**Objective of the Intervention**

The objective is to promote awareness of welfare and the rights of children and young people in the five Yaaku villages - Bookish, Maraibenek, Kantana, Kuri Kuri and Seek – belonging to a marginalized minority tribe in the Yaaku community, Laikipia North Sub County, Kenya.

**Immediate objectives**

* By May 2021 the majority of 566 children and youths will have been empowered to develop their personal potentials and increase the awareness of their opportunities in life.
* By May 2021 it is expected that a child and youth protective environment will have been established in the villages, child and youth abuses reduced significantly and the rights of the child respected by local leaders and community members.

The intervention will take place in the Yaaku semi-pastoral community in a remote and poor part of Kenya, and it will focus on the importance of the wellbeing of children and youths.

**The problems to be solved are:**

* Living in a society with traditional norms and defined roles, children and youths do not get opportunities to evolve their full personal and social potentials in order to live in a modern world and obtain satisfactory lives while the essence of their culture is maintained.
* The rights of children and youths are not respected concerning sexual abuse, neglect , circumcision, the act of killing newborn babies born out of wedlock or uncircumcised girls, early marriages and the right to education and health care.

**The Minority Group of the Yaaku People** *-*The ethnic groups found in Kenya are 42 in number and they all speak different languages. The Yaaku community, which is not officially recognized as one of the 42 ethnic groups, lives as a sub-tribe of the Maasai people since they are few in number (only app. 4.000-) and marginalized. The main reason for their marginal status is that the Yaaku people lived in caves in the Mukogodo Forest west of Mount Kenya for many years practising hunting, beekeeping and gathering as their way of life until the first half of the 20th century when they assimilated into the Maasai way of life, i.e. livestock keeping and farming. The Government does not recognize them as an independent tribe in Kenya despite the fact that the Yaaku people have their own culture, social life and their traditional ways of commemorating the events of their culture.

According to the Baseline Study Report conducted by the Kenyan partner, the DCDC (the Destiny Child Development Center – see page 4) in cooperation with TAG (Touch and African Girl – see page 5) in the five Yaaku villages Bookish, Maraibenek, Kantana, Kuri Kuri and Seek on the 10th – 13th of January 2018, it appears that the Yaaku community is facing serious challenges which are a hindrance to the positive growth of their society. Poverty is a big problem in the area, and even though children have a fundamental right to education, there is a widespread lack of education among the Yaakus. There is only one school in the vicinity of the five villages, so many children do not attend school. Furthermore, there is a lack of health facilities and sanitation, poor living conditions, a high level of child abuse and a lack of qualified people to represent the community in the relevant Government ministries to advocate against these grievances. Especially children are vulnerable and victims of these conditions.

In 2014 the Kenyan Parliament adopted the Marriage Act which introduces a uniform minimum age of marriage set at 18 for both women and men, but still an estimated 23% of girls are married before their 18th birthday, and arranged marriages are still common in the Yaaku tribe.

Furthermore, genital mutilation is common today. Circumcision became illegal in Kenya in 2011, nevertheless 78 percent of the Yaaku (and Masai) females are circumcised today. Another problem is a high prevalence of HIV in Kenya.

When we, as members of SwB Denmark, visited the Yaaku tribe in 2018, we experienced how the Yaaku people still live in isolated areas, remote from civilization with the consequences that might follow: ignorance, illiteracy, oppressive cultural traditions, prejudices, gender related traditions and inequality etc. We also interviewed some Yaaku women who emphasized the need for investment in the children’s and young people’s lives and wellbeing to make them aware of their rights and give them better opportunities in life. Utilizing these resources would improve the quality of life for the whole Yaaku tribe and preserve relevant aspects of their cultural identity. The women also emphasized the need for stopping circumcision of girls.

Some of the Yaaku people try to preserve their culture even though it is difficult since it seems that even the Yaaku language is facing extinction. For decades the Yaaku people have been trying to put pressure on the Government through the Media to recognize them as an independent tribe in Kenya, but this has turned out to be a waste of time since nothing whatsoever has happened, and no one wants to hear about the Yaaku. The main reason for this is that the Yaaku community lacks qualified people to push these issues in the Government. As a matter of fact, the community has only one university graduate and less than 50 high school graduates. Therefore, when it comes to the matter of technical and professional expert knowledge, the Yaaku do not have the capacity to carry out these tasks, as education has been neglected for a long time, which has led to poor leadership in the community.

