

Issue 20

STREET LIFE

**“YOU CAN CHANGE
YOUR LIFE DESPITE
YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES”**

Chilemba from Kenya

*Discover how our livelihood projects are
helping build brighter futures*

Stories in this issue:

- Jorge, who runs his own mobile phone accessory business in Bolivia
- Chilemba, a beauty therapist from the streets in Kenya



WELCOME

In this issue, we'd like to share the incredible stories of some of the individuals whose futures have been impacted by our livelihoods initiatives.

Building brighter futures

Unfortunately, many street connected individuals never have the opportunity to complete formal education. Without this foundational base in life, they face limited employment options and are often forced to engage in risky and exploitative work to support themselves and their families.

Thanks to your support, our local partners are working tirelessly to show them that there is an alternative – that they have the potential to thrive – not just survive.

Through Toybox supported projects, young people can receive advice, learn new skills and access training and funding to start their own small businesses. This support puts them on a pathway to earn a sustainable income and become less dependent on the streets.

And by working with caregivers, we also help to make sure that they can better provide for their children, reducing the likelihood of generations of families ending up on the streets.

Read on to hear some truly inspiring stories – from a beauty therapist who came from the streets in Kenya and an entrepreneur in Bolivia, who runs his own mobile phone accessory business. Thank you again for your continued support. It is because of you that lives are being turned around.



Lynne Morris OBE
CEO of Toybox



Last year

249

children, young people
and adults supported to
develop their livelihoods

Last year

287

children, young people
and adults benefited
from vocational skills

Last year

233

children, young people
and adults supported to
develop savings

REDEFINING LIVES

At Toybox we are steadfast in our commitment to sustainable development. This means making sure that the interactions delivered through our local partner organisations yield long lasting results.

Over time, and through working with our local partners, Toybox has developed real expertise in planning and executing livelihood support programmes. Every business success or failure brings new learning which we use to improve and develop the support we offer. Life on the streets is incredibly tough and unpredictable, which makes it difficult for the young people we work alongside to complete courses or sustain businesses. People on the streets face significant obstacles when they look to start a business and the stigma of being on the streets may mean police interference and an inability to store tools or supplies hampering them from the start.

Despite the challenges, we have been inspired to see how young people are able to find a way through. Success is hard won and requires nurturing and support from our partner staff for each person who takes part. The gains from these endeavours can be truly transformative, helping young people in street situations to redefine their lives and aspire to a brighter future.



Naomi Hall Opiyo
Director of International Programmes

Image: Alice from Kenya completed her training and is using the baking, pastry and cake making skills she learnt in her job at a local bakery. Discover more stories of transformational change at toybox.org.uk/stories

JORGE'S STORY

Income generating businesses in Bolivia

17-year-old Jorge lives in a small, basic rented room with his parents and six siblings in the city of El Alto, Bolivia. With limited resources and little income, the family struggle to make ends meet – the impact is felt in every aspect of their lives.

“We had a lot of financial problems, we lacked money for food, rent, school fees. Some of my siblings and I had to leave school – we didn't have enough to eat.”

Last year, Jorge became involved in a livelihoods project run by Toybox's local partner, Alalay. The project initially supported him with business skills training and the startup goods required to kick-start his business.

“I wanted to join the project to get ahead – I want to have a better life. I'm proud of myself because I feel that I have improved – it's as if I have evolved. I feel that I can do many more things than I set out to do.”

With the ongoing guidance of the project, Jorge started his own small business, selling screen protectors for mobile phones. This small business has positively helped to improve his family's economic situation.

“My life has changed a lot, now I help my mum to generate money to pay for rent and food. My dream for the future is to study cartoon design and be recognised internationally as the best cartoon creator! I want to have a house for my mum, so that we can be more relaxed, without thinking that we might be thrown out of the houses we rent.”



CHILEMBA'S STORY

Pathways to employment in Kenya

Chilemba was 17 when PKL, our partner in Kenya, supported him to access vocational training and secure sustainable work opportunities away from the streets.

“I had given up on life. I used to go days without food, put on dirty clothes and sleep in a pig shelter. I would feed the pigs in exchange for a plate of food and place to sleep. I felt neglected and had lost hope. I had bad friends who influenced me into using drugs and engaged in petty crime for survival.”

Since joining our livelihoods project in Nairobi, Kenya and enrolling in vocational training, his life has transformed.

“I always had a passion for beauty and needed to acquire the skills to better my life and leave street life. I wanted to meet new people who would help in boosting my self-esteem and feel like a normal human being. I'm grateful to PKL who did numerous checks to ensure I attended school. My tutor was also very good. She understood my background well and would always encourage me to work extra hard.”

After finishing his beauty therapy course, Chilemba found a job at a local salon, and is now able to support himself financially.

“I'm proud that I've finally finished my training. Now I'm able to support my mother with household needs and I'm also paying my own rent with ease. I'm living a meaningful life away from the streets. I hope to save enough to one day open my own beauty parlour and employ other youth from my community. You can change your life despite your circumstances. You just need to have a purpose and be committed to it.”



Turn over to discover one of the most powerful ways to support our work

LEAVE A LEGACY

of a lifetime

Too many children live and die on the streets around the world. A gift in your Will, no matter how small, can give some of the world's most vulnerable children a future they would otherwise be denied.

To find out more about this powerful way to give, order our guide by visiting: toybox.org.uk/legacies



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