



ORGANIZATION PROFILE

P.O BOX 92-20600 Maralal
Samburu County, Kenya

info@samburugirls.foundation
www.samburugirls.foundation

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ORGANISATIONAL BACKGROUND

Samburu Girls Foundation (SGF) is an NGO or non profit that works in Northern Kenya addressing Harmful retrogressive traditional practices (HTP's) that affect the girl child among the Nomadic pastoralist communities, such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Child Marriages (CM) and Beading among other harmful cultural practices. SGF provides the rescued girls with safety, education and counselling.

The organization later integrates these girls back to their families through a systematic counselling and reconciliation program with the aim of making them Agents of Change (AoC's) in their communities. The foundation hopes to give these girls a new lease of life by providing them with opportunities to decide their future and giving them quality education, shelter and security. The organization has 9 full time staff and a board of directors of 7 people. We have acquired our 501c3 status in the U.S and we are in the process of waiting for our tax exemption status. The U.S board has 5 members.

The organization was registered in October 2011 under the number OP.218/051/11-0792/7475 but started its official operations in July 2012. Its head office is based at Maralal town, Samburu County and operates in four counties Marsabit, Isiolo, Laikipia and Samburu.

The organization's key programs are Rescue Mission, IEC, civic & child rights awareness, reconciliation and education for girls.

Vision

Empower the Pastoralist Girl Child.

Mission

To make the world a better and safer place for pastoralist girls in Kenya through the provision of life opportunities and psychosocial care, free from the harmful and retrogressive cultural practices of FGM, Beading and Child Marriage.



Goals

1. Rescue girls from Harmful/retrogressive Cultural Practices (HPC's) and provide them safety and education.
2. Establish a rescue center that will serve as a temporary safe place for girls who are in danger of undergoing HCP's can take shelter temporarily before being reconciled with their families.
3. To network and partner with the National Government, County Governments, and other organizations with aims similar to those of the organization to further the attainment of our mission and vision.
4. To impart knowledge on harmful cultural practices to the community people through civic education to change attitude and their behaviors.

MEET THE FOUNDERS



Dr. Josephine Kulea, is a Samburu lady born and brought up in this Nomadic pastoral set up. She has long been working among her people in projects to improve their health and living conditions. Josephine understands the plight of the girl child among the pastoralist people having experienced the retrogressive practices first hand growing up. Long before the birth of Samburu Girls Foundation, Josephine had been instrumental in a personal crusade to rescue girls from

FGM, Child Marriage and beading.

Her efforts with SGF have been recognized by different agencies such as the **2011 unsung hero** by former US ambassador to Kenya Michael Ranneberger during the international women's day, **2012 Head of State Commendation (HSC)** for community service, **2013 East Africa Acumen Fellow**, **2013 Covaw Champion**, **2013 UN in Kenya Person of the Year**, **Inspiring Woman 2014**, in 2015 she was recognized by African Union as a Youth Hero, **2015 Honorary degree from De Paul University**, **YALI Fellow 2014** by the Mandela Fellowship. Most notably, **2015 US President Barack Obama** acknowledged Josephine's efforts in fighting for the Samburu girl child.



PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Samburu community is highly patriarchal and the role of the woman is one that is invisible and yet the glue that holds this community together. Women are considered the property of the man and the rules that govern the conduct of women are formulated by men with a view to keep them under control. Some of the harmful cultural practices girls and women face include:

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

This is a cultural practice that involves the removal of genital organs of girls for non-medical reasons. In the Samburu community, FGM is performed to girls as young as 8-12 in preparation for marriage and/or child bearing. FGM has absolutely no medical benefits according to the Ministry of Health, Kenya and it is a violation of human rights of young girls and Females. FGM has an estimated prevalence of 96% among the Samburu communities. Those who escape this practice are considered outcasts and cannot live within the only community that they are truly part of.

Some negative effects of FGM on the girls and women include:

- Psychological Trauma
- Excruciating Pain from the procedure without any numbing technology other than cold water
- Haemorrhage
- High risks of complications during child birth
- Reduced sexual pleasure
- Sepsis (bacterial infection)
- Infertility

Child Marriage

After the girls have gone through FGM, they are expected to get married immediately the following day. The fact that they are still children does not exempt them from such a heavy responsibility. Child marriage is a human rights violation of girls and women. Marriage for girls can lead to complications in pregnancy and childbirth, one of the main causes of death of young girls aged 15-19 in Kenya. Girls who are married are also exposed to STI's, including HIV. Globally, about 15 million girls are married off while young meaning a child is

married off every 2 seconds. Although no conclusive studies have been done in the Samburu Community on child marriage, it is estimated that 3 in 5 girls are married off before their 15th birthday robbing them of their childhood. Girls as young as 10 years old are married off to men as old as 60 years, denying the girls their rights to health, education and life.

