

## Message from the Chief Executive Officer

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We meet at the end of another challenging year for OF which has been moving ahead confidently on the road to progress, prosperity, growth, expansion and development. In line with its forward-looking vision, OF has been growing remarkably well, successfully achieving its various targets over the past four decades.

2013 saw OF's growth scale new heights as we continued to march towards achievement of new goals and realization of new dreams. During the year, we set certain objectives, goals and targets, and achieved them with relative ease despite several challenges on our way. The year saw OF expand programmatically and geographically, to add many new projects across diverse verticals.

Last year saw OF featured as a USAID institutional strengthening success story because of its exceptional capacity development. We also signed a two and half year contract with PPG to implement a reproductive health project called Closing the Gap.

We also organized and facilitated Community Health Strategy review forum in Western and Nyanza provinces aimed at collecting the views of all stakeholders in the health sector that would inform the new strategy.

## OF closes the year in style

After a fruitful year of remarkable achievements, OF held an end of year party for staff to interact and celebrate in an exotic ambience of conviviality.

In his opening speech, the CEO Wilfred Owuor thanked God almighty for his mercies over the lives of staff and for the achievements recorded by the centre during the year. He commended the entire staff of the centre for their commitment and enjoined them to show greater patriotism and commitment to OF's mission of service to community.

The event saw the fete of Employee of the year- Human Resource and Administration Manager Esther Mbaka because of her exceptional dedication and work.

The evening was an enjoyable one. There were many fun-filled events and dances.

Pre-bidders workshop conducted to orient affiliates and equip them with knowledge in responding to OF's call to proposal for the FANIKISHA programmatic grant was another highlight of the year just ended. OF's collaboration with Harvard University -USA saw two students spend time with our beneficiaries with remarkable results.

OF also got to host the inaugural HENNET Kisumu County Chapter that will see CSOs in the county take a bold step towards demanding accountability and equity in the county health budget allocation among other pressing issues.

On a melancholic note, Comic Relief (CR) funding for OF finally came to an end in the last quarter after decades of support. OF could not have asked for a better donor- we all thank CR for the support they gave to our beneficiaries.

2013 had its challenges and triumphs and we look forward to 2014!

**WILFRED OWUOR,**

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER.**



*OF HR and Administration Manager Esther Mbaka receives her gift after being nominated as the Employee of the Year 2013*

# Kisumu County celebrates its first World AIDS Day



*Kisumu County Governor Jack Ranguma gets tested during the World AIDS Day celebrations*

On 1st December, Kisumu County joined the rest of the world as it marked the 25th anniversary of World AIDS Day. This was an opportunity to reflect on the progress made this year as well as support the efforts to tackle the HIV epidemic around the world.

Of significance during the event was that in 2013, significant progress was made in addressing a core challenge of the HIV response: The lack of data on people aged 50 and over living with and affected by HIV. CSOs worked with older peer educators to raise awareness of older people's risks of infection and the importance of knowing their status

"As a result we saw testing levels increase. For example, in Kenya only 5% of older people had been tested in 2008, but this increased dramatically to 84% this year," noted LVCT Program Manager Joseph Arango.

"We also worked with government health providers to offer HIV testing to older people within the community"

Kisumu County Governor Jack Ranguma graced the event and received VCT services. "Let us be our brothers' keepers- encouraging one another to embrace VCT, abstain, engage in safe sex and adhere to treatment"

The county marked the event against a background of poor HIV indicators and the fact that Nyanza has the highest HIV prevalence at 14.9%.

## CSO Board and CEOs in Ethics Training

FANIKISHA recently organized a three-day training on ethics, integrity and compliance for board members and executive directors of CSOs currently under the Institutional Strengthening program.

The aim of the training was to improve the effectiveness of the boards of participating organizations in the performance of their governance role.

Distinction between the role of the board and that of management was a gap discussed during the training. The participants also had difficulties defining the identity of their organizations' as part of the wider civil society and their specific role in modern society

Compliance requirements particularly those related to taxation was also unwrapped for the participants.

It was recommended that FANIKISHA facilitates follow up support and mentoring as well as follow up courses to motivate institutionalizing and implementation of lessons from the training on compliance. It may also be useful to consider organizing a similar training for board members who did not attend the course to increase commitment within the partner organizations, to improved governance practices.

"This training has clarified to us issues surrounding regulation and compliance. We are now prepared to lead OF well," remarked Martha Odera of OF Board.

