

**Educating the Forgotten:  
Non-Formal Education in Urban Kampala**

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**Dedication**

This project is dedicated to the staff and children of the Bridge Project in the South Lincoln neighborhood of Denver, Colorado. The incredible people of the Bridge Project were the first to inspire me to work with children and youth in low income areas to use education to lead more fulfilling lives.

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## **Abstract**

During the practicum period, the student researcher interned at MYDEL to gain a better understanding of the challenges and successes of the non-formal education (NFE) sector in urban Kampala, and in particular the Kisenyi neighborhood of Mengo. In the slum areas of Mengo, many children and youth are unable to afford school fees and thus are more susceptible to turn to a street life, which entails the following: extreme poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS, young marriage, early childbirth, rape, or sexual abuse. MYDEL as an organization works to combat this cycle by instructing the children and youth of Mengo in basic academic courses and vocational training.

Through teaching in the functional literacy classroom for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and through interacting with the youth in vocational training, the researcher developed an insight into the reasons why these members of society are pushed away from formal education. In addition to participant observations and informal interviews, the researcher conducted formal interviews through home and community visits in Kisenyi and with the KCC coordinator for Basic Education for Urban Poverty Areas (BEUPA). The researcher also utilized literature relating to formal and NFE in Uganda from the SIT Resource Center and from the internet.

Individuals and families in Mengo are barely able or unable to meet their basic needs of food, shelter, and clothing. Due to these pressing concerns, education of children and youth is often not a monetary priority for families. Programs such as MYDEL and BEUPA work to combat the educational inequalities children in the Kampala slums by offering basic classes and by attempting to find sponsors for children to be able to attend Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools. Both the staff of MYDEL and Kisenyi community members recognizes the importance of educating the children and the youth, but the success of NFE continues to be obstructed by inefficient and inconsistent classes, lack of financial and academic resources, and physical and emotional health problems of the community.

In attempting to implement NFE in Kisenyi, MYDEL encounters these and other challenges. Slum life is not conducive to consistent and productive academic and vocational classes. MYDEL counters these obstacles by providing for more than basic

education with the sports, HIV/AIDS, counseling and other programs. The human being has needs outside of mere survival; though NFE does not transform the lives of its participants, it at least attempts to make amends for the injustices of birth and situation.

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## **Introduction**

Since the introduction of UPE in Uganda in 1997, many Ugandan children and youth have become a part of the formal education structure. For those living in the most extreme urban poverty, however, school fees are a major obstacle in accessing education. According to an *NTV Tonight* report from 20 November, 2008 on increasing poverty in Kampala slums, 47% of the income of a family living in Kisenyi goes directly to providing food (*NTV Tonight* 20/11/2008). With the remaining 53% of the initial meager amount, the family has to pay for rent, transportation, clothing and other basics before considering school fees. As a result, many children do not attend formal school and simply grow up on the streets where they are exposed to drugs, alcohol, and early sexual encounters. This endemic cycle of poverty results in increased drug and alcohol abuse, HIV/AIDS prevalence, and orphaned children.

During the practicum period of SIT's Uganda: Development Studies Program, the researcher worked and taught in Kisenyi at MYDEL. MYDEL was founded by Pascal Lutaya in 2000 to provide an opportunity for the youth and children of Kisenyi to achieve more than a street upbringing. The organization focuses on functional literacy for OVC and vocational training for the older youth, in addition to other activities, as a means to improve the lives of community members.

The research on the NFE sector in urban Kampala was completed primarily at MYDEL through teaching in the functional literacy classroom and interacting with members of the vocational training program. Home visits and walks throughout Kisenyi provided invaluable background information to how people live and survive in the slums. Spending time in the slums allowed the researcher to develop a greater understanding of the complexity and multiplicity of challenges its inhabitants face. Overall, this study sets out to evaluate alternative education programs to formal schooling in urban Kampala slums and to identify the causes for the lack of accessible formal education.

## **Background**

This study focuses on the NFE sector in Kampala. As proscribed by both international human rights documents and the 1995 Uganda Constitution, all persons have a right to an education. Under President Y.K. Museveni, UPE was instituted to provide for this right. UPE, however, fails to account for all of Uganda's youth, and in particular, the urban poor OVC. This section of the report will then provide background information on the right to an education, the traditional Ugandan education system, UPE, and NFE in addition to basic information on Mengo-Kisenyi, BEUPA, and MYDEL.

### *The Right to an Education*

The right to an education for all human beings is mentioned as a natural and unalienable right in numerous human rights documents. In particular, international documents created since Ugandan independence focus on the importance of education to a country's development and to an individual's well-being. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights in Article 17 states explicitly, "Every individual shall have the right to an education" (African Charter). The Charter does not specify the type of education, formal or non-formal, but nevertheless unequivocally affirms that every child and person deserves to be educated, regardless of financial situation or family status.

Other internationally recognized human rights documents, including the Dakar Framework for Action following the 2000 World Education Forum, likewise prioritize education as a human right. The Framework describes the role of education as being "key to sustainable development and peace and stability within and among countries, and this is an indispensable means for effective participating in the societies and economies of the twenty-first century" (Dakar Framework). This particular document deals solely with education and mentions in particular the importance of life skills lessons, including the rights to learn work-related skills and health matters, including HIV/AIDS sensitization.

Specifically in Uganda, the right to an education is theoretically protected by the 1995 Uganda Constitution. Under the Social and Economic Objectives section, the following notices exist: "[i] The State shall promote free and compulsory basic education; [ii] The State shall take appropriate measures to afford every citizen equal opportunity to achieve the highest educational standard possible" (1995 Uganda Constitution). The Constitution itself states "All persons have a right to education," and later expands on this

statement with “A child is entitled to basic education which shall be the responsibility of the State and the parents of the child” (1995 Uganda Constitution).

Even though the Constitution also proclaims, “The law shall accord special protection to orphans and other vulnerable children,” OVC do not have the support of parents and other family members to partner with the State in order to achieve even a basic education. These marginalized members of society thus comprise the “forgotten majority” of the urban poor whose rights are unprotected by current policies and institutions.

### *The Ugandan Education System*

The traditional Ugandan education system is comprised of three levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary. Each primary and secondary school year consists of three terms. Prior to primary, students may complete a nursery level, usually between the ages of four and six. Primary school consists of seven levels, the culmination of which is the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) following the third term of Primary 7 (P7). Secondary school consists of either four or six levels. Upon completion of Secondary 4 (S4), students take Ordinary (“O”) level examinations. Students can return to complete two additional years of school for Advanced (“A”) level examinations. Students who have completed this level may go on to university or other tertiary institutions (Informal Interview A).

### *Universal Primary Education (UPE)*

On January 1, 1997, President Museveni announced the implementation of UPE in Uganda. UPE began with the intention of providing at least four children in every family with a subsidized primary education, but in 2002 the program expanded to include all Ugandan youth (Deininger 7). Special emphasis was placed on recruiting girls and children with disabilities to attend school. Uganda’s implementation of UPE thus preceded the introduction of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) in September 2000, which emphasize that primary education will play a crucial role in the Campaign to End Poverty by 2015 (United Nations MDG Fact Sheet).

