

# WEP CHALLENGE 2021



## THROUGH MY EYES

"Liberating Love"



# Through My Eyes: CareConnect!



My Name is Shanice Kativi, a 26year old girl who grew up in an ordinary wonderful family. I have been passionate about volunteering and serving the grassroots communities which led me to pursue a Bachelor's in Community Development. When I was 12, I had a very peculiar experience. I met this 6 year old boy in an event who was different. From the crowd, he came towards me and chose me to be his friend. He seemed to strongly believe that I would be the best caregiver. My age was not a limitation for him. In the coming months, I continued to interact with him, learnt a lot from him and since learnt that 'caregiving' is what I was naturally doing.

I juggled between school and caregiving, it was the most challenging yet the most fulfilling thing. It was challenging because of the fact that there was little information available on how to care for children like him. It was always a team effort among him, his mother and I to help him accomplish certain occupational tasks. Sometimes it was scary. There was this one time, at the playing ground, he just went silent and his body was not moving. I panicked so much I went to get his mum, a first time mum, who was also just as clueless as I was. On our way to the hospital, he woke up. We then learnt that he was having a silent conversion. The learning for me continued through my experience later as an International Summer Camp Caregiver and Behavior Specialist in the USA. I went on to do more research on families with children with disabilities in Kenya and their needs but this information was not easily available that led to my intentional move to start Through My Eyes in 2015 and officially registered it in mid 2020.







# What is the nature of the business?

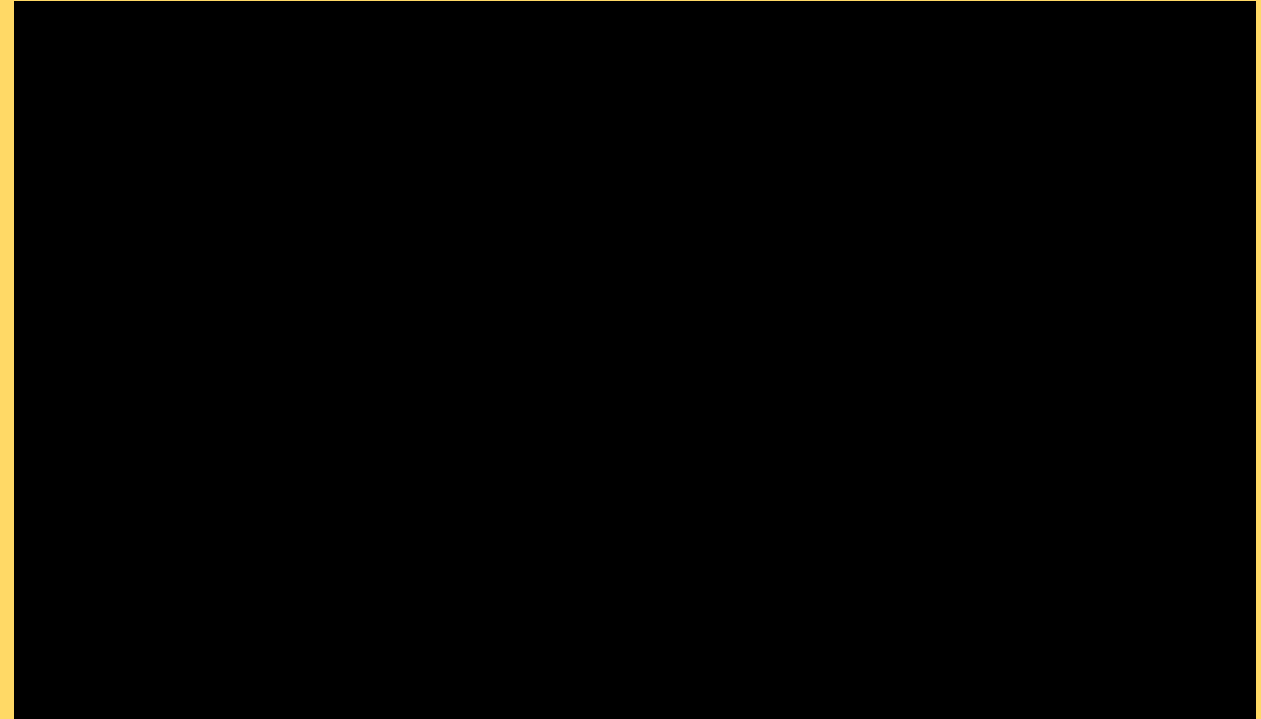
Through My Eyes, follows a social enterprise model that aims to capacity build individuals as trained caregivers for children and individuals with disabilities, who can then outsource their service to families of individuals with disabilities, special and mainstream schools and therapy centres at reasonable costs. Our caregivers are hired at a rate of \$6.50 per day, 15% of which goes back to the business to cover for operational costs such as training. We run a care hub in Kariobangi, an urban slum in Nairobi accessible to children from the low-income settlements at a subsidized cost of \$0.20 per day. The aim of the business is to avail high standards of care, reduce health complications and death due to improper care-giving among children with disabilities. As Through My Eyes, we are now developing an online platform where potential clients will have access to profiles of different trained caregivers whose service cost will be based on their experience and expertise. Clients will then select their preferred trained caregiver, once verified by Through My Eyes, caregivers are notified via text, contracts accessed via email, a text message or logging in through their individual profiles on the platform. Interviews are conducted and contracts accepted or declined. The match will be finalized, and payments managed through the portal. We will carry out continuous quality assessments that will be used to continue improving our service provision and ensure that we are the go-to service point for trained caregivers serving the marginalized and left-behind community of individuals and families of those with disabilities.