## Kisumu County CSO meet County Executive

In recognition that NGO partnership with government is not a latest phenomenon; however, challenges still exist in maintaining this partnership the NGO Coordination Board in collaboration with FANIKISHA organized for a one-day meeting between Kisumu County CSO and the county executive.

The purpose of the meeting was to enhance collaboration between CSOs in Kisumu County with the County Government and also market the Kenya Civil Society Portal for Health (KCSPH).

Speaking during the collaboration meeting at a Kisumu Hotel, the Executive Director NGO Co-ordination Board Dr. Hezron McObewa said working together would speed service delivery to the people. "The County government too has a right to know who does what and where.

HENNET Kisumu County Chapter took advantage of the event to push the CSOs present to join the network as a vehicle for driving change and demanding accountability for public resources in the county especially in the health sector budget allocation and tracking.

In Kisumu where some 345 NGOs operate, poverty levels are still high; observers argue that many of these NGOs are briefcase devoid of proper structures and are doing little to alleviate suffering in the regions. "We are aware that some have been founded to fetch money for their own use. The new law will eliminate such organizations from the industry," said Dr. McObewa.

"The new regulation is here with us. It is necessary to bring transparency while streamlining the industry and curbing rising insecurity in the country. It will also rid out bogus together with family managed organizations from the industry."

The County Government called on the CSOs to provide services that meet needs of the people and bridge inequalities in the County. Led by County Executive Member for Education Sports and Culture, Jenifer Kere, the CSOs were challenged to introduce projects that will address issues on food security in the County.



*NGO Coordination Board Executive Director addresses participants at the meeting*

## OF Petitions for Collapse of PBO Bill

OF was among the Civil Society groups that formally lodged a petition with President Uhuru Kenyatta over the Public Benefit Organizations (PBO) Act (Amendment) Bill, 2013, and the Kenya Information Communications (Amendment) Bill, 2013.

OF appreciated the fact that if passed, the Miscellaneous Bill would have serious ramifications on Kenya's social and economic development.

The Bill will not only constrain the civil society's contribution to national development, but also make the attainment of socio-economic rights more difficult.

The PBO Bill was recalled as the CSO and Government goes back to the drawing board to develop a draft that will be deemed just for all.

## OF Affiliates set to receive WASH funding

(OF) received a welcomed visit from the Kenya Water for Health Organization (KWAHO). KWAHO has planned to administer small grants for Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that OF works with in order to develop gravity-fed and rain water collection system, low cost local material shallow well, pipe extensions as well as simple cost effective options for water treatment.

KWAHO chose to approach OF to help it identify CBOs for possible funding based on OF's institutional strengthening reputation which has spread far and wide. Since inception of the FANIKISHA Institutional Strengthening Project, OF with the help of mentors has undergone numerous changes to enable it to carry out its functions more effectively.

OF has thus selected 10 affiliates in Kisumu, Nyando and Muhoroni sub counties to respond to the KWAHO request for application. If any of the affiliates succeed then it will not be the first time that OF is receiving support for program implementation based solely on its impeccable systems and structures, thanks to FANIKISHA. In February 2013, the Planned Parenthood Global signed an MoU with OF in order to implement a two-year reproductive health program dubbed Closing the Gap.

KWAHO has a preference for women groups since women are traditionally responsible for fetching water and therefore have a special interest in a well-sustained scheme. KWAHO promotes the participation of women. They will be expected to form women groups, which then become the future operators/managers of the water supply systems. It has been realized that the first step towards a productive water supply system is to incorporate women in key areas for water at all levels of project initiation, planning, decision making and implementation.

Running an organization without well laid out systems and structures is like one- like driving through the Sahara Desert with no map and two- like starting a car that has no fuel. All one ends up doing is using a lot of energy but going nowhere. FANIKISHA opened OF's eyes to these two analogies and thus started a revolution that has seen OF excel in numerous disciplines including Communications, Governance, Finance, M&ERL, Human Resource, and Advocacy.

Prospects of support and collaboration with organizations such as KWAHO only serve to motivate OF and its affiliates further; propelling them to greater heights!

## Change of Position: Advocacy Officer

OF has a new Advocacy Officer- Sharon Atieno. Sharon comes in with a wealth of knowledge and experience spanning from her engagement with local communities that OF works with during her tenure as the Economic Empowerment Officer.

An Egerton University School of Community Development graduate, Sharon will be the force behind OF's effort to engage duty bearers and opinion leaders in Kisumu county and beyond in seeking accountability and equity in terms of health resource allocation among other right- based issues.



*Sharon Atieno, OF's new Advocacy Officer*

*"If passion drives  
you, let reason  
hold the rein"-  
Benjamin  
Franklin*