Prior to UPE, there were gross disparities in the acquisition of primary education based on gender, income, and region (Deininger 10). Enrollment in schools has increased



substantially, especially for girl children and children with disabilities. Due to the rapid high enrollment, many schools have been unable to cope with enlarged classes. Teacher and classroom shortages force students to learn outdoors in classes usually of more than one hundred students with only a single teacher (Ndeezi 1).

While the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) provides curriculum, teacher training and salaries, and facility construction, parents of students must supply food, school, uniforms, and exercise books (Ndeezi 1). Though school fees for primary education have decreased drastically, some children, especially OVC, cannot afford these small monies and thus do not attend formal education despite UPE.

#### *Non-Formal Education (NFE)*

NFE organizations are allowed for under the Uganda Constitution as long as “they comply with the general educational policy of the country and maintain national standards” (1995 Uganda Constitution). In Uganda NFE initiatives are intended for areas in which UPE cannot yet reach because of socioeconomic or environmental reasons. NFE aims to provide Complementary Basic Education (CBE) for those who are unable to be served by the formal education system, including drop outs and over-age children (UNESCO Education Report).

NFE programs adapt to their community and environment for disadvantaged learners in a selected area. The curriculum is condensed and adapted to select subjects using local teachers. Other important information, including life skills and health information may be presented in conjunction with the academic subjects. Each NFE program is then responsible for its own management, application and philosophy (UNESCO Education Report).

NFE entails schools and other programs which do not require any form of payment for services and exist outside the traditional educational structures. NFE is usually promoted for the most marginalized members of society by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), religious organizations, and individual efforts. These marginalized members cannot attend formal educational establishments primarily because of monetary concerns.

Currently, NFE is considered complementary to UPE. Students in NFE programs can be considered recipients of UPE in terms of achieving the MDG (Interview with

Kakembo). Though NFE was originally conceived in the hopes of being phased out by UPE and formal education, in all likelihood, the NFE sector will continue to exist and remain necessary for the urban poor in Kampala for an extended period of time.

### *Kisenyi*

Kisenyi is an area located in the Mengo Parish of urban Kampala. Mengo is considered to be one of the most impoverished areas of Kampala and has high rates of HIV/AIDS infection and drug and alcohol abuse. In Kisenyi there is little opportunity for employment leading to many additional problems, including high crime rates and low personal motivation (Interview with Lutaya).

Of the families living in Kisenyi, many are headed by women, often widowed. These women are at a significant disadvantage due to their lack of education and inability to work and support their families. Girl children and youth also face additional hardships growing up in the slums. In Kisenyi there are higher incidences of rape and sexual harassment, in addition to widespread early marriage and pregnancies as well as the sugar daddy culture (Interview with Lutaya).

In addition to the many native Ugandans living in Mengo, the area is home to many refugees, particularly from Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Rwanda. At times these foreigners cause disruption to the native population through displacement. Refugees may come in and offer to pay rent for three years in advance, thereby motivating the landlords to vacate areas occupied by monthly inhabitants (Home Visit B).

In these slum areas, many people inhabit a small area. This rampant overcrowding leads to many health concerns. A plethora of garbage and human waste in the immediate living areas contribute to poor water sanitation in addition to a host of other diseases. Access to food also poses a significant problem to these urban poor. Unlike in rural areas, urban residents cannot simply dig on a daily basis to feed their families and as a result, many children are susceptible to malnourishment (Interview with Kakembo).

HIV/AIDS poses a significant problem in Kisenyi. Not only do those persons infected often lack anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment, but they are also unable to have their children tested for HIV because of transportation or medical costs. Many children become orphans because of HIV/AIDS. United Nations International Children's Fund

(UNICEF) estimates that of the two million orphans in Uganda, nearly half of them were orphaned from HIV/AIDS (UNICEF Uganda Background).

Education in the Kisenyi slum is primarily through UPE schools or MYDEL. Children who cannot afford UPE fees and who do not choose to attend MYDEL programs often do not receive any education. The money required to attend formal schools is not available in light of the above mentioned obstacles facing those living in Kisenyi.

#### *Basic Education for Urban Poverty Areas (BEUPA)*

BEUPA began in 1997 following the implementation of UPE. KCC recognized that the urban poor children were being left behind despite the newly established national education policy. With funding from the German government, BEUPA created a curriculum for NFE learning centers as well as a training program for teachers. For a period of time, BEUPA was under the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) leadership but in 2008 returned to KCC jurisdiction (Ilon 8). BEUPA is one branch of several Ugandan initiatives comprising CBE but is the only CBE program taking place in Kampala. (Ilon 11).

BEUPA faced many challenges in its initial years including finding and creating the learning centers and paying teachers. Students in the BEUPA centers spend only a few hours each morning in the classroom, as compared to students in UPE schools who attend a full day of classes (Interview with Kakembo). Many of the students have significant health problems for which they do not receive proper medical attention, thereby inhibiting their academic pursuits. The students also do not receive proper nutrition, which corresponds to lack of attention during class.

Reaching out to girl children also proved to be difficult, as many girls would marry and begin producing children at a young age. Older girl orphans may also care for many of their younger siblings and thus do not have the time or inclination to achieve even a minimal education.

BEUPA is currently stalled in its efforts due to lack of funding and lack of resources. As the program cannot offer monetary support to MYDEL at this time, KCC protects MYDEL's classroom from being demolished. The program hopes to improve its curriculum and outreach and begin promoting more vocational training programs,

especially the proposed Development of Vocational Skills for Urban Poor Areas (DVSUPA), even though it would be an expensive initiative.

*Mengo Youth Development Link (MYDEL)*

MYDEL was founded by Mr. Pascal Lutaya in 2000. As a lifelong resident of Kisenyi and as a researcher for the Kampala mayor on drug abuse in the slums, Mr. Lutaya was motivated to form an organization which could provide youth with alternatives to street life. Initially MYDEL focused solely on youth programs including Music, Dance and Drama (MDD), sports activities, and vocational training, but expanded into working with OVC in functional literacy and community-wide betterment initiatives. MYDEL chose to work with the OVC as a means to combat later problems these children might face as youth (Interview with Lutaya).

MYDEL currently hosts a variety of programs including the functional literacy classes for the OVC, vocational training (paper bead making, woodcarving, and tailoring classes) for the youth, microfinance women's group, MDD, football and baseball programs, girl child empowerment, HIV/AIDS sensitization, and individual counseling. The organization also tries to provide basic necessities (food, clothing, soap, etc.) to its families and especially to the grandmothers caring for multiple children.

Though associated with BEUPA, MYDEL receives most of its funding from outside sources and relies heavily on volunteers and in-kind donations. MYDEL receives program support from different Ugandan and international organizations for its sports and vocational training programs. Currently MYDEL sponsors and finds sponsors for area children to attend local UPE schools but the organization is hoping to form a boarding school outside of the city for its youth (Interview with Lutaya).