# What customer needs are being addressed



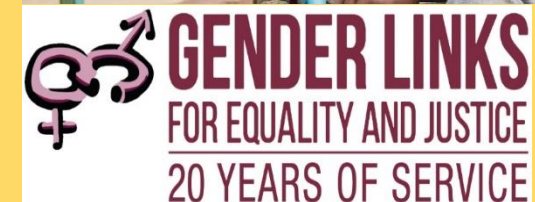
According to the WHO, 1 in every 7 children are born with a special need worldwide. In Kenya, there are approximately 1.4 million families with children with special needs and out of these 1.2 million are going through challenges. Currently, in Kenya, there is a lack of trained caregivers who can avail disability-friendly and disability-sensitive caregiving services at an accessible cost. There is limited access to adequate information on proper caregiving for children with neurodevelopmental challenges leading to health challenges and sometimes even death. This also contributes to separation and divorce among young couples at least 70% of the time. Orion Foundation, a nonprofit supporting people with disabilities, indicates that 91% of caregivers for people with disabilities in Kenya are mothers, and that most must quit their jobs in order to provide that care. Care is a basic need that a human being deserves especially at a young age to enable them meet their milestone. We are introducing a digital and physical care hub where we provide vetted and trained professional caregivers for children with neuro developmental challenges. Priority will be given to single mothers within the low-income settlements as trainees, who will then be contracted as caregivers, earn money to sustain herself and her family.



# How has the business impacted on other enterprises owned by young women?



Through My Eyes continues to be intentional in working for and with young women in Kenya. Apart from myself, my team currently employs three other women, 2 on a full-time basis and 1 on part-time basis, who also runs a catering business and provides this service to Through My Eyes during different activities at subsidized cost. We also engage a mental health trainer, a young Kenyan woman who runs her own start-up enterprise that delivers mental health services to children and young adults in Nairobi. During our trainings, we engage young women from the settlement communities as service providers; community mobilization, cleaning, session documentation through photography and videography. Our aim is to capacity build these women, both in skill and confidence building, such that other institutions will outsource them for such services within their communities. So far, having trained 20 young women on caregiving skills (first aid, mental health and Level 1 Cerebral Palsy Training, 12 have so far started outsourcing their services and thus a source of money for them and their families.





