

ROLE OF COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS IN EMPOWERING ORPHANS
AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN KENYA: A CASE OF MATHARE CHILD
DEVELOPMENT CENTER, NAIROBI COUNTY

by

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APPROVAL

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In accordance with Daystar University policies, this thesis is accepted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the Master of Arts degree.

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DECLARATION

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I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBOs	Community-based Organizations
CDC	Child Development Center
CDD	Community-driven Development
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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ABSTRACT

Vulnerability in children implies exposure to situations hindering their development like deprivation, exploitation, abuse, neglect, violence, and disease. Towards alleviating vulnerability, numerous initiatives have endeavored to enhance service delivery to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC). Compassion International is one such initiative uplifting the lives of vulnerable children through creating Child Development Center (CDC). This study sought to establish the role community-based programs play in empowering OVC in Kenya with Mathare CDC in Nairobi County as a case study. Objectives guiding this study were to establish the socio-economic needs of OVC, analyze criteria used in identifying OVC, analyze challenges facing programs, and assess the role of CDC in empowering OVC. The study adopted a descriptive survey design involving a sample of 120 alumni and 10 staff from Mathare CDC. Purposive sampling was used to select alumni, while census was used to select key informants. Questionnaires and an interview guide were administered, and data analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 25. The study found that Mathare CDC adopts a holistic development approach. Vulnerable children in the community were identified through CDC workers, referrals, or parents/guardians. A major challenge facing the CDC is limited financial resources. Nonetheless, the CDC has positively impacted the alumni through education, better healthcare, nutrition, positive behaviour change, spiritual growth, life skills, and talent development. The study recommends enhancing fundraising strategies to increase resource base and considering self-sustainable options to ease overdependence on donors. Support from beneficiaries, parents, and the larger community is paramount in the success of community-based initiatives.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to angel Dr. Gabriel Joseph Musungu. I know you would have loved to see this work come to fruition.

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