## **Justification**

UPE was formulated with the intention to provide all citizens with a basic knowledge of language, letters, and numbers. Yet in the Kisenyi slum of Kampala, most of the children and youth cannot even afford to pay the subsidized school fees to attend UPE schools. This “forgotten majority” is thus deprived of their right to education which is the responsibility of the Government of Uganda (GoU) ([beupa-ug.org](http://beupa-ug.org)). A basic primary education would provide these youth with some skills to lift themselves, their families, and their communities out of extreme poverty. Lack of an education sets a child up for a difficult, unhealthy lifestyle on the streets, where exposure to drugs, alcohol, and sex can lead to abuse, early pregnancies, and HIV/AIDS, among other problems.

Recognizing this educational deficiency in the poorest areas of Kampala, KCC established BEUPA in 1997. MYDEL was one of the original seventy-two learning centers for this initiative. Though BEUPA has recently switched management from the MoES and returned to KCC, the initiative has lost most of its international and domestic government funding and is unable to provide much continuing support to the remaining learning centers. BEUPA was set up with the intention of being a complementary program to UPE, but for a variety of reasons, is currently unable to expand its programs in Kampala parishes and throughout Uganda as a whole.

Though primary education is nominally provided for by UPE, a significant population within Uganda’s capital is not accessing this right. Without an education, people in the Kampala slums will continue endlessly in the cycle of poverty and the additional problems that accompany extreme urban poverty, including HIV/AIDS, malnutrition, gender-based violence (GBV), etc. While much research has been done on both the failures and successes of UPE, one can find only very little academic literature regarding the alternative education approaches for those marginalized by UPE. Reviewing the successes, failures, and obstacles of non-formal education will provide organizations such as MYDEL to increase their effectiveness in combating the crucial problem of poor education in the urban slums.

The word and the process of development presuppose the improvement of one’s life to a higher or better state. Though the application and direction of development in Uganda is subject to differing opinions and worldviews, the inequality of educational

opportunities faced by children living in Kampala slums is undeniable. A country, a society, a community, a family, and an individual will never be able to progress without a basic education. In order for the people of Mengo to live more fulfilling lives, the educational policies and practices of NFE must be studied and must be improved.

### **Objectives**

The research conducted during the practicum period focused on the NFE sector in urban Kampala and specifically in the Mengo-Kisenyi slums. The main objectives of the project were to:

- To learn about what constitutes a slum and slum life in urban Kampala.
- To discover what Kisenyi residents believe are their greatest challenges in accessing education.
- To analyze the feasibility and success of the NFE sector in improving the lives of children and youth in the Mengo slums.

## **Methodology**

Research was conducted during a five-week internship with MYDEL during the months of October and November 2008. During the internship, the researcher worked in the classroom and on the sports field with the OVC and conducted interviews and home visits to youth, grandmothers, widows, and other community members. Due to the nature of the research objectives, the researcher used mainly qualitative methods to gather data regarding non-formal education in urban Kampala. Literature review provided background information on UPE, NFE, and other pertinent topics to life in Kampala slums.

Pseudonyms will be used for persons interviewed except in the cases of Mr. Pascal Lutaya of MYDEL and Mrs. Hannah Kakembo of BEUPA. These individuals granted permission for their names to be used in research.

### *Participant Observation*

Throughout the five-week internship, the researcher interacted with the OVC in the functional literacy class. The class was located across from the MYDEL offices in a poorly constructed wood building adjacent to an outdoor metal refinery. The class consisted of between seventy to eighty students, dependent on the day, ranging in age from three years to fourteen years. In addition to the wide age variance, the academic capabilities of the students covered the spectrum from no ability to read or write to the ability to comprehend simple passages in English.

During this time, the researcher was able to experience the challenges of teaching and controlling so many students of different abilities and ages as well as interact and make connections to some of the children. Most of the students have only a low or minimal grasp on the English language, so often the researcher would communicate to the Congolese refugee students in French who would then translate into Luganda or Kiswahili or she would rely on a few of the older students who were proficient English speakers to aid her in the classroom.

Though she mainly focused on working with the older students in Primary 3 (P3) and Primary 4 (P4), she also spent time teaching the baby class and the younger primary levels. She was expected to teach and give the children assignments in a variety of subjects including English, Math, Science, and Social Studies (SST).

In addition to the work in the classroom, the researcher also helped to establish a baseball program for MYDEL. Immediately prior to the internship, MYDEL received a donation of baseball equipment from an American donor. One or two times per week, the researcher would teach the basics of baseball to the P3 and P4 students.

By participating in the classroom and on the sports field, the researcher developed a greater understanding of the specific academic challenges and the personal problems facing children growing up in the slums. None of the students have academic books and paper notebooks had only recently been donated. The students found speaking and writing in English to be extremely difficult. Many times the students would come to class but would be unable to participate because they would not have pens or paper. Oftentimes they would simply end up distracting other members of the class.

Assisting in these activities enabled the researcher to interact with the OVC and youth and observe their daily interactions. Teaching in the class and training in sports also allowed the researcher to understand the implementation of NFE in the field.

#### *Informal Interviews*

This active observation at MYDEL also allowed the researcher to develop relationships with many of the kids to the extent that she could freely ask them about their families and backgrounds. As many of the children are orphans, they receive very little personal attention from their already overburdened caregivers and being able to spend so much time with the children was both rewarding and informative.

The researcher spent the majority of her practicum time on site interacting with the children and youth. Their comfort level with the researcher gradually increased and she was able to ask simple questions without the aid of a translator. These informal interviews provide a human view of the topic to be covered.

#### *Home and Community Visits*

Over a span of three weeks, the researcher visited six homes of families participating in MYDEL activities. All of the families either had children in the OVC functional literacy class or children in UPE schools being sponsored by MYDEL. While at the homes, the researcher would meet multiple family members. Conducting the interviews at the individuals' homes allowed the researcher to see the living conditions of



the interviewees and constitute the bulk of the researcher's understanding of what constitutes urban slum life in Uganda.

Of the people interviewed, five were widows, including two grandmothers. Only one man and one student were interviewed. MYDEL staff members selected interviewees on the basis of ease of access and prior knowledge of their situation. At each of the homes the researcher asked a standard set of questions but then delved deeper into particular issues based on the observed willingness and interest of the interviewee. The questions mainly covered issues of background and family history, the types and importance of education available, health concerns, refugee issues, and the challenges particular to different populations within Kisenyi.

During these sessions the researcher was able to develop a better grasp of the intricate problems in Kisenyi. Often times an interviewee would bring up a point or a problem the researcher had not considered before. The researcher would then revise her standard list of questions to include the newly introduced issue. As regards to her research on non-formal education, the researcher was able to hear directly from parents and recipients of MYDEL about what they found to be the value of NFE.

As part of her internship, the researcher was asked to work with a MYDEL staff member to create questions for the purpose of compiling the success stories of MYDEL participants. A few of the interviewees are current secondary school students while others have entered the workforce. Some of these interviews took place in the MYDEL office while other took place at the work sites of the interviewees. Following the interview, the interviewee was photographed and the information inputted into a soft copy document.

#### *Formal Interviews*

The researcher had an extensive interview broaching many topics with the founder of MYDEL, Mr. Pascal Lutaya. The interview was held at the MYDEL office and lasted two hours. As the founder and current director of MYDEL, he was able to present the history of the organization, its current status and problems, and its goals for future growth and expansion.