# How viable and implementable is the solution being proposed?



The gap that Through My Eyes is keen to solve is a problem that cuts across all social status and is a pressing need to the society. The target group is not only families of and individuals with disabilities but also special and mainstream schools (that include learners with disabilities) and therapy centers. Before us, there hasn't been any other caregiving center, especially within the low-income settlements, that provides high-quality caregiving services for individuals with disabilities.

Our work is implementable through our physical care-hub. At the hub, caregivers are able to bring their children to be cared for and supported during the day which then allows them to engage in different economic empowerment activities to raise income. Caregivers are confident of the safety and security of their children at the hub. With the online platform potential customers are able to access our services from their own comfort. We have been approached by different communities to implement our model in their settlements but because of limited resources we lack the capacity to expand. This is definitely in our growth strategy. We are working towards this to increase our income and increase our impact.





# How Is Your Business Unique?



Through My Eyes is offering quality assurance to children with special needs by offering trained and accredited caregivers. Our trainings are categorized according to their diagnosis and the specific needs of the children. We also offer refresher courses as the child develops and their needs shift. For example Level 1 Cerebral Palsy Training, Advance Down-syndrome Training.

Our caregivers go through the training and go through a two-month probation period. During this period the caregivers are shadowed by professional caregivers as they put their skills to work. This is to make sure that the caregivers have mastered the art of caregiving and offer children the care they deserve to achieve their developmental milestones.

Once caregivers have been contracted they go through daily inspections to ensure they are presentable and in the most positive state of mind. This is to make sure that your children, the care-cubs receive the very best.

Our online platform is also one of the very first of its kind, to help you save time, money and reduce impact of COVID-19 due to physical contact.





# Use of ICT to promote economic and employment opportunities for young women?



Our qualified caregivers are going through a basic Information Technology hands-on skills . They learn to operate smartphones as well as I-pads and computers. This enable them have a an understanding of how to operate our online platform to increase their opportunities. The world is a global village and Through My Eyes is not being left behind. We are developing an online platform, Care Connect!, to connect and match our caregivers to potential customers. This is a smart platform that matches people according to the hobbies, interests, needs at hand, preference and location. The best part about the online platform in the COVID-19 pandemic is that parents can interview their caregivers online and reduce the impacts of the virus. Our customers can rate and give feedback to their caregivers and vice versa. This will help us improve our services to ensure we are offering the best.





# How have you managed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic?



- During the covid-19 pandemic, Through My Eyes conducted a fundraising drive and was able to provide 45 families with food and care packages. This was able to sustain 136 people for a period of 5 months. We provided assistive chairs to 12 individuals with caregivers. This was instrumental to foster autonomy as well as their dignity as it aids them as they bath. At a period where hygiene has been championed, this has been instrumental in increasing their hygiene habits.
- Our technology, CareConnect!, will reduce the number of one-on-one interviews that parents tend to carry out during the caregiver hiring/identification process. With CareConnect!, the vetting and matches will be carried out online. All contracted caregivers are given a care pack that contains masks, sanitizer and a few pairs of gloves to minimize close contact as well as following WHO's and MoH's guidelines. Reviews, comments and recommendations are being done online using our social media platforms, text or calling in. Although the physical care hub has a capacity of 20 children per day, the center is only taking in 10 children per day to maintain social distance.





# Anything else you would like to add?



So far we have trained and certified 20 caregivers in Kariobangi and the outskirts of Kariobangi. They have been trained in the Level 1 Cerebral Palsy training.

We have been in and out of rental spaces that we are hiring out as care centre. Due to stigmatization landlords are kicking us out and tenants say our children are inconveniences. We are currently being hosted by a church and are caring for 15 precious children with cerebral Palsy.

We have finally secured a space which needs a lot of interior renovations to be comfortable and ideal for our care-cubs. If we win this challenge most of the money will be used in the renovations and we will launch our platform early December.

Reach out to us on email: [info@throughmyeyes.co.ke](mailto:info@throughmyeyes.co.ke).

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“No one has ever achieved greatness without dreams.”  
— **Roy T. Bennett**

