established a livestock project for his family through the money he receives from Macheo. If it were not for Macheo, James could have succumbed to extreme poverty. "As a parent, my greatest hope was always for the happiness and economic stability of my family. I struggled for long and never in my wildest dreams did I know that I would one day be able to put up a story in my life," says James. He adds, "Thank you Macheo for giving me the right opportunity to help my family thrive. I am greatly indebted and always praying that Macheo lives long so that it can give hope to more families."

### **Individual school support**

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Every child has the right to quality education. Education is not only important for children to develop to their fullest potential, in both a social context as well with regard to the development of decision making and future economic prospects.

Education is often seen by families as the way to lift themselves up out of poverty.

For adolescent girls the risks of not going to school brings high chances of dependency and early pregnancies.

We contribute to school levies for children and network with schools for subsidized fees.

In Kenya there are two options for further education

#### 1. Day School

When there are no serious protection risks, we advise beneficiaries to opt for day secondary schools where they can receive education at a cheaper cost.

#### 2. Boarding School

We contribute to school levies for children and network with schools to advocate for subsidized fees. We advise beneficiaries to opt for boarding secondary schools where their wellbeing and protection can be taken care of, when this is at serious risk at home.

### **The story of Damaris**

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Damaris is a hardworking and determined, 18 years girl who lives with her grandmother in Ndunyu, Itetani area. She comes from a poor family background and a village where children are often not going to school. Damaris lost her mother while she was very young. She later moved to stay with her grandmother after abandonment by her father. Despite performing well in secondary school exams, Damaris' grandmother could not afford to take her to a secondary school.

Damaris desperately stayed at home as she waited and prayed that one day an opportunity would knock her door so that she could continue with studies. She shared the problem with teachers from her former school who then started a fund drive to support her studies. The

money collected could only support her first year in school. Damaris then visited Macheo to seek financial support for her education which was granted. Her stepsisters were against it and wanted her to help them in taking care of their young children who stays away in Nairobi. This stressed Damaris as she could not focus and concentrate with her studies. Macheo counselor was brought on board after which she was able to regain her self-esteem eventually improving in performance. Damaris was able to complete her secondary education and score a mean grade of C (plain) in her final exams. Presently, Damaris is working in a factory and stays with a friend while she awaits to join Technical University of Mombasa in September to pursue a course in Information Communication Technology. We are currently providing counseling to Damaris and connecting her with Higher Education Loan Board (HELB), a government sponsorship programme that offers financial support to needy children.

"I am excited that Damaris was able to complete her secondary school education, improve on her assertiveness and self-esteem," says Monica the service provider in the sponsorship program. Monica hopes that Damaris will pursue her ICT course, get a decent job and further pursue her dreams. She feels that if it were not for Macheo's intervention, Damaris could have desperately gotten into early marriage or pregnancy. In 10 years from now, Monica wish to see Damaris become independent, more assertive and a responsible person.



## Psychosocial wellbeing



Psychosocial wellbeing is important for all children. Psychosocial refers to a child's inner world and the relationship with his or her environment. Psychosocial wellbeing includes the achievement of expected developmental milestones and the establishment of effective coping skills, secure attachments and positive social relationships.

This creates the foundation for healthy behaviors and educational attainment, helps prevent behavioral and mental health problems. When psychosocial wellbeing of a child is not optimal, this could result in for instance internalizing behaviors such as anxiety or depression, or in externalizing behaviors such as aggressive, violent and disruptive behavior.

Macheo's psychosocial support happens in two ways: we offer individual counselling and group counselling.

In the individual counselling we intervene directly by offering a helping relationship for the individuals experiencing psychological, social or emotional issues that affect the beneficiary's wellbeing both in the short term and in the long term. Our counselling service to our clients are free of charge. We cannot intervene in all categories of individual psychological needs and therefore we sometimes also refer clients to external counsellors for further help.

Through our group counselling sessions, we offer guidance and life skills that are effective in connecting children to explore their issues collectively. The helps prevent psychosocial problems or address them as they emerge. The children are therefore empowered with skills on self-efficacy (one's ability to succeed in specific

situations or accomplish a task) and resilience. These sessions by our group counselors also offer wider insights to Macheo as the children tend to highlight the wider issues affecting them in their community.

## The story of the boy Kelvin



Kelvin is a perfect example of someone who has converted a disability into an opportunity. He faced many difficulties to pursue his dreams since the level of care that he required was more than his family was able to provide but with his strong will power and dedication, Kelvin has been a story of hope for people with similar challenges.