Geographically, the Yaaku villages are found in the most interior parts of the Mukogodo forest, the second largest forest in Kenya, which is one of the major reasons why the Yaaku community has been sidelined by the Government for many years. The roads to most of these villages are impassable by car for most of the year, and some of them can only be reached by walking through the deep forest. Therefore, most of the Yaaku people do not receive the Government services stipulated in the Kenyan Constitution. The Yaaku people are not aware of how to advocate for their rights. Even though the Kenyan Government has signed the ‘United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child’, this international agreement remains unknown to many Yaaku members, since there are no efforts made to inform them of the Rights of the Child as found in the Kenyan Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**Contribution of the intervention in favor of the citizen participation**

It is to be expected that the intervention will create awareness of the positive consequences of implementing the Rights of the Child and thereby secure a better future for children and youths among the Yaaku tribe. Significantly, a specific emphasis will be on the role of the community to ensure that children are not being molested or denied their rights, and on reporting the child abuse cases that may arise to the relevant authorities for the law to take its cause.

Common assembly places will be established in “tents” (pavilions or sites covered with tarpaulin) in each village for the DCDC volunteers to conduct activities with the children in. It is expected that the training and recruitment of more volunteers to join the DCDC will strengthen the participation of the community members, hence create more awareness and promote and safeguard the rights of the child. The participation of several youths, girls as well as boys, in the project activities is expected to bring a positive message to the community elders to make them see that all children - independent of gender - are equal and capable of leading and of taking responsibility.

It is to be expected that the children and youths will be informed about their rights and the procedures of how to contact the appropriate Government offices (e.g. the nearest police station) whenever their rights have been are violated.The DCDC, however, is committed to ensure that all stakeholders and participants in the intervention will act together to support the child in making such contacts and thereby strengthen the citizen participation.

It is the partner’s intention that the intervention will be a spearhead for the involvement of community leaders, elders and community members as a whole in the development of a child friendly environment and that this will spread to the neighboring villages.

Each member of the Danish project group of SwB is obliged to share their experiences with relevant networks like organizations working with orphans and other groups of poor and vulnerable children in Africa, Asia and South America, and engage other SwB members in information- and fundraising activities through e.g. SwB-Update.

1. **Partnership and partners**

The local organization, the Destiny Child Development Center (DCDC), was started in 2012 and is registered as a Community Based Organization (CBO) in the Laikipia North Sub County covering 13 villages of a minority group of people known as the Yaaku in Kenya. The formation of the organization was an effort engaged by 13 people all working with orphans and other vulnerable children and adolescents in the villages when they saw the need for an organization and then established the DCDC. With the help of the local community leaders and the area administration officer (Chief) and the staff from the local health clinic among others, the organization registered 167 orphans, vulnerable children and adolescents in the villages.

The focal point of the Destiny Child Development Center is to support the children and the youths in this community, to give them access to education so that they may bridge the gap between the community and the authorities and claim their rights in the future.

More so, the DCDC, is working closely with the local leaders trying to raise the awareness of good management and of the available local resources for the betterment of the larger community.

For the last seven years, the DCDC has been engaged in different activities for the children in the area, such as gathering them at the Dol Dol Baptist Church for feeding programs, psycho social activities, games, sports etc. The volunteers are responsible for bringing the children from the villages to the Dol Dol trading centre on Saturdays and Sundays for these activities. There is always a risk of wild animals like elephants in the area, so the children are advised against travelling by themselves. The organization works to ensure that the children in this marginalized community of the Yaaku people have an opportunity to build up their early lives through socializing with others, sharing ideas, storytelling and games, which helps them to feel more secure and appreciated.

In 2013 the DCDC conducted several meetings with the local community leadership to discuss the possibilities of mobilizing the available local resources to benefit the poor children by enrolling them in schools. It was a huge task to convince the elders in this community to understand the importance of education. Therefore, the DCDC played a major role in bringing all the stakeholders to the meeting, making them collaborate in ensuring that children are going to school instead of staying at home to look after the animals. Six months later, there was a campaign conducted by the DCDC, community leadership and the Chiefs in the 13 villages to make the parents send the children to school. The DCDC managed to get community support to help 60 children from five different villages to meet education. These children are now enrolled in Kuri Kuri Primary and Dol Dol Primary schools.

The DCDC has - through advocacy activities and cooperation with local authorities - managed to open a nursery school in Dol Dol. The school opened in January 2019 with 20 children.