In order to find out about the GoU initiatives for NFE, the researcher met with Mrs. Hannah Kakembo of KCC. The interview was conducted in her office and lasted for one and a half hours. As the head of BEUPA, she provided invaluable information on the

history of the initiative, its successes, and its continuing challenges. She also shed light on the site-specific challenges of the urban poor in Uganda as compared to the poor living in rural areas.

These individuals were selected for interviews because of their working knowledge of NFE in urban Kampala. Unlike the home and community visits, the formal interviews were conducted in English and thus the presence of a translator was unnecessary.

### *Literature Review*

Throughout the practicum period, the researcher used published and online literature to inform her work. At the MYDEL office she was able to read forms and pamphlets given to the organization describing different issues facing Kisenyi, most notably HIV/AIDS and drug abuse. Articles in *The New Vision* and *The Daily Monitor* and specials on NTV Tonight television news on the issues facing Mengo residents allowed the researcher to understand the public perception of slum life as well as note the timeliness of her research. Through internet search engines, and in particular the Article Search of the University of Notre Dame Libraries website, the researcher discovered many articles relating to UPE and NFE in Uganda as well as more general information on urban poverty in sub-Saharan Africa.

### *Methodological Limitations*

For all of the interviews and home visits conducted through MYDEL, the interviewee and the location was pre-determined without the researcher's input. As the researcher was unfamiliar with the area and the families, she could not determine on her own which families to visit. The MYDEL staff did attempt to provide some variety of interviewees for the researcher, including persons with physical and mental disabilities. For the MYDEL success stories project, the interviewees were also selected beforehand. The home visits took place in the area immediately surrounding the MYDEL office and so cannot be assumed to be examples of all of Mengo. As the interviewees were all connected with and known to the MYDEL staff, the researcher may have received a biased impression of the presence of MYDEL in Kisenyi.

All of the home visits and most of the success stories interviews were conducted in Luganda. One or two MYDEL staff members would accompany the researcher and serve as a translator. When using a translator there is always the issue of meaning and words lost during the process of translation. At times the researcher would discover that her English questions would not have Luganda equivalents and so the questions would have to be revised on the spot.

Though many of the children and youth that MYDEL serves are Congolese and Rwandan refugees, the researcher was not brought to the homes of any of these families. This inconsistency may be explained by the MYDEL staff's inability to communicate in the languages of the refugees. Several of the refugee children noted that they had only recently learned Luganda from being at MYDEL and on the streets. The refugee parents and caretakers may not yet have had the opportunity to learn the local language and therefore would be difficult to interview even with a translator.

The greatest limitation to conducting research was the short period in which the practicum was conducted. As the researcher first spent time becoming oriented to the daily activities of MYDEL before engaging in interviews, she could not conduct as many home visits as she would have liked. The busy schedule of daily work at MYDEL did not leave much time for additional interviews outside of MYDEL which could have been used for breadth of knowledge or comparative purposes.

#### *Statement of Ethics*

Conducting research in which individuals share personal information requires the utmost attention to the rights of interviewees. Particularly when encountering another culture, social norms and expectations must be accounted for. The research aim was to discover the successes and failures of non-formal education as promoted by MYDEL and to gain insight into this topic through the voluntary participation of interviewees.

The researcher disclosed her association with MYDEL and SIT, her research methods, and her intention to use the findings in a final paper to all interview participants. Informed written consent was required at the start of the interview. Permission to use names was voluntary and all adults quoted in the paper gave explicit permission for their ideas to be used and cited.

As the researcher interacted with children, she first had to receive permission from the staff of MYDEL to work with and informally interview the children and youth at MYDEL. No child's name was recorded to be used in the findings.

## **Research Findings and Analysis**

As the researcher conducted the majority of her research in the field through home visits and participant observation, her work focuses on what she learned from her actions with community members. These community members shared more with her than straightforward information on NFE and as such she will touch upon the inter-related problems of growing up and living in Kisenyi.

The research was conducted mainly through the internship at MYDEL and as such, her experience at MYDEL will comprise the majority of her findings and serve as a case study on NFE in urban Kampala.

Throughout this section, analysis accompanies the research findings. The research findings are broken down into separate sections and as a whole address the three stated objectives: slum life in Kisenyi, residents' conception of their challenges, the necessity of NFE, implementation of NFE at MYDEL, challenges of NFE, and successes of NFE.

### *Slum Life in Kisenyi*

Kisenyi is the main slum in central Kampala and its population is among the poorest in the city. Due to high rates of HIV/AIDS, substandard housing, poor water sanitation, and prevalent drug and alcohol abuse, it is also one of the least safe areas for children and youth to grow up in. Despite being such a troublesome neighborhood for children and youth, the area has a very young population due to high birth rates, overcrowding, and a recent wave of refugees. Many of the children are orphans who live with grandmothers or other extended family members and thus do not receive enough personal emotional attention or enough material food and resources.

From spending time in the classroom with the OVC, the researcher viewed firsthand their untreated injuries and health problems, their hunger, and their emotional distraught. During one week of teaching, as many as five children were out of class suffering from malaria. At other times students would not want to participate in sports programs because of a previously scraped knee that had become infected and flea infested. MYDEL aims to provide a lunch of posho and beans every day for the children, but because of lack of funding is not always able to do so. When lunch was served, there would often not be enough for all the children leading to fights and grabbing. The young children constantly wanted to be held due to lack of attention at home.

The area in which these children and youth live is clearly overcrowded and unsanitary. Many shacks are placed together in a small area. This high density leads to an abundance of garbage and other human waste. From her home visits, the researcher saw how as many as twelve people could eat, sleep, and live in a small room. Children are forced to sleep on the floor and under mattresses, which one grandmother interviewed said resulted in the death of a neighbor's child (Home Visit A).

Slum life is not conducive to a child's safety and health, let alone education. Without basic necessities such as adequate shelter, safe water, proper clothing and footwear, and enough food, the children and youth of Kisenyi are extremely susceptible to diseases and to dissolute lifestyles.

#### *Residents' Conception of their Challenges*

Enrollment rates in primary schools are low, with an even smaller amount of students progressing on to secondary schools. Instead of paying school fees to receive an education, many children remain at home or roam the streets. In one interview, a mother recounted how she and her husband were able to pay for school fees for their four children but after his death she could no longer pay for either rent or for school (Home Visit D). The woman and her family were forced to move to the slums and for the time she was unacquainted with MYDEL, her children did not attend school. Other interviewees described how they would try to force their children to attend MYDEL's functional literacy class but the children would run away or refuse to go under the influence of friends.

This inability or reluctance to attend school furthers the cycle of poverty as it creates uneducated and unmotivated members of society. Without the possibility of a better life and better employment following education, youth will quickly turn to drugs, alcohol, unprotected sex, and other self-destructive activities. Throughout the home visits with the primary caregivers of the OVC (their grandmothers and widowed mothers), the women emphasized how difficult it is to control their children living in such an environment. Unless the parent or guardian is very strict with her children, the children can quickly make poor life decisions. Children in the slums hastily become comfortable with strangers, in part because of the constant movement of people in and out of the community and the regular stream of aid workers and volunteers at MYDEL. This ease

with strangers poses a special problem to girl children who may receive unwanted and unwarranted attention from sugar daddies and *bodaboda* (motorcycle) drivers. One mother would not allow her daughters to attend the functional literacy class if there was a certain *bodaboda* driver outside of their home because he sexually and verbally harasses them (Home Visit D).

