Trustees' Annual Report

For the year ended: 01/07/20 - 01/07/21

Reference and administration details

Charity name	Hidden Voices Kenya
Other names the charity is known by	None
Registered charity number (if any)	1174076
Charity's principal address	61 Third Avenue, Liversedge, West Yorkshire, WF15 8JS, UK

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

Trustee Name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
Dr Christine Kahigi	Chair		Hidden Voices Kenya (HVK) members
Peninah Wangari-Jones	Secretary		HVK members
Dr Margaret Wachu Gichuhi			HVK members
Simon Kahigi Muigai			HVK members
Jacinta Njeri Wachira			HVK members
Patrick Mugo			HVK members
Rahma Hassan	Treasurer		HVK members
Alice Wangui Gikandi			HVK members
Teresia Wangui Kamau			HVK members

Structure, governance and management

Governing document:	Constitution
How the charity is constituted	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods	Appointed by members
Additional governance issues	n/a

Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

To promote and protect good mental health in Kenya in particular but not exclusively by:

(a) Educating the public about mental health illnesses by raising awareness, reducing stigma, fear, intolerance and stereotyping by working directly with people in various settings and in culturally appropriate ways

(b) Providing services and opportunities for people with mental illness, and their carers and families, by working in partnership with people in various settings and in culturally appropriate ways.

(c) Advocating for better support and mental health services by working at community level and with other service providers to increase the awareness of issues relating to mental illness, amongst politicians and government officials in an objective and persuasive way to help shape government policies and use of resources in the future.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects

Due to minimal resources and a number of mitigating circumstances beyond the charity's control, activities were very limited but increased significantly compared to the year before. The pandemic also impacted a lot on activities planned for 2020. HVK meetings held discussed the impact of the pandemic not only on their activities but on mental health generally.

All schools were closed for a long period of time. School closures especially in poorer areas of the country who do not have IT resources meant children were not studying but staying at home. Being stuck indoors as families especially in inner cities increased tensions, conflict and negative impact on mental health. There were reported increased rates of domestic abuse and violence increased in that period. For those who looked for healthy or unhealthy options to counter the idleness, there was increased teenage pregnancy in that same period.

Closure of public institutions like bars and clubs also had a huge effect on the family and home dynamics. Alcohol which is considered a taboo is usually consumed in public spaces rather than at home. With closure of bars, people began buying from stores and consuming at home in secret then became exposed so alot of the domestic domestics were triggered by alcohol and other substance abuse that was occuring at home. Substance misuse drugs were not as available or accessible as they were pre-pandemic affecting people's behaviours, personality and mental health especially those with dual diagnosis or mental health dispositions.

Closure of other public institutions such as churches also had a negative impact on mental health. This is because schools similar to educational institutions, bars, offices also act as social spaces for individuals and communities and their closures meant isolation, alienation and triggered negative mental health.

Poverty increased because the lockdowns, movement restrictions had a huge impact on the economy, business, jobs and employment generally. Mental health depreciated as a result of some of these negative factors.

Upcoming presidential elections (August 2022) which means ongoing gatherings, campaigns and unfortunately incentives such as giving or receiving money and other monetary gifts. As a result of this, HVK attempts to hold events, gatherings to discuss matters relating to mental health has meant there is an expectation to offer more than mental health talks and awareness raising or interference from candidates standing for elections.

That said there was increased demand and requests to HVK for mental health talks. It is believed that the communities were observing and experiencing a higher need for intervention. Reported incidents of suicide, violent murders then suicides, alcohol abuse, violence, poverty and so forth in the mainstream media heightened this senses.

The main activities include;

1. Training sessions to individuals and community groups on mental health.
2. Monthly and fortnightly meetings held by members with youth in Githurai discussing matters pertaining to wellbeing and wider factors of life.
3. Pastoral support to individuals who emerged out of and following this training sessions
4. 12 week training mental health course attended by HVK members
5. Fundraising activities and donations to sustain HVK activities and work.
6. There was a paper written and a presentation made by HVK co-founder and chair, relating to the state of mental health and the impact that covid-19 has had on families and students.

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

As stated above, the main achievements relate to meeting the charity's objectives of raising awareness of mental health through public forums, signposting to services, advocating for better mental health support and services, training and developing own and other capacities to better understand mental health and counter stima. Other achievements include writing and publishing a journal article via university of Nairobi and a paper via University of Leeds highlighting the issue of mental health. Finally

and despite not having funding and whilst still going through the pandemic, being able to deliver multiple workshops and workshops on mental health, attended by many.

