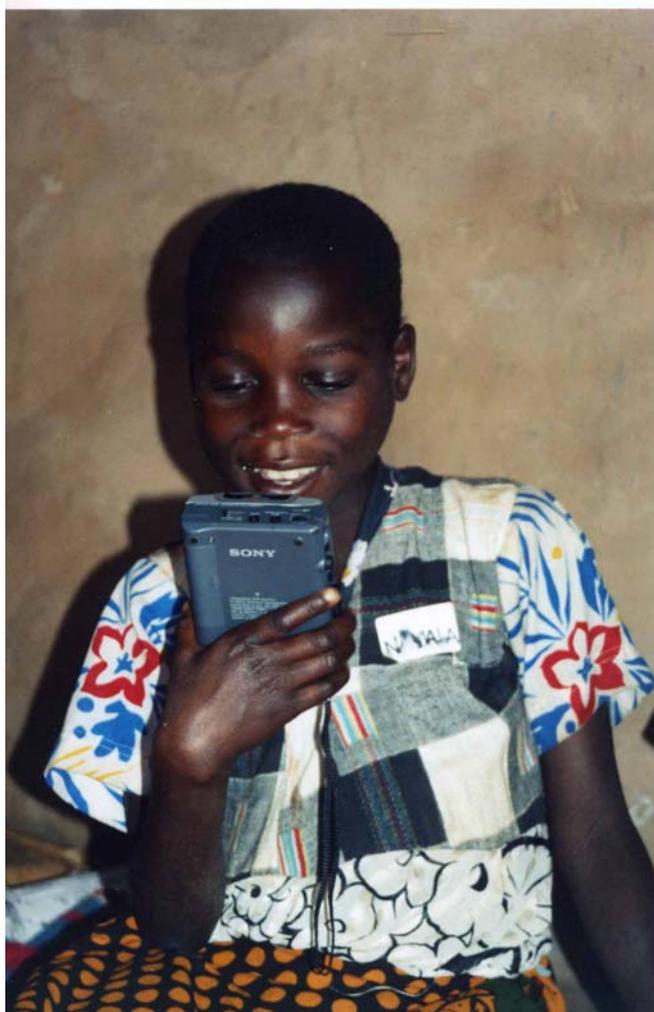


**Impact Evaluation of the VSI (Vijana Simama Imara)
organisation and the Rafiki Mdogo group of the
HUMULIZA orphan project
Nshamba, Tanzania
2005**



Natalia talks about being a member of Rafiki Mdogo

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1. INTRODUCTION

Along with the rest of southern Africa Tanzania continues to face the harsh realities of the HIV and AIDS pandemic. Overall prevalence of HIV and AIDS in Tanzania is estimated at 8.8% (National AIDS Council Programme, 2004). Orphan numbers in Tanzania are placed at over 15% of children by UNAIDS (2004).

The situation in the Kagera Province and Muleba District where the Humuliza project is based is less clear as data is sparse. Estimates place the prevalence rate as high as 12%. Accurate orphan statistics are also difficult to find. A recent longitudinal study (Beegle, 2005) in the area shows that 23% of the children interviewed in the initial round of data collection in 1996 when re-interviewed in 2005 had lost one or both parents since 1996. This data suggests significant impact of HIV and AIDS on the lives of children in the area.

The effects of orphanhood are well documented. Beegle (2005) in a study conducted in Kagera Province shows that long term impacts on children relate to health (mostly as a result of malnourishment) and reduced education outcomes (i.e. children drop out of school). Individual impacts on children include economic hardship, lack of love/attention/affection, withdrawal from school, psychological distress, loss of inheritance, increased risk of abuse and risk of HIV infection (Gertler, 2003; Makame, Ani and Grantham-McGregor, 2003; and USAID 2004).

It was in response to these impacts that the Humuliza Project was formed in 1997 in Nshamba, a small trade centre in Kagera Province in Tanzania.

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT

One of the aims of the present evaluation was to “assist in creating the information base for the replication of the VSI programme in other contexts.” (TOR) for this reason the discussion of the background and context as well as the description of the project activities included in this report are detailed.

Nshamba is situated on the Kamachumu-Nshamba plateau, about 1 600 m above sea level. It is a small trade centre with about 8 000 inhabitants, most living around Nshamba. Most are smallholder peasants, growing plantain banana, maize, beans and groundnuts and keeping some cattle. The soil is not very fertile, and the plateau is heavily overpopulated so poorer people and people without land have emigrated to the empty “low land” between the plateau and Rwanda. The area is hotter and dryer than the plateau and agricultural production is more difficult.

The project was started in Kagera as HIV and AIDS had had a huge impact on the area and in Nshamba because the organisation that designed and implemented the project, Terres des Hommes Switzerland, already had contact

with the area through a local NGO that constructed day care centres and provided school fees for orphans. The project was subsequently funded by the Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development and the Swiss Development Corporation.

The aims of the Humuliza Project are to develop a practical instrument to enable teachers and caregivers to support orphans psychologically and to develop the orphans' own capacity to cope with the loss of their caretakers. In line with these two aims the project activities focussed initially around two core areas:

- Training teachers in local schools and day care centres, members of local NGO's, and caregivers to understand better what the loss of parents means for children and how to support them psychologically. A set of 19 flexible training modules were developed for this purpose.
- The development and implementation of a group counselling intervention programme with and for orphans. The fourteen week group counselling programme has been documented and replicated in other parts of Africa.

The VSI organisation grew out of the group intervention programme. After the fourteen weeks was over, the question was what could be done to provide ongoing support for the children? The way in which this question was answered is important as it gives a key to one of the fundamental principles underlying the VSI organisation.

17 orphans (aged between 13 and 20) from different villages were invited to a workshop in March 2000. At the workshop the children spent time identifying their existing strengths i.e. what they had learnt and could do well *because* they were orphans. They also talked about where support from others would be helpful. They identified areas in which they could support each other, which ranged from practical support such as helping each other with agricultural activities to emotional support such as consoling each other. These very ideas form the aims of the VSI today. The children also discussed the possible functions of an orphan's organisation. It is these functions too that today form the core of the VSI activities. In this way the aims and activities of the VSI were identified by the children themselves. The children also carried the ideas forward: at the end of the workshop, five groups, each with an action plan, had been formed in order to start an orphan organisation.

Over the next few weeks there was a rapid growth in the nucleus of the future organisation. On the 1st of April 2000 the organisation had 39 members, by the 19th of May 210 children had become members. In mid-April of 2000 the children discussed the name of the organisation and from four proposals selected the name "Vijana Simama Imara – VSI" (Youth standing upright firmly). At the end of the year 2000, more than 500 children and young people distributed in five villages had joined the VSI. At the end of 2004 there were 1 300 VSI members

distributed in 17 clusters. The VSI organisation is run by the young people themselves through elected committees and Humuliza provides training and monitoring.

Initially the organisation catered for children aged 13 to 18 but the younger brothers and sisters of these children began to ask if they could join. In 2002 the Rafiki Mdogo (Little friends) were formed. These children meet once a week for games and activities at a meeting run by older VSI members.

3 THE VSI PROGRAMME

3.1 RATIONALE AND AIMS

The concept of “psychosocial well-being” is central to the work of the Humuliza project. Adapting the work of Armstrong et al (2004) Humuliza sees psychosocial well-being as consisting of three domains:

- Social ecology. This refers to the circumstances of children’s social worlds, including their relationships with peers, kin, neighbours and others (extent and quality), the degree and nature of social support, care, mentoring and services available to them, and the implications of their social identity (gender, class, location, ethnicity, religion) for life experiences and events.
- Human capacity. This refers to the status of children’s individual resources in relation to cognitive capacity, social competence, personal identity and valuation, emotional well-being, skills and knowledge – as is necessary for good functioning and interaction within their social, cultural and material environment.
- Material environment. This refers to the material conditions of children’s lives, including those pertaining to physical environment and infrastructure, status of food and livelihood security, and degree of physical safety and comfort.

Culture and values are not seen as separate entities but rather as an overarching concept that shapes the content of the three domains.

Another important theoretical frame for the work of the Humuliza project is the concept of resilience. In particular, the work of Julia Bala (1996) is used to inform the conceptualisation of resilience. Bala identifies four levels at which resilience can be built in children:

1. Reducing stressors
 - reducing the impact of present stressors
 - unloading accumulated problems
 - assisting making peace with the past
 - minimizing anticipated stress that could interfere with the daily life
2. Strengthening and supporting the use of existing protective factors

- within the child
 - within the (remaining) family
 - within the wider social environment (friends, neighbours etc.)
3. Broadening the coping alternatives
- facilitation of the use of existing coping strategies
 - assisting to look for new coping skills (including training, life skills, beliefs etc)
4. Strengthening and opening future perspectives
- supporting the search for future possibilities and visions

The above ideas are familiar in the psychosocial support sector but what makes the VSI project unusual is the processes it employs to encourage psychosocial well-being.

Influenced by the concept of “protagonism” – an idea most widely applied in children’s projects in Latin America and India - the VSI project allows children to access psychosocial well-being through being part of a child-directed organisation. Essentially protagonism means that children are seen as social actors who have a right to participate in whatever matters to them, short- or long-term. But as Reddy and Ratna (2002) describe, protagonism moves beyond the typical forms of participation that we see in many children’s programmes.

When Children’s Participation is seen within the frame of protagonism it takes on another dimension; the right and the ability to advocate on one’s own behalf, to be in control and a part of decision-making processes and interventions. (ibid, p1).

Within the frame of protagonism participation can be placed at the highest point of Hart’s Ladder of Participation (Hart, 1997). The activities are child-initiated and child-directed; the children make the decisions supported by adults. The description of the VSI project given below shows how the structuring of the project as a child-directed organisation allows this form of participation.

When the VSI was formed Humuliza had a clear argument for developing a child-directed organisation as a key focus for promoting psychosocial well-being among orphan children. Some of this thinking is described below.

By being involved in an organisation, children and youth are encouraged to activate their own individual capacities. It is true that orphans are children and young people for whom adults collectively carry a responsibility. But to see children affected by HIV/AIDS as victims *only* disregards what they actually achieve in terms of work, care and support for their families and in terms of social adaptation. From such a perspective these children are not only ‘victims in need of help’ but strong social actors. Allowing children to run an organisation creates an opportunity for children to use the capacities they have developed to act and consequently to build their sense of power and self worth.

Additionally it allows them an alternative identity to that imposed on them by the community who largely sees them as misfits because they cannot operate as children within the socially acceptable family structure. This results in stigmatisation and often a sense of helplessness. Being part of an active orphan's organisation allows children to build up a specific - and indeed also positive - identity as an 'orphan'.

An orphan organisation also acts as a protector in that children and youth find support for difficult situations and experience protection against the negative consequences of the adversities they face. The increased social network created by the organisation allows them to access peer support and increased adult support. Participation in the activities of the organisation, including group counselling, reduces emotional stress. The positive identity created by the organisation and the participation in democratic processes builds an understanding of rights and the support of the organisation helps to prevent abuse of orphans (such as loss of inheritance).

The organisation, by giving children access to practical resources and a wider social network, acts as a resource through which children and youth are offered a wider range of solutions for their personal problems, both practical and emotional.

One of the aims behind the evaluation was to understand the extent to which this initial thinking was accurate. Can being part of such an organisation contribute to psychosocial well-being?

3.2 STRUCTURE AND ACTIVITIES

Child-directed

It is important to emphasise that the VSI is a child-directed organisation. When staff drew a large picture to represent the project in one of the pre evaluation activities they represented it as a tree with the members of VSI as the trunk. Humuliza staff were not even in the drawing. Their role is to provide training and mentoring but the organisation is run by the children.

VSI groups

The basic structural unit of the VSI organisation is the 'cluster'; the association of children based in a village. In some villages the clusters became too big (over 150 children) and these groups then decided to form two or more clusters in the same village. Within the clusters members form smaller groups of 3-6 members. One of the main activities of the small groups is the saving, loan taking and corresponding economic activities.

The whole cluster meets twice a month, but there are a number of 'cross-sectoral' activities which link either members of the same cluster together or

members of different clusters. Such activities are the HIV/AIDS prevention group meetings, self defence training, the agricultural projects, sports events and camps.

Initially it was planned that the VSI would be an organisation of children and youth only, with support from Humuliza staff. A number of bad experiences such as fraud and a genuine demand for guidance on behalf of the children led to the introduction of the system of 'elected caretakers'. The members of each cluster elect two male and two female adults to serve as caretakers. These caretakers help the cluster to control their funds, to help in conflict resolutions, etc. The adult caretakers' tasks are not formally described, but the following contributions have in practice evolved:

- legitimating VSI in the world of the adults
- prohibiting misuse of bank-loans (some care-givers of the children misunderstood them as a contribution to their household expenses)
- advising the youngsters about how to deal with money
- controlling the distribution of income from work done for old people.

Most of the clusters have 70 and more members that meet regularly in order to discuss different issues. The young people within the group also meet for leisure activities such as football, girls' volleyball, singing and dancing. Another important activity is that the group supports any member who has had a death in the family with a visit and a contribution in the form of food. Small groups also meet regularly to plan income generation activities or to work together on their farms or in their small businesses.

The young people also attend activities that go across the clusters such as the Self Defence group and Mobile Farm School.

The wide range of activities place a lot of responsibility on the leadership of the cluster. For this reason Humuliza conducts three-day trainings for elected leaders to make sure they have the required skills. The training includes topics such as conflict resolution and planning.

Material support activities

VSI members have access to a number of ways to improve their economic situation:

- Slip payment
- VSI bank
- Income Generating Activities
- Auctions

a) The slip payment

When the VSI was first formed it was clear that some means to improve the children's immediate economic situation was needed, but Humuliza did not want to give direct handouts. During the initial workshop to explore an organisation

with the young people they had suggested that one of the things they could do was to help elderly people. This has become part of the programme of activities for each VSI member.

Each VSI member helps an elderly person in the village with everyday tasks such as collecting water and wood and Humuliza pays them for this work. The young people receive a fixed amount of 1 800 TZS (about 1,5 US\$). The elderly people sign to say the work has been done, then the cluster leadership oversees the payment of the money once a month. Each member contributes 300 TZS of their 1 800 TZS.

- 100 TZS goes into the emergency fund. The cluster can decide on the use of this fund in case of illness or other emergency cases.
- 100 TZS goes into the cluster OVC-fund. The OVC fund also receives contributions from individuals (e.g. caretakers) and from the auction. The OVC-committee, which is made up of VSI-members and the cluster caretakers, decides on the use of this fund.
- 100 TZS goes into the savings account of the cluster.

b) The VSI-bank

The bank is operated by 3 trained VSI-members (one young man and two young women) and gets some supervision from a Humuliza staff member. The bank is open every Saturday (which is also market day in Nshamba). Initially the VSI-bank served the VSI-members only for saving purposes – on an individual, group and cluster level but now VSI-groups can also apply for a credit of 5 US\$ per member to start an income generation project. Conditions are:

- The group must have made small, but regular contributions to the savings account for at least two months as a compulsory minimum.
- One group-member must have followed 2 days of training in project management.
- The Credit Committee (VSI-members and two representatives of Humuliza) must approve the project description and budget.

The loans are given without interest, and repayment should be made within 8 months. Those who repay within the given time, receive a bonus of 10% which is deducted from their repayment. After repayment the members can apply for another bigger loan.

c) Income generation projects

5 US\$ is a lot of money for a child, but it is a small amount for starting a project. Consequently most groups invest in businesses which demand little investment:

- Selling *dagaa* (small dried fish)
- Running a small kiosk: selling kerosene, soap, matches, exercise books, pens, sweets etc.
- Raising 3-4 chickens for selling eggs or chicken

Some groups prepare fire-wood or produce and sell *baragara*, a bakery-product made of manioc and bananas. An increasing number, since the inception of the Mobile Farm School, grow vegetables (tomatoes, carrots, *mchicha*) and sell them on the market.

Humuliza supports the VSI-members who run a kiosk by buying the basic products in bulk in Mwanza. The 'business department' consisting of two VSI-members, sells the products at the wholesale price to the VSI-members allowing them to increase their profit.

d) OVC-fund and auctions

The VSI members introduced the idea of an OVC-fund which can be used for emergencies. They raise the funds through monthly auctions. The members collect small quantities of foodstuff like bananas, beans, groundnuts, cassava, and sugar cane grown by the group members. Once a month they meet in an open place and the products are auctioned among the members. Some members buy the items for themselves, others buy for their friends, or for a VSI member that is known to be very poor.

The auction is usually a fun event with a good number of buying competitions. Usually the cluster has about 20 000 – 40 000 TZS (about 20-40 US\$) in their emergency fund. A committee decides on requests from the members. These requests include money for school materials, food supplements or health support.

Counselling: Group Intervention Approach

Humuliza acknowledges that many children affected by HIV/AIDS have a tremendous capacity to survive, to endure and even to recover and that just being a member of the VSI may be enough to support the healing and recovery process.

But it also acknowledges that there are a number of distressed children who need some special counselling and attention. In very severe cases (e.g. cases of psychosomatic disorder) Humuliza does individual counselling based on the Solution Focused Approach. For the other children Humuliza uses a structured group intervention counselling approach. Children are referred for individual and group counselling by VSI members, Rafiki Mdogo attendants, adult caretakers and Humuliza staff.

Peer counselling in HIV/AIDS prevention and reproductive health

A group of VSI members across all the clusters have been trained as peer counsellors in the area of sexuality and HIV/AIDS prevention by Humuliza. The counsellors are also supplied with existing information booklets in Kiswahili which address critical questions in an open manner. In addition a set of thematic discussion cards have been developed by Humuliza. These cover topics such as sexual harassment by boys and teachers, self-assertiveness, love without sex, use of condoms, etc.

Each cluster has four peer educators – two girls and two boys. They meet twice a month with the members of the cluster – one meeting is also attended by the Humuliza staff member who is in charge of the prevention work. Participation is high, almost all the members attending the prevention meetings. The booklets and thematic discussion cards are often used in these meetings.

Each cluster also elects 4 – 6 members on to an ‘AIDS action committee’ which has a double task:

- To monitor the peer education training;
- To watch the behaviour of the members and discuss with them issues such as pregnancies or relationships between the members of the cluster.

Self defence for girls

Most reports on children affected by HIV/AIDS highlight the fact that the risk of sexual abuse increases when children lose their parents (Ledward, 2000; Human Rights Watch 2002; Family Health International, 2003).

After consultation with boys and girls in the VSI organisation, the decision was made to train girls in self defence. 20 girls were trained as trainers and they now run regular groups with girls in their cluster. In addition to self defence the group discusses abuse and provides support to those who have experienced sexual violence.

The Mobile Farm School (MFS)

In an attempt to provide some kind of economic independence to the VSI members, Humuliza has adapted the Mobile Farm School model used by the Kitovu Orphan Programme in Masaka – Uganda.

Two staff members and two VSI members visited Kitovu in order to get an idea of the model, after which Humuliza developed its own program. Regular training is now run in Nshamba from the demonstration garden. Apart from farming skills the training includes book-keeping, planning and management of projects, and budgeting. Most of those who attend are heads of households who have access to a small plot of land. They attend the Mobile Farm School for one week every month - in the remaining three weeks they must apply their new knowledge and pass it to at least one other VSI-member selected by themselves.

Rafiki Mdogo - integrating young orphans

Members of the VSI are selected to work as attendants with the younger Rafiki Mdogo groups that meet once a week. They are trained by Humuliza staff who also monitor the groups. The attendants meet once a month in Nshamba to discuss their experiences and to get some support for the next months.

The attendants organise the weekly meetings. The group sings and plays together and children have an opportunity to share their experiences and

problems. In addition the Rafiki's are given soap, basic food and school supplies once a month.

Replication

By 2000, VSI was established in five villages with a sixth being added in 2002. In 2003 Humuliza decided to extend the project to nine new villages, some of them quite far from Nshamba. Only one Humuliza staff member was attached to the replication, the main work was done by experienced VSI-members, who were given the title of 'assistants'. One female and one male VSI-member assumed the task of building up a new VSI group in each village. By the end of 2004 the nine new groups were operational with elected leaders and other activities such as Rafiki Mdogo, VSI-bank, HIV/AIDS prevention and self-defence.

Let the children speak for themselves

The stories below illustrate how the different VSI and Rafiki Mdogo activities have become part of children's lives.

A (16) who lives in Kabirizi

I've never seen my mother. Since I've been born I'm living together with my father in our house. After completing the Primary School I started to go to the Mobile Farm School. Me, I don't have sisters or brothers. I don't have a grandmother or a grandfather. I'm still living with my father. I was nine years old as I went to school. I finished the Primary School in the year 2003. Now I'm sixteen years old. I would like to go on with the Secondary School and to continue with English studies. I only completed Primary School, as I was 15 years old.

Mr. Viktor from the Humuliza team came to my Primary School in Kabirizi and told us about VSI and that orphan children could join the cluster of Kabirizi. From this moment I joined VSI and I'm a member since two years, now.

I'm joining the Mobile Farm School of VSI regularly. I really like it. I'm living and earning money with keeping animals and doing agriculture. I'm keeping goats. I've got a small farming place where I'm planting small tomatoes, beans, maize and spinach. I'm also cultivating hay to feed my animals.

We are a group doing these income-generating activities of VSI but we are not working together. Everybody is farming for himself but we support and help each other. I have my own farming place beside my home place, not on the family farming ground. My father is also a farmer. My father plants coffee and bananas. I like farming. I get 1500 TSH from VSI and I normally need this money to buy basic home needs. I buy oil, kerosene, salt and soap. We are also getting loans, for example for buying seeds, animals or other things we need to do our projects. We are getting these loans as a group and share the loan. With this money we try to make business to get profit. Apart from farming we are also buying goods and selling them to make profit. We go to the VSI Bank on Saturday, we get a loan and we buy fishes with this money. We can buy a fish in Nshamba for example for 500 TSH and then we come to Kabirizi and sell it for 600 TSH. We can get 6000 TSH as a loan and then we buy fishes once a week in Nshamba on the market and sell them in Kabirizi. We are doing this activity in a group. Two friends of VSI and me sell together those fishes.