The grandmothers and mothers of Kisenyi also commented heavily on the disease prevalence and lack of adequate healthcare or disease prevention. Though KCC provides free care, often times a sick person will wait until the situation is drastic or untreatable. The most common diseases outside of HIV/AIDS that the interviewees identified are plague caused by substandard housing, malaria from lack of proper bed nets, malnutrition due to food costs, and ringworm (Home Visit C). If a child is sick, which happens frequently, he or she will not be able to attend classes thus further setting back their education. A challenge particular to girl children is the lack of pads and other sanitary devices while they are menstruating. Girls would rather remain at home instead of come to school and feel uncomfortable (Informal Interview B). Working with the younger children in the functional literacy classroom, the researcher noticed many infected cuts. The families clearly do not have even the most basic first aid and cleaning materials which can cause a small cut to become a major problem.

The researcher interviewed one self-identified HIV positive woman, one woman with mental health problems, one man with mental health problems, and one man with a physical disability. Almost all of the persons in Kisenyi interviewed spoke of the problem of HIV/AIDS. The two people with mental health problems stated that they did not think mental health was a widespread concern in Kisenyi. The person with a disability (PWD), however, emphasized how many children and youth are disabled and spoke of the problems they face, including inaccessible schooling and transportation, teasing and bullying, and marginalization from families (Community Visit B). As an emerging PWD activist, this man hopes to work through MYDEL and find other national and international PWD organizations to emphasize the specific problems PWD face in urban Kampala. All of the interviewees with identified health problems stressed the difficulty of living in their states in Kisenyi as compared to other parts of Uganda and the world.

Several of the women interviewed spoke of the possibility of returning to their villages if the situation in Kisenyi deteriorates much more (Home Visits B, D, E). They complained of neighbors who drink and quarrel in front of their children. These same neighbors scream expletives and other bad language and pour garbage all over the outdoor living areas. Returning to the village would be a very difficult move for these women, as they would have to readjust themselves to a different way of life and relearn how to dig food for their living. If the women are willing to undergo so much change to protect themselves and their children they are obviously frustrated with their current situation in Kisenyi.

### *Necessity of NFE*

NFE exists because of the inability of formal education in the form of UPE to effectively reach all of the children and youth in Uganda. Though there is poverty throughout Uganda, urban poverty in particular entails disease-ridden living quarters, lack of food, overcrowding, and rapid spread of infectious and other diseases. The urban poor of Kisenyi are unable or barely able to provide food, shelter, and clothing and so finding additional money to pay school fees is an insurmountable obstacle.

Though some of the children receiving NFE through MYDEL are members of the organization simply because of financial problems, many of the children and youth MYDEL assists are orphans and refugees. A large number of children in the Kisenyi neighborhood are orphans because of HIV/AIDS while others lost their parents due to other diseases, abandonment, and natural causes. Orphans in the traditional Ugandan family society are cared for by their extended family members. Most often these orphans are cared for by their elderly grandmothers. These women often do not have any form of employment and very little money or energy to raise these additional children. Some of the grandmothers interviewed cared for up to nine grandchildren (Interview with Lutaya). Having to provide food for all these children does not allow for any extra income to be used for school fees. Several of the MYDEL success story interviewees spoke of how they had become orphans at an early age and had no family members to turn to for school fees. Instead of being able to exercise their proper rights to education under the 1995 Uganda Constitution and UPE, these children and youth were forced to turn to drop out early and begin working.



Girl children living in the slums are particularly susceptible to not having access to any education, let alone NFE. Traditionally in Ugandan culture, girl children stayed at home to learn domestic skills while the boys went to formal education. Though recent initiatives have reduced this disparity, orphan girls living in Kisenyi often have to stay at home caring for their younger siblings. If a young or teenage girl is living with her grandmothers and is among the oldest children, she is expected to provide care and supervision, leaving her little time for herself and her studies (Interview with Kakembo). As a result of not receiving any education, these young women are more likely to marry or become sexually active at an early age. Early marriages and sexual encounters increase the likelihood that she will contract HIV/AIDS and that the cycle of poverty and minimal education will continue with her children (Ilon 27).

Refugee children living in the slums are also less likely to attend formal education. The refugee's situation is always precarious and the possibility of displacement to a refugee settlement or camp is always a possibility (Ilon 20). Refugee parents are unwilling to spend money to place their child in a formal school if there is the possibility they will have to move before the term's completion. Refugees also face a significant language barrier in Kampala thereby limiting their employment opportunities so it is unlikely that many of the parents even have enough money to consider enrolling their child in school. The children themselves face significant barriers in education, even in NFE, due to the language difference. Several of the children with whom the researcher had informal interviews spoke of how they had only recently learned Luganda. As UPE classes above Primary 2 (P2) are taught in English, refugee children find it particularly difficult to try and master two distinct languages.

Opportunities to turn to drugs, alcohol, and sex instead of school and employment abound for the teenaged youth in Kisenyi. The vocational training programs offered in paper bead making, woodcarving, and tailoring not only offer youth a chance to learn a valuable skill but also provide enjoyable, healthy activities to occupy their time. Paper bead making is the cheapest training possible as it requires only scrap paper, a ruler, a pen, scissors, and glue. Woodcarving and tailoring are more expensive projects, but MYDEL is able to provide the materials with help from outside organizations.

UPE intended to bring basic education to all Ugandan children, but unfortunately the children living in the slums are not able to take advantage of this program due to school fees and other challenges. NFE in the forms of functional literacy classes and vocational training provide these children and youth with some semblance of an education and with some hope for a higher standard of living. Without the NFE programs, the children in the slums of Kisenyi would be essentially abandoned by the government of Uganda in terms of educational and socioeconomic development.

#### *Community Attitudes toward NFE*

None of the caregivers interviewed had achieved a complete primary education and all indicated that they believe their current poverty is in part due to this lack of basic education. All but one received some education but they were forced to leave school prior to completion due to family or monetary concerns or in the case of young marriage for three of the women (Home Visits A, B, C, D, E). When asked why they want their children to receive an education, four of the women interviewed responded that they believed their own lives would be able to improve if their children were educated. In their minds, education immediately translates into better employment and thus more monetary resources for the family.

The community members interviewed see the importance of an education, but they are also concerned with the type of education their children are receiving. While all of the parents would at least like to see their children complete formal primary school, some expressed concern that vocational training and work skills in conjunction with academic courses would better suit their children. One woman noted that vocational training school in Kampala is associated with lack of money not only because those who attend training schools have little formal education but also because their primary objective is to learn some skill they can use every day to make money.

