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# Goals, Challenges, and Successes of a Girls Development Organization in Kenya : A Case Study of Moving The Goal Post (Kilifi, Kenya)

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Goals, Challenges, and  
Successes of a Girls  
Development Organization in  
Kenya

A Case Study of Moving The Goal Post  
(Kilifi, Kenya)

Madeline Boston

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## **Acknowledgments**

My thanks goes out to the employees and members of Moving the Goalpost (Kilifi, Kenya) – Cocky Van Dam, Clerice (Clara) Mrengi, Fathime Khamsi, and to numerous others for the work they do and for allowing me to spend several weeks learning about their organization.

I would like to recognize the girls of Moving the Goalpost, particularly the MTG U-16 United Team, for accepting this mzungu as one of their own teammates. In addition, the local communities opened up their homes and made me feel truly welcomed. Their stories, opinions, and ideas provided the inspiration necessary to complete this project.

I wish to extend my gratitude to the family of “Babu”, Isaac, Mama Basheer, and their many “shangazi” (meaning aunts in Kiswahili) who became like a host family to me during my stay in Kilifi. Your hospitality will not be forgotten and is very much appreciated.

Finally, I would like to thank my Academic Advisor, Dr. Jama, and the members of the SIT Mombasa office, George, Tima, Ali, and Athman, who have provided invaluable support and guidance throughout the independent study period.

## **Abstract**

Girls and Women in Kilifi District, Kenya are some of the world's poorest and most disadvantaged people. Low retention rates in school, early and unintended pregnancies, and vulnerability to HIV/AIDS trap them in a cycle of intense poverty. Moving the Goalpost (MTG) in Kilifi uses football to empower girls and young women, helping them to fulfill their potential by engaging them in sport and educational development projects. This report analyzes the goals, challenges, and successes of MTG through understanding its organization capacity, and offers recommendations for improvement.

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## **Introduction**

### 1.0 Moving the Goalpost (MTG)

#### 1.1 A Brief History

Since its origin by Sarah Forde in 2001, Moving the Goalpost (MTG) has been using football combined with peer education to empower young female adolescents living within four divisions of the Kilifi District in coastal Kenya (Kaloleni, Ganze, Bahari and Vitengeni). A motivating belief for the organization's founding was that football could be used as a tool to address issues faced by girls and women on the Swahili coast such as gender disparities in health, education, empowerment and leadership roles. For 11 years now, MTG has operated with this guiding mission:

“To strengthen the voice, impact and influence of girls and young women by providing opportunities for them to play football, take on leadership roles, learn about their rights and how to claim those rights, with a focus on sexual and reproductive health and choice. We contribute to this aim by making football an area of opportunity for girls, enabling community

stakeholders to champion girls' rights and through strategic alliances that advance this aim." <sup>1</sup>

Since 2001, almost 3000 girls have been recruited as football players<sup>2</sup>. MTG has expanded the issues it educates about to include reproductive health rights, HIV and AIDS programs, and most recently an economic empowerment project to help educate young women on how to start their own businesses in order to achieve economic independence.

MTG puts a conscious effort into ensuring the girls themselves are central to the organization and its programs so that they can fully embody the organization's slogan: TUNAWEZA! (meaning 'we can do it' in Kiswahili). These values are clearly summed up in MTG's core purpose, as put by one MTG head staff member:

"We use football to develop girls individually, from their confidence, to leadership ability, to team work prowess, and to challenge attitudes in the community around what girls can achieve. Football acts as a mobilizing force at the fields and within the community, where MTG promotes reproductive health, human rights, and economic empowerment among other things." <sup>3</sup>

In the past three years MTG has considerably grown, with a significant outcome of this being a more decentralized, field based, peer led, out of school programming approach that focuses on giving girls more power

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<sup>1</sup> Moving The Goalpost, "Mission Statement," Accessed online, 19 April 2012

<sup>2</sup> F.I.1: Van Dam, Cocky, MTG Head Football Coordinator. Formal interview.

<sup>3</sup> F.I.9: Mrengi, Clerice (Clara), MTG U-16 United Head Coach. Formal interview.

to make decisions and take responsibility for their own activities.

MTG is a rights-based organization in the fact that it understands that a purely needs-based approach would not convert into wider community change; focusing on an individual girl's needs alone will not translate into the desired sustainable systematic change that would be beneficial to all girls and women beyond MTG direct participants. Because of this, MTG has adopted a rights-based approach which takes into consideration all levels of legal and social layers in society that culminate to impact the realization of rights for young females. This approach involves more of the community and traces responsibility from a wider sect of society, both nationally and internationally, which directly impact the rights for girls and young women. MTG seeks to actively engage with parents, care givers, law enforcement, local chiefs and leaders, teachers, etc. in their capacity to be these people who affect the realization of young women's rights. The rights accorded by law to girls and young women in Kenya's constitution and other laws that seek to protect girls and women from discrimination, exclusion, and violence form the foundation on which MTG bases its community engagement and alliance building.<sup>4</sup>

## 1.2 A Closer Look at the Participants

MTG works with girls ages 8 to 25 living in the Kilifi District of coastal Kenya. As evident in Figure 2, the majority of girl league members<sup>5</sup> tend to fall in the 13 to

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<sup>4</sup> F.I.1: Van Dam, Cocky, MTG Head Football Coordinator. Formal interview.

<sup>5</sup> Girl league members and overall girls members participating with MTG are different. Figure 2 shows the number of girls playing in the football leagues, while Figure 3 shows overall

15 year old range with this group making up 42% of MTG overall membership. Nearly all of the players are under 20 years, with only six girls being above 25. With more expected to register in the upcoming months, out of the 2,019 registered so far this year, only 3% (62 girls) were not in school. Out of that same registered number, 85.6% (1,732 girls) reported themselves as Christian, 11.1% (222 girls) as Muslim, and 2.1% (40) as 'Other.' 1.2% (four girls) did not answer the question<sup>6</sup>. The girls come from impoverished backgrounds that put them at high-risk of succumbing to the many pitfalls of poverty.

Figure 2: Girls registered as league players so far in 2012<sup>6</sup>

| Age group (years) | Number of MTG members (out of a total 1,384) | Percentage of MTG members |
|-------------------|--|---------------------------|
| Under 10          | 100  | 5%                        |
| 13-15             | 847  | 42%                       |
| 16-17             | 262  | 13%                       |
| 18-19             | 79   | 4%                        |
| 20-25             | 59   | 3%                        |
| Older than 25     | 6  | Less than 1%              |
| Unknown           | 25   | 1%                        |

Figure 3: Number of fields and girls participating with MTG over two-year span<sup>6</sup>

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girls participating in both the football and educational programs overseen by MTG)

<sup>6</sup> Moving The Goalpost, "Data Summary: 2012," Demographic Section 6, Moving The Goalpost, Kilifi, Kenya

| Year          | Fields | Number of Girls |
|---------------|--------|-----------------|
| 2010          | 23     | 2, 432          |
| 2011          | 19     | 3, 114          |
| 2012 (so far) | 20     | 2, 019          |

Figure 4: Schoolgirls compared with non-schoolgirls looking at the 2, 019 so far registered MTG members this year (2012)

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| Category of Girls   | Number of MTG members | Percentage of MTG members |
|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Out of School Girls | 62                    | 3%                        |
| In Schools Girls    | 1957                  | 97%                       |

Figure 4 shows the number of girls who are in school as compared to the number of girls out of school. Staff reflections on the low registration numbers for out of schoolgirls led to development of new strategies that could enhance their participation. MTG decided among girls that were not attending school, most of them aged between 15-24 years, their greatest needs were around their access to financial independence and education (both formal and vocational), as well as the need to empower themselves to make their own choices. Economic empowerment was therefore used to attract the out of schoolgirls. Each league field was given a target to reach using different mobilization techniques. This entailed home visits as well as awareness meetings at the league field level with girls, parents, and local leaders urging them to inform out of schoolgirls to register in league teams. MTG is keen to see the results of these efforts with the registration next year. <sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> F.I.1: Van Dam, Cocky, MTG Head Football Coordinator. Formal interview.