Sometimes we are attending prevention seminars. We learn how we can prevent ourselves to prevent us from HIV/AIDS. I like to study at my home. There are some books provided by a prevention teacher. I like to read them and also other books like schoolbooks. With my friends from the VSI I like to be together. We have a football group and a drummers group. There are some friends of mine who didn't have houses. With the support of VSI we could build houses for them.

We are coming together, we pray together we are exchanging ideas, we are playing ball and drummers and we are friends and do a lot together. Through the VSI membership I got a lot of friends, also from other places. One friend is coming from Kishanda, one from Kibanga and also from Nshamba and from other far places. Since we are members of VSI we have some bicycles. Before we had to move by foot to Nshamba or to other far places. But now we have bicycles for our group, which can help us to move up from here to Nshamba to meet our friends there or to go to the market.

For me there are two important changes: I have good friends now, second I could start my farming studies and learn a lot about agriculture and I learned farming and I get loans to buy seeds. This helps me to cultivate and then I can sell and make profit. When I get sick I can go to the hospital. This is also an important advantage for me that the project is supporting me to go to the hospital and somebody from the project is joining me. If I feel sad or I have problems I go to pray or play football with my friends. Before VSI I didn't have friends, I stayed at home and I tried to find books and read them. I'm also keeping goats, now and I didn't have a lot of plants before joining VSI but now I have many plants.

Before being VSI member I was used to fear, I was shy to stay with people but now I don't fear any more. I can stay with people and go to camps. I play with other people, you see now I'm o.k. Before I was not used to stay with different people who are coming from far, I was only used to stay with my father and the small children I was schooling with. But now we are often a lot of people staying together, during maybe a camp or a seminar or in our daily life. In a camp we learn a lot of things. We are exchanging ideas and we see how the people from the other clusters are doing their projects, how they are performing their activities, how they are doing their job. In the camp we are helping each other, we play, we sing and we dance. Sometimes we stay there for three or four days. We tie plastic sheets and sleep under them. I like these camps. If your house would get fire and you have nowhere to live, you learn in the camp how to live outside. That's important.

I have also friends from outside the VSI; they are all in the same age like me. I think that the community members welcome the things that we are doing with the VSI. And they also appreciate what we are doing. The villagers also try to mobilize the people who are not yet member to participate VSI. My father likes what we are doing with VSI. He is very interested in what we are doing with the old people. For example we wash them clothes, we fetch them water, we collect them firewood, we clean the environment. This is also an income activity for me; we go there twice a week. One child is going to help always the same old man or woman, so I'm responsible for one old man and I go to visit him every week to help him and we get money for this work from the VSI office.

I have dreams and wishes for my future. I'm thinking about how I can expand my knowledge and how I will live in the future. I would like to have more education and to have a car. I wish that I can do further studies.

F (11) Nshamba

“This is a flower. It is shining with the branches. A person is taking care of this flower. If this flower grows up there will grow some other young flowers out of this one. These are the flowers around the house we are living in. “

I like playing. My favourite game is playing with a small ball. I'm playing often with other children from the neighbourhood. I also like to be a Rafiki Mdogo. With Rafiki Mdogos I play a lot. I like singing with the other Rafikis and playing different games. Sometimes we are playing all together with the ball. I meet them each Monday and Friday. We meet on a place near a kindergarten school. We are fifty Rafiki Mdogos. My brother is joining VSI. He was invited by another friend to participate the VSI. And then my brother told me that there is also a Rafiki Mdogo group and he invited me to go there. Since one year I'm a Rafiki Mdogo member.

We get pens, exercise books, oil, soap, and kerosene. Judith from Humuliza brings all these things to Bertha, who is a caretaker of Rafiki Mdogo. And Bertha distributes the pens, exercise books, the oil, the soap and the kerosene. We get these basic home needs twice a month.

I'm going to Primary School. When I started Primary School my father passed away. I have two brothers and one sister. I'm living with my mother, my brother, the baby and the wife of my brother in our house.

I have friends from Rafiki Mdogo to sing together, I really like singing. I'm eleven years old now and I would like to continue with VSI if I'm old enough.

For my future I wish to have a bicycle and to build a beautiful house for me.

4. IMPACT EVALUATION¹

4.1 A PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION

Internationally, the active participation of children in research is a growing phenomenon. Rather than viewing children as 'objects' of study, researchers are seeing the importance of involving children as active participants in research that concerns their lives (Boyden and Ennew 1997; Woodhead 1998; Grover, 2004). Without hearing from children themselves about the problems and issues that concern them, "we cannot hope to devise strategies or solutions that will address their concerns, and will constantly be struggling to make sense of the world without some of the vital information we need." (Ivan-Smith & Johnson, 1998, p299).

The project descriptions provided above show how participation is a central process in the VSI organization. Thus it was important that VSI members were involved in the evaluation too. During the evaluation planning phase VSI members as well as staff members were involved in the process. Participation of the young people and staff was focussed around two key activities:

- Clarifying the key dimensions of the project.
- Development of indicators that are rooted in participants' experiences of the project.

The key dimensions of the project were defined by staff and young people through a participatory mapping activity in which the activities (i.e. 'what you do') as well as the reasons behind the activities ('why you do this') and the key approaches ('how you do this') were drawn up.

Indicators were developed through a number of different activities. Groups of young people were asked to describe the key changes their association with VSI had brought about in their lives. These are some of the things young people said:

*I could not talk to youths but now I can.
Before I felt like I am the only orphan child.
My head was full of feelings before.
Now I am able to explain myself.
Now I am confident.
I could not play before but now I have many friends.*

¹ The full evaluation of this project involved both a *formative* as well as an *impact* evaluation. The former was essentially concerned with giving project staff detailed feedback on what elements of the project were perceived to be working well, to be working less well, and what might be improved – based on extensive information and opinion gathered in the fieldwork process. This information and feedback is contained in a separate report. The present report is entirely concerned with assessing the effectiveness of the project to date – its *impact*.

*I could not plan for my future before but now I can plan more.
Before I was thinking about my dead parents, now I have found there are other orphans like me.
I know how to overcome simple problems.
Now I am getting some money every month.
Now I can depend on my own instead of my parents.*

The staff ideas on outcomes of the project were developed through an activity based on the theory of resilience that informs the project (see the four dimensions of resilience building of Julia Bala (op cit) under 'Rationale and Aims'). Staff identified which aspects of the project fitted into the four dimensions. The children's and staff's ideas were then combined into a list of indicators (see Table 1 below). In this way the indicators selected were locally appropriate and rooted in the practice of the project.

Developing measures, and the activities on which they are based, that suit the age and stage of children's development is also crucial (O'Kane, 1998). The measures used in this evaluation (Table 1), and the activities on which the measures (both quantitative and qualitative) were based were all designed with developmental and child-accessibility as central criteria (Appendices 1, 2 and 3).



Talking about how we felt before we joined Rafiki Mdogo and how we feel now

Ethical principles

Ensuring that such a study meets ethical principles for child-participatory research is as important as encouraging participation (Corlyon, van der Merwe, Katz, & Ghate, in press). In particular, since the evaluation involved working with orphans and vulnerable children, it was seen as vitally important to ensure that ethical principles of beneficence and non-maleficence were given high priority.

Under the ethical principle of beneficence, it was seen as particularly important that orphans who participated in the control group should ultimately be given the opportunity of benefiting from the programme. Humuliza's willingness and capacity for establishing new programme clusters in the areas from which the control group was drawn was therefore seen as essential. New VSI and Rafiki Mdogo groups were established in the three control areas with the children who participated in the control groups immediately after the evaluation.

Especially in the focus groups, the principle of non-maleficence was applied through creating an environment of trust in which children were free to express only as much as they felt safe to tell. Probing a child's feelings or details of a painful event were explicitly avoided unless freely offered.

Throughout the research process, the principle of anonymity and of confidentiality was strictly applied. Apart from the obvious importance of avoiding the identification of individual participants, confidentiality was strictly maintained in focus group activities where the importance of children treating each other's contributions in confidence was stressed.

The principle of informed consent was applied in that researchers explained what the research was about and how the results would be used in a way that the children could understand. Continuous consent was applied through making it clear to children that they could choose not to participate in any activity in which they might feel uncomfortable, or to withdraw at any stage during the research process.



Drawing the places where I meet friends

4.2 COMPARATIVE STUDY

Method

Design and sampling

A quasi-experimental comparison group design (Posavac & Carey, 1997) was chosen to evaluate the outcomes of the project through both quantitative and qualitative data.

The experimental ('Project') group was randomly selected from children who had been involved in the programme for two years or more². The Control group was selected from orphans who had as yet had no intervention, who matched the Project group as closely as possible in terms of age, gender, orphan status (loss of both parents, only mother or only father)³ as well as the period of their loss⁴, and the geographical areas in which they lived⁵. Selection of the Control group took place through schools in the relevant geographical areas⁶.

Two separate samples were involved for each of the quantitative and qualitative data collection. From the point of view of the outcomes of the project, the sample drawn from Vijana Simama Imara (VSI) organisation, involving 13-18 year olds, was of most central concern. These children are involved across the full range of project activities (see above) and represent the essential core and thrust of the project. The sample drawn from the Rafiki Mdogo group, involving 9-12 year olds, was of more secondary concern as they are involved in more limited activities (see above). However, as a specific younger age group involved in the project, the outcomes from this group were of interest and needed to be separately measured and evaluated.

² This was regarded as a minimum period over which to gauge reliable manifestation of outcomes of the programme.

³ Those minor differences in the number of girls/boys who had experienced losses in each of these three categories over the Project and Control groups were found to be statistically non-significant (Chi² applications)

⁴ For the 9-12 year olds, both the Project and the Control groups had, on average, lost their fathers for 5 years, and/or their mothers for 2 years. For the 13-18 year olds, the Project group had, on average, lost their fathers for 7 years (Control group 6 years) and/or their mothers for 4 years (Control group 4 years).

⁵ It was important to match geographical areas as the relative fertility of the land, and hence general economic conditions, differed between areas on the 'highlands' and the 'lowlands' over both of which the programme operated.

⁶ To prevent stigmatisation of orphans, the questionnaire was administered to *all* children in the relevant grades. Subsequently, only orphans (i.e. those who had indicated on the questionnaire that their parent/s had died at least two years ago) were included in the sample.

Quantitative sample:

Table 1

Number and gender of Project (VSI) and Control children (13-18 year olds)

	Project: VSI	Control	Total
Boys	39	39	78
Girls	39	39	78
Total	78	78	156

Table 2

Number and gender of Project (Rafiki Mdogo) and Control children (9-12 year olds)

	Project: Rafiki Mdogo	Control	Total
Boys	30	30	60
Girls	30	30	60
Total	60	60	120

Qualitative sample:

Table 3

Number and gender of Project (VSI) and Control children (13-18 year olds)

	Project: VSI	Control	Total
Boys	15	15	30
Girls	15	15	30
Total	30	30	60

Table 4

Number and gender of Project (Rafiki Mdogo) and Control children (9-12 year olds)

	Project: Rafiki Mdogo	Control	Total
Boys	15	15	30
Girls	15	15	30
Total	30	30	60

Note: the qualitative sample had to be smaller than the quantitative sample because of the constraints of focus group data collection.

Outcome indicators and measures

Outcome indicators were chosen primarily on the basis of resilience theory, but also had to be consistent with specific project goals and activities as well as what children had expressed as important outcomes for them from their engagement in the project. Because the project goals have themselves evolved through a foundation in resilience theory and the active participation of the children (see section on the VSI programme above), the match between these elements was not problematic.

The outcome indicators (including examples of children’s views on outcomes) and the respective quantitative and qualitative measure(s) are listed in Table 1. Only the first three indicators and measures applied to the Rafiki Mdogo (9-12 year olds) as they are involved in a more limited range of activities than the VSIs (13-18 year olds). Details of the questions asked (for quantitative data) and the activities in the focus groups (for qualitative data) are recorded in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

Table 5
Outcome indicators and measures

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Measure(s): Quantitative (Questionnaire)</i>	<i>Measure(s): Qualitative (Focus Groups)</i>
1. Social support network <i>“I felt like I am the only orphan child.”</i> <i>“I could not play before, now I have many friends.”</i>	i.Peers: Number of regular friends ii.Adults: Number of supportive adults – emotional needs iii.Adults: Number of supportive adults – survival needs	Network mapping activity and discussion re friends and supportive adults
2. Emotional stress <i>“My head was full of feelings before.”</i> <i>“I have been able to explain myself.”</i>	Emotional stress scale	‘Basket and stones’ activity: Discussion re emotional stress caused by parental loss and degree and nature of emotional support since loss
3. Confidence <i>“I can talk with</i>		i.Drawing and problem naming / problem solving activity:

<i>confidence.</i> <i>"How to live in difficulties."</i>		Discussion re problem solving ii.Unfair accusation scenario: Responses to this
4. Future orientation <i>"I could plan for my future before but now I can plan more."</i>		'Steps' activity: Discussion re 5 year goals and steps to attain them
5. Survival knowledge (HIV/AIDS) <i>"I know on how I can take care of myself."</i>	Essential HIV/AIDS knowledge (true/false test)	
6. Income generation <i>"My capital for selling small fish has expanded."</i>	Estimated current monthly earnings	Writing/drawing income earning activity: Discussion re sources of earning, amounts, spending patterns and feelings re earning
7. Coping skills <i>"Now I can depend on my own instead of parents."</i>	Money budgeting awareness (multiple choice)	New coping skills learned in past two years: Discussion re what and why important

Note: The questionnaire and focus group activities were presented or conducted in the children's home language. Data for qualitative analysis was translated by the researchers into English.

Data analysis

Qualitatively, the products of the data gathering processes (notes, transcribed audio-recordings of discussions, children's drawings, etc.) were thematically analysed to reveal the most common or prominent differences between VSI orphans (Project) and non-VSI orphans (Control) on the relevant indicators listed above. Interpretations are based on these thematic differences and their qualitative content. Illustrative quotes and some pertinent drawings are included in the results to give reality and substance to the analyses.

Quantitatively, data on relevant indicators were analysed for statistically significant differences between Project and Control conditions and, where relevant, for gender differences and interactions.

Results

Note: In reading and interpreting the results it is important to keep the different contributions of quantitative and qualitative data in mind.

Quantitative data are based on relatively larger sample sizes and are therefore more representative of the populations under consideration than the qualitative data. The quantitative data have also been subjected to analysis for determining the statistical significance or meaningfulness of observed differences between the Project and Control conditions.

On the other hand, qualitative data, although involving relatively smaller samples, were gathered in a focus group context in which, especially with children, the establishment of trust and the child-friendly nature of the activities are of central importance. In this context children's responses (in their own voices) give a level of detail that, with careful thematic analysis, can reveal the *nature* and *fabric* of differences between Project and Control conditions on a specific issue.

The two forms of data should be read as equally important but supplementing one another in terms of the different information that they offer.

Social support network

A. Quantitative:

Unfortunately, a number of children either misinterpreted these questions or gave answers that were more related to wishful thinking, or perhaps what they saw as desirable responses. For example, frequencies as high as 74, 70, 63, 50, 38 etc. were entered for regular friends; 22, 20, 19, 16 etc. for emotionally supportive adults; and 45, 18, 17, 15 etc. for adults giving survival or practical support, whereas, according to the director of the project, frequencies in the region of 10, 5 and 5 for the three respective categories would, in reality, be seen as normal-to-high. Significantly the majority of what appeared to be unrealistic frequencies were given by children in the Control groups – where such support was perhaps missing but desirable – and especially in the younger age group (9-12 yrs).

For the 13-18 year group it was possible to set a ceiling of 12, 6 and 6 for the three social support categories and to adjust those responses exceeding the ceiling, in either Project or Control groups, to the specific ceiling frequencies. Although more such adjustments had to be made in the Control group than the Project group (thus giving some bias to the former through attributing the

'maximum' to adjusted frequencies), the results are still worth presenting (see below). For the 9-12 year group, however, there were too many adjustments to allow for any meaningful comparison. In particular, the bias in favour of the Control group would, in the case of the younger age group, have entirely distorted the results. The data for this group had, therefore, to be rejected⁷.

13-18 year olds

i) Peers – regular friends

For the Project group, the mean frequency for regular friends was **6.55** (N=78, SD=3.58) compared to the Control group mean of **6.19** (N=78, SD=3.89). Although a trend in favour of the Project group was apparent in this result, the statistical comparison was non-significant.

ii) Supportive adults – emotional needs

For the Project group, the mean frequency for adults supportive of emotional needs was **3.74** (N=78, SD=1.67) compared to the Control group mean of **3.09** (N=78, SD=1.61). The difference in favour of the Project group was statistically significant (F (df 1) = 6.13, p< .05). See Graph 1 below.

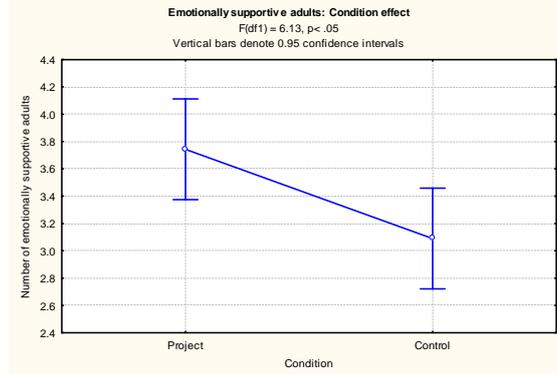
iii) Supportive adults –survival needs

For the Project group, the mean frequency for adults supportive of survival needs was **4.19** (N=78, SD=1.58) compared to the Control group mean of **3.17** (N=78, SD=1.94). The difference in favour of the Project group was statistically significant (F (df 1) = 13.57, p< .001)⁸. See Graph 2 below.

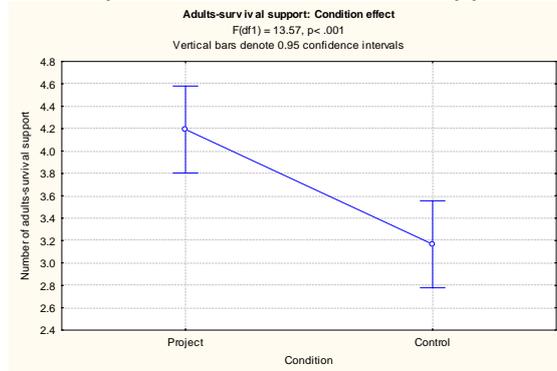
⁷ An alternative to the 'ceiling' strategy, involving the deletion of the entries of all subjects where responses were deemed unreliable, was considered. This was not adopted however, because individual responses over the three categories often varied from excessive to reasonable. Deletion of a subject on the basis of often one excessive frequency would have resulted in the loss of simply too many subjects in the respective samples, but equally, not deleting that subject would have been inconsistent.

⁸ None of the gender differences under the three categories above was statistically significant. However, the interaction of gender with condition for adults offering survival support was statistically significant. This indicated that the difference between Project and Control groups on this variable was greater for boys than for girls.

Graph 1: Emotionally supportive adults



Graph 2: Adults – survival support



Because of the ‘ceiling’ adjustments referred to above and the resulting slight bias in favour of the Control group, all three of the above results *might* have been more markedly in favour of the Project group had the data been more reliable. Given the existing statistically significant results for supportive adults (emotional and survival), and at least a positive trend for peers, it would not be unreasonable to conclude that social networks are strengthened through the activities of the VSI project.

B. Qualitative:

13 –18 year olds

The mapping activity explored both peer and adult support networks. Note that the activity and questions asked were identical for Control and Project groups. (i.e. Researchers did not ask the Project groups explicitly about their support networks in relation to VSI or Rafiki Mdogo: this arose spontaneously.)

In terms of peer support networks, both Project and Control groups have friends of the same age. Both groups describe working with their friends;

These are my friends we collect firewood together. (Control)

I go with friends to fetch water. (Project)

They also describe playing together,

I am with my friends in the field playing. (Control)

- *What do you do when you meet your friends?*
- *We usually play football. (Project)*

doing school work together,

They are my best friends even when we were studying they used to give me past papers and we were studying together. (Control)

[She is my friend] because we help each other on various issues when at school. She advises me and I do the same to her and we make a common understanding. (Project)

and having a special friend.

No, there is only one [special friend], it is F. F is the best among all.
- Why do you regard F as the best among your friends?
- You know for her, she brings me food and she comes to visit me and I also go to visit her. That is how our friendship began. When I started school she told me, the others were laughing at me because I did not have clothes and she told me come and she gave me clothes and we started to stay together and we became friends. (Control)

All of the VSI members are my special friends but there is one who is so important because she helps me a lot. (Project)

From this it is clear that young people in the Control group, like those in the Project group do have supportive peer networks. There are, however, significant differences evident in the nature of this peer network between the two groups.

The two quotes below illustrate these differences. The first is typical of how young people in the Control group talked about their peer network, the second is typical of members of the VSI (Project group).

- *This is my friend. She was together with me at school. Now I am in Grade 5 and she is in Grade 6.*

- *Why is she your friend?*

- *She gives me food and pens and exercise books. Here, I was going to the river*

- *Aha, did you meet any friends by the river?*

- *Yes, one.*

- *Where did you come to know your friend?*

- *We stay together in the village.*

- *Is there any other place you meet?*

- *At school, at the Market.*

- *Why do you call her a friend?*

- *I stay with her*

- *Where do you stay together?*

- *At home*

- *Is there another friend that you have drawn?*

- *No. (Control)*

- *[This picture shows that] I was working with VSI members at the meeting. I was holding a pen. The second day, I visited my neighbour. The third day I was in the shamba doing weeding. On the fourth day I was teaching children from Rafiki Mdogo. Day five I fetched water. Then I was at the church. I met my friend and I greeted.*

- *Where do you know that friend from?*

- *From VSI.*

- *Day seven we were singing at school, all VSI members.*

- *What were you preparing for?*

- *We were preparing ourselves to go to the farm.*

- *Among all those places, where did you meet friends?*

- *Here at the school - VSI members.*

- *How did you get to know these friends?*

- *When I joined VSI we came together, we knew each other, we introduced ourselves as new children and youths, and others are my neighbours. Some are from different places but we knew each other. All my friends are from VSI.*

- *Why do you call them friends?*

- *They help me in various things.*

- *For example?*

- *For example my house was damaged (ilibomoka) and when I went at the meeting I informed them about the problem with my house. They came to help me.*

- *In what way?*

- *By repairing damaged part of the house.*

- *In what other ways do these friends help you?*

- For example they are advising me. Once we get an information from the office that we need people who want to join the subject and my friends are ready to advise me that I go to learn that subject. (Project)

As the quotes above show, the first difference is that the young people in the Control group generally have between two or three friends, only. The VSI members, however, have more friends.