Several of the caregivers want their children to achieve university status. In one of the families visited, the youngest daughter recently completed her first term at Kampala International University. Her mother was extremely proud of this daughter's accomplishments and believes that her daughter will inspire her five grandsons to complete their educations. Interestingly, the women interviewed who want their children to attend university also mentioned that they want their children to be able to move out of

Kisenyi and to marry non-slum inhabitants. These women were extremely adamant about their children having better qualities of life than themselves.

Parents and caregivers appeared willing and happy to let their children participate in MYDEL activities, such as MDD and sports programs, as they are opportunities to learn new skills and enjoy their childhoods. During the MYDEL success story interviews, several of the young men and women interviewed mentioned with pride how they had learn to act and write scripts through the MDD program. The students themselves enjoyed the opportunity to play both football and baseball as they can run around freely in an open space, which is an impossibility in their crowded neighborhoods. The sports programs provide good outlets for children's energy in addition to being a learning environment for teamwork and persistence. Three of the young men interviewed in the success story project believe that their participation in these programs encouraged them to pursue lives outside of traditional gangster and slum life (Success Story C, D, F). By offering non-academic and non-work related activities, MYDEL, as an NFE program, caters to the other aspects of human existence including the arts, entertainment, and exercise.

MYDEL also offers girl child empowerment programs, a woman's microfinance group, HIV/AIDS sensitization, and individual counseling. Two of the young women interviewed in the success story project mentioned how valuable the girl child programs had been to them. In particular, they spoke highly of the sessions on proper behavior for young women and on information for dealing with sugar daddies and improper sexual advances (Success Story A, B). Whereas other girls in Kisenyi do not learn about HIV/AIDS prevention, the girl child program focuses on the importance of abstinence. In light of the male-dominant culture in Uganda as a whole, and the problems of sexual harassment and rape in Kisenyi, the girl child needs the additional attention to encourage her to stay in school and stay healthy (Success Story A).

The women's microfinance group likewise empowers women to begin small businesses or stalls so that they can become financially independent and support their families and children. Through the group, entitled *Twajja Twajja*, women receive cash rounds every four months to fund their enterprises but must pay back a small amount of the loan once a week (Community Visit A). As the group meets every week, the women

members also have the opportunity to meet and to discuss problems and their solutions. This program is clearly not part of the formal education system, but as an NFE organization, MYDEL encourages all community members to learn and expand their horizons, including women struggling to make money.

As Kisenyi has a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS, sensitization is crucial to improving the community's well-being. Community members feel at ease with the staff of MYDEL and come to the organization with a variety of problems. During her time interning at the organization, the researcher had the opportunity to sit in on a meeting with two MYDEL staff members and a young mother to discuss her health predicament. The women realized she was pregnant after she left her boyfriend and when she returned to confront him, she was told he had died accidentally. After giving birth she discovered that she was HIV positive but is currently not receiving treatment. She came to MYDEL for help as she fears her son may also be HIV positive but she does not have the money to pay for transportation to and from Mulago Hospital for testing (Community Visit C). Even though MYDEL's main programs do not concern this woman, the organization was still able to provide her with counseling and support.

Both KCC and the Kisenyi community see the value in an organization such as MYDEL. According to an independent study, BEUPA organizations throughout Kampala have been commended as being community centers because they go above and beyond their simple task of providing NFE programs to including other empowerment programs (Ilon 43). In addition to the academic classes and work skills offered by MYDEL, the community benefits from the other programs offered. People living in Kisenyi are very comfortable with the staff members, especially since the director and many staff members are residents of the neighborhood. All of the people interviewed stated that participating in MYDEL improved their quality of life. Without MYDEL offering free NFE, sports and arts activities, and counseling, community members would not have any access to these services.

#### *Implementation of NFE at MYDEL*

The researcher's main activities at the internship were in the OVC functional literacy classroom and in the sports programs, particularly baseball. By participating in these activities, and to a smaller extent, interacting with the youth in vocational training,

she was able to gain a better realization of how a community based NGO operating within the NFE sector functions in urban Kampala.

NFE programs such as MYDEL rely heavily on private donors, volunteers, and in-kind donations. Since this type of funding and staffing is inconsistent, NFE programs must operate as best they can with their current financial and manpower situations. To an outside observer, the daily running and organization of MYDEL may appear to be haphazard, but MYDEL is nevertheless able to put forth many programs and activities. As opportunities offered by different organizations arise, MYDEL creates new programs or supplements established ones. For example, with the donation of baseball equipment by a private American donor, MYDEL is able to offer a baseball program to some of the children and youth. Through collaboration with The Teens Uganda (TTU) and Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, the participants in the baseball program are taught basic skills (Interview with Lutaya). Other recent initiatives include the First Annual Ghetto Children's End of the Year Party and the expansion of the vocational training program into logo-stitching and bag making.

In the OVC classroom, MYDEL staff members are assigned different days to teach. The curriculum is dependent upon the teacher. As the staff members are volunteers, they work in the classroom according to their own schedule. Staff members expressed frustration with the amount of children present in the classroom at one time, the noise level, and the inability to effectively cater to each child's individual academic level (Informal Interview B). The classroom itself is a hectic environment. The building is located across the street from the MYDEL offices and adjacent to a loud metal refinery and a busy road. With minimal and broken furniture and chalkboards, the children do not have a structured and orderly learning environment. The students will often stand on the broken furniture while misbehaving or playing resulting in falls and injuries. Furthermore, the children often lack pens and pencils so even if they attend school and want to participate, they are unable to do so. The small quantity of supplies leads to fights between the children for writing materials.

Though the teachers do strive to have the children learn English in such an environment, it is nearly impossible. The children are unable to read and write, for the most part, in their local language and so it is difficult to master another in the classroom.

English and other literary courses proved to be very difficult for the students, though many were very good at mathematics. Due to the large class size, students choose how interested they are in learning the materials and thus how productive they are during class time. The teacher cannot pay adequate attention to each child's educational growth. Often siblings will help each other by sharing writing tools or explaining exercises that are more difficult. Cheating and copying are rampant as the teacher's attention is often distracted by some other concern.

Offering vocational training programs is an expensive venture. With help from Youth Action International, MYDEL is able to pay individuals to teach woodcarving and tailoring. These programs require materials (i.e. wood, cloth, etc.) as well as equipment (i.e. saws, sewing machines, etc.). Students in the classes are supposed to come for the entirety of the class, often lasting up to one year, but many drop out as they pick up skills. Only a few students remained in the program long enough to complete their final examinations and reviews. Paper bead making is a relatively simple skill that even the youngest children can pick up without much assistance. After the functional literacy class in the morning, several students may come to the office and pick up the materials and begin working for as long as they are interested. Due to the population of students comprising the vocational training classes, this program is more flexible and requires a serious commitment and personal interest in the individual to learn the craft properly.

### *Challenges of NFE*

Though many of the challenges of NFE were mentioned or described in the previous sections, all of the specific challenges the researcher noted during the time of the internship will be listed here for simplicity and clarification.