## Statement of the Problem

### 2.0 Why Kilifi?

#### 2.1 The Status of the Girl in Kilifi, Kenya

Kilifi is one of Kenya's poorest districts with 68.5% of the population living below the poverty line.<sup>8</sup> This puts girls and young women at risk with families struggling to survive on less than 1 dollar per day. Food insecurity and financial uncertainty make a young girl's position even more fragile. Similar to other communities in Kenya and Sub-Saharan Africa, traditional gender roles and power dynamics between males and females automatically place girls and women in Kilifi at a disadvantaged starting position relative to boys and men. These deeply imbedded dynamics combine with other factors to hinder a women's participation in development, where the current Kenyan girl pails considerably to her male counterpart in practically every financial, political, and social comparison.

This gender discrimination manifests itself in economic and material wealth but also in the girl and women's lack of power and freedom to decide how to live their own lives.<sup>9</sup> Proof of this can be seen in some of Kilifi District's development statistics: the female population in Kilifi District has low literacy levels at 45% compared to men's 55%. Although the GER (the Gross Enrolment Rate is the total

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<sup>8</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "Youth and Human Development: Tapping the Untapped Resource," UNDP Kenya, 2010.

<sup>9</sup> United Nations, "Sport and Peace," Report of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace.

number of pupils enrolled in primary schools irrespective of age) for girls at the primary level has risen to 117.4%, the high dropout rate of 8.3% will offset these gains long-term. This dropout rate is cause for concern since the reason for dropouts are usually relating to early childbearing, early marriage for dowry collection, and forced labor to support a struggling family. The district also records a very low transition rate from primary to secondary education at only 14.4% for girls. This can largely be attributed to the fact that primary education is free while secondary schooling requires a fee, one that many families are unwilling or unable to put towards girl's education.

Furthermore, the 2003 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey indicates that within the Coast Province, Kilifi District included, at least one-fourth of women ages 15-19 had a child. Access or knowledge to sexual and reproductive health and services is low with only 39% of young girls and women being on some form of contraceptives. The maternal mortality rate in Kilifi is very high at 440 per 100,000 live births, and up-take of antenatal care stands at just 23%. Clearly women's access to sexual and reproductive rights and health is a crucial part of addressing and advancing gender equality, as well as reducing the growing feminization of poverty. These are important issues for young women in rural areas. MTG acknowledges these truths for young females living in Kilifi and uses them to build the target goal of what to alleviate and empower young women to change.

## **Contextual Background**

### 3.0 Why Sport?

### 3.1 Sports as a Tool for Development

*"Sport has a crucial role to play in efforts to improve the lives of people around the world. Sport builds bridges between individuals and across communities, providing a fertile ground for sowing the seeds of development and peace."*

- Wilfried Lemke, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace<sup>10</sup>

Sports have historically played an important role in all societies, whether they're used as physical activity, entertainment, or play. More recently however sports have been recognized as a low-cost and high-impact tool in humanitarian, peacekeeping, and development efforts around the world. This acknowledgement has come from all levels of establishment, including the UN, governments, non-governmental bodies (NGOs), development agencies, professional sports federations, social culture media and even armed military forces. Sports have been pointed to as a viable and practical tool to assist the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), established by the UN in 2000 that aim to eradicate or reduce poverty, hunger, child mortality and disease, and to promote education, maternal health, gender equality, environment sustainability and global partnerships.<sup>11</sup>

What exactly is sport? In 2003, the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace defined sport in the context of development as "all forms of physical

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<sup>10</sup> United Nations, "Sport and Peace," Report on the International Year of Sport and Physical Education.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations MDGs, "Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women," United Nations Millennium Development Goals using the UNICEF measuring statistics.

activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction, such as play, recreation, organized or competitive sport, and indigenous sports and games." This definition has since been accepted by many proponents of sport used for development and promotion of peace.

Sports are uniquely positioned to attract, mobilize, and inspire people. This theme is so present and powerful that it carries across divides of language, culture, age, race, class, gender, and multiple others all around the world. At its very core, sport is about participation. This factor naturally encourages inclusion and fosters interactions, which set the foundation for dialogue. Sports naturally embody human values that act as a universal language since they are globally understood. These include respect for the opponent, acceptance of rules guiding actions and punishment in accordance to breaking those rules, as well as teamwork and fairness. Intrinsic characteristics such as these can be harnessed to advance the social cohesion and peaceful coexistence of societies in all countries. According to the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group, sport is seen to have the most benefits in:

- Individual development
- Health promotion and disease prevention
- Promotion of gender equality
- Social integration and the development of social capital
- Peace building and conflict prevention/resolution
- Post-disaster/trauma relief and normalization of life
- Economic development

- Communication and social mobilization.<sup>12</sup>

However sports are not a cure-all for development problems. They are a mirror of society and thus are just as complex and contradictory. The positive impact of sports therefore can be misguided and negative outcomes are possible. It requires a professional and social responsibility to tailor the sport and development procedure to the individual cultural and social context it is being used to aid. Though sports alone cannot stop or solve a conflict, it represents a flexible and cost-effective medium for conflict-relief and conflict-prevention<sup>13</sup>.

### 3.2 Football as Utilized by MTG for Development

MTG has focused on using football specifically as its tool of choice to address underdevelopment in the Kilifi District. There are many reasons why football is a popular sport used within development agencies, mainly because football has the most international appeal out of any other sport. It is widely considered the world's most played game, and therefore has the power to unite people living around the world. Looking at Africa alone, according to the FIFA Commission around 50 million people across the continent play football regularly. For many of these people, FIFA asserts that football is "an act of survival, a means to restore normality in traumatized communities, to rebuild confidence, and to promote tolerance and solidarity in

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<sup>12</sup> Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group, "Sport and Peace," Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments.

<sup>13</sup> Right To Play, "Harnessing The Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments," Right To Play on behalf of the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group.

countries torn apart by natural disasters, war or poverty.”

MTG has outlined several reasons why they chose football to help empower their girls. These reasons were discussed in my formal interview with Cocky Van Dam, MTG’s head football coordinator:<sup>14</sup>

- Football is seen as a man’s game. The girl in Kilifi is therefore brought up to believe that there are things (football is one of them) that she cannot do. By playing football, she is proving – even to herself – that “Yes I can,” hence MTG’s slogan “TUNAWEZA!” (Kiswahili for ‘We can do it!’)
- Through football MTG instills life skills such as self-esteem/confidence, team work, leadership skills, decision making, planning and implementation, and management skills.
- Playing football in public places allows girls to “kick start the attitude change” in wider society about what girls can or cannot do as they show parents, teachers, elders, brothers and that “Ninaweza!” (I can)
- Issues on reproductive health, gender, and other rights of the girl are shared through peer led health education activities.
- The league fields with teams and regular matches provide safe spaces where teenage girls can share their experiences and interact with one another in a non-threatening environment. This fosters a communal feel among the members, something that has proved integral to MTG’s achievements.

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<sup>14</sup> **F.I.1:** Van Dam, Cocky, MTG Head Football Coordinator. Formal interview.