Meet Kelvin, a 17 years young man with autism and an intellectual disability, who has always lived at home with his parents in Gatunyaga. Kelvin's parents are dependent on odd jobs and have had struggles to make ends meet for the family. Kelvin dropped out of school ever since the parents were not supportive and while in school, other children could make him a laughter out of his condition. This made Kelvin develop low self-esteem and emotional instability because of the discrimination from other students. Kelvin stayed at home desperately eventually joining a group of friends who introduced him into drugs abuse. He became untidy and addicted to using Bhang and other hard drugs.

When Macheo identified Kelvin, he had lost hope and meaning to life. He was already using hard drugs and could not sober up towards any accomplishment. Through a Macheo counselor,

Kelvin was supported with counselling and after several sessions he was able to regain his self-esteem. Again, the counsellor made it to rescue him from drug abuse even though it took a lot of efforts. Kelvin was then taken to a local special school where he learnt about weaving and beads making. After sometime, Kelvin made it to realize and achieve his fullest life potential. Further, the counsellor talked to the parents on matters parenting and were able to understand their role in caring for Kelvin.

Currently, Kelvin has been making strides in the weaving and beads making venture. He has become more thoughtful, hardworking and enjoys weaving and beads making especially with the efforts and nurturing from his parents, teachers and the other people who provide moral support. Kelvin enjoys a happy, enriched, and stable life outside the confines of his home.

The experiences and friendships shared with many layers of love and support from parents have been a rewarding adventure for Kelvin. Kelvin is currently in the process of joining a vocation training where he can advance his capabilities in his passion for weaving and beads making. The counsellor says that if it were not for Macheo, Kelvin would not have exploited his talent and passion in weaving and beads, instead he would have succumbed into drugs and substance abuse.

## **Household Economic strengthening**

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### **Empowerment is the true objective of our work.**

However, this can only be achieved once the people are out of the extreme poverty that overwhelms all the other daily activities. Supporting clients (household heads/income earners/bread winners/household decision makers) with funds or tools to start income generating activities to sustain their families. We therefore help clients to develop business ideas that can work in their local context and give them small grants and tools to start their own businesses. We conduct regular field visits to monitor progress and offer additional trainings and any necessary business support to these beneficiaries to ensure that their living standards are improving, and with that the lives of their children.

We also network with employers close to us and mediate beneficiaries into paid and stable employment.

### **The story of Shamila**

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Meet Shamila, a single mother of four children who hails from Kiandutu slums. She used to wash clothes for people to earn a living, but income from the laundry business was not enough to make ends meet. Shamila hoped that her children could afford a better life but her dream seemed to shut as each day could bring a long more challenges.

When the social worker first identified Shamila, Margaret her last-born child was totally malnourished while the other three; James, Charles and Simon were not attending school. Macheo service provider immediately enrolled Margaret in the malnourishment intervention and referred Shamila to the household economic strengthening program. After inquiring on the diet history by the nutritionist, it was noted that the feeding habit was very poor and Margaret mostly fed only on carbohydrates as Shamila lacked knowledge on nutrition and ability to get sufficient food for the family. Margaret was put on fortified blended porridge and introduced to supplemented foods. With nutritious food, proper medication and care, Margaret's condition improved dramatically and as later retained at home.



Macheo further provided Shamila with economic empowerment to start up her own business. She was first taken through a training on financial literacy, marketing and book keeping then supported to start a grocery business. The business picked up well and she was able to expand her business to selling soaps and detergents. Shamila has since then been able to support her family as well as her children who never attended school.

Shamila is grateful for the entrepreneurship and small business training she had received through Macheo. "It disturbed me emotionally that I could not manage to give the best to my children especially in providing enough food and also taking my three children to school. Life changed for the better after I received empowerment from Macheo. The business start-up kit and training on financial literacy, marketing and book keeping was a life changing testimony for me. I am saving money so that soon I can expand my businesses and start a utensils shop," says Shamila.

Seth, the Manager for the food, health and nutrition program is happy that Household Economic Strengthening of caregivers that aims

to support families to break the cycle of poverty through teaching caregivers how to save, manage money and grow their entrepreneurial skills has helped change the lives of many beneficiaries through Macheo. He adds that if it were not for Macheo's intervention, Shamila's children could have maybe joined street children or succumb to hunger.



**2018 financials**

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