A basic challenge to the success of an NFE program such as MYDEL is the environment of the slum areas. Kisenyi is not conducive to a child's educational development. The neighborhood is constantly loud and the youth and children follow the example of their elders and often become involved in fights and confrontations. The peer pressure to stop attending classes and become involved in gangs, drugs, alcohol, and sex is always present (Interview with Lutaya). With so many problems in their everyday lives, children and youth may not be mentally or psychologically prepared to take on the additional stress of learning and at times failing. Families do not have enough money to

send children to UPE schools and so without NFE provided free of charge, the slum children would receive no education.

The situation of being an orphan or being a refugee creates additional problems. As mentioned before, some of the success story interviewees recounted how they had attended school, but once their parents died, they were forced to drop out for lack of school fees. Already overburdened extended family members are the people who care for orphans (Success Story B). These grandmothers and siblings cannot afford to provide both food and school fees for the children in their care. When a child does not have adequate food, he or she will be unable to concentrate on academic work. Refugees are constantly uncertain of their ability to remain in one place and operate in the local language. Their parents may often be poor or unable to find employment due to the language barrier and thus they are also unable to pay for school fees (Informal Interview A).

Health concerns affect a child's or a youth's ability to attend classes. In addition to the community-wide problem of HIV/AIDS, children often are sick from malaria, ringworm, and other diseases. During the internship period, the researcher was aware of several students who would miss up to a week's worth of classes due to illness. Without money to pay for treatment for diseases like malaria, the children simply have to suffer and miss educational growth opportunities. For the duration of menstruation, some girl children, who are particularly vulnerable to educational disparities, do not attend classes.

The facilities of MYDEL are substandard, specifically the classroom. The classroom is disorganized without proper seating and tables. The tables and chairs that are there are often splintered or broken and easily cause injury to unsuspecting students. The classroom is somewhat divided into two halves for the baby classes and the higher primary levels, but there is no physical separation and thus increased noise and interaction. To participate in sports programs, the children and staff must walk far distances in order to reach poorly maintained fields. One of the fields is mainly gravel with very little grass; as the children run during games they often fall and sustain serious scrapes and bruises.

In addition to poor facilities, NFE programs such as MYDEL often lack necessities to run a classroom and run training programs. Students do not have individual

books and often lack paper and writing materials. Though they come to the classroom willing to learn, they become distracted and bored without the materials to complete the exercises. Many of the children who participate in the sports programs also do not have the proper equipment and attire, as seen by the footballers who play barefoot or in slippers. Vocational training materials are expensive and difficult to come by, especially as some of the materials purchased or donated will be used only for practice.

Overall, the environment in which NFE programs take place, the family and personal situations of participants, health concerns, lacking facilities, and inadequate supplies hamper the effectiveness of these programs.

### *Successes of NFE*

Despite the many problems of NFE programs, at the very least they often disadvantaged and marginalized individuals the opportunity to learn and to improve their lives. Though the BEUPA program and in particular MYDEL may not as of yet transformed the communities in which they operate, they have made individual impacts. Through the success story project, the researcher was able to meet with six individuals whose lives were clearly changed by MYDEL's programs. One of the young men even said that before participating in MYDEL, he did not know how to count, but now he owns and operates his own small spare parts shop. Having the opportunity to be educated outside of the traditional, formal sector enabled this man and the others interviewed to accomplish goals they did not realize they could pursue.

A goal of NFE is to enable students to enter into the formal education sector. According to a private study, BEUPA programs had the highest transfer to UPE schools of any GoU CBE program. In 2003, out of the 3,440 participants in BEUPA, 26.4% transferred to UPE schools (Ilon 33). MYDEL sponsors children and looks for both domestic and international sponsors for its children to attend primary and secondary schools. Though sponsorship is not a transformative way to amend the institutional and societal problems in Kisenyi, at least some of the children who have passed through the OVC functional literacy class are able to participate in formal education. The children in the OVC and vocational classes may not be able to lift themselves out of poverty and out of the slums, but they are able to spend time off the streets and in a safe, protective environment with staff members and volunteers who care about them.



Though the educational benefits and socioeconomic benefits of the functional literacy class, vocational training, and other programs at MYDEL have not been measured quantitatively, the positive community impact can be examined qualitatively. The students, former MYDEL participants, and caregivers all have dreams and plans for the future. Without any education and any assistance these individuals would be forced to resign themselves and their children to living in the slums. While none of the people interviewed had unrealistic expectations about how much they would be able to accomplish in their lives, they were all unsatisfied with their current situation and looking for ways out of the cycle of poverty.

## **Conclusions**

According to this study, NFE in urban Kampala is not the ideal educational system. The curriculum is less demanding than UPE schools and the teachers receive much less training than do UPE teachers. As seen during the internship at MYDEL, the learning centers lack necessities and are unable to serve each child on an individual basis. So many of the children's basic needs of food, shelter, and clothing remain unmet and thus providing for an adequate education extremely difficult. NFE, however, is a critical factor in urban slum life as it provides children and youth with at least a minimal education they would otherwise not be able to afford.

Slum life in Kisenyi consists of substandard housing, poor water sanitation, overcrowding, disease prevalence, and other gross problems. People in the slums are living a subsistence lifestyle, merely getting by on what they can afford. Most of the children and youth suffer from neglect of physical as well as emotional needs. As per the research findings presented, the children suffer from a lack of medical, educational, and psychological care. Community members interviewed throughout the practicum stressed the low quality of life in the slums and blamed overcrowding, HIV/AIDS, and alcohol and drug abuse for many of the area's problems. None of the caregivers want their children to grow up in such an environment.

Children and youth in the slums are at a grave disadvantage to achieve even a basic education as compared to other city residents. For a variety of reasons, children and youth in Kisenyi do not have the funds to attend school. Yet without an education, they will remain confined to slum life with very limited opportunities. Life in the slums is extremely difficult for children because of the unstable family life, drug and alcohol abuse, poor sanitation, and prevalence of HIV/AIDS and other diseases. One of the most critical research points made in the interviews was the insistence of several guardians that their lack of education forced them into compromising socioeconomic situations and that their children need to receive some form of education to help them and the rest of their families. People living in the slums clearly see the value of education but because of economic problems are unable to provide this right for their children.

MYDEL, as an organization offering NFE and advocating for the rights of slum residents, plays an important role as an agent of community empowerment. Instead of

limiting its programs to simply basic literacy and work skills, MYDEL serves the spectrum of human needs through its additional programs. Children and youth living in the slums are like children and youth throughout the world; they require further stimulation through the arts and athletics and require personal attention and sensitization to relevant topics. MYDEL serves the community's needs, be it through academic programs, counseling, or HIV/AIDS sensitization, and as such goes beyond the initial goals of NFE to provide simple education outside of the formal sector. NFE is no longer alternative education but is instead community growth.

If one accepts the simple definition of development as being the improvement of one's standard of living, NFE is an agent of development. NFE enables an individual to grow in knowledge and in skills thereby creating greater opportunities. NFE organizations such as MYDEL also serve the greater community outside of the target population of children and youth by creating other programs to serve different members of society. The Kisenyi community members associated with MYDEL have plans and hopes for the future instead of despair and acceptance of their impoverished situation. Instead of simply focusing on the multitude of problems they face living in a slum, they have hopes and dreams for their children, their futures. Human development cannot be accomplished without this desire for change. NFE may not always succeed in providing a complementary education to the formal sector, but it does contribute to the positive human development of the slum community.