Secondly, as the quote below illustrates, VSI members are involved in a wider set of activities with peers because of their membership of VSI,

- [My first drawing] shows I was working with VSI members at the meeting. I was holding a pen. The second day, I visited my neighbour. The third day I was in the shamba doing weeding.

- On the fourth day I was teaching children from Rafiki Mdogo. Then I fetched water.

- Where did you take that water?

- To home. This [drawing] shows I was at the church. I met my friend and I greeted.

- Where is that friend from?

- From VSI. [This drawing shows] we were singing at school, all VSI members, preparing [for a performance].

- This shows us [VSI] preparing to go to the farm. (Project)

The two drawings below illustrate the fact that the VSI have more friends and that friends are involved with them in everyday tasks. The first drawing is done by a VSI member. Notice the groups of friends who are present at a number of everyday activities in contrast to the 2 or 3 friends who are found at school or home.



Drawing from project group



Drawing from control group

The network of contacts that the VSI have is also much more extensive and reaches beyond the school and the village:

- *On Monday I came here at the office.*
- *For what?*
- *To meet K so that he can give me a He-Goat. On Tuesday, I went at the prevention meeting (but the place not mentioned). On Wednesday I went to dig in a garden.*
- *Was it a group garden or yours?*
- *Mine. On Thursday I went to cut grass.*
- *For what?*
- *To do mulching in my shamba. On Friday I went to Kishanda to mobilise youths about prevention. On Saturday brother Kitambi came so I went to collect that Billy goat. On Sunday I went to attend service at church.*
- *Where did you meet friends?*
- *I met friends from Kabare and Mubunda when I was here at the office. At the meeting I met friends. Even at Kishanda and at the church I met friends. (Project)*

And perhaps most significantly, VSI members describe friends as providing deeper social support. The children in the Control group describe their friends in terms of what they do for them and with them, rather than in terms of emotional support. This could be because the VSI members are more used to describing emotional issues but the contrasting quotes below also suggest a different view of friendship between the two groups.

- *My friend and I meet at school. At school we sweep first, and then we go into class to learn. We also play handball, skipping rope and we meet in church. We attend the service then go back home*
- *Do your friends help you in any way?*
- *When I am unwell they write for me or tell the teacher on my behalf that I am unwell. (Control)*

- *Then why do you say that these are only your friends? Is there anything that they help you with?*
- *Yes, they give me a pen to write with. (Control)*

- *Why do you call them friends?*
- *Because they are helping me in various things.*
- *In what way do these friends help you?*
- *For example I go with others to collect firewood. One day I went to fetch water and unfortunately my basket was broken. My friends went together with me at home that they succeeded to convince my guardian to cool down. (Project)*

If one of us gets any kind of problem we just sit together and discuss on how we can just go about that problem. (Project)

- *Why do you call them friends?*
- *Because a day we meet, they give me good impression, show me good facial expression, they advise me on different ideas, they interrogate me when I make some mistakes and correct me, for example at VSI meeting when I make a mistake somewhere they can correct me. (Project)*

VSI members also describe a great deal more interaction with friends, usually around VSI projects.

- *We also exchange ideas.*
- *What kind of ideas do you exchange?*
- *On how to run our projects for example how to keep our garden and our animals. (Project)*

- If I go to the VSI meetings and when we go to irrigate on our projects we talk and share ideas (Project)

As usual, I go to school every Monday. I go with my friend. We sometime go on foot and other times on bicycle. At school I also meet other different friends. Some belong to VSI Kishanda. We usually discuss about VSI progress. (Project)

In the VSI group we are very close. We visit each other and make different plans together and exchange some ideas. (Project)

It seems that being part of the VSI group creates opportunities and topics of genuine interest for peer activity: they are friends because they do have something to do to together.

- *Are all your friends from the VSI group?*
 - *No. Some are from the village but they are not as close friends as the ones from VSI.*
 - *Why do you regard those from the village your friends?*
 - *They are close to our home.*
 - *Why do you consider friends from VSI to be more important to you?*
- In a VSI group we are very close. We visit each other and make different plans together and exchange some ideas. (Project)*

This is reinforced by the Project groups agreeing that most of their special supportive friends came from the VSI group.

- *Who's got a special friend?*
- *I've got a friend, he is E.*

- Where did you meet E?
- At VSI.
- Who else has a special friend?
- I meet most of my special friends at the VSI.
- And you others?
- Yes (whole group)
- We met at VSI. (Project)

VSI seems to create not only the opportunity for increased and deeper peer interaction it also allows young people to take on responsibilities and develop advanced social skills such as planning and leadership skills. This is illustrated by the quote below. The young man talking is an elected leader in the VSI. Note that he was asked to describe the activities he does in his week and where he meets people during the week, he was not asked to describe what he does with VSI. The VSI activities and his responsibilities are an integral part of his week along with collecting water, doing his washing and meeting friends. What is also clear from this quote is how his sense of identity is also formed from his involvement in the organisation.

I went at school on Monday and stayed there from morning to evening. After that, I went back home. I fetched water, washed clothes and spread them over the roof for drying. On Tuesday I woke up at 6.00 am and went to school. I returned back home at 2.00 pm and found a letter informing me as a group chairman to mobilise all members to attend at the office on Saturday so that they can meet a certain visitor/guest. Because I am a student, I asked our secretary to co-operate with me by passing around and informing all members. That task was completely done. On Wednesday I left early at home for school. As I returned back home I found one member having a problem. He got a bicycle accident. I looked for a member who is not in school. Fortunately I found him and he carried the patient by bicycle to an office where he was given a letter for Rwantege Dispensary. On Friday I woke up early in the morning for school. After the school we convened a meeting, here at the office, involving all leaders to plan for agendas to be discussed on Saturday morning ... Then I went straight to one station called Maganilo to meet my friend...He is a friend from VSI, we discussed the meeting. We planned to meet the following day at the meeting. He was a member but not a leader with VSI. He asked me about the agenda. I replied that we have arranged very nice agendas that will improve our group. We left each other. There came another friend whom we are schooling together ... we talked about school. (Project)

In terms of *adult* support networks, there were not many differences in the way the Control and Project groups described adult support in their lives. Both groups most often mentioned the adults who supported them at home. These included, grandmothers, aunts, mothers and fathers and a few older siblings. Usually it was

one adult that was mentioned, though two older boys in one of the project groups described older men who helped them with their small business.

When my mother is not around she gives me money to buy paraffin and other home needs. Also school books and stationery. (Control)

When describing the support they were given both Control and Project groups described practical help such as cooking for them, giving them soap and clothes.

Though two young people in the Project group and one in the Control group did mention that the adults loved them.

The one major difference between the two groups was that at least half of the Project group mentioned the elderly person they helped as a source of adult support. They described these old people as friends.

There are some elderly disabled people whom I help. They have become my friends when I help them or sometimes when they help me. (Project)

As part of the formative evaluation, a focus group discussion was held with VSI members and the older people they support. This discussion is worth recording here as it reveals the clearly supportive 'friendship' that has resulted between young and old.

She fetches water, collects firewood, sometimes wants to wash clothes but I say it is too much for her. She helps three times in a week ... When going to school she says good morning and when from school she passes to say good afternoon. We talk well daily. (elderly person)

I will continue helping her because we have become familiar and become friends. (VSI member)

Interestingly, apart from two young people the Project group did not mention Humuliza staff as a source of adult support. It was clear that much of their emotional and even practical support came from fellow members of the VSI group.

9–12 year group

In terms of peer support networks, Project and Control groups both describe meeting, talking and playing with friends during their weekly activities.

When we go to wash clothes we meet at the river. (Control)

We meet at school. We study together. (Control)

We meet in the streets. (Control)

She gives me company when I go to fetch water. (Project)

She plays skipping the rope with me. (Project)

But the children in the Control group have fewer friends than those in the Project group.

- *Can you show us your friends?*
- *She is here.*
- *Any one else?*
- *Only one comes to visit me. Others I meet in the market. (Control)*

- *Is this your friend?*
- *Yes.*
- *And where does this friend live?*
- *He lives in the village and when we want to go to school he passes by to call me.*
- *How do you know your friend?*
- *We started school together and we know each other.*
- *When he is in the village we meet, if I am going to the market we meet even when gathering firewood.*
- *This one also is my friend...*
- *He helps me to collect firewood, I tie the bundle and then he goes to his home.*
- *Are there others?*
- *No. (Control)*

- *Who is that?*
- *This is Betty playing the ball*
- *Is Betty your friend?*
- *Yes she is.*
- *What makes you feel that Betty is your friend?*
- *Because Betty helps me.*
- *How does she help you?*
- *For example when I become sick she finds medicine for me, and when I fail to attend to school or to Humuliza. She helps me to report and tell the reason that might have caused me not to attend.*
- *This is Vetty Elivinus, Shuuvu and others of Rafiki Mdogo.*
- *Are their other friends you did not mention?*
- *Elinus and Adoption.*
- *How does Elivinus help you?*
- *When I become sick he helps me to fetch water and collect*

firewood for me. And when I do not attend to Humuliza for some reasons, he helps to report.

- Do you have other friends apart from these?

- Yes.

- Who are they?

- There is Steward ...

- Who is this?

- That is Vetta. she is sitting on the desk reading the book .

- Do you attend the same school?

- Yes.

- Is she also your friend?

- Yes.

- How does she help you at school?

- When I don't have a pen to use and it happens that she has two pens, she borrows me one pen, and also I borrows her a pen when it happens that she does not while I have two. We help each other in that way. (Project)

- Do you have friends at school?

- Yes, they are Frieda, Diana, Jonia and Sabera ...

- Here I am with my friend Naziru we are coming from the field to collect firewood.

- Do you have other friends?

- Yes, there is Sackman and Mchunguzi. (Project)

Another clear difference is that Control group children, when asked to describe the friends they have, consistently referred to friends within the household. Some did have friends outside the household but then usually only two or three. Consistently the friends from outside the household were either made in school or were neighbours. The children in the Project groups, however, had friends from all over the local area.

- Show us your friends.

- Here they are.

- Another one?

- There is no one else ...

- How did you get to know your friend?

- We were at school. We were going to school together in the same class and I came to know her.

- So where else do you meet with your friends?

- Where we meet it's is at ... silence.

- Is there anyone else?

- No.

- Why is this one your friend?

- When there is firewood she helps me collect some, comes back fetches water and she helps me to weed the garden. (Control)

*Can you show us where you meet friends?
This is Khimulo.
How did you meet her?
She is my mother's sister. She is a girl ...
Any other friends?
There is Elvia. She is the child of my mother's brother ...
This is Matungwa she is my grandmother's child. (Control)*

*Here I am playing football with Avitus.
How did you become friends?
We fetched firewood and met that way.
I also have my friends Regan, the brother of Avitus.
I was going to church here with my other friend... I met him at church.
And in this picture I am coming to Humuliza with my friends from Rafiki Mdogo...
Here I was playing with my fellow friends from school. (Project)*

Consistently children in all three Project groups describe having a wide circle of friends. These friends are not just named within Rafiki Mdogo activity: they work and play together, meet at school and also go places together. The quote below illustrates how, in the Rafiki Mdogo group, interaction with friends is integrated into the children's everyday lives. Only two children (both boys) within the Control group had this kind of extensive and complex network of friends who work, play and study with them.

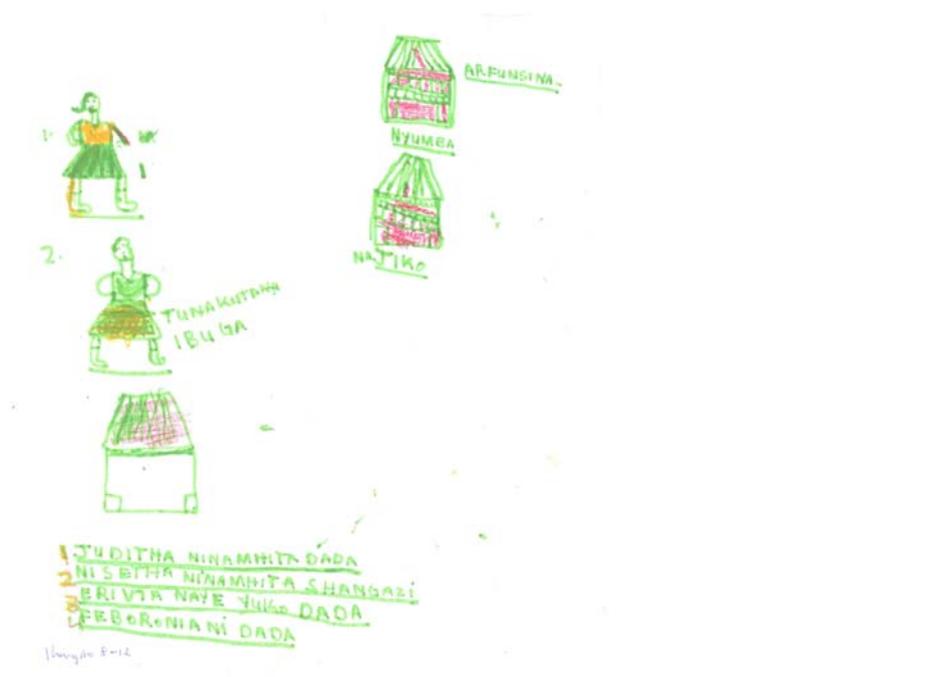
- *O.K. thank you, Livinus take the ground.*
- *This house is my home. Here I am with my friend Naziru we are coming from the field to collect fire woods.*
- *Why you drew Naziru? How is he important to you?*
- *Naziru gives company when going to collect firewood, and at school, he borrows me a pen/pencil if I also not have mine. And I do the same to him when he has no pen/pencil*
- *Continue to tell how helpful Naziru he is to you?*
- *When he buys mango to eat, he also given me. He does not eat alone.*
- *Apart from Naziru, do you have other friends?*
- *Yes, there is Sackmon and Mchunguzi.*
- *How do Sackmoni and Mchunguzi help you?*
- *When going to do farming activities they borrow a hand hoe and tools to use for irrigation our crops.*
- *What type of crops do you irrigate?*
- *We irrigate African spinach, cabbage rice and maize.*
- *Who is the owner of these crops?*
- *The Rafiki Mdogo group of Bugarama.*
- *What is this?*

- This is Eston's bicycle.
 - Why did you draw this bicycle?
 - Because when Eston is riding his bicycle, he carries me on it.
 - Is Eston a Rafiki Mdogo?
 - No, he is not
 - Do you have other friends who are not members of Rafiki Mdogo.
- Yes.
- This is Chungu and that is Sackman.
 - What is their importance to you?
 - They play ball together with me.
 - What more help do you get from them?
- They help me to draw water from the water well, especially when adult people overcrowd and never give chance for young ones to fetch before they have fetched.
- Any more help they give?
 - Whenever I get sick the help me to fetch water for me, and to collect firewood.
 - Are they members of RM?
 - No they are not. (Project)

The drawings below illustrate this point well. The first is typical of drawings done of 'places we meet our friends' in the Rafiki Mdogo group and the second is typical of children in the control groups.



Drawing from project group



Drawing from control group

Additionally, the children who attend the Rafiki Mdogo group describe the interaction with their friends differently. Two children from the Control group did say that having friends made them happy but mostly they describe friendship in terms of the practical help friends give them. The children in the Project groups also describe the practical help friends give them but, in addition, the way they describe their interactions with friends shows greater spontaneity and playfulness that suggests emotional well-being. This difference between the two groups was marked:

- My friend comes from Morogoro.
 - His name is Kasisi ...
 - This is a table from his house.
 - And that friend of yours where do you meet.
 - In the forest.
 - How did you come to know him.
 - I chose him.
 - Why is he your friend?
 - He collects firewood with me, fetched water for me and I bath and when I finish I dress well and go for a walk... he helps me to pick weeds.
- (Control)

We started school together and I met them [friends]. We meet at the market... they help me when I do not have a pen, they lend me and I can write with it. (Control)

I am at the market. I see my friends together and I go to them and ask where are they going, they say to the market. I say let us hurry up and we go. Then we return back. We come together to home. We start cooking, the food gets ready and we eat and we finish and we sleep. The next day we went digging. (Control)

When we are playing football, I play with my friends, we also cheer with each other by saying heee! and when we go for grazing we take a ball with us so that when we reach there we start to play. (Project)

Here I am playing football with my friends and I am very happy, on the other picture I am with my friends at the river they help to fetch water and after that we start playing. The following picture we are going to school with my friends, Kanywanyi and Frenk, but they are not in Rafiki Mdogo. (Project)

Here we are at school with my friends and others we are at the river, when we are at school they help me to do the home work and we play together by using a rope as well as when we are at the meeting of Rafiki Mdogo they help me to answer questions. (Project)

Clearly, being part of the Rafiki Mdogo group encourages greater interaction as the children have a set of common activities apart from going to school together and collecting water and firewood, as this child explains:

When it is time for going to Rafiki Mdogo project we call one another to go. Another thing we do together is for example when we are at school, we communicate about the group and evening activities that will be done at our homes so after school hours we go together to do these activities like fetching water for domestic use. (Project)

Obviously too, being part of the Rafiki Mdogo group gives the project children additional activities to do with friends.

I drew the Rafiki Mdogo girls playing the ball with the Rafiki Mdogo boys. (Project)

At times when wanting to go to Humuliza they call me and we walk together. (Project)

Some of the children in the Project group described how these activities made them feel.

- *What do you do at the Rafiki Mdogo meetings?*
- *We play games and sing songs.*

- *Is this helpful to you? How does it make you feel?*
- *I feel well.*
- *Which part of you feels well, your mind or your body?*
- *I feel well in my whole person. (Project)*

In terms of *adult* support networks, both Project and Control groups mentioned their primary caregivers as 'friends' who support them, often spontaneously without being asked about adult support. These included grandmothers, fathers, mothers and aunts. This age group also talked about older siblings, cousins or other adolescent relatives as important sources of support.

The support most often mentioned was practical such as providing soap, handing on clothes that have been outgrown and food. Older brothers and sisters were often mentioned as helping with work that needed to be done such as washing clothes or cooking. Both groups describe this support in some detail defining the different kind of help they get from different adults and identifying what it means to them.

There is my father who takes care of me, my grandmother who gives me different stories which I tell others, my brother who buys me clothes and my sister who cooks for me, when they do this I feel happy. (Project)

I drew someone else, my brother. He is here. He fetches water for me, I give him soap and he washes my clothes for me until they are clean he brings the clothes to me and tells me that your clothes are in the sun I have left them to dry. (Control)

The younger groups (both Control and Project) identify more adults who support them than the older groups. Additionally adults were mentioned spontaneously when the children were asked about 'friends'.

The major difference between the Project and Control groups is that the Project groups spontaneously and often mention the VSI members who run the Rafiki Mdogo groups, and members of the Humuliza staff, in a supportive capacity.

These are [friends] called Lord, Kyega and Laina they are teachers at Rafiki Mdogo. We are attending the Rafiki Mdogo meeting. (Project)

*This is brother K [Humuliza staff member]
Why did you draw him?
Because he helps me.
He teaches me ... and we sing songs. (Project)*

There is sister Mergi and Justa. They are important. They help me with a pen and copybooks and soap. They help me with uniform and body cream. Also if I am sick at a meeting they carry me home. (Project)

Summary of Project vs Control differences: Social Networks

13-18 year group

In terms of peers, the qualitative data revealed that the Project (VSI) group consistently show *more* specific, named peer friendships than the Control group. This would appear to confirm the trend, although statistically non-significant, in the problematic quantitative data.

Beyond the number of friendships, the qualitative data revealed that, while friendships are important in both groups in terms of practical support, the Project group's VSI friendships also tended to involve *emotional support, social skills development*, and were central to a growing *sense of identity* – none of which was apparent in the Control group.

In terms of the adult social network, the quantitative data revealed that the Project group had established significantly more adult relationships offering both emotional and practical support than the Control group. Qualitative data showed that the Project group's relationships with elderly people, as formed through the VSI, were not only central in their adult social network, but contributed to a wider sense of community connectedness. This was not apparent in the Control group.

9-12 year group

Although the quantitative data had to be rejected in the case of the 9-12 year group, the qualitative data clearly indicated that the Project group had a *wider* circle of friends, both within and from outside the Rafiki-Mdogo's, than the Control group whose friendships were often limited to other children in the household. While both groups talked of their friends as supporting them in daily practical tasks, it was only the Project group who talked of the play and fun associated with friendship and the *well-being* implied in this.

Both Project and Control groups mentioned a range of 'adults' supporting them – including older siblings and other adolescents. Amongst these, the Project group made spontaneous and frequent mention of VSI members who run the Rafiki Mdogo groups, as well as members of the Humuliza staff.