The Chairman of the DCDC met with two of the SwB members in Nanyuki Kenya in 2013 when they discussed the young organization and the vision of working with the children and the young people of the Yaaku community. The SwB members have since visited Dol Dol several times to see the actual reality of the work implemented by the DCDC. They visited some of the villages and the center where the children are gathered on Saturdays in Dol Dol. Through this cooperation with SwB, the Chairman of the DCDC was invited to attend a three-month course in Denmark at the Diaconal College of Aarhus, where he studied a Certificate Course - Church Based Development Work.

The SwB project group consists of five members and they all have relevant education and experience from working in Kenya and other parts of East- and Central Africa. One of the members has been involved in the designing, planning and implementation a project for orphans and children/youths living with HIV for several years.

The SwB project group will contribute with its experience from the implementation of psycho social projects in Uganda and Zimbabwe, with guidance and supervision, as well as with monitoring. SwB will have the overall responsibility for the implementation of the project activities and reporting to CISU.

TAG –Kenya (Touch an African Girl, Kenya) is not as such a direct partner in this project, but the DCDC partnered with TAG in the previous partnership intervention for the DCDC organizational capacity building program, and in this intervention TAG is involved in the training of the DCDC participants. It is also significant that TAG Kenya is an NGO championing for girl child rights in the Samburu community, which has a similar culture and way of life as the Yaaku. The DCDC´s networking with TAG Kenya is significant, and the expertise needed in capacity building training for the local leadership of the Yaaku community will be possible due to this cooperation.

**Previous cooperation:**

From 1st February 2017 to 1st May 2018 the partners implemented a Partnership Intervention: Development of DCDC’s organizational Capacity. The baseline study carried out in that project has formed the basic information for designing this application. Partly in describing the target group(s) and identifying the problems the children and youths are facing. The overall experiences from the previous partnership intervention will be used in this project to design activities in the villages, the training in advocacy and child rights for the DCDC Board members, volunteers and local leaders.

The previous partnership intervention also empowered the DCDC board and a number of volunteers in running an organization, planning and implementation of activities, the roles of board members and volunteers etc. Furthermore, a stronger bonding between volunteers and board was an effect of the intervention.

**Contribution and roles:**

The DCDC will contribute with their knowledge of the structures of the local communities, the culture of the Yaaku people and the cooperation with local departments. Furthermore, the DCDC Board members and volunteers will contribute with their experience in implementing activities for children and youths in the villages.

The DCDC will have the overall responsibility for implementing the designed activities, accounting and the use of funds.

The SwB project group will contribute with its experience from the implementation of psycho social projects in Uganda and Zimbabwe, with guidance and supervision, as well as with monitoring. SwB will have the overall responsibility for the implementation of the project activities and reporting to CISU.

It is expected that the Citizen Participation Intervention will strengthen the already positive relationship between the partners through the visits by SwB-volunteers to the DCDC and the ongoing communication regarding reporting.

It is expected that the partners will cooperate on similar projects in the remaining Yaaku villages using the experiences gained in this intervention period.

1. **The actual intervention**

**Primary target group**

**Total: 566.**

1) Children in the age group 4-14 years: Male 124 – female 119 (orphans 60 – vulnerable 207) Youth/adolescents in the age group 14-18 years. Male 189 – female 134 (orphans 134 – vulnerable 167).

The target group was identified as a result of the baseline study conducted by the DCDC in cooperation with TAG, i.e.: children at risk due to lack of education, neglect, family conditions, gender related traditional customs, violence, poverty etc.

2) Ten village elders and five local leaders selected by the board to participate and supervise the project. It is important to ensure that there is an equal number of male and female members and an equal number of elders and leaders from the five villages.

**Secondary target group**

1. Government Departments such as Laikipia County Children Officer, Sub County Director of Education (Laikipia North), Sub County Health Department (Laikipia North), Ministry of Youths and Sports (Laikipia North).

The above Government ministries are all at sub county level and are relevant for the DCDC in order to start approaching the Government from grass root level. Contacts to these institutions were established in the previous project, and the cooperation was positive. The engagement and participation of the representatives from these ministries in some of the training and in meetings with community members will eventually pave the way for the DCDC and the Yaaku community to advocate for the neglected children in the community.

**Strategy**

The intervention corresponds with the development triangle as it consists of **capacity building, advocacy and services delivery.**

**As capacity building** was started in the previous project, this project intends to continue the positive experiences from this such as training duty bearers and community leaders in children’s rights with the focus on provision of vital necessities, protection and participation in community life.

Because the local communities have an important influence on the psychological well-being of the children, 10 village representatives (elders), five local leaders (Government officials i.e. Chiefs, Community land officials and Primary school head teachers) will be trained in basic child right related issues.

