



Kumekucha Quest
Connections for Healing and Hope

COMMUNITY-LED HEALING

AN OVERVIEW ON THE KUMEKUCHA QUEST MOVEMENT



THE GREEN STRING
NETWORK

HEALING-CENTRED
PEACEBUILDING



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACK GROUND

In March, 2021, the Green String Network began piloting Kumekucha Quest with funding from Grand Challenges Canada. Kumekucha Quest is an innovative movement that adapts Green String Network's existing community-led social cohesion Programme, Kumekucha: It's a New Dawn, for children, teenagers, and young adults aged 10 to 24 years old in Kenya. Youth in Kenya—representing upwards of 60% of the population—experience chronic stress and trauma as a result of high levels of poverty, unemployment, domestic violence, police harassment, and exposure to traumatic events such as violent crime, electoral violence, witnessing extra-judicial killings, and terrorism, all while battling high levels of fear and stigma in Kenya when it comes to talking about mental health.

IMPACT

62% improvement in overall wellbeing based on the WHO Five Wellbeing Index

83% decrease in levels of post traumatic stress based on the HTQ

100% increase in knowledge and awareness on trauma and mental health

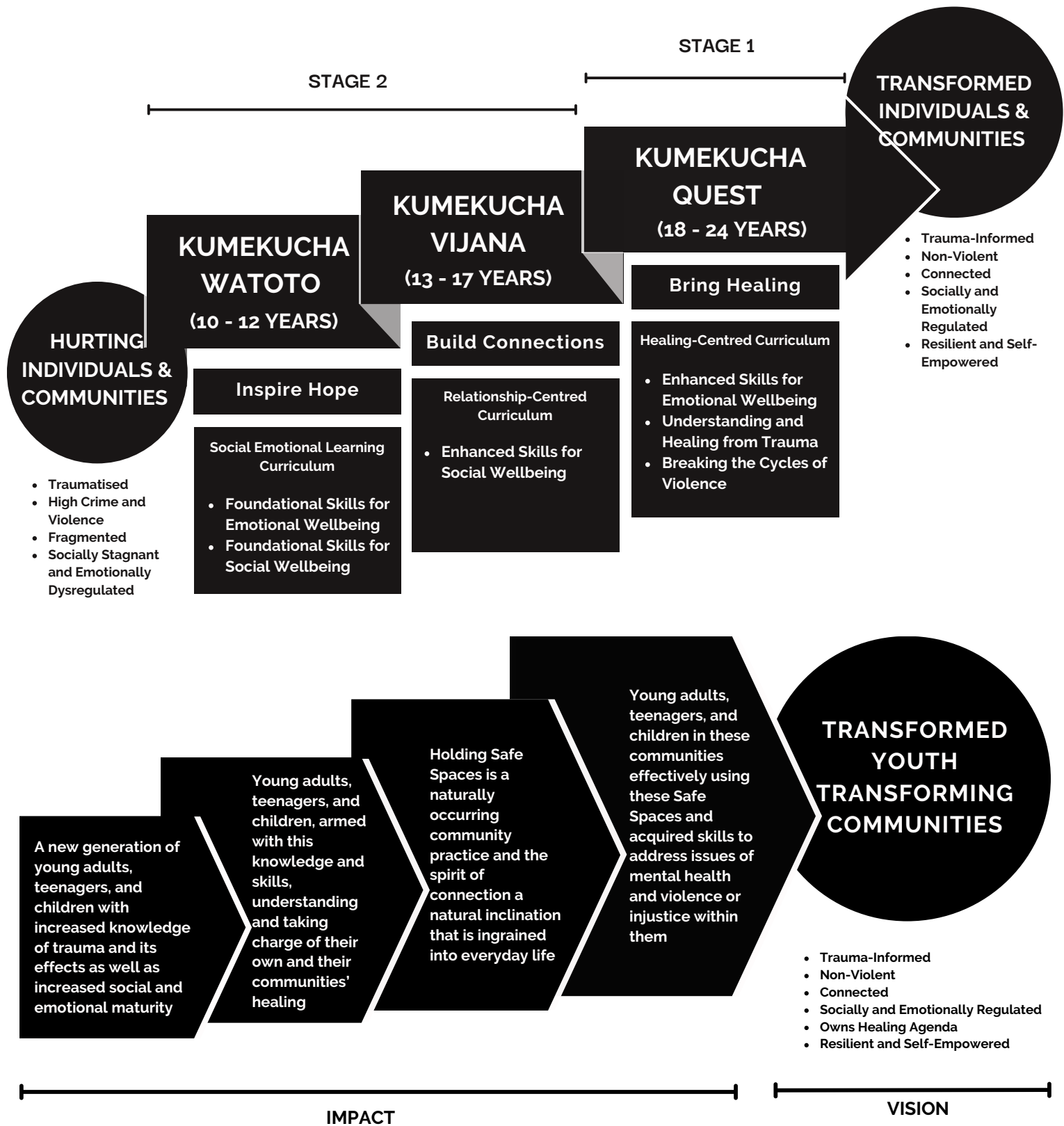
100% using emotional regulation tools by Programm end

See the **Kumekucha Quest Preliminary Report** for an in-depth reporting of findings.