#### 4.0 Peer Led Health Education: How MTG goes beyond playing Football

MTG recognizes the benefits of using football as a tool for development, however they are aware that effective development programs combine sport with other non-sport components to enhance the received benefits. These components embody the best values of sport while upholding the quality and integrity of the sport experiences. They serve as a transition between the lessons learned through play and how they can be used in every day life. How MTG implements and utilizes these educational programs therefore is just as important as the ways it conducts football instruction. MTG lists their objective for peer educational programs as the following:

“To Equip Girls and Young Women with Information and Peer Support in Order to Promote Safe and Fulfilling Relationships.”<sup>15</sup>

MTG aims to deliver its educational programs in an integrated manner with other local, regional, and national development and peace initiatives so that they are mutually reinforcing. There are two forms of educational instruction that take place within MTG’s mandate: Field Educational Sites and School Educational Sites. Both of these settings provide places with different opportunities and capacities to reach MTG members with benefiting information. MTG empowers participants and communities by engaging them in the design and delivery of the educational activities, building local capacity, and pursuing sustainability through collaboration, partnerships and coordinated action. Both

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<sup>15</sup> Moving The Goalpost, “Peer Education: Purpose,” Accessed online, 19 April 2012.

field educational sites and school educational sites work to address MTG's theory of change:

“IF more girls play football, develop leadership skills, learn about their sexual and reproductive rights, health, and choices, and have more visible roles in society, THEN more individuals will join MTG in addressing gender inequality and violence, more girls and women will realize their potential and more fully contribute to society, and ULTIMATELY more inclusive, just and peaceful communities will develop.”<sup>16</sup>

#### 4.1 Field Educational Sites

Field educational sites are very important to MTG's central mission, and play a vital role in reaching league members and community members with information about health and rights. MTG has 30 trained peer educators that act as facilitators so that the sessions are interactive and everyone feels comfortable asking questions. Every field where MTG league matches and practices are held is required to have at least one peer educators present, so that regular health education sessions can take place. Without these educational teachers, the field is deemed unqualified to be considered for MTG football instruction. Currently there are 27 league fields involved with MTG, with matches taking place every Saturday from March to October. Health education sessions at these sites usually are delivered around some football related gathering, such as before, during or after

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<sup>16</sup> F.I. 8: Khamsi, Fathime (Fatima), MTG Head Site Coordinator. Formal interview.

matches and practices. Fatima, MTG's head site coordinator, adds,

"Often brief health messages taking as short as 20 minutes are conducted at a football field before a match. Football related games are used to pass on our health messages. Peer education sessions are also held during all major tournaments and events."<sup>17</sup>

Fatima says that these educational programs are largely created by the league members themselves, and serve as opportunities for the girls to emerge as leaders in the community by being the ones to create and pass on the health information to other members of the community. The field education sites not only serve as places where information is shared but also as a form of empowerment for the girls who are conducting the educational sessions. By drawing community members together to learn about health at a site where girls are also featured playing football publicly further challenges the stereotype of what girls are able to do. And by connecting girls' football with increased health knowledge, Fatima says the community becomes more aware of the benefits MTG can provide and is more supportive of the organization as a whole.

#### 4.2 Primary and Secondary Educational Sites

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<sup>17</sup> F.I. 8: Khamsi, Fathime (Fatima), MTG Head Site Coordinator. Formal interview.

The other method of delivering health education takes place directly in primary and secondary schools. These schools are sites that participate in MTG's football league (in other words, the schools need to have a girls football team that is actively engaged with MTG in order to gain the benefits of having educational sessions brought to their schools. MTG sees football and everything that accompanies it as an integral and non-separable aspect of the development project, and therefore staunchly requires its involvement).

MTG underwent an expansion in 2007, with nine new schools being added<sup>18</sup>. Taking into consideration the low transition rate of 14.4% for girls going from primary to secondary school, MTG is focusing on targeting primary age schoolgirls in an attempt to improve this statistic. Seven out of the nine new schools added were primary institutions. Through the in-school peer education programs last year, a total of 726 girls were reached with health information.<sup>19</sup> MTG peer educators worked with 7 primary schools once a week for a period of six months. The schools were selected on the basis of their participation in the MTG annual primary schools football tournament and in MTG leagues. These schools should also not have been supported with health education during the previous year. During the educational sessions, Fatima reported the topics covered revolved around understanding adolescence and its characteristics; menstruation, assertive decision making including postponing sex, what is rape and what to do when raped, STIs, HIV & AIDs, drug and substance abuse, violence against girls and women, stress management, problem solving and goal setting. The sessions were conducted in an interactive way, at times

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<sup>18</sup> F.I.1: Van Dam, Cocky, MTG Head Football Coordinator. Formal interview.

<sup>19</sup> F.I. 8: Khamsi, Fathime (Fatima), MTG Head Site Coordinator. Formal interview.

using skits as well as song and dance, where students were given opportunities to discuss, ask questions and share experiences.

Both MTG's field and school education sites are widely known among the community, such that a number of external organizations in Kilifi County have requested MTG peer educators to facilitate health education during their own events. These organizations were KEMRI (Kenya Medical Research Institute-Kilifi) and Plan International, Kilifi. A special request was also made by Mazeras Girls High School and KESHO (a Community-Based Organization that promotes education by offering scholarships to intelligent children from poor families).<sup>20</sup> These requests demonstrate external stakeholders' confidence in MTG peer educators' abilities to deliver high quality health education and information.

## **Objectives**

The focus of my research was to analyze the capacity of Moving The Goalpost through the lens of their philosophy and organizational mandate, as well as to answer these questions connecting to my perception of common problems that girls' developmental organizations focused through sport face:

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<sup>20</sup> F.I. 8: Khamsi, Fathime (Fatima), MTG Head Site Coordinator. Formal interview.

1. How does MTG maximize efficiency, given limited resources? Look at how they make decisions about project execution.
2. What is the impact of MTG; does increased membership duration bring increased benefits?
3. What is the local community's perception of girls' football and MTG's work?
4. What challenges remain, and how does MTG address these things? How can it improve its capacity to address these issues?

## **Literature Review**

For my literature review, I chose two reports analyzing methods of organizational capacity and performance accountability for NGOs, and two reviews on sports and their role in development.

1. "NGOs and Organizational Change," by Alnoor Ebrahim (Cambridge), 2003.

Dr. Ebrahim of Cambridge University provides a well-informed analysis of the relationships between two NGOs in rural India and donors in North America. Based on his extensive field research, he recognizes how NGOs work in a complex world full of different stakeholders. He reveals a realistic picture of how NGOs "play the game" so to speak, and present information (while sometimes withholding it) depending on the audience of the moment.

Ebrahim clearly outlines how NGOs and donors depend on each other: NGOs gain funding by putting forth 'successful' statistics of how their organization is doing 'well' thereby painting their donors with a profitable reputation. In reciprocation, the donors continue giving funds. It creates a system where the NGOs have huge incentives not to publish anything negative in their findings since that could directly disrupt the flow of money they rely on to operate. The results of this are many, however Ebrahim asserts that this type of exchange leads to favored short-term, easily measurable activities at the expense of longer-term, more structurally effective political and social change. He calls it an "unfortunate truth" and a "stable system that reinforces itself without promoting high quality work in the field." It is painted as a critical, system-wide weakness that should be of major concern.

2. "Non-Governmental Organizations - Performance and Accountability," by Michael Edwards and David Hulme. Published through Earthscan, 1995.

This comprehensive book provides a review of issues of performance and accountability for NGOs, based on a wide range of case studies and field research done by the authors. It is still highly relevant today.

The book speaks to the complexity of what NGOs are trying to achieve and how is it difficult to measure their performance since it is almost always a matter of judgment and subjective interpretation. But NGOs don't get let of the hook for this reason. In fact I found the main tone to be highly critical of NGOs, and it points to increasing evidence that NGOs do not perform as effectively as had been assured or as they claim.

In keeping with Ebrahim's work, this book describes how

NGOs operate with very little accountability and how “Northern NGO survival has been almost completely delinked from performance,” because they appear to be “under little obligation to tell the truth to their supporters.” The editors emphasize the importance of the quality of the relationships between NGOs, donors and governments – and of negotiation as a necessary step in improving accountability between different actors.