Twenty volunteers (two men and two women from each village) will be trained in psycho social support and activities by an organization working with psycho social activities for children and youths.

The trained volunteers will train four other volunteers from each village in basic psycho social work. All volunteers will be trained in basic skills required to deal with psychological issues for example: good and non-judgemental listening skills, a caring attitude, how to identify and respond to the children’s basic needs congruent with local cultural practices and understandings and in selecting and directing relevant psycho social activities for the children.

The DCDC will select 24 youths and 10 village elders to be informed of the effect of primitive traditional practices such as female genital mutilation and other forms of antisocial behaviors in order to disseminate their skills and teach other community members.

In this intervention the psycho social method and activities will play the core role in the empowerment of children and youths. SwB’s partners in Uganda (CFOU) and Zimbabwe (CARC) have developed a method that has shown great effect in empowering vulnerable children and youths and evolved their personal and social potentials. Both organizations have produced written materials describing this psychosocial method that will be used by the DCDC.

The psycho social approach will be applied because it focuses on the combined influence that psychological factors (psycho: mind, brain, personality) and the surrounding social environment (social: external relationships and the environment) have on the individual. Through psycho social activities the participants are expected to develop psycho social skills for example: ability to deal with reactions, awareness of personal identity, self-esteem, communication skills, ability to make choices for themselves, awareness of gender related cultural traditions, social competence, motivation for education etc.

As for **advocacy***,* the DCDC will organize meetings and dialogues between community leaders and all the relevant duty bearers and stakeholders to address the fundamental issues that affect the children in the villages, especially on educational matters. These meetings will enable the Yaaku leaders to meet face to face with the Government officials in their villages, so that they may see the actual reality of the situation the children are facing. The presence of various departmental heads in the villages may prove promising, as the DCDC - in collaboration with community leaders - may wish to approach the Government to consider the establishment of nursery schools in those villages.

By involving the local Yaaku community members the sustainability aspect will be strengthened because of their achieved awareness of the negative elements in their current attitude and norms regarding the rights of the child. Consequently, they will support children, families and neighbors through a variety of channels including the media, religious organizations, existing community structures and youth groups.

As for **services delivered** a common assembly place will be established in each village, and tents (pavilions or tarpaulins) will be supplied for the activities - such as psycho social activities and/or semi-counseling for the children - to take place in.

The DCDC board and volunteers will take responsibility for the implementation of the activities in the villages, arranging meetings with stakeholders and the dialogue with the authorities. The inclusion of the youths as the primary target group is aimed at enlightening and motivating them to become the agents of change in restoring the hope for the future for the marginalized Yaaku community.

It is to be expected that the inclusion of girls in the training schemes will have a great impact on the girl child´s social life in the villages, as they will be taught the basic skills in resisting and reacting against the outdated practices of FGM in their respective villages and how to report such cases to the authorities.

The project will train more volunteers and members from the identified villages to join the DCDC and to form youth groups/clubs, which again will work under the DCDC as the agents of change in their villages. The vision of eventually reaching out to all the 13 villages of the Yaaku community is the hope of the project.