VISION

Kumekucha Quest is a uniquely designed initiative that engages and supports local youth volunteers to facilitate and sustain the change they wish to see in their communities. At its heart, it aims to build connections between community members, foster mentorship and learning within these new connections that promote hope and healing, and empower them to flourish without any formal framework. Kumekucha Quest is a social movement, not simply a collection of Programmes, and is designed to offer long-lasting healing and transformation to communities. We are working to transform communities—or, more specifically, to have transformed youth transforming their communities—and, with your help, we can reach those most in need of these Programmes.

Whereas the curricula, objectives, and intended effects of the movement build up from Kumekucha Watoto through Kumekucha Vijana to Kumekucha Quest, the Programmes' implementation happens in the reverse.



Individual and collective well-being sustainably strengthens the social fabric of society resulting in self-owned agendas for increased agency, connection, resilience, and peace. This is what we are aiming for with and, when this is done, then we can realise our vision of transformed communities or, more specifically, transformed youth transforming their communities.

PROGRESS

The participants continue to become more understanding and respectful of each other's circumstances and opinions and felt comfortable opening up and sharing about their pasts without fear of being judged or looked down upon, and it is for these reasons that the ToT sessions were extremely interactive and engaging. This also boosted the CKs' and RFs' morale and the motivation to help the young people in their communities who were also in need of this. Most individuals noted, by the end of the ToT, major excitement to get started on the Programmes and apply their newly gained knowledge.



1. Kumekucha Quest

Shortly following their first Round of KQ Peer Support Circles in Nairobi and Kwale participants embarked on round 2. Beginning in the second half of 2022, a second Round of KQ groups began in Nairobi, Kwale, and Mombasa, that reached 233 (132 male and 101 female) individuals as of today. The second round of KQ groups has been completed, and mentors have been selected and trained for the Watoto and Vijana second round of groups. The impact of these groups on these young adults, and the stories of transformation coming from them, are truly inspiring (see the results section for more), Of note, KQ was also able to conduct a handful of groups with inmates at Kwale Prison. The transformation among these inmates was so profound that the county's Prison Commander has already affirmed his commitment to have KQ scaled up to prisons across the region. Currently, KQ is on the verge of beginning the third round of groups across several schools in Kwale. Additionally, new groups are about to commence in Likoni, Mombasa, in collaboration with the organization Akilimali Associates.

Moreover, there is an upcoming event in June, which will bring together all past KQ and KWW participants to celebrate their journeys and continue spreading the word about the movement. Stakeholders, including government officials, are expected to be present at this event.



2. Kumekucha Watoto and Vijana

As for the watoto and vijana, 88 Youth Mentors (YMs), thus far, of the 215 Round 1 and 233 Round 2 KQ participants have been trained in Kwale and Mombasa who, over the past few months, have been taking upwards of 200 participants through the art-rich, game-intensive Kumekucha Watoto and Vijana Programmes. Two rounds of Kumekucha Watoto and Vijana have been conducted since the start of the year, reaching a total of 247 (91 male and 156 female) Watoto/Vijana participants. A third round of Watoto and Vijana groups is commencing now in both Kwale and Likoni.

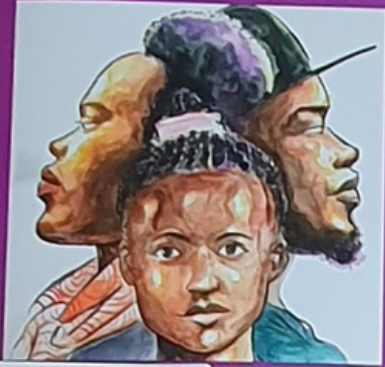
NEXT STEPS

Spurred on by and learning from our successes thus far, the KQ movement is eager to and making plans for its expansion to youth in all corners of the country, and beyond.