The editors deduce: “Improving performance-assessment and accountability is not an ‘optional extra’ for NGOs; it is central to their continued existence as independent organizations with a mission to pursue. However, judged by the meager level of resources devoted to organizational development in these areas and the reluctance of NGOs to innovate, an independent observer would have to conclude that most were not seriously concerned about accountability at all.”

From other more recent reports, it seems like there is little evidence that the sector as a whole has changed very much since Edwards and Hulme published this conclusion.

3. “Evidence in the Field of Sport and Development: An Overview,” by Schwery Consulting. Biel/Bienne: Schwery Consulting, 2008.

Schwery Consulting discusses the challenges of evaluating the impact of sport on development. In spite of the popularity of sport and recent resurgences to use it as a tool for development, there is not a lot of scientific evidence supporting the causal relationship between sport and development. The report says there are many methodological challenges in determining this link: “In many instances it is almost impossible to isolate specific sport effects from non-sporting ones. For instances, a

simple correlation between physical activity and smoking does not explain the causality. It could be that people stop smoking because of their level of sporting activity (causality) or that heavy smokers simple avoid sport (reverse causality). Or it is possible that a third factor explains the relationship (spurious correlation)."

The report asserts that a shift has taken place, both in policy and in rhetoric used to discuss development and sport. More and more governments and donors are driven by accountability and have to prove the impact they have in order to continue funding. With this policy shift came a different rhetorical question being asked: instead of "is sport good or bad?" came the more pragmatic question of "what are the preconditions that sport needs to deploy positive outcomes" and "how do programs have to be designed to be effective?" The report outlines three ways sport and development can interact:

1. "Sport Plus" - The traditional focus of sports development argues that the promotion of sport has a direct effect on raising self-esteem, increasing resilience, building character, and teaching team building among participants.
2. "Plus Sport" - Organizations that follow this theory use sport as a vehicle though which messages are communicated. This relationship is similar to the first, however there are differences in evaluating the outcomes.
3. "Sports as a Platform for Development" - The popularity of sports can be used as a platforms to promote a developmental cause. This option usually involves professional athletes who make contributions by raising awareness about critical social or health issues.

4. "Harnessing The Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments," by Right To Play on behalf of the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (SDPIWG). Right To Play, 2008.

The Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group (SDPIWG) published "Harnessing the Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments" in 2008. This report demonstrates that well-designed programs that prioritize the best values of sport can drive development goals forward. The report presents:

- Consolidated evidence of sport's effectiveness as a development agent in areas such as health and disease prevention, child and youth development, gender empowerment, inclusion of persons with disabilities, and peace-building
- Specific policy recommendations for government sectors working in these areas
- Practical recommendations to all ministries within national governments on how to integrate sport as a tool for development and peace into national and international development policies and programs.

## **Methodology**

For approximately three weeks I was heavily involved with the staff working at the head MTG office, based in Kilifi, Kenya. I assisted them and conducted my personal research at both the main administrative building and at nine surrounding schools participating as MTG education

sites. My research activity took several forms. I conducted formal interviews with the head football coordinator of MTG, the head educational site coordinator, as well as the head coach and coordinator for the U-16 MTG United Team (for United Teams, the best players are gathered together to represent MTG in tournaments outside of the Kilifi District). I had the benefit of speaking to the top level of personal involved with MTG because of my proximity to the office headquarters. I also held formal interviews with six small groups of teachers, adults, and other influential community members at MTG educational school sites in various parts of Kilifi. These provided me with context and opinions that were invaluable in analyzing the place MTG has within local communities.

I conducted numerous informal interviews with community members, three other small groups of teachers and parents at MTG educational sites, six MTG girl league players, and three family members of MTG participants.

I observed the work of MTG employees for three weeks, witnessing individual work, staff interactions, phone calls, meetings between the head administrative staff and divisional directors, meetings between the MTG staff and educational site directors, fieldwork, community interaction, educational programs conducted at schools and the preparations for them, MTG player interactions, and personal involvement in MTG football instruction through daily practices.

I directly administered a survey collecting information to 186 MTG players across differing demographics at nine MTG as educational sites. From this quantitative data I was able to analyze broad trends looking at MTG sites on whether accessibility (distance) to MTG headquarters and the established age (number of years in partnership with MTG) of the site influenced program effectiveness. I aimed to see if

these independent variables affected experienced benefits. Through interviewing community members, I also was able to see how those two independent variables affected community perceptions of MTG.

## **Definitions of Key Terms**

**Development:** There are many different definitions of development. For the purpose of my study, I refer to development as a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and thus accordingly the distribution of benefits.

**Sport:** Perhaps just as diverse as the definitions behind development, if not more so, are the meanings given to the term 'sport.' For the purposes of my project, I use the definition published by The International Working Group on Sport for Development and Peace partnering with Right To Play<sup>21</sup> (a leading group in the field of Sport and Development): "Sport refers to all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction, such as play, recreation, organized or competitive sport, and indigenous sports and games." It is an extremely comprehensive definition, one

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<sup>21</sup> Right To Play, "Harnessing The Power of Sport for Development and Peace: Recommendations to Governments," Right To Play on behalf of the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group.

that incorporates all forms of sport, physical activity and exercise<sup>22</sup>.

**Sport and Development:** There are many relationships that could be drawn between sport and development. When I use the terms together as one influencing the other, I mean to address these following things<sup>23</sup> that sport has been most commonly linked to:

- Individual development
- Health promotion and disease prevention
- Promotion of gender equality
- Social integration and the development of social capital
- Peace building and conflict prevention/resolution
- Post-disaster/trauma relief and normalization of life
- Economic development
- Communication and social mobilization.

**NGOs:** I use the definition of Eric D, Werker and Faisal Z. Ahmed as published in the Journal of Economic Perspectives article, "What Do Non-Governmental Organizations Do?"

<sup>24</sup>They outline NGOs as private organizations characterized primarily by humanitarian or cooperative, rather than commercial, objectives "... that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development" in developing countries. NGOs, then, are the subset of the broader nonprofit sector that engage

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<sup>22</sup> However it should be noted that such comprehensive definitions are unusual in the broader research reviewed. There is invariably a focus on organized sport and physical activity in the research because of its accessibility to researchers and its measurability in terms of participation, energy output, etc.

<sup>23</sup> United Nations Sport for Development Peace Initiative, "Sport for Development and Peace: The UN System in Action," The Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group.

<sup>24</sup> Ahmed, Faisal Z. & Werker, Edward D, "What Do Non-Governmental Organizations Do?" The Journal of Economic Perspectives.

specifically in international development. Werker and Ahmed's definition excludes many of the nonprofit actors in developed countries such as hospitals and universities.

**CBOs:** Stands for Community-Based Organizations. At times they are lumped together with non-governmental organizations and viewed in the same category. However, I feel these categories should remain separate, because unlike non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations exist to benefit their members directly. NGOs are one group of players who are active in the efforts of international development and increasing the welfare for poor people spanning many different communities.

## **Analysis and Results**

The objective of my research was to analyze the capacity of Moving The Goalpost through the lens of their philosophy and organizational mandate, as well as to answer these questions connecting to my perception of common problems that girls' developmental organizations focused through sport face:

5. How does MTG maximize efficiency, given limited resources? Look at how they make decisions about project execution.
6. What is the impact of MTG; does increased membership duration bring increased benefits?
7. What is the local community's perception of girls' football and MTG's work?
8. What challenges remain, and how does MTG address these things? How can it improve its capacity to address these issues?