## **Recommendations**

The researcher believes that MYDEL does a great service to the Mengo community by providing free education for the children and youth. After spending time working with the organization, however, the researcher noticed certain trends in the functional literacy class for OVC that may hinder MYDEL's effectiveness and so will make some recommendations on how she feels the organization could be improved.

A primary challenge cited by both Mrs. Kakembo of BEUPA and Mr. Lutaya of MYDEL is the lack of funding to run NFE programs. In particular, the vocational training programs for the youth are expensive because of the type and number of materials required. Even in the functional literacy class, many students attend but are unable to learn or concentrate because they lack books, paper, and pens. While the researcher does see this need for additional resources to better serve the community, she also believes that a restructuring of the program to be more efficient and consistent will benefit both the children and the organization.

The children in Kisenyi lead very tumultuous lives. MYDEL currently serves as a haven for the children to relax and play games even outside of scheduled programming. As a foreigner both to the organization and the country, the researcher sees the potential for MYDEL to become an even greater refuge for the community's children. The children have no stability in their lives, especially in regards to basic human needs including food, shelter, and health. What the children may need in order to make their lives more ordered and functional is a scheduled program and school that provides some stability in their ever changing world.

While MYDEL does offer some daily and weekly programs, the functional literacy class in particular has a very inconsistent schedule. Almost all of the MYDEL staff members teach in the classroom at least once a week. Although this system allows for both involvement and for outside schedule conflicts, the children are then exposed to different teaching styles far too frequently. The children have difficulty understanding even simple lessons because there is little communication between teachers on what has been taught, what needs to be reviewed, and what needs to be covered.

Due to office concerns and individual scheduling conflicts, the children are often left alone for extended periods of time in the classroom. When the teacher is present, the

subjects are taught seemingly at random. Though the children's break from classes takes place at relatively the same time everyday, there is still a slight time variation. Additionally, sometimes the break lasts for longer than the allotted half hour due to issues pulling the teacher outside of the classroom.

In order to create a more stable and emotionally healthy environment for the children, MYDEL should consider creating an ordered schedule with consistent times, classes, and teachers. Though this rescheduling may prove to be a difficult task based on the fluid nature of the heavily-student MYDEL staff's schedules, creating a reliable and consistent timetable for the classroom will provide the children with a more comfortable learning environment.

## **Appendix**

### *MYDEL Home Visit Questions*

1. How long have you lived in Kisenyi? Where did you live before? Why did you move to Kisenyi?
2. How many children do you have? How many children do you care for?
3. How do you support your family? Do you have any type of employment?
4. What education have you had?
5. Why do you think it is important for your children to receive an education?
6. What types of education do you think are important for your children to receive?
7. What have you found to be the value of a non-formal education?
8. How are you able to control your children growing up in this environment?
9. What are the biggest challenges facing women in Kisenyi?
10. What are the biggest challenges facing the girl child in Kisenyi?
11. What are the biggest challenges facing the youth in Kisenyi?
12. How have existing problems in Kisenyi been aggravated by the influx of refugees in the area?
13. What are the most serious health problems in Kisenyi?
14. How has MYDEL helped your family?
15. What do you want your children to achieve? How are your children able to make progress towards those goals?

### *MYDEL Success Story Questions*

1. What is your age?
2. What is your sex?
3. What is your nationality?
4. What is your status in MYDEL?
5. Do you live with a guardian or parent?
6. What is the name of school?
7. Where do you live?
8. How is your life at school?
9. What is the number of people you live with?
10. What are you currently doing (studying, working, etc.)?
11. When did you first start participating in MYDEL activities? Which activities?
12. How was your life prior to joining MYDEL?
13. How has your life turned out differently than your counterparts in Kisenyi?
14. What challenges do you continue to face?
15. Do you think your life would have turned out differently without MYDEL?
16. What have you found to be the value of a MYDEL education (vocational, functional literacy, etc.)?
17. What are your personal achievements?
18. What are your future plans?

*Questions for Mr. Lutaya of MYDEL*

1. What is your background or story?
2. How did you found MYDEL? With whom? When?
3. What is your education and expertise in?
4. What were the biggest challenges in founding MYDEL?
5. What was MYDEL's original mission and activities and how have they expanded?
6. What are the biggest problems facing the youth in Kisenyi?
7. What have been MYDEL's greatest successes?
8. What have been MYDEL's failures?
9. What government support does MYDEL receive?
10. What international support does MYDEL receive?
11. What community support does MYDEL receive?
12. Which are the strongest programs MYDEL offers?
13. What structural, political, and socioeconomic change do you think needs to occur to transform Kisenyi?
14. How does MYDEL receive in-kind donations?
15. What do you think is the importance of integrating sports programs into youth education?
16. What have you observed to be the value of NFE?
17. What are the specific challenges of the OVC functional literacy class?
18. What are the specific challenges of the vocational training program?
19. Do you believe NFE can be an acceptable substitute for formal education?
20. What benefits does NFE have over formal education?
21. What challenges does NFE face that formal education does not?
22. What is the history of this particular slum?
23. What specific challenges does the girl child face?
24. What are the biggest health problems faced in the area?
25. Does MYDEL make a special effort to reach refugee and Karamojong street children?
26. What effect does being an orphan have on a child's education?
27. What effect does being HIV positive have on a child's education?
28. What are your goal for Kisenyi? For Uganda? For MYDEL?

*Questions for Mrs. Kakembo of BEUPA*

29. What is BEUPA?
30. Which communities does BEUPA affect?
31. Why is there a lack of formal education in these areas?
32. What has BEUPA contribute to UPE?
33. What has BEUPA done to prove the success and importance of NFE?
34. When and how is NFE deemed successful?
35. How does lack of adequate education contribute to other problems in urban poor area?
36. Does BEUPA standardize curriculum?
37. How is BEUPA implemented?

38. How does BEUPA corroborate with NGOs, civil society organizations (CSOs), and other private organizations?
39. Does BEUPA encourage NFE for refugee and Karamojong street children?
40. What are the biggest challenges for BEUPA?
41. What is the future or ultimate goal of BEUPA?



## Glossary

Formal education	Training or education provided in educational institutions such as schools, universities, and colleges
Functional literacy	A level of reading and writing sufficient for everyday life but not for completely autonomous activity
Non-formal education	Less structured education that takes place outside of traditional learning institutions such as schools, universities, and colleges
Orphan	A child who has lost both parents or a child who lacks support, care, and supervision
Sugar daddy	A wealthy older man who gives a young girl or woman expensive gifts in return for intimacy

## Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARV	Anti-retroviral
BEUPA	Basic Education for Urban Poverty Areas
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DVSUPA	Development of Vocational Skills for Urban Poor Areas
GBV	Gender-based violence
GoU	Government of Uganda
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
KCC	Kampala City Council
MDD	Music, Dance, and Drama
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MUK	Makerere University
MYDEL	Mengo Youth Development Link
NFE	Non-formal education
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PLE	Primary Leaving Examination
PWD	Person with a disability
SIT	School for International Training
SST	Social Studies
TTU	The Teens Uganda
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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