**Step by step what is going to happen**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Regarding objectives |  Activities | Expected outcome | Budget numbers | Timetable |
| Objective 1By May 2021 the majority of 566 children and youths will have been empowered, their personal potentials evolved and the awareness of their opportunities in life increased. | 1.1. DCDC board/volunteers and SwB planning meeting Formulation of a detailed plan for the entire project.1.1. Introduction of the children activities in each village. DCDC board, volunteers, community members and SuG representatives will be present for start -up meeting and introduction of the 20 volunteers, who will be responsible in conducting the activities with children in each village. The activities will take place every weekend for the entire project period.1.2. 10 DCDC volunteers to be trained as trainers of trainees (TOT) in psychosocial methods. Training is carried out by a relevant organization selected by the partners.1.2. Four volunteers in each village (20) to be trained in psychosocial methods by DCDC (TOT) volunteers who are trained on Psycho social methods1.3. Psycho-social activities in 5 villages every second week - starting when the training of the volunteers is completed.566 children join. The activities include social games and individual counseling.1.3 Exchange visits by the children and youths to each village. DCDC volunteers will organize soccer games, talent shows, competitions and athletics in each village. Community members will be invited in each village to participate and cheer on their children as they do the activities. The visits will take place 5 times for the entire project period.1.4. Training on the effects of harmful traditional practices like FGM (Female circumcision) and early marriage will be conducted through e.g. drama for community members and 24 youths (12 men 12 women) and 10 village elders (2 men 2 women in each village). The trainings will be facilitated by 2 health officers (Dol Dol sub-county Hospital).1.5 The 10 DCDC volunteers and the 20 village volunteers to be trained on child right with focus on provision, protection and participation. The trainings will be carried out by TAG Kenya | 1.1.1 Common agreement on project activities and timetable1.1.2. Everyone who works in the project has got a common understanding of the project's objectives and means.1.2.1. 10 Volunteers are able to use psycho-social methods working with the children1.2.2. They practice psycho social methods when working with the children.1.3.1 The children and youths have gained higher self-esteem and knowledge of their human rights1.3.2. Strengthening of group membership and acceptance by the elderly.1.4.1. Will start a process to stop female circumcision.1.5.1 The rights of children and youths have been improved. | 1.11.11.21.21.31.31.41.5 | June2019June2019July2029August2019 andhence-forwardsDecember2019October/November2019Sept.2019  |
| **Objective 2**By May 2021 a child and youth protective environment will have been established in the villages and child and youth abuses reduced significantly and the rights of the child respected by local leaders and community members. | 1.6. Dialogue with the authority in the villages. 4 Departmental head, 15 local leaders and 7 DCDC Board members. The Government officials will visit the 5 villages to see the actual reality of the violation of child right and other injustices. The dialogue in the villages will be between the local leaders and the duty bearers (Government officials)1.7 DCDC will organize for training sessions for 5 local leaders and 10 village elders, at Dol Dol Baptist hall. The trainings will be aimed at familiarizing the participants with basic knowledge on child right issues and basic advocacy skills. TAG Kenya will facilitate the sessions.1.7 DCDC will organize for stakeholders’ trainings sessions on child rights for Government departmental heads at the sub county level, 15 local leaders and 7 DCDC board members. TAG Kenya will facilitate the sessions.1.8 DCDC and SwB members visit the 5 villages for monitoring and evaluation and they meet at Dol Dol Baptist hall to prepare the final report.1.8 DCDC board and 2 SwB members meet for 1 day at Baptist Hall to close the project. | 1.6.1 a common understanding of the situation in the villages is established1.7.1. Equip the participants to take up advocacy activities on child rights1.7.2 Equip the participants to take up advocacy activities on child rights1.8.1 Submitting the final report1.8.2 Submitting the final report | 1.61.71.71.81.8 | Nov.2019January2021May2021April2021 |

**The plans with regard to systematizing and using experience both along the way and at the end of the intervention:**

Formats for the volunteers to write monthly reports to the DCDC Board and for the DCDC’s quarterly reports to SwB will be worked out by the partners at the starting up workshop.

For the reports from each village, a format will be worked out to form the basis for accurate submission of reports to SwB.

After the first year of implementation, SwB will visit the project to monitor the intervention activities and the partners will draft the report and activity plan for the remaining intervention period. By the end of the intervention an evaluation will be carried out.

The experience and learning gained will be used in designing an intervention with the aim to reach out to more Yaaku villages.

**Tangible changes which the intervention is expected to contribute**

For the very first time in the history of the Yaaku people, 566 children/youths and a number of community leaders and members have an opportunity to be trained in various issues that will affect them as a society. The knowledge imparted to the participants will contribute tremendously to a positive cultural awareness and understanding of the modern world among the youths and children who are the hope and future of the Yaaku community.

The duty bearers and the local leaders will have been trained in the constitutional provisions on the rights of children, the UN convention on the rights of the child. It is expected that both the duty bearers and the local leaders will start to work in unity to ensure that the rights of the Yaaku children e.g. the right to education and good health are adhered to by pressing the relevant bodies to work for it.

It is expected that - in all the five villages - the self-esteem of the primary target group (the children/youths), will be developed through the various activities and that they will start to view the world from a different perspective.

It is expected that - through training and the meetings with Government officials and other stakeholders - the Yaaku community leaders will address the Government with matters related to the rights of the child, lack of education and other areas that they feel have been neglected them for a very long time. The intervention will encourage the Yaakus to have dialogues face to face with the duty bearers (Government officials) and the community leaders.

The DCDC’s organizational sustainability will hopefully be obtained by building the capacities of volunteers in the five villages and their involvement in the activities.

Awareness raising and training activities involving the duty bearers and village leaders will also secure the DCDC organizational sustainability and legitimacy.

Through capacity training the DCDC Board has already shown the ability to obtain small financial funding for activities and through advocacy and cooperation with local government departments a nursing school has been established caring for a small number of the children in the area where the DCDC operates and consequently we expect this to continue.