### **Objective #1: How MTG Maximizes Efficiency Given Limited Resources**

During my time spent at MTG headquarters and surrounding educational sites, I was able to gain a clear view on how MTG makes decisions and executes projects with the resources they are provided with. As with every organization, especially NGOs, finance management and donor funding is an extremely important part of how the organization runs. MTG began with a small seed of funding from the British Council, with the advice and guiding support of Moving the Goalpost UK (a registered charity in the UK).<sup>25</sup> Since 2001, MTG has been aggressive in courting new donors and publishing their events in order to secure other sponsorship. MTG has a very active online website and newsletter campaign (one monthly publication by the head staff as well as the Tunaweza Newsletter, which is written and published entirely by MTG girls and is more for the local community) that serve to spread the word about what MTG does<sup>26</sup>. These easily accessible modes of communication attract interest and have proved very effective tools to garner new donor attention and support. Today the

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<sup>25</sup> F.I.1: Van Dam, Cocky, MTG Head Football Coordinator. Formal interview.

<sup>26</sup> Moving The Goalpost, "Publications," Accessed online, 19 April 2012.

organization receives funding from big name donors such as VSO Jitolee East African Volunteering, Ford Foundation (East Africa), Street Football World, Lauraus, Safaricom Foundation, Kenyan-German Development Cooperation, Women Win, and the Embassy of Denmark (Nairobi), Alistair Berkely Trust,, KNVB, Alive and Kicking, KESHO, ILO, Adidas, as well as surrounding school and local volunteers. <sup>27</sup>

Even though this list of high profile donor names sounds impressive, MTG still needs be ever conscious about project finances, as donor support can be taken away as quickly as it is offered and change in donors is common. To this end, MTG takes several steps to ensure their organization has multiple layers of durability and is not sustained solely by one sect of funding. One of the ways MTG increases its resilience is to employ a very high percentage of local girls<sup>27</sup>. This strategy has multiple benefits, yet two reasons seem to be the driving forces for why MTG has chosen this direction. The first one is money saved on paying yearly salaries. Foreign employees work at a much higher expense rate than local workers do, if nothing else just based on travel expenses to and from the project location. Clara said<sup>28</sup> that it is also normal for local women to work for fewer wages than international employees because they are personally invested and dedicated to seeing change for their families and peers. This dedication helps amplify the capacity of the organization. Every employee<sup>29</sup> I spoke with said she has logged many unpaid hours of work but that it was worth the extra time because of the difference MTG can make in girls' lives.

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<sup>27</sup> F.I.1: Van Dam, Cocky, MTG Head Football Coordinator. Formal interview.

<sup>28</sup> F.I.9: Mrengi, Clerice (Clara), MTG U-16 United Head Coach. Formal interview.

<sup>29</sup> All informal interviews with employees during April 20<sup>th</sup> to May 11<sup>th</sup>

The other central reason for why MTG has focused on keeping their staff local is because of their expressed belief that projects with serious community support can be more efficiently executed at every step. All of the staff members pointed to the strong integration with community personal as one of the main strengths of MTG. Fatima describes<sup>30</sup> the process:

“All of our peer educational workers are local women and girls...they can talk to the youth and see what really is needed. Our staff is mainly all field workers...The women go and actually talk to the girls, see and hear what their lives are like and the types of stories they have, and then we build our programs from there. Our projects start with talking to the girls, not in [the head office building].”

MTG employees and participants keep this idea central to everything the organization does. Most staff members I observed spent a substantial portion of their workweek in the target schools or communities, researching the girls, and working to better understand their needs. MTG also assigns a large portion of their budget to projects evaluating and further researching what exactly is the current basis of knowledge the community has on important health issues, and what specifically needs to be addressed. Clara says<sup>31</sup> because conversation and community participation is so encouraged, young girls feel like they have a voice within the MTG community. That ultimately this is the core purpose of MTG's work: to empower those young girls.

It is not solely a grassroots effort. Certain studies, particularly the bigger studies assessing wide spread

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<sup>30</sup> F.I. 8: Khamsi, Fathime (Fatima), MTG Head Site Coordinator. Formal interview.

<sup>31</sup> F.I.9: Mrengi, Clerice (Clara), MTG U-16 United Head Coach. Formal interview.

improved financial gains for communities participating with MTG, are done through important partnerships. Cocky told me:

“We have to have external help in some of the bigger audits and studies. We lack the capacity to do those types of things ourselves just yet. We work closely with these partners, and need to involve government departments and others to tap their resources. Development intersect many fields and the process needs to be collaboratively addressed.”<sup>32</sup>

MTG has many current projects that utilize external partnership. Through these other NGOs, government departments, and individual donor charities, MTG is able to affect a much larger faction and scope of the community than they would have the ability to do otherwise. The following are a few selected projects<sup>32</sup> that MTG, along with external donors, is most recently involved with:

1. CTC (Coach the Coach): The Coach the Coach program started in 2005 with help of a VSO volunteer. The aim of the program is to empower girls to coach their own football teams and to improve the standard of football in MTG. To date the CTC program has trained about two hundred fifty girls as coaches at three different levels: beginners, intermediate and advanced. A MTG CTC manual in Kiswahili has been developed, and a group of ten girls have now been trained as CTC program coaches. One girl, who began as a program participant in 2005, is now coordinating the CTC program.

2. Affordable Sanitary Pads: One of MTG's most recent endeavors is to make sanitary pads more available to girls in East Africa, starting with Kilifi. MTG says that a very

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<sup>32</sup> F.I.1: Van Dam, Cocky, MTG Head Football Coordinator. Formal interview.

common problem they see is their girls feeling embarrassed, shy, uncomfortable and hindered when they have their periods because they cannot afford to buy sanitary pads. Instead they use cloth, cotton wool, pieces of mattress or anything they can find to take the place of sanitary pads. It impacts their school and home lives and it also stops some of them from playing sports altogether. That is why MTG has decided to try to do something about it, backed by one of their most supportive long-term donors The Ford Foundation. Through Ford, MTG was linked with T4T (T4T.com) in Uganda to see whether they could produce and distribute the sanitary pads patented by T4T MakaPads. Currently MTG and T4T MakaPads are working on a business plan to see if MTG can make this a social enterprise. Through being a member of the streetfootballworld network, MTG has enlisted the help of a team of Sony Graduates who will apply their business skills to help develop the plan. The aim is simple, to make affordable sanitary pads available to more girls. Yet the solution is complex - that's why MTG is using all the help they can get from people with different skills to try and set up a viable social enterprise which has the potential to increase the income of young women and girls (as rural salespeople) and allow girls to menstruate with a little more dignity than they currently do.

3. Awards System with KESHO: Many girls in Kilifi do not get a chance to go to secondary school because they cannot raise the school fees needed. MTG promotes education by encouraging girls to stay in school and discussing with parents and girls the importance of an education. MTG has created an awards system where girls who are identified as having exception grades, attendance scores in school and MTG program events, football events, and leadership proficiency, are granted awards. Girls who benefit from these awards

receive support towards their school fees if they are in secondary school and towards their textbooks, uniform etc. if they are in primary school. MTG also assists girls to access other sponsorships and has an agreement with a local organization called KESHO who personally supports four MTG girls, selected based on MTG's award scheme, to go on to secondary school every year. In 2011, 50 girls received some type of leadership award from MTG.

## **Objective #2: The Impact of MTG**

To address this objective I conducted a study that aimed to gauge the impact of MTG on a cross-section of members. I wished to see if increased membership duration brought increased benefits to MTG participants.

1. Procedure: Nine school sites were taken at random from each of the four districts (Kaloleni, Ganze, Bahari, and Vitengeni). The schools included four older MTG sites established before the 2007 expansion, and five newer sites; five sites were more accessible and four were less accessible to the headquarters. A letter to the head teachers of the nine schools requested permission to collect data from willing MTG members. The heads passed the information on to the MTG members and consent materials for their parents. I visited the nine schools over a period of three days, in the footsteps of a separate group of MTG researchers who were doing a follow-up study for another project. At the schools, the head teacher gathered about 20 MTG members in one room. I explained the purpose of my project using Swahili. After the general instructions, the girls completed the short survey before answering the other researchers' questions.