Beading

Child beading (*aishontoyie saen*) is a major cultural practice found in the Samburu community. Samburu morans, young warriors aged 15-35 years, are not allowed to marry. Hence girls as young as 9 years old are assigned to male relatives by use of red traditional beads. The young girl is adorned with beads, signifying 'engagement' for sexual purposes only. The mother of the beaded girl builds a hut outside their manyattas where the male relative visits the beaded girl to engage in sexual activity at any given moment he wishes. The 'couple' is allowed to have sexual intercourse but pregnancy and the use of contraceptives are forbidden. In case pregnancy occurs, it has to be terminated by use of herbs or by crude abortion by pressing down on the stomach. If the baby is born, it is given huge amounts of tobacco and abandoned in the forest as it is an outcast.

This traditional practice of beading has the potential of spreading HIV in the community. Girls who are initiated into sexual intercourse at a tender age have immature genital organs which are normally inflicted with cuts and ruptures in the process of intercourse with older men who are experienced and who may have sexual relations with other partners thereby creating pathways for HIV transmission and increasing their vulnerability. Although no studies or surveys have been done, the practice has it is estimated that 3 in 4 girls in the 8-12 age group are beaded.

CHALLENGES

- Lack of a rescue center in the region to place girls who are in need of safety after rescue.
- Limited resources to reach out to the whole community with civic education.
- A high level of illiteracy among the target communities makes our work conflict with community's interests.
- Lack of women involvement in decision making on issues affecting women and girls. This makes them more vulnerable to harmful cultural practices.
- Lack of female community role models as a success stories for the girls to pursue their education goals.
- Women economic dependence on men makes it impossible for them to make informed choices on their lives.
- Low retention rates of girls after mid primary due to harmful cultural practices.
- Nomadic-pastoral way of life of the community presents a serious problem in monitoring girl's progress in schools.
- Lack of a project vehicle to run the programs.

KEY STRATEGIES

1. Build a quality and fully equipped girl's rescue center that will be designed to provide safety, counseling, basic needs and education for girls who are in danger of the harmful cultural practices.
2. Provide counseling for the affected girls and their families and reconcile them after the rescue.
3. Invest in different programs to empower the girls like camps and extra curriculum activities.
4. Providing sponsorship for the rescued girls to offset financial pressures on parents to marry off their young children.
5. Educate the community through workshops and other public forums on the importance of protecting the girl child in order to change mindsets and social norms.
6. Use community role models to champion change.
7. Network and collaborate with likeminded organizations and government departments.
8. Eventually have our own girls high school to reduce the burden of fees.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

For the 5 year period of operations, Samburu Girls Foundation has achieved the following:

- Managed to rescue over 1,000 girls and placed 315 in school's country wide and 25 babies are in children homes/foster families.
- Got a piece of land (15 acres) donated by the community to build a rescue center.
- Established key partners especially in the Education sector.
- Member of Kenya Alliance on advancement of children rights [KAARC] and member of Girls not brides - a coalition of international organizations working to end child marriage and nationally a member. Member of Girl Generation an organization supporting ending of FGM.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- An established NGO working on child protection in 4 counties of Northern Kenya with major achievements
- Organization efforts have been widely recognized.
- Major success stories from the beneficiaries.

Weaknesses

- Lack of resources to give the girls quality education.
- Assumption that the organization has lots of funding owing to lots of recognition for the good work.

Opportunities

- Availability of several donors who can be interested to support the great initiative.
- Leveraging on the recognitions.
- Potential fundraising platforms including social media and others.

Threats

- Lack of political goodwill.
- Competing with big NGOs fundraising along the same areas of interest
- Community resistance due to high level of illiteracy.

SOME OF OUR BENEFICIARIES (Before and after story)



This is Rosilla. she was married off at the age of 9 to a 52 year old man as a 3rd wife. At the time of rescue, she was hawking milk around the county offices. She is now in class 7 and the best performing in her school. The two photos describe her life as a 'wife' and a pupil.





Beaded girls holding their babies. They are all in high school now while their children in primary school.





These are Kanifa and Salma who were both 11 years old. They were married off to a Chief and beaded respectively. They are all now happy to be in school.



Girls rescued from beading and they all now in primary school.



Letele, this 15 year old girl holding her son, was rescued from early marriage. The son was to be killed so that she can get a 'husband.'" she is now in school and performing well.



Santana is an 8 year old girl who was married to an old man aged 45. The parents and the 'husband' ran away. She was rescued and now in school.

