



Sauti Kuu

Powerful voices for our future generation

INTERNSHIP REPORT

DOROTHY SHALI MWAZIGHE

SAUTI KUU FOUNDATION |



BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF SKF

Sauti Kuu Foundation (SKF) is a non-profit organization established and registered in Kenya in 2010 and Germany in 2011. The Foundation is inspired and led by Dr. Auma Obama, who has extensive experience in working with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and young people. Sauti Kuu (meaning “Powerful Voices” in Kiswahili) works to empower rural children, youth, and their families to utilize locally available resources to improve their livelihoods, gain sustainable economic stability and food security. Using the principle, “Use what you have to get what you need”, Sauti Kuu teaches children, young people, and their families to recognize and appreciate land as an asset to improve their living conditions. The program activities are designed in such a manner that the children and young people take lead in the activities. This is because sustainable transformation and change can only occur if the beneficiaries participate actively in the development processes.

INTRODUCTION

I started my programs internship at the Sauti Kuu, Auma Obama Foundation on August 28th, 2021, and completed it on December 6th, 2021. I was warmly welcomed by Dr. Auma, Akinyi Obama – Manners, and all the other Sauti Kuu Foundations’ staff, who were compassionate and made me feel at home and safe.

My internship was based in the Alego, Nyangoma office. I enjoyed the three months of working at Alego because I was practically involved in most of the activities that took place in the organization from farming, building, and afforestation to spending time with the children and doing home visits. The main activities I carried out during my internship revolved around the different pillars of the Sauti Kuu Foundation (SKF). The four main pillars of SKF are Sustainable Economic Growth (SEG), Personality Development (PD), Infrastructure

Development (ISD), and Education & Training (ET). The operations department supports all of them.



Figure 1: Welcoming by Dr. Auma on the first day at SKF.

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH (SEG)

I participated in home visits to monitor and evaluate the progress and impact of the program on the beneficiaries. Since I was also working with the social media department, I had the privilege of accompanying other staff during these home visits to help in taking photos and videos.

Under the leadership of Mary, the SEG team taught me how to prepare portable gardens, compost manure, and stair gardens. She also advised on the best type of trees to plant at the different seasons of the year.

I learned about the dangers of the Dodder (*Spaghetti*) weed and its deadly effects on trees and plants. It invades a plant, covers all its leaves and the plant dies slowly until it eventually dries up.

I believe I will carry this knowledge with me wherever I go and will apply it and teach other people what I've learned in SKF.



Figure 2: A visit to an SKF beneficiary's homestead.

PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT (PD)

i. Sports and games

During my internship period, I helped the youths in their studies. I was also able to teach them new indoor and outdoor games like Ludo and singing games such as Mingle *Mingle*, chair dance, and balloon dance.



Figure 3: Teaching Sauti Kuu Youths (SKYs) how to play Ludo during PD.

I participated actively in sports games such as football, netball, basketball, the **Kati* game, and the hula hoop with the children.



Figure 4: Playing Netball with SKYs.

ii. Open Mic

This was my favorite activity. I learned new dancing styles from the SKYs and I also taught them new dance choreographies like Zumba dances. They learned so enthusiastically and I was delighted. I also interacted with the youngest SKYs and also taught them new nursery rhymes through the *Coco Melon Cartoons Channel* on YouTube.

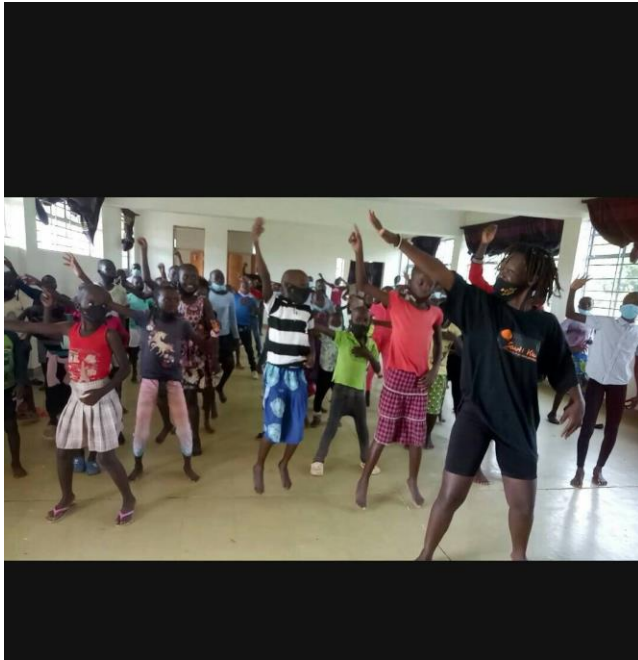


Figure 5 : Teaching SKYs Zumba dance.