Emotional stress

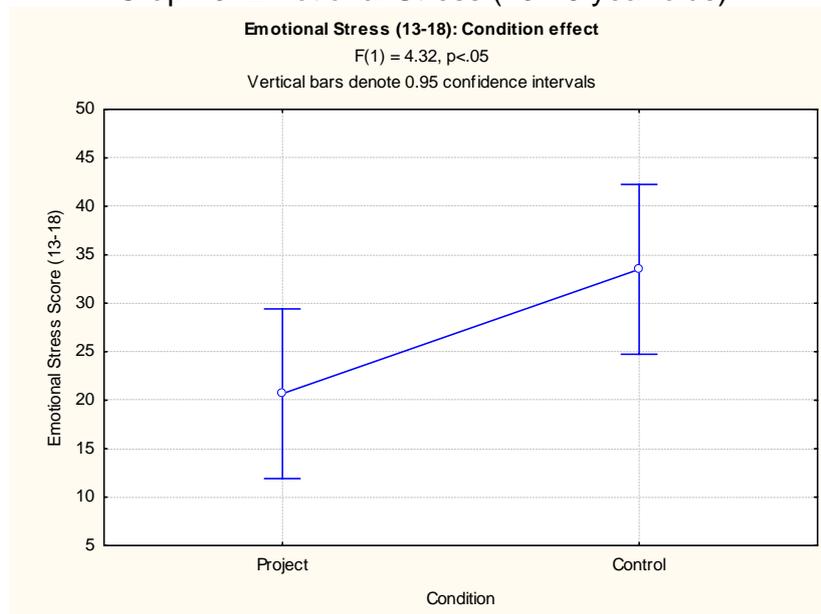
A. Quantitative:

13-18 year olds

Emotional stress scale

For the Project group, the mean emotional stress score⁹ was **20.67** (N=30, SD=20.70) compared to the Control group mean of **33.50** (N=30, SD=26.30). The difference was statistically significant (F (df 1) = 4.32 p< .05), indicating a lower level of emotional stress in the Project group than in the Control group¹⁰. See Graph 3 below.

Graph 3: Emotional Stress (13-18 year olds)



9-12 year olds

Emotional stress scale

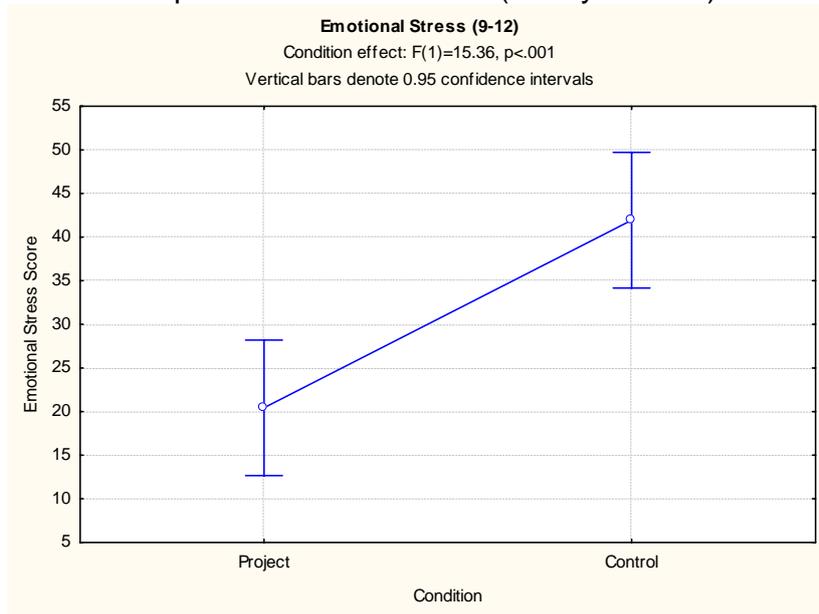
For the Project group, the mean emotional stress score was **20.43** (N=30, SD=15.71) compared to the Control group mean of **41.93** (N=30, SD=26.05). The difference was statistically significant (F (df 1) = 15.36 p< .001), indicating a substantially lower level of emotional stress in the Project group than in the Control group¹¹. See Graph 4 below.

⁹ See Appendix 2 for the derivation of scores.

¹⁰ There was no statistically significant gender difference nor interaction with the condition effect.

¹¹ There was no statistically significant gender difference nor interaction with the condition effect.

Graph 4: Emotional Stress (9-12 year olds)



The significance of these results is an indicator of the degree to which the VSI and the Rafiki Mdogo have both successfully had their levels of emotional stress reduced through their involvement in the project. For the younger age group, where the difference between Project and Control is particularly marked, this result is perhaps of most importance in terms of the emotional vulnerability of these younger children and the particular aims of the Rafiki Mdogo group within the wider project.

B. Qualitative:

13-18 year olds

The discussion about emotional stress as a result of being an orphan centred around a basket and stones. The stones represented the problems the young people faced since the death of their parents. The stones were placed in the basket as the problems were named making the basket heavier and heavier. Once the basket had been filled with stones the young people were asked if the basket was still heavy, i.e. if they still felt heavy emotional stress or if any thing had happened to them to reduce the stress.

The problems mentioned by Control and Project groups were very similar. The quotes below present a comprehensive list of the problems faced by both groups.

When our parents died I had many problems. First I did not have anyone to buy me uniforms. (Control)

Sometime we didn't have pens and exercise books. We had to struggle and pass to our relatives (uncles and sister) begging for those items and hence fail to attend the school. (Project)

We get social problems. For example, if your mother dies and your father decide to marry another wife the new wife cannot tolerate the step child. When you go to school and come back home without getting food because you are not born by the stepmother. (Project)

When our parents died, we faced many problems. For instance food, bedding is poor at home, we lack money to buy clothing, and then we start remembering again our parents. This disappoints us. If you go to school without a pen or exercise book it makes you to despair and abandon the school. If a mother dies leaving the daughter, this is difficult because there are things your mother can help with but you cannot tell your father such things. I think it is another problem faced by daughters who have lost mothers... So new problems include disappointment and missing a parent whom you can tell secrets to. (Project)

For example social isolation. For instance when parents die we remain with uncles. If there are two children, as the funeral comes to an end these children are left alone at home. (Project)

An addition is that if we have lost all parents before going to school, those who have remained are not ready to take you to school. They do it with bad intention. This is why children stay in difficulties without anything important to do, they decide to remain loitering in streets. You may find children being affected/infected with AIDS due to social isolation. (Project)

Some of us have lost both parents, thus we are cared for by grandmothers. You find about three children in that house who are seriously infested by jiggers because nobody can pick them out. (Project)

When my parent died, we had a problem of our house falling down. (Control)

I ... they are all finished [dead] but only my mother is left. My problem is food and lack of school materials. Mmmh. (Control)

Me, when my parents died...to pay the debts, they said pay the debts and they took everything. (Control)

When my parent died we got problems, if he was around he would be supporting me and we would not lack everything. Now I do not have

uniform, food, pens and exercise books and now I have to involve myself first to get money to buy my requirements. (Control)

- My mother became sick. I was really in pain to see ... she died and left us with misery.

- Now in your heart how do you feel?

- Sorrow. (Control)

- Being deprived of your essential rights and freedoms.

- What are the rights that you are deprived of?

- When our parents died some of our properties were taken by our relatives. (Project)

Some of us who are schooling you can be suspended from school because you don't have the school fees. (Project)

Being chased from home. In case you are the elder brother or sister you have a big load of taking care of your young siblings. (Project)

Sometimes you feel that you are tortured because you don't have parents. (Project)

Sometime you work in the farm and some of the neighbours might come and say that you have exceeded the limits of your parents' farm, so they may reduce your plot. (Project)

Sometimes you can have the responsibility of looking after the young orphans. (Project)

Sometimes if your parents die the relatives may take away your plot which you might have inherited from them and sometimes leave you with clothes that you have worn so you stay with those as night wear and day wear. (Project)

When father died I became very angry. Whenever my father went to Bukoba he bought me clothes and many other things ... Now there are no things and I feel angry. (Control)

When father died they took away all our things. They took our farm. (Control)

When my father died I was mistreated. My step mother, she even beat me. When she beat me I kept quiet, sometimes she beat me and I also beat her. Sometimes she beat me and I say just beat me. (Control)

Too many thoughts in my heart, it is a burden in my heart. (Control)

Lacking good upbringing is a problem. (Control)

- *When you are orphaned then we start being mistreated.*
- *You get despised.*
- *Others falsely accuse you of being a robber and a thief. (Project)*

It is important to note that the quotes above describe both practical problems and emotional stress. As soon as the issue of the death of their parents was raised the groups became quiet and sad. Young people in the Control groups were much sadder and found it more difficult to articulate their sadness suggesting a high level of emotional stress.

When the Control groups were asked if the stones were still in the basket or if anything had helped to reduce the stress for them they all answered that the stones were still in the basket. As the quote below shows, researchers asked the question a few times to make sure and each time the group insisted that the basket was still full of stones:

- *Now tell me if any of these problems have been reduced. Are there any stones that have come out of your basket?*
- *No. (all agree)*
- *Do you mean that all your problems are still in your basket?*
- *Yes. (all agree)*
- *Not even one has been reduced?*
- *No.*
- *They are still all there?*
- *Yes. (Control)*

- *Are there any things that have helped you to take these problems out?*
- *The problem of lack of basic needs is difficult to overcome because we as school children go to school in the morning until evening.*
- *Is there anything to be done to reduce the problem?*
- *No.*
- *Someone else?*
- *We go to school we don't have the opportunity to reduce the problem. (Control)*

After young people confirmed that no stones had been taken out of the basket – the problems remained - researchers asked if there were any times at all when the basket felt lighter. In one focus group the children insisted that nothing helped make the basket lighter. Children in the two other focus groups mentioned some times when the burden felt lighter.

When is the time when you feel a little bit released - that although you have problems it is a little better?

When I go to church or when I am with other people it is lighter but when I am alone it becomes heavy again.

Since I do not stay with my brothers and sisters so I feel it is lighter when they come. They stay with relatives and I stay with my one brother.

When my cousins come from outside the region, they help me a little with my brothers. (Control)

- Me, my brother wanted to take away my farm but fortunately I got the chairman who helped me to recover it.

- On holidays, I play and feel good.

- You go for a visit, or you go for a walk and you see a friend and says that he has permission to come and see you. You feel good.

- I feel good when my friend comes and helps me, we help each other and he gives me papers and we study. Now when I see him I really feel great.

- Me, when Farida comes to see me, I feel good and say that God has blessed me.

Me also these days grandmother stopped beating me and gives me permission that you too go and play so that you can rest.

- But me my problem with my stepmother is not reduced. I feel it all the time when she sees me she asks me, what child are you who looks like a red headed lizard? (Control)

The Project group response was completely different. When asked if the problems had been reduced, they spontaneously described how being part of the VSI had helped them.

Some are being solved for example, some of us are being helped to pay school fees and other school needs, so stones are reduced like that.

(Project)

- Humuliza teaches us to dig and get at least a little capital to survive.

- Which stones have been taken out of your basket?

- From the money I get for [looking after old people] I manage to get my basic needs like soap, food, clothes.

- Sadness can be reduced since Humuliza is there. (Project)

- Like being oppressed and being deprived of our properties after our parent's death.

- So how did this problem get reduced?

- We go to different meetings and meet people and ask for support. Some people get scared of us because they know we are the children of

[Humuliza]. (Project)

Sometimes before our parents die they sell each and everything that could remain and support us. So the problem like this is being solved by

Humuliza, since it buys plots for us, so this reduces the load also. (Project)

Humuliza supplies us with 1800 Tsh which helps us to buy things like exercise books, pens and so on. (Project)

But it is not just the reduction of practical problems that reduces stress. Young people also describe how the social aspects of the group provide release of emotional and social problems.

Stones of being isolated are removed by getting friends. (Project)

- Doing discussion with the VSI members helps me to reduce the problem of thinking about these problems all the time. So it is as if I am reduced from such loads...

- It reduces sadness...

- Like getting friends from VSI has helped me to get the solution to different problems. (Project)

They have given us preventive health education that will help us to live better lives in future. (Project)

We never had friends but now it has helped us make friends. (Project)

It is also clear that the practical help has reduced emotional stress.

- We've gotten cash to buy soap to wash clothes...

- I make some money to buy clothes...

- How does that make the basket lighter?

- Because you don't look different from other people in the surroundings. They used to see you as a nobody without anything but now you can dress well. (Project)

- The sorrow stone is a smaller stone.

- How did it become smaller?

- The help we received.

- What kind of help?

- Like we said, we've been assisted to go to school, to build houses. This has reduced the sorrow. (Project)

[The stone of worrying at school] is finished because when we are in class teachers pass around and send some students home to collect school fees whereas I feel comfortable because I have already paid. (Project)

If I could not get such help I would despair and go in town and turn into a street boy. (Project)

I think the problem of being treated badly by people goes away due to house building. If you have lost all parents at a young age but succeeded to get a good house because VSI members helped you to build you shall also be able to stay nicely because you have a nice house... you have no need to be dependent on anybody. (Project)

- I think the big load has reduced a little because when my mother died I could not talk to anyone. Now I know that if I get a certain problem I may go to a certain person and express myself.

- Who do you go to for help?

... I finally got an organisation that was ready to help me. (Project)

The problem which faced me that I would only tell my mother but not my father (menstruation and the need for sanitary protection) was solved by that money (monthly payment for helping old people), since I could go and buy that thing that I needed... I can't tell my father to buy me an underskirt. But I can come here at the office and tell Sister L (Humuliza staff member). This organisation has helped me to reduce the load. It is still there but it is reduced a bit. (Project)

I remember my parent who died; I can not see them. What would I do? It is true that VSI has helped me a lot. If I start to remember her I may forget that for instance by singing a VSI song; or if I think that today there will be a VSI meeting I have to attend it and discuss other things that help me to forget my dead parent. In other cases education has also helped me to reduce bad memories. When I start remembering parents, I may take a book and read. When at school with friends and other pupils, I don't remember such things, except when I am at home. The school has helped me to reduce bad memories. For example when my mother died I was in standard five. After the funeral, I went back to school where I proved that it helped me to forget such things. However, when I returned back home I remembered my mother again. When I take materials or books and start reading, I forget bad memories. VSI has very much helped us. I can't remember such things, when I am here. I can therefore reduce that problem. (Project)

I would like to say that such a situation when somebody finds it difficult to talk, is reduced at VSI meeting. Everyone, even those people who are not leaders are encouraged to take part, to stand in front and conduct the song, for example. This helps that member to forget about bad thoughts and participate in VSI agendas. (Project)

9–12 year olds

Note: Particularly for this younger age group, activities were carefully structured to make sure that the children's sadness was contained. Additionally, researchers were experienced in work with vulnerable children and were sensitive to the situation.

The same activity with a basket and stones was used with the younger children. They too became very sad and most cried when the discussion turned to the death of their parents. Researchers observed that Control group children were sadder. The children were given the opportunity to go outside and choose their own stones if they felt the ones in the room were not big enough. The Control group children consistently chose bigger stones than the Project group, with one focus group carrying in a large rock to represent sadness.

Control and Project groups identified similar problems after the death of their parents. The younger groups mentioned sadness more easily and more often than the older groups who tended to focus on practical issues.

The following is a list of problems children described.

When father died our brother took away our farm and my brothers wife started insulting us. They also took our plates and pans and we do not know where they are. (Control)

When my father died we were insulted and my mother was insulted ... by people in the village. (Control)

When father died, grandfather, who is my father's father formed a group and they threw us out of our house. They were beating us. (Control)

When my father and mother died our neighbours started moving the boundaries of our farm and taking our land. (Control)

When father died they [thieves] started breaking the house until it was demolished. (Control)

I feel bad and I have a lot of pain. (Control)

*What could one of the stones be called?
It is great pain. It is big like this stone (points to the very large rock he has carried in).*

Yes, it is big like this. (Control)

It is like I did not have any foundation. (Control)

When my father died the elder wife took away all the farms. (Control)

I was always having fever. (Control)

I had great sorrow because my parent had died. For most of the time I was crying. (Project)

After my parents died I could not get kerosene. (Project)

I had no pens and no kerosene. (Project)

When my mother died my mind was full of thoughts. (Project)

When my mother died there was no one to give me exercise books. (Project)

For me the death of my mother was very painful in my heart.

What caused that pain?

The torture that was done by some people who humiliated me.

Who?

My mother's uncles. (Project)

No food in our house. Lack of food (Project)

No money for school things. (Project)

Our clothes were old and we had no soap. (Project)

When asked if the burden had been reduced children in the Control group said no. All of the Control focus groups refused to allow the researcher to take any stones out of the basket.

In two of the Control focus groups children described times when the burden was reduced a little but not removed.

- When many people come and you start talking and laughing you feel it is lighter.

- When I am also with people and become happy then my basket becomes lighter.

- When I am among children talking and I become happy

- When I play ball game I feel that it is a bit lighter. (Control)

When I am playing with friends it is lighter but when I am alone it is heavier. (Control)

But those in one focus group insisted that the stones just felt heavier over time.

- *How is the basket now? How do you feel now?*
- *Heavy.*
- *Heavy as before?*
- *Heavier.*
- *Who else?*
- *Me?*
- *How do you feel now?*
- *Heavy as before?*
- *It is heavier...*
- *Heavier.*
- *It is very heavy.*
- *Which stone has made it heavier?*
- *This one. (They point to the large stone representing sadness).*
- *The pain is in my face.*
- *It is in my heart.*
- *Does anything help to make it better?*
- *Nothing.*
- *What about doing work does that reduce it?*
- *No, it does not help.*
- *Crying does not help. Even if you cry they will not come back.*
- *When you talk to your friend does that help.*
- *No. (Control)*

In the Project group, however, children stood up and took stones out when asked if anything had helped remove the stones in the last year. The stones that represented practical problems such as no food, no soap, no money for school needs were taken out first.

- *What helped you to take out that problem?*
- *It is the help we get from Humuliza through the materials they give to me. Such as soap, school uniforms, exercise books, pens and oil for my body. (Project)*
- *There is one stone that is gone out. that is lack of kerosene and clothes. (Project)*
- *I can get soap and salt now. (Project)*

For one child being able to contribute to the family reduced the discrimination he was experiencing at home.

- *Even me, they don't beat me as they were doing shortly after the death of my mother.*
- *What helped you to make them stop from beating you?*
- *When I take home the materials given to me by Humuliza, such as*

soap and oil my fathers feels happy.(Project)

Many children described how sadness had been reduced, mostly through contact with other children through the regular meetings of Rafiki Mdogo but also through the practical help.

- *For example; the feeling of pain in my heart has become less.*
- *How?*
- *Joining the Rafiki Mdogo of Humuliza has helped to lessen that feeling through playing with friends of Rafiki Mdogo. (Project)*

- *The problems are becoming less.*
- *Which problem has become less?*
- *The painful feeling in my heart.*
- *What helped you to lessen that problem?*
- *It is the help I get from Humuliza through the materials they give to me such as soap, school uniforms, exercise books, pens and oils.(Project)*

- *Is there any other problem apart from what you mentioned that has gone down?*
- *Yes.*
- *Which problem?*
- *The problem of losing the parent through death.*
- *How has that problem gone down?*
- *That feeling has become less in my heart.*
- *What helped you to lessen it?*
- *Humuliza*
- *How has Humuliza helped?*
- *By providing me with exercise books, pens and oil. (Project)*

- *For me, the thoughts of sorrow which filled my mind have gone done.*
- *When I meet Rafiki Mdogo friends, the sorrowful thoughts get away from me.*
- *Which thoughts were disturbing you?*
- *Thoughts about the way I was being tortured and beaten.*
- *You said when you are in Rafiki Mdogo the thoughts get away from you?*
- *Yes.*
- *What makes these thoughts get away when you are in Rafiki Mdogo?*
- *I enjoy because of the good care that is offered to us. (Project)*

- *What type of stone has gone for you?*
- *I feel no sorrowful thoughts because of playing with fellow children of RM. (Project)*

- *The problems have become less.*
- *Give an example of the problem that has become less.*

- *Crying.*
- *What has helped you to make you stop from crying?*
- *Playing with my friends. (Project)*

- *The problem of crying has become less.*
- *What has helped you to make that problem become more less?*
- *Playing with our friends. (Project)*

When playing the sorrowful thought gets away but when I stay idle the thoughts some back again. (Project)

- *What made the basket to be lighter?*
- *Because the problem has been reduced after coming to Humuliza. (Project)*

- *What made it not heavy?*
- *Simply because the sorrowful thoughts are no longer in my mind.*
- *What removed these thoughts in you?*
- *My friends like Livinus whom I play with? (Project)*

Summary of Project vs Control differences: Emotional Stress

13-18 year group

The quantitative data revealed a statistically significant lower level of emotional stress in the Project group than in the Control group.

The qualitative data amplified this finding by showing that the Control group differed from the Project group both through their more depressed mood as well as in their insistence that none of their stresses (practical and emotional) had been reduced since the death of their parent(s). The Project group, on the other hand, who described similar initial stresses, spontaneously described how being involved in the VSI had reduced feelings of worry and inadequacy through the practical support offered, as well as through increased social support in the organisation.

9-12 year group

The quantitative data revealed a marked and statistically highly significant lower level of emotional stress in the Project group than in the Control group.

Again, the qualitative data amplified this finding by showing that the Control group manifested a high level of stress through depressed mood, open crying and (in the basket and stones activity) selecting larger stones than were initially offered to represent the 'weight' or depth of their pain and sadness. Although the

Project group described similar initial feelings and hardships on the loss of their parent(s), their mood was less overtly distressed and many spontaneously described the reduction in pain and stress through the activities in the Rafiki Mdogo group, their extended friendships and the practical support they had received.

Generally, it was noticeable that there were more overt expressions of emotional pain and stress in the younger age group than the older age group whose primary stresses revolved more around practical, survival issues.

Confidence

Qualitative:

13-18 year olds

A number of ideas were explored in the activities. These included the confidence to do something about a problem, to seek help where appropriate and the confidence to speak out. The sense of locus of control was explored within these activities.

Firstly, young people were asked to identify the problems they faced and describe how they had solved them, if at all. In addition they discussed a scenario where they had been wrongly accused of something. They were asked what their response would be to the false accusation.

Very distinct differences emerged between the Project and the Control groups in the focus group discussions.