2. Hypothesis testing: In this cross-sectional survey, the main independent variable was membership duration, with the dependent variable being benefits experienced. I proposed that any benefits are more likely to be achieved with greater exposure to the program (It should be noted that for MTG sites, site duration correlates directly to membership duration, as in the older the site is, the longer the girl has been a member of MTG. Because this is exactly true for all MTG members participating through educational sites, these two factors can be viewed in the same way). This theory was made into my first hypothesis:

2.1 The more established the MTG site is (as in the longer the site had been running and the longer the girls had been MTG members), the greater amount of benefits a girl will experience in many areas of her life.

- Independent variable: age of established site in years.
- Dependent variable: amount of benefits an MTG member experiences

I chose to identify a second independent variable that I thought might influence MTG's impact level. While MTG strives to provide a uniform program at all of its sites, a concern could be that girls at less accessible sites might not be exposed to as many opportunities as those closer to the headquarters (more accessible sites). Therefore, I wanted to gather data that could provide more information about this concern. The second hypothesis I used to gauge the impact of MTG on members was:

2.2 The less accessible the site is from the headquarters, the less amounts of benefits a girl will experience.

- Independent variable: distance between MTG headquarters and MTG field site
- Dependent variable: amount of benefits an MTG member experiences

3. Sample: Overall, 186 MTG members completed the survey with between 11 and 28 participating per site. 101 girls were surveyed at older, more established sites and 85 from newer sites; 114 were from more accessible and 72 from less accessible sites. Mean membership duration was 2.3 years (with the median being 2.0 years, range 0-7 years). Most respondents were between 13 and 19 years old (mean age was 14, median age was 14.5, range was 10-25). Several omitted their date of birth. Religions reported were Christian at 88%, Muslim at 10%, and 'Other' at 2%.

MTG's target group is girls ages 10 - 25 coming from different religious backgrounds, Christian, Muslim and traditional. Possible demographic influences on outcomes were therefore age (a continuous variable computed from date of birth and date of data collection) and religion (categorical variable: Christian, Muslim and Other). Any significant difference based on these demographic variables would inform more effective program planning and targeting of resources. They could also be seen as confounders of the main independent variable.

4. Method: I designed a cross-sectional survey that would be used to respond to my two hypotheses. Questions were posed such as "I feel more confident about myself since joining MTG" that then would ask for the member to provide a score on a scale of 1-5 based on how much they agreed with the statement. The girls could mark anywhere on the continuum that they felt accurately scored their opinion.

**EX:** MTG has helped me improved my leadership skills:

1 - - - - - 2 - - - - - 3 - - - - -  
 4 - - - - - 5

There were four categories I asked questions for, with these containing various numbers of items seeking to assess perceived benefits: Thoughts and Feelings (4 items), Leadership now (3 items), Gender issues for girls and women (4 items), and HIV/AIDS (3 items).

5. Data: Table 1<sup>33</sup> shows the data gathered from the nine different MTG educational sites. The four categories are labeled in the furthest left-hand column under the heading 'section'. The numbers of items/questions that I asked in the survey are labeled in the next column, followed by a summary of their content. The independent variables of less/more accessible and newer/older sites are broken up in columns 4-7. The average scores from each category are provided, broken down by individual item that was asked on the survey. Each score is the averaged number marked by the girls on the 1-5 scale. I tallied up the scores first based on the sites being less/more accessible to the headquarters, and then separately by whether the sites were newer or older MTG locations.

6. Results:

6.1 Accessibility of site to headquarters

As table 1 shows, the results determine that accessibility of site to the headquarters, my #2 hypothesis, does not dramatically affect the amount of benefits a member receives. Only two items differed significantly (as in had a difference > 1.0) between accessible and non-accessible sites: "I feel free to say who and when I will marry," and

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<sup>33</sup> Please refer to Table 1 in the Appendix section of this report

"My parents say who and when I will marry", but they *both* had higher levels of agreement at more accessible sites. Neither provided enough information to make any true conclusions from. Thus hypothesis #2 is deemed false and accessibility of site to headquarters is concluded to not make a difference in the amount of benefits MTG members experiences.

## 6.2 Site duration

Scores related significantly to site duration, all in favor of *more* established sites. Thoughts and feelings scores was greater, displaying that girls at older sites felt MTG has positively affected their mental wellbeing. HIV/AIDS education scores were higher as well indicating that girls at the more established sites believed that MTG had had more impact on HIV-related knowledge for them. Among the item scores, girls at older sites thought their leadership skills had improved more and that they had longer futures in education. These scores overwhelmingly favored older established sites over newer sites, indicating that hypothesis #1 is true: the more established the MTG site is (as in the longer the site has been running and subsequently the girl had been a MTG member), the greater amount of benefits a girl will experience in many areas of her life.

7. Discussion: Based on this small-scale study, there were clear and significant impacts of site duration: the longer the site had been running, the more perceived benefits were gained. The results showed that longer site duration and subsequent membership duration results in perceptions of greater happiness and self confidence, more developed leadership skills, greater perceptions that MTG has changed beliefs about HIV/AIDS, a stronger belief that one can follow education as far as any male and one is more free to

make important decisions regarding her future. The management's concerns about differing benefits according to site accessibility were largely unfounded.

While there seems to be a strong amount of data to support the statement greater benefits are experienced at more (compared with less) established MTG sites, the relationship could be largely explained by age, with older girls believing they have more developed leadership skills. The older MTG sites - thus those with the members who had been participating with MTG the longest - were older in age than the newer sites and their participants. This demographic disparity could be an important influencing factor; my study did not account for this difference and thus cannot attest to its role.

8. Conclusion: This study demonstrated a link between duration of existence of and membership with the MTG project sites and a range of desirable outcomes. These included improved positive thoughts and feelings, altered views about HIV/AIDS, and stronger outcomes related to female empowerment. An apparent relationship with improved leadership skills could be explained by age. These results indicate the importance of creating a positive, enabling culture over time for the girls of impoverished communities. To evaluate further the impact of MTG site duration and membership over a period of time, future studies should track the same individuals and compare changing scores.

### **Objective #3: Communal Perceptions of Girls Football and MTG**

The communal perception of MTG and the girls participating in the football program correlated surprisingly well with the findings of Objective #2. Based on the interviews I conducted with teachers and parents at

the MTG sites, there was more support and positive reviews of the program coming from the community the longer the site had been in existence. Distance from the headquarters did not matter in terms of the positive or negative reception by the community; accessible and non-accessible sites that had been running for the same amount of years had fairly equal teacher and parent support. Similarly, accessible and non-accessible sites that had been established at the same time also had constant reviews compared to each other. However the support offered to the program differed significantly between sites that had been established since 2001 and sites that had been more recently realized since the 2007 expansion. The teachers and parents at the older MTG sites were much more supportive of the program, whereas the teachers and parents at the new sites spoke with more hesitancy of MTG's effectiveness.

Looking at the older established MTG sites first, family members and teacher were generally positive in their reviews of MTG.<sup>34</sup> I conducted three informal interviews and one formal interview with four small groups of teachers, parents, and elder community members at four old MTG sites. I also spoke with three teenage boys who had sisters participating at old MTG sites as well. This base of community members spoke highly of MTG's involvement with their students, daughters, and sisters. The teachers said that MTG promoted school attendance and improved their students' self-esteem, while the parents' main review was that the girls had an improved sense of self-discipline and

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<sup>34</sup> I.F.I.3: 2 Teachers, 1 Police Officer at an old, non-accessible education site. Informal interviews.

I.F.I.4: 1 Teacher, 2 Parents at an old, accessible education site. Informal interview.

I.F.I.5: 3 Teachers, 1 Parent, 1 Local Politician at an old, accessible education site. Informal interview.