Although I am not conversant with the Dholuo language, I did not experience a lot of difficulties interacting with the community since they welcomed me quite well. I was able to learn a few Dholuo vocabularies as well.

HOSPITALITY SERVICES

I took part in hospitality duties whenever there were guests or Dr. Auma was around. I was in the team that helped in food preparations and served them during their entire stay. I was also assigned to assist by leading in the accommodation logistics whenever we had guests coming to stay in the organization and assisted in doing shopping too whenever I was needed. I also helped with the registration of SKYs and Sauti Kuu Parents (SKPs) whenever there was an event, for example when the first Kendo project was being conducted at the RTL Children Learning Centre.



Figure 6: Dorothy & Malaika registering participants during the first Kendo project.

I also got a temporary pet during my internship. Mbilu is the most charming cat! He made me realize that I also need a pet of my own. I'll miss him a lot.



Figure 7: Mbilu, the cat I was taking care of.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT (ISD)

In this department, I worked with Meshack and Wakoli. I learned how to assemble shelves.



Figure 8: Working with Meshack in making office shelves.

During the pilot Kendo project that was done at the RTL Children Learning Centre, I participated in different activities such as registration of participants, serving the participants, and physically participating in the construction process. The project was under the SEG, but it was coordinated by Wakoli who is the head of ISD.

The second phase was done at one of the SKP's homesteads where I was actively involved in the whole process as social media personnel and also in the actual handy work. This was an awesome experience for me.

I also helped the ISD staff like Isaac Ochieng in typing their weekly reports.



Figure 10: Kendo-2 Project, the final day.



Figure 9: Helping in the roof construction in Kendo- 2 Project.

PROGRAMS

This consisted majorly of the administrative part of my internship. I mainly spent most of my time in the office with Philip, Judith, James, Mary, and Richard. I helped in office work by typing documents, data entry, taking minutes in meetings, photocopying documents, naming media contents daily, scanning documents, cleaning the office, running errands for administrative staff who had tight schedules, and preparing name tags for any events that came up. I was able to improve my skills in office work and learn new things like naming systems and converting documents to PDFs.



Figure 11: Richard (Left) and Judith (Right) - part of the office team that I worked with.

Through Philip, the Assistant Projects Manager, I learned to do monitoring and evaluation. I was also able to teach Hassan and Mary basic computer skills with the help of Richard.

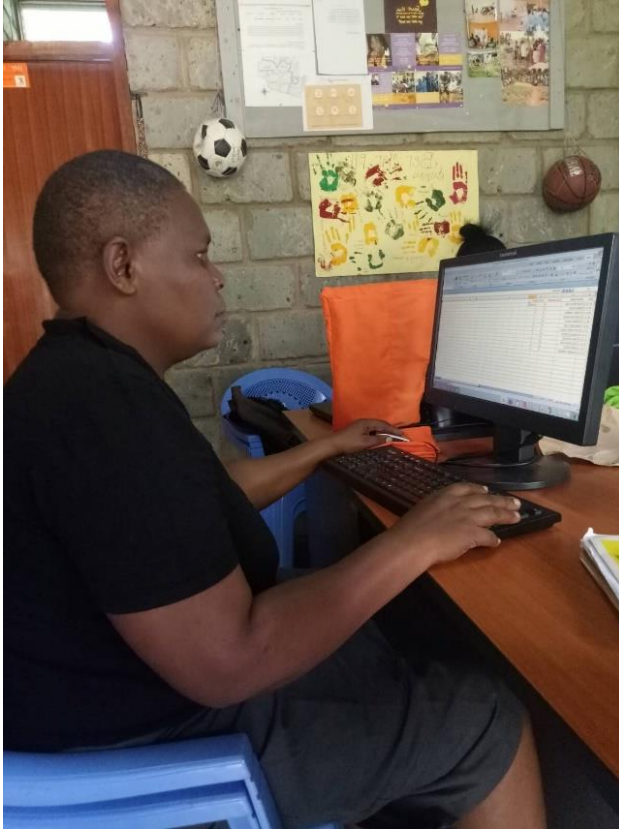


Figure 12: Teaching Mary basic computer skills during my internship.