The problems faced by both groups were similar. They can be categorised into five themes:

- Social problems involving family members
- Practical problems such as a lack of food or school materials
- The problem of discrimination against them in the community because they are orphans or poor
- Emotional problems related to the death of their parents
- Problems related to accident and illness

After the death of my parent I started lacking the basic needs such as shelter, food and clothes. (Project)

The other problem is that people were coming to my home and taking things without my permission and by force. (Project)

*Being blamed at home even when I did not do anything by my stepmother.
(Project)*

*A problem when you are an orphan, is your property is taken from you.
(Project)*

Having no bedding for sleeping. (Control)

This girl (referring to a picture she has drawn) does not have something to put on to go to school and even she does not have a pen, a pen to write with... She is like me. (Control)

When you go to church if you do not have nice clothes to put on. I have drawn a torn dress here. Those who have nice clothes insult you if you have a torn dress. (Control)

The first problem I had is lack of laundry soap at home. (Control)

There are problems we faced at home. You can see (in my picture) the way the house is weak. The shamba is very small. There was not enough food. The problems were not enough food and a weak house. (Project)

Children in the Control groups responded to the problems in a number of ways. Many described turning to family to solve the problem. In some cases this provided a solution in other cases not.

*When I did not have a uniform I was told not to go to school until they buy me another one... I told my mother and she told me to cut grass and sell and she said she would add some money to buy the uniform ... so I cut grass and I got 1000Tsh and she added 500 Tsh and I bought a skirt.
(Control)*

*When my father was chasing me out I slept outside for three days ... after three days I went and told my uncle that I did not have anywhere to sleep. He called my father and they went to the chairman and resolved it.
(Control)*

The second strategy was to try within the resources that they had to solve the problems.

When I do not have uniform at school, my friend has two and I ask him to borrow for two days. (Control)

I was being mistreated at home but it was not my mother it was my stepmother, she wanted me to do all the work and she just sat there with

her daughter. ... she said to go and fetch water, wash the dishes, cook food but I should not eat. I just serve them then sit outside while they eat. I wait until my father comes and in the morning I tell him and we then eat together. (Control)

I was on my way from the market and I found people taking my friend to the hospital, I had sold grass. I gave her 50 Tsh and asked them to buy her samoosas on the way. (Control)

The third response was to describe what they thought they could do, though they had not done it.

In order to get a school uniform I can ask my friends or neighbours so that they can help me or I could look for some small activity to generate some income. (Control)

The fourth, and quite common response, was to do nothing as they did not think the problems could be solved.

*- Coming late to school is a problem. By the time I get to school it is very late and going back is dangerous at night. They beat me at school.
- Can you do anything about coming late to school?
- There is nothing I can do.
- Do you tell them why you are late when they beat you.
I do not say anything. (Control)*

*- Me, I am late because my stepmother makes me to fetch water before school. I was caned.
- Did you do anything?
- No. there is nothing to do. (Control)*

*- Me, my uncle's wife mistreats me, she sends me to the river, when we go we find a lot of people and start getting water, she beats us when we come late and then father says let her beat you again and you will see.
- Have you tried to solve this problem?
- No (Control)*

An interesting pattern emerged in two of the three Control focus groups. Young people did not describe actual problems at first almost as if they did not want to talk about them. They recounted meeting snakes, falling down, having an accident rather than the real problems. Researchers had to gently push them to describe actual problems. Problems at home were especially difficult for them to describe or admit to. Project groups on the other hand readily shared their problems, even those that were difficult to talk about. In contrast to the Project group, the Control group children's initial unwillingness to describe their real

problems may suggest a feeling powerlessness and inadequacy in relation to the real issues in their lives.

When I was coming from collecting firewood, when I finished to put the bundle on my head, I fell down and got prickled by a thorn in the foot. (Control)

When I was weeding on the farm I saw my friend sitting and she was crying and I asked her what happened and she told me that bees has stung her on her leg. (Control)

I went to fetch water and I was cut by a snake. (Control)

The Project group more easily talked about solutions; only three participants expressed powerlessness when talking about solutions to problems. The rest all had stories to tell of how they had solved or attempted to solve a problem. They were proud of their ability to solve their problems and wanted to talk about what they had done. This suggests an internal locus of control or a sense of power over what happens in their lives.

A number of strategies for solving problems were described in the Project group.

- *People stole my manure and beat my chickens. Now I no longer keep them [chickens] in the garden. I built a fence and a shed for the chickens.*
- *Where did you get the materials?*
- *I collected them from the forest.*
- *Did your neighbours help you to build the fence and shed?*
- *Nobody helped me. I did it by myself. (Project)*

Humuliza and VSI were mentioned as helping young people solve some of their problems. Note that, as with all other activities, researchers did not mention VSI or Humuliza as a possible source of solution. The reference to the organisation arose spontaneously.

One common strategy was the use of the small monthly payment for looking after elderly people to solve practical problems such as lack of food, soap and school materials.

When they gave us slip payment (money for helping elderly people) I could buy soap for washing and buy kerosene for family usage. (Project)

Having access to this money also solved some social problems

- *The first problem is missing food at home. When my mother died, I could only find my stepmother. After school I would go home and she had eaten*

all the food. I did not find any food. She didn't reply me when I asked her about food. Then I started thinking the way I can solve that problem.

- Is that problem still there?

- No, it was solved.

- How did you solve it?

- It was solved when I joined VSI because when we were at VSI Humuliza we got that slip money (money for looking after elderly people) which helped me to buy food and cook myself.

- Do you still prepare your own food?

- Yes, I still do it.

- Don't you cook together with your stepmother?

- No. We are living together but I cook myself. It has solved it because I don't ask anything from the stepmother. (Project)

Children in the Project focus groups also described farming and income generation projects as a source of income that helped solve practical problems. In particular the training given to start an income generation project and for farming was mentioned as a source of solution to problems. Some children described this training as a replacement for the kind of skills parents would have given them if they had been alive.

I also missed people to advise me to go and grow crops like my friends. Then my friends advised me to go to Humuliza and I was advised and they taught me things and how to make a garden and cultivate crops. (Project)

- There is a boy who distracts and advises students to stop learning... to solve that problem I did what they advised us at self defence training. The training can help you overcome such a person, this boy.

- Can you really use self defence training to overcome such a boy?

- Yes, nobody can cheat me... our thinking will be different. (Project)

- The problem is at home. You can see the house is weak (referring to his drawing) the shamba is very small. There is not enough food...

- Is the food problem still there?

- The problem is at least reduced.

- Can you reduce it more?

- Our Humuliza organisation has taught us modern skills of agriculture. We are now growing crops such as sweet potatoes, cassava, yams so when we learn these things we can go back home and use the skills and get enough food for ourselves. (Project)

Support from VSI members was another common source of solutions. This support was both practical as well as emotional.

- The problem is at school... At school, I write using my exercise books until they are full. At that point I find it difficult because I don't have any

person that can help me to immediately buy new ones. So, I become snagged.

- Do you stop writing once the exercise books are full?*
- No, I continue but squeezing in old ones. No, I find small spaces in a particular exercise book. I shift that information when I get a new exercise book and cancel it in an old one.*
- Do you have another way to solve it?*
- Yes. I remember at time when the exercise books were full, I informed my friend Antidius about a problem and he gave me two new exercise books.*
- Is there a different way?*
- Another way I may ask VSI members and get at least one exercise book from some...*
- I also have problems at home. When I come back home from school, I don't find anybody at home. I start doing domestic duties such as water fetching, firewood collection and cooking. I therefore stay at home without a lunch. That is one of the problems at home.*
- What have you done to solve that problem?*
- I can't completely solve that problem. I am trying, after school, to do different duties such as water fetching and firewood collection, but I leave others when I feel so tired.*
- I got one person who told me that I should withstand all these problems because it is difficult to get anybody who will help fetching water, collecting firewood or cooking for me.*
- Who was that?*
- My friend Antidius. This is why I continue like that.*
- How do you consider that advice?*
- I find it good and I will follow it. (Project)*

Children also described how being part of the organisation had changed people's attitudes to them.

The problem in the village was being isolated by other people because I am an orphan. When I joined Humuliza I now noticed most people love me. (Project)

A few children also described how association with the VSI had helped them access other resources to solve their problems.

In business I was being mistreated, someone took money from me. I decided to get legal aid. Humuliza gave me the name of the legal aid person. (Project)

It was also clear that they drew on their own inner strengths as well to solve some problems. This is often related to standing up for themselves. This ability to stand up for themselves is the most clear difference between the Project and

Control groups. Children in the Project group repeatedly described reporting children who insulted them or standing up to them. Some even highlight this behaviour, pointing out the difference between the way they would have responded in the past with the way they now are.

Some people used to insult me. I told my friends about this problem and they advised me and it got over because I told them [the people who insulted me] that I was going to report them to the chairman. (Project)

I was advised by my friend to report this [adults from the community taking his things] to the chairperson. So I did. (Project)

- The first problem is when I left home for school and this girl started abusing me ...

- Is that problem still there?

- It was solved.

- In what way?

- I said stop abusing me. We were about to fight then I said that I will beat you or report you to your father and then she stopped. (Project)

I was coming from the well. I met small children along the way and they abused me. I decided to go home to tell their parents. They were beaten. (Project)

- My first problem was at school. I went to school in a depressed condition as I lost my parent. I met a pupil one-day and he beat me with a stick. I went home crying. When students at school played, I only remained sitting looking at them.

- Is that problem of being beaten, depression and reluctance to play solved?

- Yes.

- How was it solved?

- Because I accused them to my teacher.

- Then?

- A teacher punished them.

- Have they stopped?

- Yes.

- What about depression?

- It is solved.

- In what way?

- When I joined VSI my fellows encouraged me to sing.

- Any other way?

- The second problem is isolation by children in our village. They chased me away.

- Why?

- Because I was afraid of them.

- Why so?
- Because of depression.
- What was the cause of that condition?
- Loss of parents.
- Didn't you feel like other children?
- No, I didn't.
- How did you solve that problem?
- I accused them to their father.
- Then?
- They were punished.
- What followed?
- It stopped and I also became bold.
- How did you become bold?
- I stood prominently when they tried to chase me.
- What did give you that strength?
- I was already in VSI?
- How did VSI help you?
- I was much used to VSI members such that I could not fear them anymore.
- The third problem is at home. My father married another wife (stepmother) following mother's death. Other children went to play while I had to go and collect firewood or fetch water. I met my friend one day. We talked. At that moment my father came and punished me. I went to VSI leaders and report the case. They came at home and make counselling to my parents. Fortunately my parents agreed to change.
- Is that problem totally solved?
- Yes.
- What did VSI leaders do to solve that problem?
- They counselled them.
- Only that?
- Yes.
- I see other people on the picture. Who are they?
- One boy from the village used to throw me stones. When we met here, I decide to stand firm, hence we fought (boxing) each other. He stopped this habit from that time.
- Did you solve that problem by defending your self through fighting?
- Yes.
- Is there another problem?
- No.
- Thank you. (Project)

The quote above is a clear description of a growth in internal locus of control explained by the boy as a result of being part of VSI. It is important to note that this quote is typical. In the Project groups at least half the children describe standing up for themselves against bullying in this way. This kind of behaviour is not mentioned at all by children in the Control groups.

Note that not every problem was solved for children in the Project group. Problems related to family relationships were the most often mentioned in this regard.

I am still treated badly by my stepmother. It is not solved because she will not change. (Project)

But even though the problem was not always solved the descriptions of the problems in the Project group were almost all linked to an attempt to find solutions, suggesting an internal locus of control rather than a sense of powerlessness.

Some children in the Control group also described attempts to solve their problems, some successfully, but this was much less apparent than in the Project group. Perseverance, such as in the quote below, also characterised many of the Project group's responses and was absent in the Control group.

- *Problem number one is experienced at home. Our parents died but they left me with a small land that is not sufficient for food. Though Humuliza has helped for house construction but the shamba remains too small.*
- *What problem do you get from a small shamba?*
- *Lack of sufficient food.*
- *What have you done to reduce that problem?*
- *I have tried to grow bananas but the place is under all efforts difficult to produce that crop.*
- *What did you do?*
- *Yes. I sometime got cattle manure, trying fertilising the shamba to improve banana production.*
- *Where did you get it?*
- *I collected from some holding where cattle are kept. Owners graze them at that place in daytime when I went to collect manure and apply it to banana plants to see if they can do well.*
- *What else did you do to reduce that problem?*
- *Following the failure in banana production, I decided to grow cassava and yams mixed with banana.*
- *Have you reduced that problem in this way?*
- *Yes, to a certain extent. (Project)*

The sense of confidence of the Project group compared with the Control group was also clear in the discussion about what to do if someone wrongly accuses you. The sequences below, incorporating a number of individual responses, illustrate the difference between the two groups. The Control group were not completely powerless. As the quotes show, most said that they would report the person accusing them, but the level of confidence and personal power is clearly

different from that demonstrated in the Project group who were much more inventive and confident about making their case than the Control group.

- *What would you do if you had such a problem?*
- *I usually explain.*
- *What I can do is self-explanation.*
- *What I can do is to make an oath that I never did it and I that I was not there.*
- *What I can do is to show that I am sorry for accusing me of something I have not done. I could even request that person to ask a friend if I have done so. If he can make a follow up and get the truth, that problem is over. If not so I could even apologise.*
- *It means you can both explain and apologise?*
- *Yes.*
- *If I meet that problem I could hate that person and ultimate forgive because it is possible that it was done unknowingly.*
- *First of all I would totally refuse it. If that person continues I will ask him to call other people so that we each explain. It may be another person who did it. If so, It is possible for the concerned person to forgive me.*
- *I would ask that person to forgive me whether I have done it or not.*
- *The first thing is falling angry. Then I will try to explain and tell that I have not done it.*
- *If I meet that problem, the first thing is to ask the concerned if there are witnesses or not. If someone say that there was a witness I will ask to call him/her. If that witness come we need to hear the contribution. If that will be not enough, I will take stern measures. (Project)*

- *I will report him.*
- *To whom will you report him?*
- *If you are at school, I will report him to the teacher.*
- *You will report him to the teacher, the others?*
- *Sometimes you report him to the teacher and the teacher starts asking, how did it start?*
- *So what do you do now?*
- *Then I just have to leave him because I have nothing to do.*
- *The rest? The others what do you do?*
- *Me, when I report him to the teacher and he does not do anything, I then go and report him to his parents.*
- *For me if he refuses to [listen] ... we start each other [fight].*
- *Is there anything [else you can do]?*
- *No (Control)*

9–12 year olds

The younger children were also asked about how they solved problems. Many of the problems mentioned by the younger children were similar to the older group, though they did include meeting a lion on the way to collect firewood!

The problems described by Project and Control groups were similar. Children in both groups recounted practical problems such as lack of food and soap, no pens and books for school. They describe frequent beatings at school for not having books or for having dirty clothes.

- Sometimes at home, you find we do not have money for buying soap. (Project)

- When you go to school with no pen the teachers also beat you. (Control)

- We do not have a hoe at home, or a knife for cutting... we do not have a farm for bananas and beans. (Control)

- A pen, shirt, skirt and exercise book. I do not have them. (Control)

Both groups also describe relationship problems at home related to fostering or stepmothers.

When I am at home they pinch me, they abuse me, they beat me. (Project)

When I go to grandmother and I am late she beats me ... she asks where I have been all this time and she kicks me and I run away. (Control)

Children in both groups also describe problems related to their age and status in the community.

When you go to the water well they never let the young ones draw water until they are finished. And sometimes they throw away our buckets and sometimes they break them. (Project)

When you go to school with dirty clothes the teachers beat you. (Project)

The children from one of the Control focus groups describe high levels of discrimination against them by adults and by children in the community. This level of discrimination was not commonly described by any of the Project groups, though individual children did tell stories of discrimination.

When I go to people's gardens they slap me and pinch me. (Control)

When I go to my relatives I get a problem of being insulted, I get a problem of being beaten. (Control)

I was going to fetch water. Children were at the river. These children beat me. (Control)

When I am at the river fetching water I see children and they come and beat me. (Control)

For the Project group, friends were the most common source of solutions to problems.

I go to collect firewood with friends. We go together and came back safely. (Project)

My friends consoled me when my father died. (Project)

One day at school I had no pens to use and the teacher was about to beat me but I begged forgiveness and the friends borrowed me a pen. (Project)

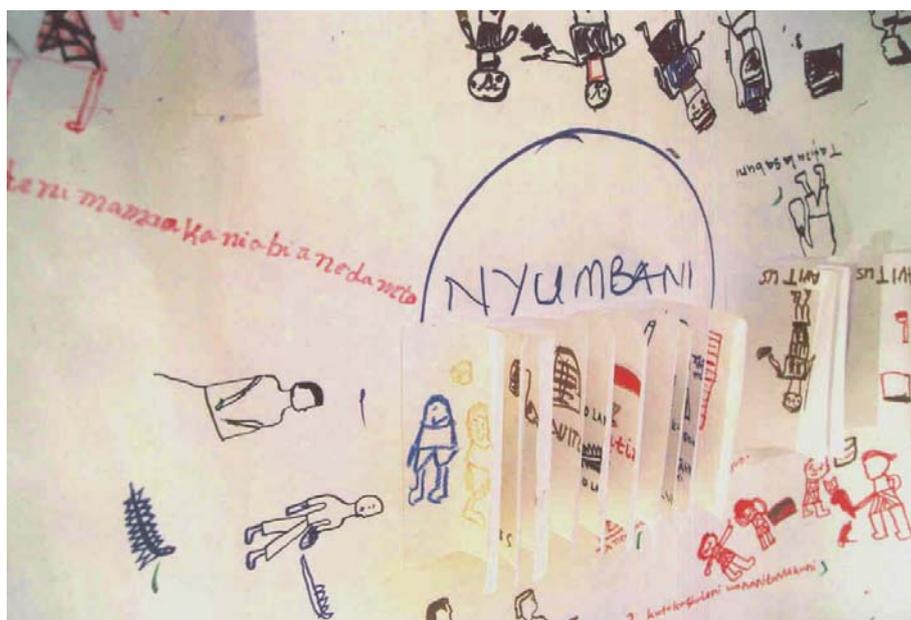
Though friends did not always give the best advice.

One day my mother sent me to the shop to buy some needs. As I was going I met one of my friends and we spent a lot of time playing so I delayed home. But my friend told me to tell lies to my mother that if she asks why I am late I tell her that there were so many people buying at the shop so I had to wait until the older people finished. I did that and I didn't get beaten. (Project)

They also describe giving support.

One of my friends when her father died I accompanied her during the mourning period and consoled her so she was not very much disturbed by sorrowful thoughts. (Project)

Humuliza was another common solution sited especially in terms of food, soap and kerosene. This is best illustrated by the photograph below which shows the problem drawing with solutions glued on to it. In this group when children were asked to draw how some of their problems had been solved the children busily drew pens, bars of soap, food, kerosene and school uniforms. When researchers guided them on to a discussion about the next problem they enthusiastically continued to draw pens, soap and uniforms until each one had drawn one of each. Then they proudly brought them up to be pasted on to the drawing. It was clear from this how important the practical help was to the young children.



Practical help from Humuliza helps us

Children in the Project group also described their own internally generated solutions which often also show a confidence in explaining themselves to authority figures.

- *The other day I was beaten at school, I went home and told my parents that I was beaten because I was late at school.*
- *What did you do?*
- *I started waking up early. (Project)*

One day at school the teacher was about to beat me because I went to school with a dirty uniform. When the teacher asked me the reason for this I told him I had gone away on a journey during the weekend. The teacher forgave me then. (Project)

They also describe standing up for themselves. Unlike the older VSI's many of whom stand up to the abusers themselves, the younger children appropriately tend to go home, report the abuse and get adult help. None of the children responded by saying they did nothing.

Once I was at the water well. There I found some bad people who had beaten me. When I went home I reported them ... my father went to their homes and told them not to beat me again. (Project)

In the Control groups some children did describe attempts to solve problems.

How do you get the exercise book?

I weed the gardens, [get paid] and I buy an exercise book. (Control)

*When we do not have food we work for people and they give us food.
(Control)*

But the most common response was to say that they had done nothing. A sense of powerlessness was evident particularly in response to bullying and discrimination.

- I was going to school and I met children and they told me that there is no school today. The next day I went to school and the teacher beat me.

- Did you tell why you did not come?

- I did nothing.

- You did nothing?

- Yes. (Control)

- What did you do when they beat you?

- I cried.

- Anything else?

- Nothing. (Control)

- When they got angry with you and insulted you and beat you what did you do?

- I just kept quiet. I went home. (Control)

- My friends that I had I liked them but when I had gone to the river they said they were angry with me and have picked someone else

- What did you say when they said they did not like you anymore?

- I kept quiet and said I will also pick somebody else.

- You kept quiet?

- They chased me, beat me. I kept quiet and I took the cans and returned home. (Control)

They took away my firewood. I cried and went home. (Control)

Summary of Project vs Control differences: Confidence

In relation to activities which explored the confidence to do something about a problem, to seek help where appropriate and the confidence to speak out, the qualitative data revealed a clear difference between the Project and Control groups for both age groups.

13-18 year group

Although both groups described a similar set of problems, almost all participants in the Project group described solutions or attempted solutions to problems, whereas this was much less apparent in the Control group. The Project group also used a greater variety of strategies for solving their problems, demonstrated more perseverance, and were more inventive and confident about speaking out and making their case than the Control group.

In general there was a sense of relative powerlessness in the Control group. This contrasted markedly with a greater sense of choice and control over problems and issues in their lives in the Project group, suggesting a stronger internal locus of control in the Project than in the Control group.

9-12 year group

Although the problems described by this age group fell into similar themes as the older age group, they had somewhat different emphases as might be expected for younger children (e.g. more bullying and social discrimination). The pattern of differences between Project and Control groups in terms of solutions, however, was almost identical. All Project children, without exception, came up with solutions or attempted solutions to their problems whereas the most common response in the Control group was to say that they had done nothing. The sense of relative powerlessness in the Control group contrasted strongly with a greater sense of a confidence in the Project group.

Future orientation

Note: Because this indicator was developmentally more appropriate for older (13-18 year olds) than for the younger (9-12 year olds), it was not assessed with the latter.

Qualitative:

13-18 year group only

The young people were asked what they would be doing in five years time and how they were working towards this goal.

There was little difference between Project and Control groups in terms of their goals. Some said they would be at school, others wanted to have small businesses, others to be farming. Both Control and Project groups described quite detailed plans.