- Activities continued to focus on raising awareness of the charity and of mental health, through a few introductory events led by volunteers. They included planning and starting to carry out awareness raising sessions in Githurai, Nairobi and Kinangop. It was well received with over 200 people in the community attending overall. Most topics covered are based on need or requests and community participation reported as high and a request to return again or ask for more.

- Monthly and fortnightly meetings and gatherings by active members of HVK has meant that need is picked up and particularly topics that they would like to be covered or clarity. Ths method of community engagement and listening has been effective and actionable and one they can see results as most who have attended mental health awareness sessions have reported back on usefulness and ease in having these discussions with families and colleagues.

- With this training, there are people who approach facilitators or trainers for extra support or deeper knowledge. HVK also gets contacted via social media as are the members when they speak of mental health. There was a particular case of mental health and law injustice that HVK picked up on following a training session. This situation is currently ongoing but has in its initial stages required financial support to rescue the family, support to feminist organisations who work on gender based violence and child abuse and interventions via courts, lawyers and police, schools, neighbourhood amongst other things. Within our objectives, we are aware that raising these mental health awareness workshops would also heighten a need for services and therefore HVK's ability to signpost. These objectives were met during this third activity.

- HVK trustees and ambassadors have continued undertaking mental health related activities and tasks outside of hidden voices in Kenya, raising HVK's profile. They have continued to build a bank of information from the media and other sources to demonstrate the need for this attention to mental health. Information uploaded onto the website. The 10 week course that was attended by trustees was said to be invaluable and adding to their knowledge and understanding therefore communicable to the rest of society. The beneficiaries of this added knowledge through training will be the communities who are contacting HVK and asking to be served.

- There was no external funding received through the course of the year. Expenses related to the few meetings, training sessions, refreshments for volunteers and attendees was met by HVK individuals.

  Last year the board of trustees agreed that it would be helpful if work will be carried out by two or three of the HVK ambassadors through monthly donations from a trustee who volunteers to contribute as this would activate and sustain the work. Lack of resources and funds has been one of the biggest barriers in actioning the charity's objectives. This action was fulfilled and as a result two workers have been doing the grassroots work, one as a mobiliser and organiser of meetings, networking and relationship/engagement with communities around the country. The second worker would concentrate on doing communications, managing social media platforms, publicity, preparing flyers, recording sessions and uploading them. The other members who have skills and knowledge on mental health, will present talks and training. The donations will not pay a salary to the workers but they will help meet expenses incurred in community engagements and also acknowledge their valuable skills.

- Discussion by the committee has emphasised that post pandemic and when lockdown measures are reduced, planning for the future will continue, with a focus on young people and

liaising with schools. This is because it was clear from previous years work that there is a great need for building a better understanding and more open discussion about mental health and how it can affect people and their families. As well as continuing Githurai youth group meetings and inviting guests.

- Others included an online annual general meeting held in March 2021 and inviting other local, regional and national guests to HVK meetings to present on work they are doing, challenges and check synergy for future collaborations.

Overall outcomes

Hidden Voices Kenya continues to be deeply committed to carrying out its objectives but continues to be thwarted by the challenges of finding suitable funding and lack of day to day resources that enable trustees and volunteers to carry out activities. Thanks to the generosity of some, it has been possible to maintain momentum and ambition as the subject of mental health becomes more widely promoted through the media. The pandemic, travel restrictions, curfew and reduced income also greatly impacted on the plans intended for the year 2020, however this increased significantly in 2021. We were able to conduct and run 5 sessions to youth members, parents, parents of children with disabilities, carers of people with mental health, friends and families of people with alcohol and substance misuse, church audiences. We reached a number of 200 people who attended our training sessions and workshops.

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Financial review

HVK opened a Triodos Bank account in 2019 and a donation of £20 added, in May 2021 a donation of £140 was made bringing total funds in the account to £160.
The second financial activity that has occurred has been a monthly donation of £100 to pay two workers to conduct HVK activities and meet activity costs. Other donations to meet project activities i.e transport were from members totalling £100, bringing to a total of £460 as of July 2021 for direct costs.
With minimal financial activity at this stage simple records have been kept.

Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

Law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the charity's financial activities during the year and of its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing financial statements giving a true and fair view, the trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ascertain the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report

above Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature
Dr. Christine Muthoni Kahigi
Name
Chair
Position (e.g. Chair etc)
27.05.2022
Date