

Street Life – Issue 24

RIBA ZETU ZETU KWA STREETS

Our own stories from the streets

In our issue:

- We share what's really happening in our street life in Kenya
- Maria's journey: Breaking barriers, building a future
- Peer to peer interview: From the urban farm
- Shantel reflects: From ashes to hope



WELCOME TO OUR ISSUE

We are children and young people supported by Pendekezo Letu through the Wezesha project. We come from informal settlements in Nairobi and projects like this street magazine bring us together to share our voices and dreams.

Through the Wezesha project by Pendekezo Letu, we have taken part in different sessions, learning about safeguarding, photography and interviewing skills and creating and uploading our own stories. We also worked together to choose the title of this magazine, which was one of our favourite moments!

This project has helped us express who we are and what we have experienced. Most of all, it has reminded us that there is always a glimmer of hope for every child and young person finding their way on the streets. Sometimes, all we need is someone to believe in us and help turn our dreams into reality.

We are grateful for your support and for giving us this opportunity to be heard.

 *Read all the stories online at toybox.org.uk/kenya-street-life*

20

children and young people involved

1832

photos taken as part of the project

6

creative learning sessions delivered



Photo: 15 of us from the project formed the editorial team. We narrowed down the best ideas and materials to shape the final version.



FROM THE STREETS TO A BRIGHT FUTURE



Written by Maria

My name is Maria. I am 20 years old. Being on the streets exposed me to idleness, drugs and random roaming with a risk of potential abuse. I was jobless and lacked any skill to provide for my basic needs.

My life changed when I met Pendekezo Letu during their street visits programme and I started participating in their life skill sessions. I was referred to their Wezesha Youth Empowerment programme where I started joining their sessions and was later enrolled at a vocational training centre to learn skills in electrical installation. I committed myself and managed to get first class certification. Pendekezo Letu helped me secure my placement where I perfected my skills through on-the-job training.

After gaining experience, I started job hunting. This was easy due to the training that Pendekezo Letu had equipped us with on interviews and work ethics, though I faced challenges as electrical installation is perceived as a male dominated career. I finally secured a job where I'm currently working as an electrical technician.

I have never stopped learning under Pendekezo Letu. My life has changed, from being on the streets to acquiring a skill and employment. I am grateful to Toybox for enabling me to become independent. My future plans are to motivate and mentor other youths who are still in the bases to know that they still have a chance to transform their lives.