F.I.7: 3 Teachers, 0 Parents at an old, non-accessible education site. Formal interview.

F.I.7: 3 Teachers, 0 Parents at an old, non-accessible education site. Formal interview.

sense of responsibility around the house. The young boys commented about the improved social-skills they saw in their sisters, with one saying,

“She’s just cooler. Before she was so quiet and never hung out with my friends or me. Since she’s gotten to be a better footballer and has gone [to MTG] for so long, she is more fun and outgoing.”<sup>35</sup>

Other general comments from this group included that they have seen differences in the girls’ decision making, goal setting, organizational and problem solving skills. One teacher shared,

“My students have much bigger dreams now. Before they thought they would just become a housewife, but now they want to go into business for themselves and make money. Many want to continue school and go to college- this was something we did hear before MTG.”<sup>34</sup>

Some community stakeholders in this group cited a few MTG girls that had even received national awards, secondary school scholarships and employment because they excelled in football.

Despite these achievements clearly seen by community members around old MTG sites, some community stakeholders in groups I spoke to around newer MTG sites expressed various concerns regarding football and MTG. I spoke with five small discussion groups at five different newly established MTG sites to gain insight and hear their opinions<sup>36</sup>. There was a

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<sup>35</sup> I.F.I. 7: Isaac, Joseph and Peter, brothers of MTG members. Informal interview.

<sup>36</sup> F.I.2: 3 Teachers, 3 Parents at a new, accessible education site. Formal interview.  
F.I.3: 2 Teachers, 3 Parents at a new, accessible education site. Formal interview.  
F.I.4: 3 Teachers, 4 Parents at a new, non-accessible education site. Formal interview.

high awareness of MTG's presence in the community among all respondents, but my interviews revealed that there is inadequate consultation on MTG interventions with the communities around sites that have been newly added to MTG programs. There is a need to provide concrete knowledge about what the program is actually doing in these communities. Whereas the parents and teachers at the older sites generally felt satisfied about the progression of their girls participating in MTG programs, the elder community members around the newer sites did not have as positive reviews. One teacher at a new MTG site, a secondary school in Kaloleni, said,

"I don't think much effort has been made to let the parents and older community members here know the purpose of MTG. While some parents are very satisfied with the development of their girls through participating in the football or peer education sessions, other parents do not trust MTG because a few girls have gotten pregnant since the programs started."<sup>36</sup>

With another teacher at a newly established primary school site adding,

"I don't know what activities go on outside of normal school hours. Parents ask me what I think about MTG and I don't know what to tell them, because I don't know myself."<sup>36</sup>

Another parent at a newly established MTG secondary site had similar sentiments,

"I know some mothers who said their girls would come home late for dinner every night. They said they were coming from MTG whenever they returned home late, but does

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F.I.5: 2 Teachers, 5 Parents at a new, non-accessible education site. Formal interview.

F.I.6: 1 Teacher, 1 Parents at a new, accessible education site. Formal interview.

the mother know for certain what she is doing? No, she does not. This trust is a valuable thing in families here and you just don't know if girls tell the truth about things like this. I am [at the MTG survey] because I want to learn more about this program and what the girls do."

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Many parents and teachers said they first heard about MTG through family members, friends or other MTG members or football tournaments. However most weren't aware of any program or meeting that had been formally set up to introduce the community to MTG and the work they would be doing with the girls. As a result, some football tournaments were not well attended, particularly for schools where teachers and parents felt neglected. No mechanism has been established for the parents or other community members to relay their concerns or resolve issues with MTG. Since the girls are part of a wider society, assuring long term involvement with MTG demands for immediate consultation with and ongoing support from parents and the community.

When I asked staff members for some reasons why the communities around newly established sites generally felt apprehensive about MTG's work or felt ignored, reasons given were that MTG has primarily focused on its target audience - i.e. in-school and out-of-school girls - with limited consultation of parents and other community members regarding the purpose and activities of MTG.<sup>37</sup> A few community stakeholders were involved when MTG was launched, however since the 2007 expansion when the new sites were added, head staff admits the main focus has been on the girls. They said that communal perception is vital concern though; they maintain better involvement and communication

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<sup>37</sup> F.I. 8: Khamsi, Fathime (Fatima), MTG Head Site Coordinator. Formal interview.

is a high priority for the immediate future of the program.<sup>38</sup>

#### **Objective #4: Remaining Challenges and Recommendations**

After spending time at MTG and observing a portion of the work they do, I identified two main challenges that I felt MTG would benefit from targeting, and offered my recommendation and help in addressing them. These areas pertained to community stakeholders' perception of MTG and the quality of peer education within the school sites. I felt by sharing these observations and suggestions that MTG could improve the already valuable work they do.

##### 1. Improve Communication within New Communities

Based on my research and observation, I would say that currently the biggest challenge faced by MTG is improving the local perception of the organization and girls football among elders and community stakeholders, particularly around newer established MTG sites. These parents and teachers are not aware enough of MTG's purpose or potential benefits. Some parents restricted girls from attending peer education sessions because they feared negative outcomes of reproductive health awareness, lacked education on what the programs were about, and possibly because they were not consulted from the beginning. MTG must create more forums and meetings to educate parents and teachers to the work and goals of their organization. MTG has recognized this problem and has recently created a Community Liaison Section<sup>39</sup>. This

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<sup>38</sup> F.I.1: Van Dam, Cocky, MTG Head Football Coordinator. Formal interview.

<sup>39</sup> F.I.1: Van Dam, Cocky, MTG Head Football Coordinator. Formal interview.

position is new, however several meetings to be held with parents in the upcoming weeks have already been planned. I was able to participate in two different meetings where we brainstormed key discussion points to include in the meetings:

- Providing education and moral support for girls
- Education about the rights of the girl child
- Building capacity of the girls to enable them to become productive adults in the future for the sake of their community and Kenya
- Understanding the role of MTG in helping girls achieve their life potential.
- Based on improved understanding, urge parents to support their daughters to register as players

In addition, added focus should be put on “Tumanyane Days” (meaning let us know each other in the local Kigiriama dialect). These days have historically played a big role at MTG and bring the girls, community leaders, and parents together and in touch with MTG. When MTG first started out, Tumanyane days were very important in establishing contact with the community and helped shape the views and perception of MTG in the minds of community members. Since then focus has been diverted to other areas of the rapidly growing organization due to the new expansion of schools and teams added to MTG. However a renewed effort to return to the Tumanyane Days is critical and recommended. Staff members were very responsive to this concept and steps will aim to cultivate adequate stakeholder support in the future.

## 2. Improve the Quality of Peer Education Sessions

I attended many peer education sessions, and while the

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potential benefits are obvious and certain positive outcomes definitely result from them, I observed shortcomings regarding their delivery. The lack of incentive from the educators themselves sometimes created an environment that was less than motivating. It seemed as though some girls were conducting the education sessions by force or because they needed to in order to participate on the MTG football teams, and not because they felt inspired to teach the information. In addition, the fact that there is no feedback system or supervision for the peer education session conducted by even the newest peer educators limits accountability for the entire program. Peer educators admitted that although they refer girls to health care providers, there was limited follow up. It would benefit MTG and the receiving community if there was a communication line created that would focus on reviewing the quality of peer educators and the sessions they conduct to ensure ongoing discourse. I presented this view to Fatima and other staff members at MTG and they subsequently held a meeting right before I left to discuss the topic of how to improve peer education. Various suggestions were given by community stakeholders to enhance peer education, including use of theater, and continued involvement of parents and the community. It was decided that to further enhance confidence, skills, and motivation, peer educators require a continuous update or refresher training with periodic review of retained knowledge and misconceptions, plus ongoing supportive supervision by MTG field coordinators and improved links with health care providers to assure youth friendly services are continually provided to the children.