I would like to grow tomatoes, sell them and then use that money to buy things for selling in the shop. (Project)

The remaining five years, if I am blessed and pass and get someone to pay for me I will go on with secondary school. (Control)

The coming five years if God keeps me and I complete school I will be at home farming, growing food crops. (Control)

In all but one Project focus group there was also little difference between Project and Control in terms of what they were doing now to reach their goal. Children in both groups said they were studying hard and those who wanted to farm were farming now. Others described how they were growing something or keeping animals now in order to make money to build their businesses and farms.

One of the Project focus groups, however, showed an interesting pattern. In this group young people described more detailed strategies for reaching their goals. In most cases these strategies involved drawing on the support and resources of VSI. These responses also show knowledge of income generation processes. Clearly these young people see VSI as an important resource to help them reach their goal.

- *I will be a business woman*
- *What will you do to become a business woman?*
- *I will get a loan.*
- *From where?*

- From VSI. I would also assess my environment. I may for example choose Nshamba or at hours where there are a big number of people in order to get many customers for my business.

- What will you be selling?

- If I get a loan I will buy chickens for egg production that will sell for profit making. I will use the savings to buy other eggs for chickens expanding the project. (Project)

- Form four examination, I will continue with Form five. Alternatively, If I fail to continue, I may be a clinical officer.

If you want to be a clinical office, what are you doing now to achieve your goal?

- I have to study hard. I may come to borrow books from our organisation. To make various research in studies; for example when I am studying, I should carry out some experiments so that I can cope from what I am learning. (Project)

Summary of Project vs Control differences: Future Orientation

13-18 year group only

The qualitative data showed little difference between the Project and Control groups in terms of goals. However some of the Project participants showed a more detailed understanding of what they would need to do in order to achieve their goals, including processes of income generation. This again suggests a stronger internal locus of control.

Survival knowledge (HIV/AIDS)

Note: Because this indicator was developmentally more appropriate for the 13-18 year olds than for the 9-12 year olds, it was not assessed with the latter.

Quantitative:

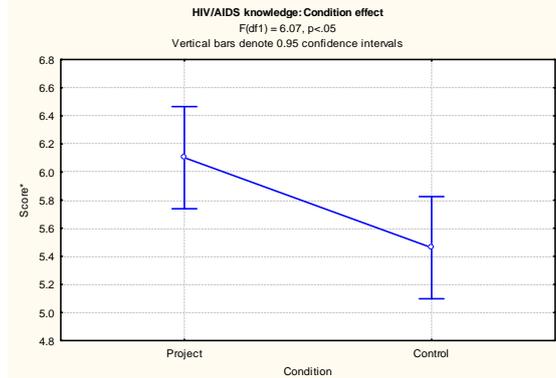
13-18 year olds

Essential HIV/AIDS knowledge

For the Project group, the mean score on this test was **6.10** (N=78, SD=1.54) compared to the Control group mean of **5.46** (N=78, SD=1.70). The difference in favour of the Project group was statistically significant ($F(df\ 1) = 6.07, p < .05$)¹². See Graph 5 below.

¹² There was no statistically significant gender difference nor interaction with the condition effect.

Graph 5: Essential HIV/AIDS knowledge



This result is a positive indication of the success of VSI activities aimed at increasing HIV/AIDS awareness and knowledge which have obvious and important survival implications.

Summary of Project vs Control differences: Survival Knowledge (HIV/AIDS)

13-18 year group

The quantitative data revealed a statistically significant difference in favour of the Project group on the test of essential HIV/AIDS knowledge. This result has obvious and important survival implications for the Project group in contrast to the Control group.

Income generation

Note: Since income generation was not a specific programme goal for the younger age group, this indicator applied only to the older age group.

A. Quantitative:

13-18 year olds

Current monthly earnings

Asked whether they earned any money in the past month 78 (**100%**) of the Project group responded 'yes', against only 12 (**15%**) of the Control group. The mean amount per month estimated by individuals in the Project group was **1,867** Tanzanian shillings (N=78, SD=976), contrasted with **122** shillings for individuals in the Control group (N=78, SD=433) – a statistically significant difference (F (df1) = 208.70, p< .001)¹³.

¹³ There was no statistically significant gender difference nor interaction with the condition effect.

The substantial difference between the two groups is not unexpected given the explicit money generating activities in which, as a central part of the project, the VSI children are engaged. Nevertheless, the very small average amount earned in the Control group (with the many earning nothing), by contrast with the Project group, underlines the critical survival value of the VSI money earning activities themselves.

B. Qualitative:

13-18 year olds

In the focus groups, young people were asked what they typically did to earn money, how much they earned through these activities in the last month and what they spend it on.

Table 6
Typical monthly income generation and expenditure by individuals in the 3 Control and 3 Project focus groups

Control groups

Ihangiro 1

Q1 – What do you do to earn money	Q2 – How much do you earn?	Q3 – What do you spend it on?
Cut grass and sell Fetch water Compost pit digging Farming Cut grass Fetch water Split firewood	1,550	2 pens Clothes Soap Salt Cooking oil
Sold cassava Two bundles of firewood	900	Pen School book Soap Food Paraffin Savings (neighbour keeps it)
Fetch water Gather firewood Harvesting Cut wood	7,000	Shoes Rabbits Shirt 2 pens
Weed Fetch water	700	Flour Soap Pen Book
Fetch water Sell grass	1,100	School books Pen School shoes
Cut grass Errands Fetch water	400	Purchase fish Pen School book

Fetch water Weed Gather firewood Launder	1,530	Clothes Tapes Savings
Weed Dig a farm Sell grass Collect firewood	9,200	Shoes Clothes Savings
Fetch water Sell fruits	700	Shirt
Fetch water Collect firewood Cut grass Fetch water and sell	1,750	Short T-shirt Salt Oil Soap Savings
Total	24,830	

Ihangiro 2

Q1 – What do you do to earn money	Q2 – How much do you earn?	Q3 – What do you spend it on?
Selling grass Weeding Selling firewood Selling fruits	1,450	School clothes School books Stationery
Fetching water Selling grass (Writing in Kihaya)	350	
Selling eggs Cutting grass Selling <i>dagaa</i> (small fish)	10,500	Chicken Goats Clothes
Fetching water Working at neighbour's place (Writing in Kihaya)	500	Two school books
	2,000	Mother School books & stationery School shirt
Cutting grass and mulching	800	One hen
Selling fish Fetching water Cutting grass Collecting firewood	2,000	Rabbit Clothes To wife
Fetching water	350	School books Ink pen
Work Fetching water	700	School books Ruler & 3 ink pens
Fetching water	50	School book
Total	18,700	

Kibanga Bumiro

Q1 – What do you do to earn money	Q2 – How much do you earn?	Q3 – What do you spend it on?
Planted tomatoes and maize then sold the produce.	3,000	Trousers Salt

		Savings
Sold charcoal Sold beans Sold my cockerel	5,150	Cloths Cockerel Duck (layer) The duck laid eggs and i got an extra 8,000
Fetching firewood Collected grass	2,000	Body oil Cassettes Clothes Savings
I got 500 Borrowed 75	575	Clothes Cassettes
no activity mentioned	500	Buying fish Onions and tomatoes Savings
Planted tomatoes and potatoes then sold the produce.	4,000	Cloths Body oil Savings
Sold beans Sold a hen	3,000	Exercise books Cloths Pencils/pen Salt Savings
My auntie gave me land to cultivate and I planted tomatoes	700	Soap Paraffin Vegetables Savings
Total	18,925	
Whole Control group: Mean individual income	2,230	

Project groups

Kishanda B

Q1 – What do you do to earn money	Q2 – How much do you earn?	Q3 – What do you spend it on?
Cut grass and sell Sell goats and chicken 'Slip' (VSI programme for assistance to the needy)	18,000	Purchase milk goats
'Slip' (VSI programme) Cutting hair Keeping chicken Rearing goats Farming Fetching water Firewood	14,500	For needs at home Assistance to a friend in need Purchase more chicken

Buy and sell eggs Loan from VSI for business Buy and sell chicken	9,800	Grow business School books
'Slip' (VSI programme) Sale of small items like bananas, Work in salon Telephone services	11,800	Home use Business
Selling farm animals Selling tomatoes 'Slip' (VSI programme) Loans Selling traditional greens and seeds (picked from forest)	4,100	Purchase of clothes and shoes Laundry and bathroom soap Paraffin
Broiler and layer chicken farming Farming Fetching water Business Selling wood Ducks for eggs Cutting grass	3,150	Purchase of school books and Stationery Start another business More chicken More ducks
Fetching water Cutting grass Weeding Animal rearing Selling firewood 'Slip' (VSI programme) Laundering services Plaiting hair	14,000	Stationery School items and books Bag Shoes Home needs Paraffin for home use
Farming Business Animal rearing Selling farm produce Selling water Cutting grass Selling firewood Selling clothes Tailoring Cutting hair Cutting and selling wood Plaiting hair	5,600	School items Start another business School uniform Shoes
Tailoring 'Slip' (VSI programme)	20,000	Pigs Chicken
'Slip' (VSI programme) Group farming share	1,900	School books Stationery School uniform Clothes Paraffin Food
'Slip' payment (VSI programme) Cutting grass for sale Fetching water	15,500	School shoes Uniform
Total	118,350	

Kabirizi

Q1. What do you do to earn money?	Q 2. How much do you earn?	Q3. What do you spend it on?
Loan Savings Keeping chicken Farming	2,000	Pens Exercise books Paraffin Ruler Savings
'Slip' Earned a reward (money) for scoring a goal	2,000	Food Clothing Salt Soap Savings
'Slip'	2,850	Used the money to pay for completion of my house
Assisted an elderly woman in thatching her hut	2,500	Soap Paraffin Body oil Cassette
'Slip' Washing clothes Cut grass Cleaned firewood	1,500	Exercise books Pencils/pens To further my education Paraffin
?	2,500	Paraffin Soap Salt Exercise books Pencils Savings
Helped disabled person	1,500	5 exercise books Pencils/pens Spent in school
Slip payment (Slip payment) Plus other	1,900	Cassettes Oil Savings Kerosene
Slip payment Livestock selling Digging in shamba	2,900	Soap paraffin pencils/pens exercise books cassettes Savings
Fishing Garia Kalweli Selling eggs	4,800	shirt household items Savings
Total	24,450	

Bugarama

Q1. What do you do to earn money?	Q 2. How much do you earn?	Q3. What do you spend it on?
Loan Savings	12,800	Soap Exercise books

Keeping chickens Farming		Pens Uniform Savings
'Slip" Farm produce Credit from the office Fetched and delivered water Ferried baggage Awarded cash in meeting for correct answer Help from uncle	16,500	Food Clothing Goat Savings
'Slip' Sold firewood Farming Profit from credit Ferried luggage for a friend	6,800	School uniform and shoes for sibling Soap Exercise books Pens Savings
Tomato crop Sold a goat Sold manure from cow Weeding Ferried luggage Helping the elderly	6,100	Chickens Personal use Exercise books Savings
Fetching water 'Slip' Manure from my goat Help from aunt	2,150	Paraffin Church contribution Pen Exercise books
Sold carrots Work Profit from sale of chickens 'Slip'	4,700	Body oil Exercise books Clothes Savings
Sold wood 'Slip' Cut and sold grass Sold chicken Fetched water	3,600	Shoes Soap Mangoes Watch Exercise books Pen
'Slip' Sale of eggs Credit from office Sold tomatoes and vegetables	10,600	School uniform and shoes for sibling Exercise books Pens Continue the business
'Slip' Firewood Weeding Watering plants	4,800	Skirt Kanda Mbili Soap Savings
Fetched water VSI work Sold grass Helping an old man	1,750	Chickens Exercise books Pens
Total	69,800	
Whole Project group: Mean individual income	6,858	

First, in terms of Table 6, the mean individual incomes calculated per month over the combined Control focus groups (Tz 6,858; N=28) and the combined Project focus groups (Tz 2,230; N=31) are considerably higher than those estimated through the quantitative questionnaire (Tz 122; N=78 and Tz 1,867; N=78 respectively - see under Quantitative result above). This discrepancy is however understandable as the individual calculations of income in the focus group context were specifically related to how the money was earned in each case and would have been more carefully worked out than the 'estimations' asked for in the questionnaire context. The difference between Project and Control in the focus group context is still statistically significant ($F(df\ 1) = 15.37, p < .001$) and, even though it was taken over a smaller sample, is likely to be more accurate.

Second, the lists of items on which the money was spent in Table 6 were analysed in terms of *capital* items such as a goat or a chicken that would create more income, *savings*, and *household and personal* expenses. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 7 below.

**Table 7:
Expenditure categories for Control vs Project focus groups**

(% is of total in last column)	Capital	Household/ Personal	Savings	Total
Control groups				
Ihangiro 1	2000 (8%)	20,350 (82%)	2,480 (10%)	24,830
Ihangiro 2	11,300 (60.4%)	7,400 (39.6%)	0 (0%)	18,700
Kibanga Bumiro	3,000 (15.8%)	9,625 (50.9%)	6,300 (33.3%)	18,925
	16,300 (26.1%)	37,375 (59.8%)	8,780 (14.1%)	62,455
Project groups				
Kishanda B	57,800 (48.84%)	50,550 (42.71%)	10,000 (8.45%)	118,350
Kabirizi	4,000 (16.4%)	11,550 (47.2%)	8,900 (36.4%)	24,450
Bugarama	15,900 (22.8%)	37,300 (53.4%)	16,600 (23.8%)	69,800
	77,700 (36.55%)	99,400 (46.75%)	35,500 (16.7%)	212,600

As can be seen from the comparative percentages (in bold) in Table 7, the Project group spent a greater proportion of their earnings on capital and savings than the Control group, and a lesser proportion in the household and personal category. This indicates the effectiveness of the VSI's programme of building sustainable income generation awareness and skills amongst its members.

Young people were asked about how the earning of money made them feel. Those in the Control groups said that earning this money made them happy.

- *I felt that I was happy.*
- *Why?*
- *Because I had some money.*
- *I felt that I had a lot of happiness. (Control)*

- *I felt great.*
- *Why?*
- *Because I could buy exercise books.*
- *I felt happy...*
- *Did you do anything?*
- *No. (Control)*

This response was much more muted than the Project group who talked spontaneously about the different things they were able to do with the money they earned. The more muted response from the Control group is understandable considering they earned less and some did not earn at all.

Young people in the Project group expressed their excitement at being able to earn enough money to meet many of their practical needs.

- *I felt very happy.*
- *Why?*
- *Because I sold eggs and got money; the payment of receipt came after a little while, all money came and I felt ... (big laugh)*
- *Myself I also felt very happy and comfortable because it was Sunday when we got that list payment.*
- *I felt very comfortable. For example I had some needs. When I got that money I bought what I need and the other money remained such that I added it to my capital and business. (project)*

- *How do you feel when you do those jobs so that you get money?*
- *We feel proud.*
- *We can live on your own and manage.*
- *Sometimes if you seriously engage yourself in agriculture you can abruptly find yourself with two millions. Sometimes you can buy the school uniform for yourself.*
- *Sometimes you can support others like your young siblings and other relatives. You can also buy domestic things. For example you can buy them soap, shoes exercise books pen and salt. Sometime if you have enough capital you can take a part and give it to your young so that they can invest it into other business and get profit.*
- *Our families are happy with us. (Project)*

Summary of Project vs Control differences: Income Generation

13-18 year group only

The quantitative data revealed a substantial and statistically significant difference in favour of the Project group in terms of estimated income earned per month. A similar statistically significant, although somewhat less substantial, difference was found in the course of a focus group activity where participants were asked to calculate their monthly income in relation to the specific ways in which they earned the money. Although conducted on a smaller sample, the latter result is likely to be more accurate than the 'estimates' given under questionnaire conditions. Either way, the results underline the critical survival value of the income generation activities of the VSI programme.

A further finding from the focus groups was that, in contrast to the Control group, those in the Project group spent proportionately more on capital gain (investing, for example, in a goat or a chicken for their earning potential) and savings and proportionately less on the household and personal category. This is a positive indication of the effectiveness of the VSI's programme of building sustainable income generation awareness and skills amongst its members.

Coping skills

Note: Since income generation was not a specific programme goal for the younger age group, this indicator applied only to the older age group.

A. Quantitative:

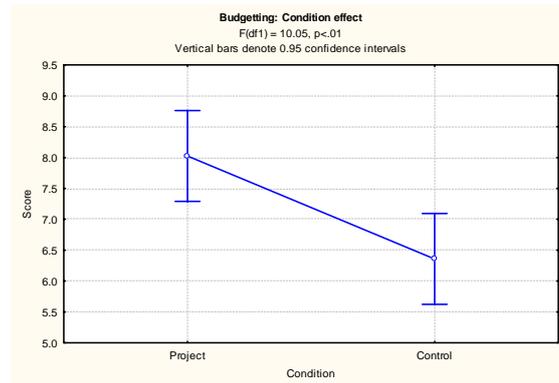
13-18 year olds only

Money budgeting awareness

For the Project group, the mean score on this test of budgeting awareness was **8.03** (N=78, SD=3.00) compared to the Control group mean of **6.36** (N=78, SD=3.54). The difference in favour of the Project group was statistically significant ($F(df\ 1) = 10.05, p < .01$)¹⁴. See Graph 6 below.

Graph 6: Budgeting awareness

¹⁴ There was no statistically significant gender difference nor interaction with the condition effect.



This result is an indication of the awareness of how important money budgeting is in the VSI group. Taken together with the result on money earning above, the efficacy of the underlying monetary skills that the project aims to develop can be deduced.

B. Qualitative:

13-18 year olds only

Young people were asked to identify any new skills they had learned in the last two years.

While both groups mentioned skills that they had learned, the Control group were limited to a narrow range of skills taught by family members and related mostly to farming, with a few mentioning some business skills.

In the last two years I learned to start doing business... for example I buy a hen then it lays eggs, then I sell the eggs. (Control)

I learnt to grow tomatoes. (Control)

I learnt how to grow crops like onions and cabbage. My uncle taught me. (Control)

My mother taught me how to cultivate in the field. (Control)

The Project group described a much wider range of skills learned. Interestingly, these skills included social and emotional skills. The verbatim transcript from one of the focus groups below illustrates the variety and nature of skills mentioned by VSI members:

- I have learned how to conduct a meeting and I am able to do it in VSI ... I learned in the VSI leadership seminar. I have also learned about different

games and sports I can teach other members. We learned singing, drums, prevention, life skills, etc.

- I have got many different friends and I can continue making friends.
- How do you know them?
- Through gathering, for example during seminars. I have friends from Mubunda and Kabare through VSI.
- I have learned the way to co-operate. I can now co-operate with my fellows.
- In what ways?
- During sports and games, in seminars like this one.
- I have learned things like agriculture. We learned about modern agriculture. For example we didn't know a "kitchen garden" but I now know how it works and I can establish it. In the beginning we didn't know how it looked like. I can now establish it using the tools we applied.
- I learned about animal husbandry. I know how to keep animals... Rabbit, chicken, dairy and indigenous goats.
- I have also learned the way to assist each other during good and bad times. During hard times, for example, a member can get a funeral or sickness. Under such time, all members visit him/her. During good times, for example, we may decide to go and construct the house walls.
- I have learned more about agriculture. That knowledge has very much helped me because I am able to conduct own good agriculture. I can grow vegetables. tomatoes, cabbage, etc.
- What else I have learned is not fearing people. In the past I was afraid of people like you. I was passing far from them. But now I can look at them without fear and we can discuss together.
- What helped you to overcome the fear?
- When I joined VSI I was invited to seminars where we could come together and discuss with members and leaders as we are doing today.
- I have learned about love. In the past some us lacked love. However, after joining VSI we started having love and commitment.
- I have learned how to listen to views from group members.
- I have learned more about truth and openness. In our groups a member should be open and true. (Project)

Summary of Project vs Control differences: Coping Skills

13-18 year group only

The quantitative data showed a statistically significant difference in favour of the Project group in terms of a test of budgeting awareness. Taken together with the result on money earning above, the efficacy of the underlying monetary skills that the VSI programme aims to develop can be deduced.

The qualitative data revealed clear and interesting differences between the Project and Control groups. Whereas the Control group were limited to a narrow range of skills that they had learned in the past two years, the Project group mentioned a wide range of agricultural, business, sporting, social and emotional coping skills all of which had been learned in the context of the VSI in the same period.

4.3 NON-COMPARATIVE DATA

Data which compares the Project group with a Control group of orphans drawn from a similar population is able to argue that differences found in favour of the Project group are most likely to be attributable to the project's intervention itself and not to some other source of influence that might have benefited all orphans in that population anyway. Non-comparative data generally cannot do this. Nevertheless, when data that could *not* have been collected in a contrastive form from both groups is presented together *with* comparative data, it can act as supplementary to what has already been found in the comparative study. The non-comparative data presented below fits this purpose.

Life changes

In focus groups, both VSI members, and separately Rafiki Mdogo members, were asked to describe, through a drawing activity, the life changes that joining VSI or Rafiki Mdogo had brought for them. The activity revealed their own perspective not only on what they saw as the most important life changes but also what it is about VSI or Rafiki Mdogo that has caused those changes.

VSI (13-18 year olds)

In describing themselves before they joined VSI, young people spoke about a number of interrelated stresses. First among these was grief and emotional stress.

I everyday thought about the death of my parent. I thought that I would perhaps lose life (commit suicide) because I was always unhappy.

I was sad in my heart. I became disappointed due to my parents' death. I was so desirous! I desired much to meet my parents. I felt a state of crying in my heart and remembered my parents wishing to meet them.

Closely related to these was social isolation.

I was very sad to lose my parents. I had different thoughts. I was under a difficult situation as I lacked people to talk to and explain my problems to.

I had different views from others. I thought or felt differently from other people. I was separate from friends of mine.

I feared to go anywhere because of unhappiness.

I had loneliness. I had a feeling of not co-operating. How would I co-operate without friends because co-operation requires friendship? Therefore I had a feeling that I wouldn't co-operate. I feared people. I feared them due to the feeling that, "how would I approach people and

give them respect in this loneliness condition?" I realised that I fear people.