In line with what was hypothesised in our research, the KQ Programme has evidential potential to increase participants' level of employment, future careers, and/or general livelihood prospects long-term. In this way, it is proving the long-term effectiveness of the Triple Dividend concept. KQ, therefore, is an excellent precursor to several issue-focused programming including (but not limited to) youth livelihood, gender-based violence, and preventing violent extremism programming. Embedding KQ in such programming is a primary focus of the movement going forwards that will not only bring healing to all those involved in them but enhance the effectiveness of said programming. This assertion is based on the Market Basket analogy. The two Market Baskets are an analogy of how trauma can affect one's life: due to trauma, an individual's resilience (that is, how they react to challenges) and/or their protective factors (that is, what they have that mitigates against these challenges) are weakened and they may go through life in various negative ways; whilst healing from trauma allows individuals and communities as a whole to patch the gaps in their resilience, or build their protective factors, thereby enabling them to navigate positively through life in all its highs and lows. In the same way that healing from trauma builds resilience and/or protective factors, allowing individuals and communities to bounce back from life's challenges, it also bestows on them choice and agency (by breaking them free of their victim mentality), allowing for them to hold on to life's resources.

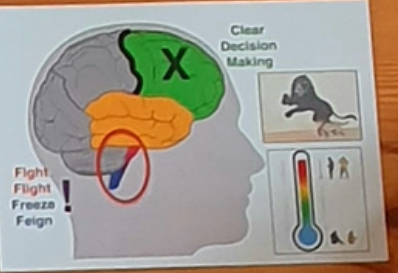


As well as embedding KQ into existing and to-be-developed issue-focused programming, the movement has also identified target sectors, populations, and locations for KQ to delve into for its continued success and scale out. In brief, the 3 main sectors KQ will be looking to branch into are education (schools, teacher training), criminal justice (prisons/corrections, probation, diversion), and social care (orphanages/children's homes, foster care). In addition to youth prisoners or offenders and youth in care or recently leaving care which are major populations of interest for the movement's future—and would be reached through the criminal justice and social care sectors, Being that this is a largely ignored and severely disadvantaged population in Kenya and one that is not visibly represented in the current KQ participant cohort. KQ will also look to target more male-centric locations, as this is the population evidently most in need of this Programme.

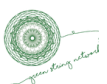
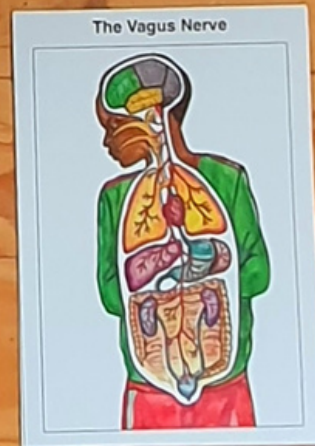
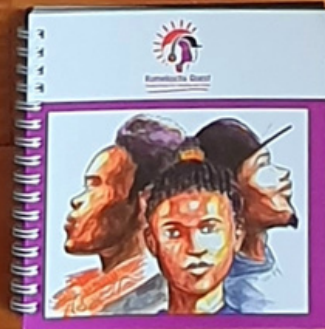
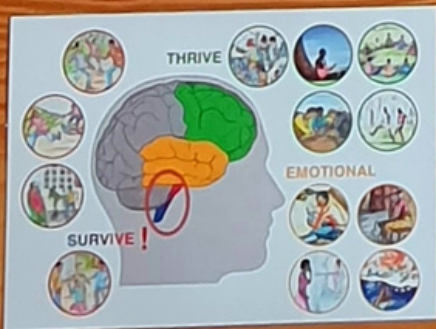
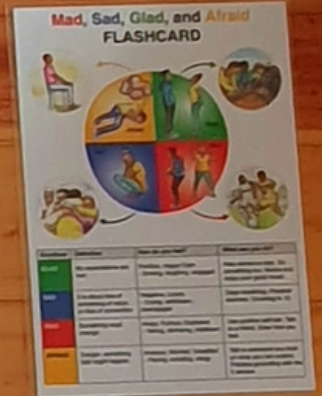
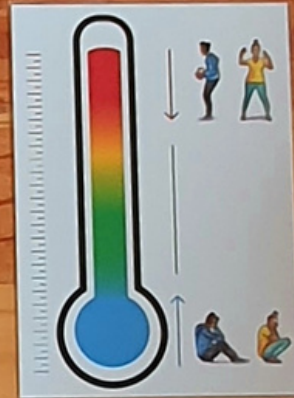


"I Refuse to be a Victim. I am a Resource for Peace."

Supporting Healing-Centred Youth Wellbeing and Resilience HANDBOOK FOR CIRCLE KEEPERS



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