## **Conclusion**

In the context of the global fight against poverty, I discussed the important role girls development agencies focused through sport can have in improving standards of life for impoverished communities. Moving the Goalpost in Kilifi, Kenya is one of those organizations engaged in this struggle by dealing with the complex problems belonging to the poor Kenyan girl living on the Swahili coast. Through working at MTG and observing their work in the office and in the field, as well as participating in their football and educational programs, I aimed to analyze the organization within the context of these questions:

1. How does MTG maximize efficiency, given limited resources? Look at how they make decisions about project execution.
2. What is the impact of MTG; does increased membership duration bring increased benefits?
3. What is the local community's perception of girls' football and MTG's work?

I then focused on identifying remaining challenges, and offered my recommendations for improvement in these areas. Through my research I confirmed that there are many challenges facing the girl child in Kilifi, ones that are fuelled by cultural practices of educating boys rather than girls as well as the negative realities of poverty. Consequences include high incidence of unwanted pregnancies, rapid spread of HIV, and low individual self-esteem, which only result in perpetuating poverty. The potential of the MTG program to increase education and empower adolescent girls in Kilifi to think critically and achieve their dreams is clearly visible. MTG has multiple strategies to achieve this aim, focused on football education coupled with peer educational programs conducted at both the football fields and in participating school sites.

The advantages of using football as the vehicle to

transfer knowledge about reproductive health and other matters are evident from the fact that the girls not only learn to play football but also gain confidence to take charge of their sexual and reproductive health practices. Data from evaluations reveal that since its inception MTG has reached many in-school and out-of-school girls through its football tournaments and peer education activities, which are generally well perceived by respondents in terms of promoting school attendance, reducing problems of menstruation, increasing access to health care, increasing individual self-esteem and social interactions, and enabling older girls to secure scholarships for secondary school and employment. The program appears successful in empowering these girls to assume an active role in their community. This implies they have potential for further leadership capabilities in community mobilization and development projects.

I provided my recommendation for further expansion of core activities focusing on increased communication among key stakeholders and improved peer education strategies. Added effort to include parents and teachers in program creation, as well as providing transparency and knowledge of the organization's activities, will serve to increase the capacity of the organization by improving its perception from community stakeholders' point of view. While it is too early to measure the impact of MTG activities in reducing teenage pregnancy and risk of HIV among the adolescent girls, it is important that MTG implements a more comprehensive sexual reproductive and health education program that fosters follow-up care for the girls and accountability for its peer educators. Many of these recommendations will take long-term efforts to accomplish, however should they be realized they could further develop the potential of the organization to create a more lasting

change in its target regions.

## **Limitations**

While conducting this project I experienced many limitation that may have hampered my ability to effectively and accurately assess MTG. Organizational performance and long-term evaluation of influence is a crucial part of understanding any organization's place in a community. I lacked the skill-set, resources, and necessary amount of time to reach any sort of conclusions that would speak to MTG's organizational performance. While I was able to provide parts of data to a much larger picture, my research was limited to just that. I was constrained with how much I could actually contribute, perhaps the most so due to the short amount of time in the ISP period. I was unable to see the progression of projects, the hiring and firing of personal, how larger structural challenges were addressed, and basically the evolution of MTG. The short month-long window may not have been adequate to fully get an accurate idea of the organization.

Personal bias may have also affected how I understood and evaluated MTG. I entered into their project coming from a culture that prioritizing timely efficiency and rigid clarity of organization. I may have seen the ways they conducted meetings, practices, and educational programs as unclear and disorganized because of my different values of time management. I may have also underestimated the level of

indigenous knowledge about football and educational teaching. This bias could have contributed to me unfairly assessing the effectiveness of peer educational sessions and other forms of meetings.

My access to projects and communities was limited because of how far away some of them were. Even though I accompanied many MTG staff during their fieldwork, I was physically unable to be in multiple places at once and therefore did not see the entire scope of MTG's work. I was also limited with how much I could connect with the target communities I did visit, due to length of time present there as well as factors such as language barriers, cultural differences, etc. This lack of full understanding about the communities could have hindered my overall consideration of the work done by MTG.

Finally, I don't pretend to be an expert on NGOs, the Kenyan Government, or at collecting infallible data. I conducted this project to the best of my ability and skill-set, however am aware that without professional training in these areas, the clarity of my insight to an organization such as MTG is limited. Inadequate personal knowledge may have been a constraint in this study.

## **Recommendations for Further Study**

Another project could expand on the conclusions drawn from my study. On its own, my research was a cross-sectional study and could not statistically prove whether individual girls experienced increased benefits over a set period of time. Data of increased benefits would be better demonstrated if a follow-up study was done on the same girls who participated in my study, where their updated responses were gathered on the same questions. This would tell us

whether there is a real change in a particular direction from one year to the next.

From looking at my results, parent and community involvement still needs to be improved. A research project done specifically on the Community Liaison Section (a branch of MTG that focuses on parents and community members as key stakeholders) could be useful in analyzing the current state of community perception as well as providing specific in-depth feedback for future ways to improve this relationship.

The last recommendation I have is that a project could be done on the economic empowerment component MTG has recently integrated. In 2011 a full time staff member was employed to oversee the fast developing sector of economic empowerment activities. A needs assessment was conducted for 26 girls who were not in school to establish what specifically they needed and would benefit from and thus criterion was developed from there. Over the last six months, three girls were placed in vocational training situations, two in hair and beauty therapy and one in fashion design. An analysis of their progress could provide vital feedback for this new branch based on economic empowerment. This topic would be achievable based on several factors. MTG is a very legitimate and well-established organization, and the economic empowerment division, while new, has a strong, well-planned foundation. In other words, it is small enough to be able to be comprehensively researched while still being very impressive in its scope.

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## Interviews

### \* Formal

F.I.1: Van Dam, Cocky, MTG Head Football Coordinator. Formal interview. 23 April 2012.

F.I.2: 3 Teachers, 3 Parents at a new, accessible education site. Formal interview. 1 May 2012.

F.I.3: 2 Teachers, 3 Parents at a new, accessible education site. Formal interview. 1 May 2012.

F.I.4: 3 Teachers, 4 Parents at a new, non-accessible education site. Formal interview. 1 May 2012.

F.I.5: 2 Teachers, 5 Parents at a new, non-accessible education site. Formal interview. 1 May 2012.

F.I.6: 1 Teacher, 1 Parents at a new, accessible education site. Formal interview. 2 May 2012.

F.I.7: 3 Teachers, 0 Parents at an old, non-accessible education site. Formal interview. 2 May 2012.

F.I. 8: Khamsi, Fathime (Fatima), MTG Head Site Coordinator. Formal interview. 7 May 2012.

F.I.9: Mrengi, Clerice (Clara), MTG U-16 United Head Coach. Formal interview. 11 May 2012.

### \* Informal

I.F.I.1: Hussan, teenage boy watching U-16 MTG United Team try-outs. Informal interview. 20 April 2012.

I.F.I.2: David, father watching U-16 MTG United Team try-outs. Informal interview. 20 April 2012.

I.F.I.3: 2 Teachers, 1 Police Officer at an old, non-accessible education site. Informal interviews. 30 April 2012.

I.F.I.4: 1 Teacher, 2 Parents at an old, accessible education site. Informal interview. 30 April 2012.

I.F.I.5: 3 Teachers, 1 Parent, 1 Local Politician at an old, accessible education site. Informal interview. 30 April 2012.

I.F.I.6: 6 MTG members, ages 14-17, at MTG headquarters. Informal interview. 3 May 2012.

I.F.I. 7: Isaac, Joseph and Peter, brothers of MTG members. Informal interview. 6 May 2012.

As well as numerous informal conversations with various employees working at MTG spanning from 20 April 2012 to 11 May 2012.

## **Appendix**

