



MOVING THE GOALPOSTS TUNAWEZA



Table of contents

01

INTRODUCTION

Why focus on the coast of Kenya?

Page 4

02

INTRODUCTION

What does football have to do with girls' empowerment?

Page 5

03

INTRODUCTION

Key strategies

Page 5

04

ACHIEVEMENTS

Awards

Page 6

05

ACHIEVEMENTS

Achievements

Page 6

06

ACHIEVEMENTS

Statistics

Page 7

07

PROGRAMS

Our programmatic scope

Pages 8-14

08

PARTNERS

Moving the goalposts with us

Page 15

09

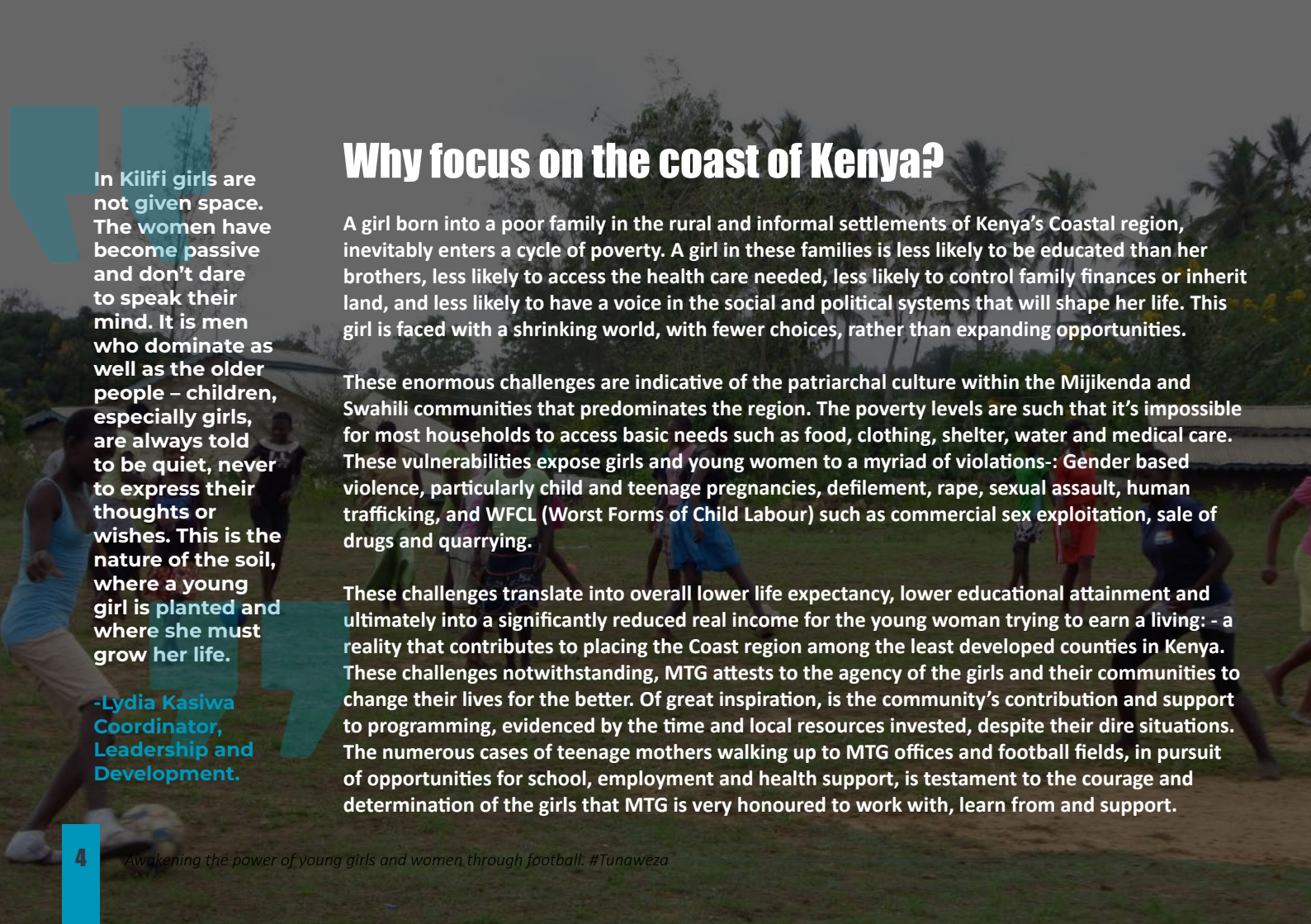
CONTACTS

Get in touch

Page 16



wakening the power of young girls and women through football. #Tunaweza



In Kilifi girls are not given space. The women have become passive and don't dare to speak their mind. It is men who dominate as well as the older people – children, especially girls, are always told to be quiet, never to express their thoughts or wishes. This is the nature of the soil, where a young girl is planted and where she must grow her life.

**-Lydia Kasiwa
Coordinator,
Leadership and
Development.**

Why focus on the coast of Kenya?

A girl born into a poor family in the rural and informal settlements of Kenya's Coastal region, inevitably enters a cycle of poverty. A girl in these families is less likely to be educated than her brothers, less likely to access the health care needed, less likely to control family finances or inherit land, and less likely to have a voice in the social and political systems that will shape her life. This girl is faced with a shrinking world, with fewer choices, rather than expanding opportunities.

These enormous challenges are indicative of the patriarchal culture within the Mijikenda and Swahili communities that predominates the region. The poverty levels are such that it's impossible for most households to access basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, water and medical care. These vulnerabilities expose girls and young women to a myriad of violations:- Gender based violence, particularly child and teenage pregnancies, defilement, rape, sexual assault, human trafficking, and WFCL (Worst Forms of Child Labour) such as commercial sex exploitation, sale of drugs and quarrying.