LIVESTOCK

I learned of a new breed of goats from the West. The goats are so big and beautiful. They were an amazing sight to see. Through the Livestock assistant named Hassan, I learned a lot about the animals - sheep, goat, chicken, and cows, especially through his daily journal. He is so passionate and caring to the animals. Even though he does not know it, he inspired me so much during my internship. Although he is elderly, he works alone in this department from Monday to Monday! I once met him on the road and saw how he struggles to get the sheep and goats to feed on the dangerous bushy areas. He also transports heavy feeds on his unstable bicycle to SKF. He

has to walk to the SKF Centre in Katuda twice a week to check on the cows because his bicycle is not efficient enough and the route back is also hilly, making it impossible to ride on his bicycle. He also manages to help in infrastructure construction such as the building of the utensils rack and maintaining and repairing the animal house – including the chicken house. However, he is always happy. His positive energy was inspirational to me, such that I looked up to him whenever I felt I was having a hard time. In return, I always cheered him up whenever I saw him. I managed to teach him to switch on and off a computer, how to open his e-mails, and to type. He just needs more practice to reach Mary's level of computer proficiency. I'm glad I got to meet such a persevering person like him -Thanks to SKF, I hope he feels that his sacrifices are appreciated.



Figure 13: Teaching Hassan how to check his e-mails.

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

I worked with Akinyi Obama - Manners and Richard in this department. They gave me the chance to help them in creating media content for all events or activities I participated in. I helped in taking photographs and videos and in arranging and saving them in folders according to the dates they were taken. I also worked with Richard, the Media and Communications

Support Assistant in managing the SKF social media platforms by finding content to post daily and also in monitoring the posts and the subsequent responses.

Under the guidance of Richard, I helped in the cleaning process of the computers, taking of the inventory, labeling of all the peripheral devices, and also re-naming the computers. I also learned from him how to retrieve serial numbers using the Command Prompt. Working with him was a stress-free because he was a good teacher and listener. He also taught me how to work on social media by using the Agora Pulse app. The office knowledge and skills he taught me are so important and will come in handy in my career. I'm grateful to have worked with such an amazing team.



Figure 14: Working in the ICT room.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

I participated minimally in this department. I helped Dan Friday in clearing the training rooms to create space to accommodate more equipment and for general tidiness. Through Scevar Swaro, I was tasked to contact all the applicants for the Vocational Training program - for follow-up and to get missing information that they had not included in their application forms. It was a nice experience and I improved my skills in customer care services.

SUMMARY

Generally, my internship had a lot of positive impact on me. I majorly learned how to interact with people with different perspectives in a diverse cultural setup, which is a very important tool in the world today. Much of my life has been around the Coast and Rift Valley regions of Kenya but I had an opportunity to also learn the way of life of the people from the Western part of Kenya, especially the Nyanza region. I learned a whole new culture in such a short period. Most of the activities involved the community and this helped me learn their customs and traditions. SKF has helped me acquire professional skills that will help me in my career. I created networks with the staff and beneficiaries that will be long-lasting too. My work with the children re-affirmed my passion for working for them and their innocence reminded me how pure their love and mind are. This has left me with lots of ineffaceable memories.

The SKF staff were warm and friendly from the day I arrived and gave me a sense of a new family away from home. They allowed me to learn from them and they were all willing to teach me skills in their areas of work.

Finally, I'm very grateful to the management of SKF for such an amazing opportunity. Special thanks to Sharmila, the Chief Operations Officer who was also my mentor. She always encouraged me to have a positive attitude and to welcome challenges to experience growth and development through overcoming hardships. The SKF fraternity gave me the chance to serve



cohesively with them in a manner that motivated me to work smart and bring a positive impact wherever I shall be. Thank you Sauti Kuu Foundation!

**Kati* is a catch-and-throw game, popular amongst young girls in Kenya. ‘Kati’ is coined from the fact that the players stay in the middle position (Kati-In Swahili) of the catch and throw series to try to evade being hit by the hand-sized ball.