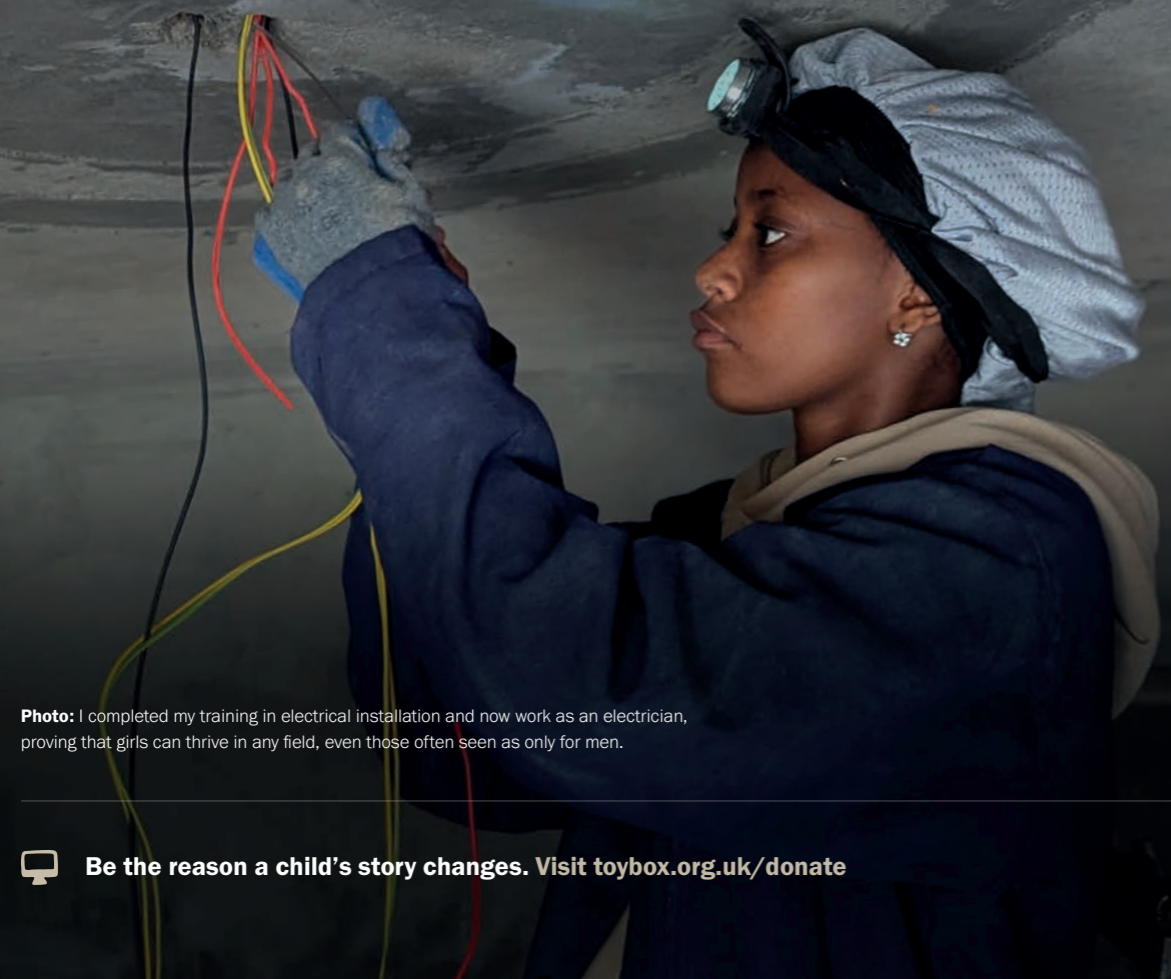


Photo: I completed my training in electrical installation and now work as an electrician, proving that girls can thrive in any field, even those often seen as only for men.


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Photo: I really enjoy drawing; it helps me express my feelings and remember things clearly.



AFTER THE FIRE: FINDING HELP & HOPE



Written by Shantel


On 17th July 2025, a fire broke out in our village. I didn't have any photos from that time because I did not have access to a smartphone or a camera to take pictures. Instead, I've decided to share my story through drawings and words. I wanted people to see what happened to us that night and how our community came together afterwards.

Before the fire, life was normal. Businesses were running as usual, children were playing and were happy. In the middle of the night fire broke out and people were wondering what the fire came from. They did not know what to do. The police were there. There was a lot of confusion. People were helping, others were crying for help. After the fire, people were sleeping in the tents. They had no place to go.

People were crowded at the police station seeking help from them, but unfortunately, they got no response from them. They were only told to stay calm. After, our MCA* helped us with some blankets, mattresses, and a few iron sheets. People were very thankful. He also gave food to eat, so that people can start there.

Today, our community is slowly recovering. Many families have rebuilt their homes and most children are back in school; however, some people are still recovering from the aftermath. The garage that burned down is still empty, but it reminds us of how far we've come. I feel proud of how we supported each other and stayed strong. I learned that even when bad things happen, people can still come together and help each other.

*Member of County Assembly - an elected local leader representing a specific ward in Kenya.

 See more of my artwork and story online at: toybox.org.uk/kenya-street-life



INTERVIEW WITH NJUGUNA

My name is Kuria and I am 12 years old. I interviewed my friend Njuguna and although it was a bit challenging at first, I really enjoyed it. It felt great to hear him share our story and experiences at the urban farm.

Kuria: How old are you?

Njuguna: I am 14 years old.

Kuria: What activities do you take part in at the urban farm?

Njuguna: I help with planting, weeding, watering, pruning and harvesting kales, spinach and pigweed.

Kuria: How has the urban farm supported you?

Njuguna: The farm provides surplus vegetables for my family of seven, improving our diet and health. I am assured of at least two meals a day, which helps me focus at school without worrying about food.

Kuria: How has the urban farm supported your wellbeing?

Njuguna: The farm is a safe space where I meet friends, share encouragement and stay away from drugs and crime. The life skills sessions offered by Pendekezo Letu and farming have taught me resilience and not to give up. I hope the farm grows to support more children like me.

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