These challenges translate into overall lower life expectancy, lower educational attainment and ultimately into a significantly reduced real income for the young woman trying to earn a living: - a reality that contributes to placing the Coast region among the least developed counties in Kenya. These challenges notwithstanding, MTG attests to the agency of the girls and their communities to change their lives for the better. Of great inspiration, is the community's contribution and support to programming, evidenced by the time and local resources invested, despite their dire situations. The numerous cases of teenage mothers walking up to MTG offices and football fields, in pursuit of opportunities for school, employment and health support, is testament to the courage and determination of the girls that MTG is very honoured to work with, learn from and support.

What does Football have to do with Girl's empowerment?

MTG leverages the power of football to create safe spaces for peer learning. Girls aged between 9-25 years are registered annually to participate in football leagues that run between March and November. Once allocated to a particular field, football teams are formed according to the different age categories i.e. under 10, under 13 and open age (14-25 years). Thereafter, weekly football practice sessions and football leagues are carried out in the respective MTG community fields. MTG transforms these leagues into safe spaces where girls are equipped with knowledge, skills and opportunities to realize their potential.

Key strategies

- Football for social impact, through girl led leagues and tournaments.
- Peer education through child focused & youth friendly curriculums and tools
- Counselling.
- Child safeguarding.
- Grassroot community mobilization through parents' trainings, community awareness sessions and stakeholders' forums.
- Advocacy.
- Male engagement: involvement of young men in MTG programming.

Awakening the power of young girls and women through football. #Tunaweza

Awards

This unique model has been recognized home and away, including the East African Philanthropy Award-2012, Beyond Sport Award in Child Safeguarding-2015, Laureus Sport for Good Award -2016, Global Goals World Cup Champions -2017, runners up position for the FIFA Diversity award – 2018. In 2019, MTG was recognized among the leading NGOs applying innovative mechanisms towards gender equality in the Diversity and Inclusion Awards Kenya.