I was disappointed, fearing people. Because of losing parents. I feared them and hid myself. I was in dirty clothes, I didn't wash the body, and was infested by jiggers.

The quotes above show that this isolation was related to their grief and emotional stress but also to their physical situation. Being dirty and having dirty clothes as a result of no soap and worn out clothes was commonly mentioned.

I stayed dirty/rough all the time, I didn't have anything to wear, only a single cloth that remained dirty.

Because I wore dirty clothes whereas other children had nice and clean ones, so I was afraid of mixing with them.

Many also mentioned that they did not communicate with anyone.

*Keeping silent most of the times. I didn't like talking
I most of the time remained silent. When I was told to fetch water, I agreed but I was unhappy and kept silent.*

In school pupils laughed at me and said "why is this pupil very silent?" I didn't mind, I just kept silent.

I kept silent most of the time. I very rarely talked. In fact I feared people. When I met people, I greeted them at a very low voice. It is because my thoughts were very far. I was thinking about my parents I lost.

Another dominant theme that emerged from the discussions was fear and worry about coping and their future.

I was unhappy because I did not know the way I could manage my future life. I didn't have an ability to meet my needs.

I was thinking about which way I would live without my parent.

I felt disappointed in my heart and getting worried if I could manage life in that situation.

When describing themselves after joining VSI they talk about how they have forgotten their sadness.

Sad thoughts about my parents stopped because of attending group activities where I got happiness and motives that made me forget about my parent's death.

They are no longer isolated and fearful of others.

Now, I fear nothing such that I could go anywhere. Because I have been able to co-operate with my fellows, introducing myself to them, and know them.

- Becoming fearless because I feared much before but now I don't fear anymore.

- Did you fear walking at night?

- No. I feared people but now I don't. This is because I lived in loneliness but it is now no longer there.

Worry about the future is reduced because they can meet their basic needs, and through this also recover their dignity and social acceptability.

I am also happy because I might now meet my basic future needs. For example, since I went to school, the organisation has helped me to meet educational expenses. The education I am accumulating will help me through out the life. The receipt money has helped me to meet important needs, for example getting clothes and food.

Some time I went appearing smart from clothes I bought by the receipt money we got. I appeared very decent such that others admired me and reckoned I became very nice because of VSI.

We were built a new house. Problems of a leaking house vanished. I am now feeling unprecedented happiness in my heart.

I started getting help. For example when I lacked exercise books or clothes I could use receipt money to buy exercise books, clothes and laundry soap that put me at a similar standard of other people.

Helps I get are from VSI/Humuliza organisation. For example they have constructed me a house, and paying school fees

They no longer fear talking but describe themselves as now having confidence.

The shyness feelings stopped because I started meeting my fellows and we discuss about different issues. Sometimes I was asked to speak in a group. That way the shyness turned down.

The feeling of silence also stopped because I could stand and sharing views with my fellows.

The confidence they have is related to their acceptance within the VSI group and respect within the group.

I felt happy because the audience did not laugh me or dishonour what I said.

Talking with confidence. In the past I talked, but with worries. I talked at low volumes and feared people. I can now talk at high volumes. I don't worry or fear to contribute various views. I have completely changed. In the past, I didn't contribute and feared standing in front of people and speaking but now I don't have worries, I can stand in front to air my views during VSI meeting.

- I couldn't smile in the past because of fears, but after joining VSI, I changed. When I go to run a meeting with members I have to smile because without that a meeting would not be nice and members won't be active. If you go in front and run agendas while smiling all members become happy.

- Would you demonstrate?

- Yes. "VSI mpo?" (he pretends to open a VSI meeting while the others laugh loudly).

- When you are going to teach VSI meeting you must show a good face so that members could understand that this leader has a good face. It is not advisable to run a meeting with a wrinkled face. Members could not understand you.

- What is a wrinkled face?

- For example in the way I appear now. (Laughter as he makes a sad face) I never attended any seminar before joining VSI that would instruct me on the do's and don'ts in doing various tasks. That is why I didn't smile because I was afraid. Seminars, therefore, helped me to change and avoid unwanted ways of doing things.

Identification with other young people who face similar problems was another theme. The fact that the organisation is for orphans is clearly important for the members.

The feeling of thinking about my parents also diminished because I could see some of my fellows who lived alone at homes and hence regarded it a common problem.

Because when I joined VSI they told me that this organisation deals with orphans alone. I found that we were about thirty members. I then realised that we are all under similar condition because some lost one parent and

others lost both as we informed one another. My self I already lost both parents and was living with my uncle. We explained our problems and finally discovered that we had common problems.

- I no longer fear people. I feel comfortable because I am now brought together with my fellow orphans.*
- What brings you together?*
- I think it is because we are all orphans.*

In addition, the opportunity to play and enjoy activities together such as ball playing and singing was another reason for the change.

I felt happy most of the times because we could go and meet in the grounds to play because VSI gave us balls. We happily played.

- But when I joined VSI all those feelings came to an end because I met my fellows with whom we made different plays and now I feel free. By talking and playing for example singing and ball.*
- Do you know singing?*
- Yes.*
- Can you sing one song?*
- Yes.*
- (She sings a Haya song.)*

Social support and co-operation was also seen as an important part of what VSI contributed to their lives.

When I joined VSI I felt much joy in my heart because I abandoned all that fear. I started meeting my fellow members that made me active and we discussed about different issues. I knew many friends and stopped from fearing all brothers and sisters.

- We discussed about what we should do following the deaths of our parents.*
- What did you decide to do?*
- We decide to be firm.*

When I came to VSI I felt very happy to meet other members with whom we co-operated and made friendship. Such things made me feel happy.

Elimination of shyness and fears. These diminished as I met members. Having friends. VSI has helped me to get friends. I only had friends here at home, but now I have friends from Nshamba, Kabare, Buhuma and Mubunda due to VSI.

Helping one another during difficult and good times. For example when a VSI member falls sick I may call him/her here at the office and prepare a letter to get treatment at Rwantege.

The benefit is that, when you get a problem while alone, if you have a friend he/she might be ready to come and help you to find a solution.

The practical skills they learn are also seen as important.

I got an income from producing. We get various loans for production from VSI. For example goat keeping, chickens, and other kinds of businesses.

I feel comfortable because I have attended various seminars that helped me to eliminate fears. For example seminars on leadership that trained us about conducting meeting. Seminars for Rafiki Mdogo. I train them that they should be fearless when they go teach Rafiki Mdogo. It helped me to eliminate fears.

VSI has helped me to get different types of training. For example training in agriculture, prevention and life skills. For example I didn't know modern farming ways, but I now know some modern ways in agriculture.

I couldn't teach in the past because I had no any important lesson to make. However, later on I attended a seminar for Rafiki Mdogo teaching. I thus changed. When I got a seminar on Rafiki Mdogo, they trained me on how to teach them. When people see you teaching, they call you a teacher. That is why I regard myself a teacher.

The last quote illustrates a confidence and identity formation related to increased competency particularly clearly.

VSI members also describe some of the things they have learned. The kind of things they would have learned from parents within a family.

Learning love

Love bearing. VSI has helped me to learn about love. I learned love from the way we members stayed. We possessed love. They show you bearing love by co-operating with fellows and that we are in harmony.

Learning respect

VSI has taught me respect to my fellows. We respect each other and co-operate in many things.

Learning cooperation

I have developed co-operation with my fellow children. I have co-operated with other members in difficult and good times. For example escorting a sick person for treatment; and helping our fellow VSI member in good time, to erect mud walls when an organisation decide to construct a house.

Rafiki Mdogo (9-12 year olds)

The younger children also describe sadness, isolation, fear and shame as the predominant state before joining the Rafiki Mdogo group.

I was crying. I had thoughts and this was because I was left alone by my friends. I had shame and I was sad all the time.

I was not settled because I remained alone at home.

I was not happy and I was fearing all the time therefore I used to hide myself in the house.

- I thought a lot because I used to stay alone with my sister and brother and we had no parents, and I thought that the thieves would break into our house and attack us. Also, I fought all the time because my fellow children didn't want me.

- Why?

- I thought that they didn't love me I also used to hide myself and cry for my parents.

I was hiding for example in the church and sat behind so that people couldn't see me. I felt ashamed all the time and my friends used to insult me all the time. I cried whenever my friends beat me. I was also fighting when someone insulted me.

This is how they describe themselves after joining the Rafiki Mdogo group. The group has had an impact on a practical level but it has also widened their social network and given them more confidence as well as helping to reduce their unhappiness, fear and shame.

- When I joined RM I was very happy because I was no longer fearing and I am walking well.

- Why?

- I walk well because I am with my friends. I am very happy when I am playing I am also strong after getting friends to walk with.

I was very happy after joining RM because we sing get the soap books and uniforms. We also play and share different stories with RM members.

I am very happy since I joined RM because we are getting different gifts and we are playing football. I am no longer fighting again. When they accuse me I tell Brother J (a VSI member who runs the RM group)

When I am with my friends I feel very good because I have a company. I don't have shame again as before, also I have friends whom we meet in RM.

*There is great changes; the problems we had has now stopped. Which problems you had?
We lacked soaps, school uniform, and oil but after joining RM all the materials we need are offered.*

They also acknowledge though that their unhappiness often returns when they go home.

Myself when I am with my friends at RM I feel happy. But when I get back hope, happiness stops because at home they beat me.

I feel happy because at RM I play with friends and this make me to stop to think about my dead parents. At RM I feel happy, but when I get back home where I stay alone. The sorrow comes back again because I remember my dead parents.

Summary: Non-comparative data: Life changes

VSI

The VSI's described three main, interrelated areas of stress prior to their joining the VSI: grief and depression; social isolation; and worry about coping and their future.

Four main, and again interrelated, themes then came through in their descriptions of how joining the VSI had helped them in overcoming these stresses:

- The group activities (meetings, training sessions, playing and singing together, etc.) provided not only a sense of acceptance but also confidence, a common identity and a sense of purpose which relieved much of the grief and stress.
- The wide range of friendships and the strong social co-operation they found in the organisation provided a sense of self-respect and social acceptance, and could also be seen as feeding into identity and purpose.

- Similarly, the practical and income generating skills they learned not only reduced worries about coping and the future but could also be seen as feeding into a sense of competence, confidence and purpose.
- Finally, the resources that became available, through the organisation and its income earning activities, (meeting school costs, buying new clothes, repairing a house, etc.) provided a sense of security and dignity which, again could also be seen as feeding into competence, confidence and social acceptance.

This data supports and supplements the comparative findings most specifically on the indicators of: social network; emotional stress; confidence; income generation; and coping skills. Beyond this the data brings out the interrelatedness of the benefits provided by VSI membership and suggests overarching benefits of identity formation, and a sense of competence and purpose.

Rafiki Mdogo

The younger age group, in their own simpler terms, also expressed grief, fear, withdrawal, isolation and, repeatedly, shame before they joined the Rafiki Mdogo group.

The main themes that came through in their descriptions of how joining the group had helped them in overcoming these stresses were:

- The friendships, talking, playing and singing together of the Rafiki Mdogo group which provided social acceptance, more confidence and relief of their immediate emotional stresses.
- The meeting of their most pressing practical needs (soap, books, school uniforms, etc.), often related to recovering their dignity and social acceptability.

This data supports and supplements the comparative findings on all three indicators applicable to the Rafiki Mdogo group: social network; emotional stress; and confidence.

In contrast to the VSI's, some of the Rafiki Mdogo's spoke of their unhappiness returning on going home. This may have to do with the wider range of activities and more complete involvement of the VSI's in their organisation than is the case with the Rafiki Mdogo group.

Community perceptions of the VSI

A number of focus group discussions were held with different members of the community about their perceptions of the VSI. In addition a community survey was conducted to look at general community perceptions. Much of what was said in the focus groups and survey corroborates findings from the project group above and gives a deeper understanding of how VSI members are seen in the

community as well as giving indications of how the project has contributed to children's well being in terms of social networks and support.

Caretakers of VSI members

Caretakers of VSI children see their children as more competent than other orphan children.

VSI has made the children learn to do their own things. (caretaker)

They also see them as having wider social networks,

The orphans in VSI know each other well and they seem to cope with each other. They share their problems and do their work together. The other children do not seem to have as many friends. (caretaker)

The children know each other and have many friends. They help each other a lot. (caretaker)

They point out that it is possible to identify children from the VSI because they work in a group,

You can identify them by the way they do their work. Their activities like building, fetching water, cooking are done in group work.

They also mention the pride the VSI take in the work they do as part of the organisation,

The VSI children are proud of what they are doing and when you talk to them they will mention their projects to you. When they visit each other they normally want to see what projects their friends are doing

What is interesting is that the broad social network extends to the parents as they mention also knowing from 10 to 30 VSI members each. One father described how caretakers become involved in the work of the VSI and get to know the children.

They come to my house to cook when they are going for consolation (when a family member dies) and they talk together and I have got to know them.

Caregivers also described talking together about VSI,

We talk and we normally discuss the health of our children. We also talk about the money the children bring home.

Caretakers describe how, alongside their friends (whom they had briefed to look after their children's interests) they saw the VSI as an important protection for their children if they were to die.

It will be comforting to know the children will receive support from VSI.

Elderly people the VSI members support

The elderly people that the children support described the ways in which the VSI helped them.

Lilian, she fetches water, washes clothes and goes to the shop to buy my kerosene. She comes two times in a week.

Asimwe, fetches water, collects firewood, sometimes wants to wash clothes but I say it is too much for her.

But they also describe how the relationship is far more than just a practical one,

My helper is in Standard 5 when going to school she says good morning and when from school she passes to sya good afternoon. We talk well daily.

I call her 'my daughter'

The relationship is clearly also reciprocal as children some of what they get from VSI with the old people,

If you have found ground nuts or sweet potatoes or yams you give them. When they get slip payments they buy you soap or matches, so you make friendship.

When we give something to the orphans who help us we give it as a gift and not as a payment.

Community leaders

Interviews were held with the village chairmen of four villages in which the VSI project operates. The information from this group is particularly interesting as it reveals how VSI are perceived in the community.

When asked to describe what the VSI did in the village this is what they said.

As I know, it helps orphans, it helps to have a group where they can solve their problems and make friendship. It also makes them self reliant in contributing ideas, having confidence and taking part in income generating activities like agriculture, animal keeping and small businesses.

As I know, it is for helping orphans, making friendship and helping each other in times of happiness and sorrow, and it makes known the problems brought about by AIDS.

Is to help vulnerable children and orphans to cope. Because some have lost both parents and have no help and the community is not so ready to help. So VSI helps to make their life normal.

Cooperation of youths such as building houses cooperatively to help VSI children, giving education such as English language. Children are enabled to live like normal children and not to be abnormal.

Members help each other, they safeguard each other, they cooperate . So they are different from non -members.

What is interesting about the above quotes is the extent to which community leaders see the project as contributing to emotional well-being. The comment about enabling children to 'live like normal children' is particularly interesting as this corroborates what children in the project group say about the reduction of discrimination against them since they have joined the project.

This goes even further as the following quotes show.

VSI members have better behaviour than others.

A VSI member is charming, is able to tell his / her problems, is able to be self reliant by keeping chicken, rabbits, goats and can have a vegetable garden and can sell vegetables and get money.

For this leader, the word, translated here as 'charming' suggests that they are well socialised members of the village community. This idea is further reinforced by the following response given when asked what would happen if the VSI project stopped,

It would be very harmful. There will be many illiterates. There will be chaos as the "haves" will mistreat the "have nots". Education will be down. There will be many hooligans. Once not kept busy by VSI activities, there will be many street kids who will require the village to take responsibility.

Another leader describes how the project has shifted local perceptions of orphan children,

I think that the basic foundations which has been made (by VSI) will help the children not be mistreated or cheated because they have lost their parents. The community will feel responsibility (even if the project was to stop).

Community Survey

A community survey was conducted to look at community attitudes to the VSI project. The survey was conducted on a Saturday morning in Nshamba. This is a market day attended by people from all the surrounding areas in which the project operates. Four VSI assistants circulated in four different, one in the central market area and the other three at key entrance points to the village. The survey consisted of a short verbal questionnaire.

Results of the survey

79 people were interviewed. The table below summarises the results.

Number who knew the project	55
Number who knew children who attended VSI	44
<p>Descriptions of what the project does</p> <p><i>Note: respondents gave more than one answer. The numbers below are thus far more than 55.</i></p>	<p>To assist / support / encourage orphans 16</p> <p>To help with a variety of things</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pencils, books, pants, clothes, soap 3 - bicycles, goats 3 - food 3 - funding, loans, school fees, hospital bills 23 <p>To build houses for orphans whose parents have died 21</p> <p>It provides projects / training on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - farming and livestock 10 - leadership of the youth 1 - construction 1 - projects 3 - to make water containers 1 - to work for people e.g. elderly 1 <p>It helps orphan children to rely on themselves 1</p> <p>To prevent AIDS 2</p> <p>It helps the disabled 1</p> <p>To teach good manners / good principles 3</p> <p>It teaches children to love people 1</p> <p>It supports old people 6</p> <p>So that the boys do not become thieves 1</p> <p>Do not know what the project does 5</p>
What people said about the children who attend the project	<p><u>Present tense responses:</u></p> <p>They have a sense of being in a family 1</p> <p>They help each other during difficulties / they work together 3</p>

	<p>They are doing good work 1 The children's total welfare is good, one cannot imagine that they have lost their parents 1 They are being helped / enabled / it improves their lives10 It is good for children to want to play 1 They help the elderly 4 They are well-behaved / they are different from other children / they are productive 9 <i>(Children acquire primness / steadfastness e.g. in their own work)</i> They have no household things / they have many needs 2 Their ability is limited / they have limited means 2 I thank this organisation for helping these children 4</p> <p><u>Future tense responses ("should"):</u> They must continue getting assistance: - e.g. farming 1 - to give them guidance 1 - to reduce the burden of buying or fetching water 1 - general 3 They should meet the objectives of the organisation e.g. going to meetings 1 They must get household things to help them 1 They must continue to help each other / together 2 They must take care of themselves so they do not get HIV/AIDS 1</p>
<p>Community members were asked if they thought that the VSI children had become arrogant</p>	<p>43 said no and 2 said yes but did not give examples of this arrogance</p>

Summary: Non-comparative data: Community perceptions of the VSI

The VSI project is well known in the community and community members have a good understanding of what the project aims are. The general perception of children involved in the organisation is a good one. Caretakers, elderly people and community leaders see the VSI members as hard working and well behaved. They also see them as having many friends and supporting each other. It is clear that being part of VSI has changed their identity from that of 'orphan' to a contributing member of the community.

5. CONCLUSIONS

For both the central Vijana Simama Imara (VSI) orphan self-organisation component of the Humuliza project (13-18 year olds), and the Rafiki Mdogo support group for younger children (9-12 year olds), the outcome evaluation results are convincing.

A quasi-experimental comparison group design was used, with randomly drawn experimental (Project) samples compared quantitatively *and* qualitatively (VSI: N=78 quantitative; N=30 qualitative. Rafiki Mdogo: N=60 quantitative; N=30 qualitative) with Control samples of orphans drawn from the same geographical areas and comparable in terms of numbers, age, gender and period of orphanhood.

Outcome indicators were selected primarily in relation to resilience theory but, within this framework, to accord with specific outcome goals and activities of the organisation. In addition the evaluation was designed as child-participative throughout, to accord with outcomes that children themselves had identified as important in their lives.

5.1 VSI OUTCOMES

Social networks

In terms of *peers*, the qualitative data revealed that the Project (VSI) group consistently show more specific, named peer friendships than the Control group. While friendships provided practical support in both groups, the Project group revealed that their VSI friendships also involved emotional support, social skills development, and were central to a growing sense of identity – none of which was apparent in the Control group.

In terms of the *adult* social network, quantitative data revealed a statistically significant difference in favour of the Project group on the number of adult relationships offering both emotional and practical support. Qualitative data showed that the Project group's relationships with elderly people, as formed through the VSI, were not only central in their adult social network but contributed to a wider sense of community connectedness. This was not apparent in the Control group.

Emotional stress

The quantitative data revealed a statistically significant lower level of emotional stress in the Project group than in the Control group.

The qualitative data amplified this finding by showing that the Control group differed from the Project group both through their more depressed mood as well as through their insistence that none of their stresses (practical and emotional)

had been reduced since the death of their parent(s). The Project group, on the other hand, who described similar initial stresses, spontaneously described how being involved in the VSI had reduced feelings of worry and inadequacy through the practical support offered, as well as through increased social support in the organisation.

Confidence

Qualitative data revealed that almost all participants in the Project group described solutions or attempted solutions to their problems, whereas this was much less apparent in the Control group. The Project group also used a greater variety of strategies for solving their problems, demonstrated more perseverance, and were more inventive and confident about speaking out and making their case than the Control group.

In general there was a sense of relative powerlessness in the Control group. This contrasted markedly with a greater sense of choice and control over problems and issues in their lives in the Project group, suggesting a stronger internal locus of control in the Project than in the Control group.

Future orientation

The qualitative data showed little difference between the Project and Control groups in terms of the nature of their goals. However the Project group generally showed a more detailed understanding of what they would need to do in order to achieve their goals, including processes of income generation. This again suggests a stronger internal locus of control.

Survival knowledge (HIV/AIDS)

The quantitative data revealed a statistically significant difference in favour of the Project group on a test of essential HIV/AIDS knowledge, a result that has survival implications for the Project group in contrast to the Control group.

Income generation

The quantitative data revealed a substantial and statistically significant difference in favour of the Project group in terms of estimated income earned per month. A similar statistically significant, although somewhat less substantial, difference was found in the course of a focus group activity where participants were asked to calculate their monthly income in relation to the specific ways in which they earned the money. Although conducted on a smaller sample, the latter result is likely to be more specific and accurate than the broad 'estimates' given under questionnaire conditions. Either way, the results underline the critical survival value of the income generation activities of the VSI programme in contrast to the minimal income of the Control group.

A further finding from the focus groups was that, in contrast to the Control group, the Project group spent proportionately more on capital gain (investing, for example, in a goat or a chicken for their earning potential) as well as on savings

and proportionately less on household and personal items. This is a positive indication of the effectiveness of the VSI's programme of building sustainable income generation awareness and skills amongst its members.