Achievements

During this strategic period, 2016-2019, MTG has made great strides in creating safe spaces for girls and young women to play football, take up leadership roles and have a voice in the society. Our girls are now characterized by their confidence, and ability to make sound decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive health. They are also well rounded, exhibiting improved educational performance and transition rates, while demonstrating leadership skills as coaches, first aiders, safe guards, referees, peer educators and field leaders. These skills affirm and sustain MTG's peer-led model, whereby the girls coordinate and run league activities both within and outside of MTG, as they occupy public spaces that were initially the preserve of boys and men.

An impact evaluation carried out by our partner Adidas in 2016 also revealed that MTG has been successful in improving its participants' personality and skills with 85% of girls demonstrating improved leadership skills and capacity to confidently speak and express their feelings and opinions in public. MTG has also gone an extra mile to nurture elite footballers through our MTG United team that has represented our organization and country in various national and international leagues and tournaments.

In ensuring that girls stay in school, scholarship support has been provided by MTG to deserving girls who drop out of school due to limited financial and material support available to them. Additionally, girls who are not in school have also been imparted with enterprise development support focusing on financial literacy, business development services (including mentorship) and linkage to micro-loans and savings through MTG livelihood program. This has resulted in 91% of MTG's out of school girls reporting confidence in their autonomy over decision making on their earnings.

Statistics



522

girls in scholarships



1187

mobile library users



37

savings groups



74

girls in business



23

internships & apprenticeships



29

employment opportunities



1749

leaders trained



7584

girls in football league matches



6548

girls in MTG-organized tournaments



4355

girls reached with SRHR annually



42158

contraceptives distributed



2568

girls receiving sanitary towels



Football

MTG runs a comprehensive football for girls' program in the Coast region that entails leagues and tournaments involving over 200 primary and secondary schools annually. The MTG United Team comprises of the elite players who participate in national and international matches, thereby positioning girls for professional football and expanding their career and livelihood pathways.

Health



MTG leverages football to equip girls with knowledge, skills, products and services to make informed decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive health. This is aimed at reducing teenage and unwanted pregnancies amongst young girls and thus positioning them to complete their primary and secondary education.



Education

The program aims at improving the education outcomes of girls and young women in Coastal region, by increasing opportunities for girls to enroll, remain in school and complete. This is realized through provision of scholarships, mobile libraries, mentorship and role modelling. Efforts towards policy change and implementation are through MTG's leadership in the Return to School Campaigns for teen mothers in primary and secondary schools in the Coast.

Livelihoods & Economic Empowerment



The program was introduced to assist young women in their pathway towards financial independence. MTG facilitates skills transfer in financial literacy and entrepreneurship, access to capital through savings groups and finance institutions, business mentorship and incubation services through MTG's Acceleration Center.

This is coupled with work readiness interventions that entail development of career pathways, role modelling and motivational talks for girls, linkages with Technical and vocational Institutions, internships and employment opportunities.



Young Men as Equal Partners (YMEP)

In expanding safe spaces for young women and girls in the community, MTG has intensified male engagement and is working actively with young boys and men as allies to influence norms, attitudes and behaviors towards promotion and respect of girls and women's rights. This is achieved through sensitization of boys and young men, male parents, local leaders and influential male leaders on gender, positive masculinity, responsible fatherhood and SRHR.

Safeguarding



At the heart of MTG programming, is child protection and safeguarding that is fully integrated in its entire operations to ensure safety to all beneficiaries while participating in MTG activities is guaranteed. MTG's comprehensive safeguarding system has been recognized in the invitation to participate in the development of international standards for Child Protection by UNICEF. MTG continues to be sought after to provide technical assistance for organizations seeking to integrate child protection in their programming, both nationally and internationally.



Leadership

Considering the patriarchal nature of the coastal community, leadership roles either social, economic or political are solely taken by males.

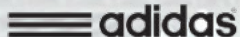
Our Leadership Programme is modelled around football as we believe sports has the power to transform and build leaders. Girls and young women learn by doing.

Girls and young women are provided potential space to pursue authority over particular social, economic and political relations.

Partners



COMMON
GOAL



Awakening the power of young girls and women through football. #Tunaweza

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