Coping skills

The quantitative data showed a statistically significant difference in favour of the Project group in terms of a test of budgeting awareness. Taken together with the result on income generation above, the efficacy of the underlying monetary skills that the VSI programme aims to develop can be deduced.

The qualitative data revealed clear differences between the Project and Control groups. Whereas the Control group were limited to a narrow range of skills that they had learned in the past two years, the Project group mentioned a wide range of agricultural, business, sporting, social and emotional coping skills all of which had been learned in the context of the VSI in the same period.

Supplementary non-comparative data: VSI members

Focus group data that, by its nature, could *not* have been collected comparatively from the Control group was nevertheless presented for its value in offering: (1) an integrated view from VSI members of the life changes they had experienced as a result of joining the programme, and (2) community perceptions of the VSI project.

Life changes

VSI members described three main, interrelated areas of stress prior to their joining the VSI: grief and depression; social isolation; and worry about coping and their future.

Four main, and again interrelated, themes then emerged in their descriptions of how joining the VSI had helped them in overcoming these stresses:

- The group activities (meetings, training sessions, playing and singing together, etc.) provided not only a sense of acceptance but also confidence, a common identity and a sense of purpose which relieved much of the grief and stress.
- The wide range of friendships and the strong social co-operation they found in the organisation provided a sense of self-respect and social acceptance, and could also be seen as feeding into identity and purpose.
- Similarly, the practical and income generating skills they learned not only reduced worries about coping and the future but could also be seen as feeding into a sense of competence, confidence and purpose.
- Finally, the resources that became available, through the organisation and its income earning activities, (meeting school costs, buying new clothes, repairing a house, etc.) provided a sense of security and dignity which, again could also be seen as feeding into competence, confidence and social acceptance.

This data supports and supplements the comparative findings most specifically on the indicators of: social network; emotional stress; confidence; income generation; and coping skills. Beyond this the data brings out the interrelatedness of the benefits provided by VSI membership and suggests overarching benefits of *identity formation*, and a sense of *competence* and *purpose*.

Community perceptions of the VSI project

The VSI project is well known in the community and community members have a good understanding of what the project aims are. The general perception of children involved in the organisation is a good one. Caretakers, elderly people and community leaders see the VSI members as hard working and well behaved. They also see them as having many friends and supporting each other. It is clear that being part of VSI has changed their identity from that of 'orphan' to a contributing member of the community.

5.2 RAFIKI MDOGO OUTCOMES

Given the younger age and more limited activities of the Rafiki Mdogo group in the project, the outcomes below were the most relevant to assess.

Social networks

Although, on the grounds of unreliability, the quantitative data had to be rejected in the case of the 9-12 year group, the qualitative data clearly indicated that the Project group had a wider circle of friends, both within and from outside the Rafiki Mdogos, than the Control group whose friendships were often limited to children in their own household. While both groups talked of their friends as supporting them in daily practical tasks, it was only the Project group who talked of the play and fun associated with friendship and the well-being implied in this.

Both Project and Control groups mentioned a range of adults supporting them – including older siblings and other adolescents. Notable amongst these, the Project group made spontaneous and frequent mention of VSI members who run the Rafiki Mdogo groups, as well as members of the Humuliza staff.

Emotional stress

The quantitative data revealed a marked and statistically significant lower level of emotional stress in the Project group than in the Control group.

The qualitative data amplified this finding by showing that the Control group manifested a high level of stress through depressed mood, open crying and (in the basket and stones activity) selecting larger stones than were initially offered to represent the 'weight' or depth of their pain and sadness. Although the Project group described similar initial feelings and hardships on the loss of their parent(s), their mood was less overtly distressed and many spontaneously described the reduction in pain and stress through the activities in the Rafiki

Mdogo group, their extended friendships and the practical support they had received.

Generally, it was noticeable that there were more overt expressions of emotional pain and stress in the younger age group than the older age group – a finding that is developmentally not unexpected but which underlines the importance of the project's intervention with this age group.

Confidence

In relation to activities which explored the confidence to seek solutions to their problems, all Project children, without exception, came up with solutions or attempted solutions whereas the most common response in the Control group was to say that they had done nothing. The sense of relative powerlessness in the Control group contrasted strongly with a greater sense of confidence in the Project group.

Supplementary non-comparative data: Rafiki Mdogo members

Life changes

Focus group data that, by its nature, could *not* have been collected comparatively from the Control group was nevertheless presented for its value in offering a view from Rafiki Mdogo members of the life changes they had experienced as a result of joining the group and how this had helped them.

The children expressed grief, fear, withdrawal, isolation and, repeatedly, shame before they joined the Rafiki Mdogo group.

The main themes that came through in their descriptions of how joining the group had helped them in overcoming these stresses were:

- The friendships, talking, playing and singing together of the Rafiki Mdogo group which provided social acceptance, more confidence and relief of their immediate emotional stresses.
- The meeting of their most pressing practical needs (soap, books, school uniforms, etc.), often related to recovering their dignity and social acceptability.

This data supports and supplements the comparative findings on all three indicators applicable to the Rafiki Mdogo group: social network; emotional stress; and confidence.

5.3 SUMMARY COMMENT: CONCLUSIONS

First, in relation to the central VSI organisation, this independent impact evaluation can declare with confidence that the programme is effective in meeting its goals (see section on 'Rationale and Goals'). The range of outcomes, assessed both quantitatively and qualitatively in the evaluation, relate directly to

key dimensions of resilience building, to Humuliza's overarching aim of creating an orphan organisation that is wholly participative, and to the orphans' own perceptions of meaningful outcomes. In comparison with a Control group, the Project group revealed meaningful differences on all seven outcome indicators, whether through quantitative, qualitative or both forms of analysis as appropriate. This is convincing evidence of the overall impact of the programme.

Second, in relation to the Rafiki Mdogo group, a sub-component designed specifically to help younger orphans in terms of their socio-emotional and immediate practical needs, similar meaningful differences between Control and Project groups were demonstrated on three key socio-emotional outcome indicators.

The evident value of the VSI's involvement with this younger group, both to the VSI's and to the Rafiki Mdogo's themselves, is typical of the *integrated, interrelated functioning* of the Humuliza project as a whole, as also evident in the non-comparative data. This important overarching outcome should not be lost in the separate analyses of the two groups and of the indicators themselves.

Children's organisation as psycho-social intervention

It is clear from the findings of this report that involvement with the VSI and Rafiki Mdogo groups has an impact on psycho-social well being. The evaluation also points to some of the aspects of the organisation that promote this well being. There are many programmes attempting to promote psycho-social well being but few, if any, that use an organisational model based on children's participation. This evaluation suggests that children's participation through an organisation should be considered more widely as an intervention strategy. For this reason an Occasional Paper that explores some of Humuliza's thinking about why the organisational model works has been attached to this report (Appendix 4).

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7. APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Questionnaire for project and control groups

Researcher will explain how answer sheet works before hand. Must emphasise that there is no right answer that we are hoping to get. Actually we are hoping that they will give accurate answers that are truthful about themselves.

Question 1.

“Do you have young people that you regularly play or sing or work with who are not in your family? How many do you have – count them on your hands and then write the number in the box next to 2. If there is nobody put 0.”

Question 2.

“Do you know any adults you can talk to about something that worries you? How many? Count them on your hand and then put the number in the box next to 3. If there is nobody put 0.”

Question 3.

If you get sick and have to go to the hospital or need food do you have anyone who can help you? Count how many on your hand and then put the number in the box next to 4. If there is nobody put 0.”

Researcher to check that young ones have written the number so we can read it.

Question 4.

Ask the children to tick one or both boxes if one or both parents have died. On the same line as the box they have ticked they should fill in the date that that parent died. If they do not know the exact date, the month and year are OK.

At this point say that anyone who is aged 12 or younger should stop in case you have mixed ages.

Question 5.

(only for 13 –18 year olds)

“Did you make any money in the last month?” Yes/No

“How much money do you make in one month?”

Take your time, work it out. It doesn't have to be exactly right.

Write the amount in the box next to 5.”

Question 6.

(only for 13-18 year olds)

"I will read out a sentence. Decide if it is true or false and make a cross in the correct box on the answer sheet."

- i) You can get HIV/AIDS from having sex without a condom
- ii) You can get HIV/AIDS from kissing someone
- iii) HIV and AIDS are the same thing?
- iv) You can get HIV/AIDS from sharing a cup with someone

Question 7.
(only for 13-18 year olds)

If you had 3000 /= **extra** money, what would you do with that money?

- Buy fishes to sell
- Buy cakes for my friends
- Buy a chicken for the eggs
- Buy sweets
- Buy clothes

Make a tick in the box next to your choice.

Appendix 2

Emotional stress scale¹⁵

Directions: Here are some sentences about how you might have been feeling over the past two weeks or so. Read each sentence and decide how often you feel this way. Decide if you feel this way: Almost never, sometimes, a lot of the time or almost all the time. Tick the answer that describes how you really feel. There are no wrong or right answers.

	<i>Almost never</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>A lot of the time</i>	<i>All the time</i>
1. <i>I feel happy</i>				
2. <i>I worry about school</i>				
3. <i>I feel lonely</i>				
4. <i>I feel my parents don't like me</i>				
5. <i>I feel important</i>				
6. <i>I feel like hiding from other people</i>				
7. <i>I feel sad</i>				
8. <i>I feel like crying</i>				
9. <i>I feel that no one cares about me</i>				
10. <i>I feel like playing with other children</i>				
11. <i>I feel sick</i>				
12. <i>I feel loved</i>				
13. <i>I feel like running away</i>				
14. <i>I feel like hurting</i>				

¹⁵ This scale, presented in kiSwahili and in an idiom appropriate to the children's cultural context, followed as closely as possible the Reynolds Child Depression Scale (the English, in italics, represents questions from the original scale). Nevertheless, because of the above adaptations and the age-range of the participants, the original norm-referenced scoring system would not have been valid and was not used. Instead, a weighted scoring scale (0,1,4,8: from 'Almost never' to 'All the time' – excluding distracter items) was applied which was sufficient for the purpose of making comparisons across groups, but should *not* be taken as comparable with the original norms.

<i>myself</i>				
15. <i>I feel that other kids don't like me</i>				
16. <i>I feel upset about things</i>				
17. <i>I feel life is not fair</i>				
18. <i>I feel tired</i>				
19. <i>I feel I am bad</i>				
20. <i>I feel I am no good</i>				
21. <i>I have trouble paying attention in class</i>				
22. <i>I feel sorry for myself</i>				
23. <i>I feel like talking to other children</i>				
24. <i>I have trouble sleeping</i>				
25. <i>I feel like having fun</i>				
26. <i>I feel worried</i>				
27. <i>I get stomach aches</i>				
28. <i>I feel bored</i>				
29. <i>I feel nothing I do helps anyone</i>				

Appendix 3

Focus Group Activities

Activity 1: Social networks

Mapping networks

i) Peer support:

Draw a map of your area. Draw all the places you go to *in a week*.

Draw the places where you meet your friends.

Do these friends help you? In what way?

Probe: different friends for different needs (some for practical some for emotional) – level of support from peers. How friends offer support.

ii) Adult support:

Draw places where there are older people (adults – anyone over 18) who are important for you. Count them up. Why are they important to you? What kind of support do the different people give you?

Probe: Forms of support and how adults and peers support differ. Who do they seek out for what kind of support?

Activity 2: Emotional stress

Stress and its reduction: Basket and stones

One child to hold basket on their head. Take a pile of stones and say:

“When your parents or mother or father died it was like a lot of stones came into your basket making it very heavy. “

“What were those stones?”

As you put the stones in let the children name them.

“Are those stones still there?”

“Is there anyone here who has been able to take some of the stones out?”

(make it ok not to have stones taken out – as some children may still feel a heavy burden)

“Which stones were taken out?”

“Who or what helped you to take them out?”

Activity 3: Confidence (agency, locus of control, problem solving)

3A

Problem solving

“Ok, we are going to talk about problem parts of your life. Where do you have problems?”

School, friends, work, community, home, relationships with families, relationships with people in the community.” (as they name them draw circles on the paper and write the name in each circle - don't worry about making this too specific – just help them think of areas of life. Make sure that the area of relationships comes up.)

“Now think of some of problems you have in these different parts of your life. Draw them on this large paper.” Make sure they include issues like discrimination.

“Is there anything you have been able to do about these problems? Talk about what you have done about them. Have you been able to solve these problems?”

3B

False accusation

Have a short discussion about this:

“An older boy in your school says you have stolen his brother's pen. But you know you have not done this. What do you do?”

Probe: 'I would keep quiet' or 'I would try to explain'.

Activity 4: Future Orientation

Goals and ways of achieving them

Do a quick drawing of a young person at the bottom of a staircase and a bigger child at the top.

“Imagine yourself here, now as a young boy or girl and then here you are at the top of the steps in 5 years time.”

“Think about what you would like to be doing in 5 years time.?”

”What are you doing now to help you to get up those steps?”

Activity 5: Income generation

Earning money

Give the group a piece of paper folded in half. Let them write their name on it.

“Is there anything you have done in the last month that brought in money?”

“Write down or draw the different ways that you got the money on the left hand side of the paper.”

“Work out how much money it was you brought in all together and write it down too.”

(Note to researchers: help them to think of the different sources of money they have and to add it up – they can use the paper)

“What was the money used for in this month? Make a list of all these things.”

“What do these things cost?”

“How did it make you feel to earn this money?”

Activity 6: Coping skills

New coping skills learned

“What are the new things important in your life that you have learned to do in the last two years. Think about things you know how to do.” Draw a picture of these things.

Have a discussion.

Appendix 4

HUMULIZA Occasional Paper No. 12

Theoretical consideration on the dynamics in the realm of psycho-social support, based on the experiences of the VSI

By Kurt Madoerin, PSS Advisor REPSSI

"When my father died I went to look for my friend from the Rafiki Mdogo. We cried together. It helped me a lot"

"My father died already and my mother is sometimes sick. I'm afraid that she might also pass away one day. But now, here in the group, I met some children who have lost already both parents and I can see that they survive. This gives me hope that I also can cope if my mother would leave me one day"

The Orphans' Organization program has been running since spring 2000 and currently has a total of 2,500 children and youth in the age groups of 8-12 (Rafiki Mdogo) and 13-20 (VSI). The following elements characterize the program:

1. The organisation is the main structural bond between children/youth
2. The structure of the organisation allows (or even demands) a long-term commitment of the included children and youth. The big majority adhere to the organisation for several years. If a child starts as a Rafiki Mdogo at 8 years, he or she could become a VSI at 13 and stay on up to the time he/she is 20 years. This means a child could be a member of the organization for 12 years.
3. Self-activity of the members: the overwhelming part of the activities is done by the members themselves. The main task of the program-staff (9) is to provide the training which is crucial because there is a constant influx of new members and a constant outflow of experienced members because of the age-scissor.
4. Mixture of age groups: Although the two age groups are separated there is a lot of contact between the younger and the older children. Older children and youth serve as trainers and caretakers for the younger ones. Most

of the Rafiki Mdogo strive to become a VSI-member one day.

The preliminary results of the evaluation done in September 2005 shows a considerable impact of the activities on the children in terms of broader social network, increased self-confidence, increased communication capacity (including communication about own emotions), increased capacity to realize adapted coping strategies etc.

The following model can help to explain these outcomes and the possible dynamics of the improvement of the psychosocial well-being. The model is based on two assumptions that are used in other contexts.

Assumption 1: The constructivist approach: reality is constructed

Constructivists assume that *any action or intervention has a meaning for the concerned individual*. This meaning is - of course - subjective, i.e. different for each individual. Constructivism inquires into the processes by which individuals come to describe and explain the world in which they live.

Furthermore any individual is considered as an acting and active being: gathering and processing information and acting upon the environment etc. Information, values, skills, knowledge enter into a dynamic feedback loop and will shape the future activities and attitudes of the individual.

The (individually) attached meaning to any information will hereby serve as "selector" among the innumerable amount of information - i.e. the selected meaningful information (e.g. *"I'm able to earn some funds to sustain myself and my siblings and I feel proud about it"*) will receive a special attention in the further processing leading probably to more activities in this area (or at least to a clearer awareness regarding economic survival). Those activities will furthermore "reinforce" the formerly selected information.

This process is best summarized in Thomas' theorem that *"what is perceived as real is real in its consequences"*. If a child perceives the VSI as a possibility of a change

towards the better then energy will be channeled in this direction and will in reality improve its conditions which will act again as reinforcement for further change. If an approach emphasizes the strengths and the active coping behavior of a child and promotes a wider range of coping possibilities for the child rather than emphasize its helplessness, its passive role as a "victim", the child will perceive its strengths and capacities, will make use of them and will become - in reality - a resilient child.

Assumption 2: The paramount importance of the social environment

'All thinking and perception is embedded in a social context and environment'.

Vygotsky says that all development (including cognitive development) is first social before becoming individual in the sense that all development results from the permanent challenges emanating from the society to the individual. Vygotsky (and other representatives of the social historical theory of human development such as Luria or Leontjew) think that - when it comes to indicators for the development of children - *it is not so important what the child can actually do, but what it is capable to do with the support of elder persons* (adults or older children). The older, more competent person supports the child to reach performances and achievement of a next developmental stage which it is not yet capable to reach alone.

(Rolf Oerter: Der oekologische Ansatz, p. 126 in "Entwicklungspsychologie" 1987)

The social context plays again an extremely important role when it comes to the assignment of "meanings". What is considered as "meaningful" is mediated and constructed socially, through the tradition, through the culture, through communication between people, through education, through the social entity the individual belongs to.

The same fact (e.g. to be an orphan) gets a different meaning following the social context in which a child is living and acting. The biological fact of being an orphan can socially reinforce the position of a "victim" - leading to stigmatization and a negative self-image or can emphasize and acknowledge the strong "survivor" with considerable coping resources, depending on the social context which

provides the frame for interpretation of the own activities, thinking and behavior.

We will call these condensates of giving meanings, norms, values, appreciation, motivation, support etc. "thinking entities" or "thinking collectives". They will shape and influence the way a child perceives what "it can", what "it is" and what "it knows".

The VSI theory: assumed dynamic of changes in psycho-social well-being in and through the VSI

One (efficient) way to produce differences is, as mentioned earlier, to broaden the realm of perception of realities within the individual - trusting in the Thomas' theorem that *a changed perception will create a change in the reality*. This process is used in the SFA¹⁶. The SFA is usually applied in individual counseling. When it comes to thousands of children who have lost their parents or are in the situation to lose them, the individual approach has to be modified into an organizational approach. In other words: a new "thinking entity" has to be created which opens for the members the way forward for a different perception of the daily reality of orphans - different from the usual perception as "victims".

There is some evidence from Latin-America and West-Africa that children and adolescents can build up their own organisation. Experience has mainly been gathered from organized working children (MANTHOC in Peru, NATRAS in Nicaragua, ENDO in West-Africa) or from street children (MNMMR in Brazil). Beside there are church based youth organisations and the scouts-movements.

The following arguments support the idea that organisation-building by and through children and youth is an important part of building up resilience:

¹⁶ ***The Solution Focused Approach (SFA)*** – a counseling approach developed by Steve de Shazer and Kim Insoo Berg - makes systematically use of Thomas' theorem. The SFA is directing the energy and the attention of the client on real existing exceptions (where the problem was not so painful or even absent for short period) which are normally not noted because being exceptions. Doing this and helping the client to perceive such exceptions as important and helpful parts of his or her reality the perceived exception have a big potential to become a part of the day-to-day reality.

A children organisation acts as MOTOR/STARTER/KICK OFF for resilience-building within the individual. It is evident that the inner character and the individual capabilities of resilient children are important. Nevertheless many scholars believe that an external supportive social network is the main key to activate and to train the individual capabilities for resilience.

A children organisation act as a PROTECTOR for its members: It is generally accepted that the social support network of an organisation can act as a buffer between the members and a non-conducive environment and protect individuals against negative consequences of stressful circumstances.

A children organisation finally acts as (collective) SOURCE for resilient behavior: A social network enables solutions of a wider range of problems. The individual has more powerful choices because the network can provide a wider range of physical, social and mental tools at the disposal of the child. This can be in the area of emotional coping, modeling social behavior, material support, advices etc.

The VSI as a new "thinking entity" opens new areas of activities and definitions of realities, and each added activity opens a new "window". The mere process of choosing the name for the organisation testifies a new, different outlook on orphanhood. When the idea was first discussed, children suggested five proposals - most of them using the Kiswahili word "mtoto yatima" (orphan). After a big discussion they decided for the name "Vijana Simama Imara" which means "youth being firmly upright" - a metaphor which differs quite significantly with the traditional understanding of "orphans".

Once the "thinking entity" is established as a starter, a protector and a source, members can tap into the wealth of the organisation and take over and appropriate those new perceptions which fit into their actual conditions, their life plan, their own interest and their own personal potential. More activities an organisation develops broader are the "offers" of alternative perceptions. In the VSI a member can

- Become economically active and be proud of it
- Gain knowledgeable in prevention or in agriculture
- Become a leader in the organisation

Guide younger children
Learn skills of self defense
Find more and new friends etc.

Social power, participation and new perception

Children are in all societies - in different levels - considered as human being with only little power. Power means - if we follow Foucault - not so much or not only the physical power, but rather the ability to "define" situations and relationships. Churches, education, cultural systems, medical and psychological professions among others are mostly in a privileged situation to define what is "appropriate" and what is not, what is "valuable" and what is not, what is "normal" and what is not. Children are seldom heard - in many African societies the rule is that "children should be seen, but not heard". The possibilities to develop alternative and new perception and to get them acknowledged by the wider society are rather restricted. A children/youth organisation is a viable instrument to balance the lack of social power.

But organisation in itself will not lead automatically to new views of realities and to new perceptions - and subsequently to changes and differences. Organisations can even play an important role in maintaining the existing beliefs and values and fighting against changes. Here is where the participation comes in. Participation enables children and youth to bring their own views and experiences into the discussion and into the organisational activities.