Annual Report

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Letter from the Executive Directors

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on 2016, we are proud to share with you the many accomplishments that we have made towards making Mfangano Island, Kenya a healthier place to live! Over the past 8 years, our roots have grown deeper in the community. Today, Organic Health Response and the Ekialo Kiona Center represent an organization that is built by the community and for the community. With a local staff of 34, we have built solidarity across the island through relationships that are the cornerstone of our community-driven approach. By extension, our holistic health and environmental programming and research have enabled us to measurably improve the quality of life for many Mfangano’s residents.

2016 was a year of dynamic growth for Organic Health Response. After 4 years of setbacks, the Ekialo Kiona Youth Radio finally obtained one of the first community radio licenses authorized by the Kenyan government since 2007! The Ekialo Kiona Club hit a notable milestone, surpassing 5,000 members. We also expanded our health services network across the entire island: 7 new villages now have access to life-saving emergency transportation through our Health Navigation program, and all villages can participate in our Kanyakla HIV social support groups. Lastly, we took a giant step forward and designed new organizational systems to support our growth for decades to come.

We concluded the year with the largest World AIDS Day event in Mfangano’s history! Over the years, World AIDS Day has become more than an OHR tradition – it is now a widely anticipated community event in Mfangano that celebrates our immense progress over the last decade. During a week-long football tournament that led up to December 1st, thousands of community members from every corner of the island attended to learn about their HIV status, while receiving health services and referrals for reproductive health and family planning, antenatal care and child nutrition.

We want to thank each of you around the world who together are making Mfangano Island and the rural communities of Lake Victoria healthier and more resilient. Without your ongoing support, we would not have the freedom to adapt and grow, and create innovative solutions to the complicated health, cultural and ecological challenges we face.

We look forward to sharing our progress with you over the next year.

With gratitude,

Kelsi Hines,
Organic Health Response Executive Director

Richard Magerenge,
Ekialo Kiona Center Executive Director
We support a diverse “community health ecosystem” on Lake Victoria through adaptive, grassroots programming in collaboration with local and international partners.

We promote honest dialogue and learning about our intentions, strategy, and impact through enduring cross-cultural relationships.

We educate, train and employ Kenyan leaders to cultivate a new generation of community health providers, researchers, sustainable farmers, and rural activists.

We develop and utilize community–based research to explore and share effective strategies for similar populations across sub-Saharan Africa.

Our Methods

At OHR, we believe that the health of individuals is fundamentally connected to the strength of our communities and the sustainability of our environment. Our diverse network of health, community and environmental programs - which rely on local capacity building, community–based research and honest dialogue - enable the residents of Mfangano to create a more resilient community that is capable of improving and protecting itself in a limited resource setting. The impact of our local and adaptive “Community Health Ecosystem” approach has the ability to inspire similar communities along the remote shores of Lake Victoria and beyond.

Our Story

In 2008, a team of local and international activists came together to understand and address the unique socioeconomic, epidemiological, and ecological challenges faced by the remote island communities of Lake Victoria.

Through community meetings and research, a vision of island health and wellbeing was formed, and Organic Health Response (OHR) was born. OHR is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit in the United States and community–based organization (CBO) in Kenya. In 2010, we opened our doors to the Ekialo Kiona community–based center, a solar–powered community facility with an organic farm and wind–powered radio studio, which serves as our headquarters to reach community members throughout the island. Over the last five years, we have successfully served residents of Mfangano in close collaboration with community leaders.

Our Mission

We strengthen the capability and confidence of the residents of Mfangano Island in Kenya to protect their health, culture, and unique island ecosystem.

Our Vision

We envision a resilient Mfangano community that cultivates wellbeing in Lake Victoria and beyond.

Our Approach

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Our Story

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Mfangano Island, Kenya

Today, Mfangano Island has one of the most HIV-impacted populations on the planet, with 30% of the population infected with HIV, five times more than Kenya’s HIV prevalence rate.

Mfangano Island is home to 26,000 people. As one of Lake Victoria’s largest islands, it lies in the boundary waters of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. Most residents are descendants of the Abakunta people, who sailed across the lake over 15 generations ago. Their unique culture has endured: islanders primarily speak Suba—an endangered Bantu language that is only found on these remote shores of Lake Victoria.

Many still rely on fishing and subsistence farming to sustain their way of life. However, the island’s geographic isolation makes it difficult to access running water and electricity.

Over the last 50 years, the people of Mfangano have experienced a series of devastating events that has left their health, land, and culture in a state of disease and destruction.

Organic Health Response believes that with the right resources, research and activism, Mfangano Island has the potential to overcome its unique health and environmental challenges, while reviving the rich social fabric of Suba communities. Rather than casting our nets wide, Organic Health Response is committed to deepening its impact on the island through micro-level initiatives.

Community Stats

- ~30% HIV Prevalence Rate
- 40% Poverty Rate
- Limited electricity
- No running water
- Public transportation across the lake is only available during daytime
- 3 health centers with no surgical capabilities.
In 1954, under the British Colonial Administration, the Lake Victoria Fishery secretly stocked the waters with a lucrative but highly invasive fish species, the Nile Perch.

The Nile perch boom peaked in the 1980s, attracting hundreds of thousands of migrant fishermen from East Africa. The industry eventually declined, disrupting Mfangano’s economy, environment and public health.

Over 300 native species of fish became extinct just five years after an aggressive invasive species – the Nile perch – was introduced into Lake Victoria for commercial purposes in the 1950s.

Overfishing has forced many residents to return to the land for subsistence farming, leading to further resource depletion and deforestation. By extension, food insecurity has become defining characteristic of the region’s lakeshore communities.

Moreover, the overwhelming influx of migrant fishermen, coupled with a burgeoning transactional sex economy and intense gender inequities, created the perfect storm for the lethal spread of the human immunodeficiency virus and the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS).

As a result, Mfangano’s ecosystem and economy are in an increasingly fragile state, unable to fully support and nourish the community.

The island’s geography poses additional challenges for residents, who face physical barriers to accessing mainland healthcare services.

Young women in the community remain most susceptible to HIV due to systemic gender inequality and the lack of comprehensive reproductive health services.

This single act profoundly changed the ecosystem and lives of island residents forever.
Our Programs

We build capacity for essential health care services that aid rural HIV-affected communities.

**Microclinics:** The Kanyakla (“team” in the Luo language) program empowers rural HIV-affected social networks to improve linkages to care, facilitate confidential status disclosure and medication adherence, and develop an enduring social infrastructure to address the social, economic, and environmental factors that fuel the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

**Health Emergency Response and Navigation Program:** Mfangano’s only 24-hour emergency boat service increases access to critical care for Mfangano residents. Pregnant women, the disabled and the elderly are among those most affected by complications, trauma and disease and need timely and effective healthcare services.

Economic and Environmental Resilience

We create opportunities for sustainable farming and forestry that support livelihoods and protect the island’s ecosystem.

**Reforestation:** We establish indigenous tree nurseries, planting over 5,000 indigenous tree seedlings to protect and restore Mfangano’s sacred forests. We work with Kenya Forest Service to conserve land for the future.

**Sustainable agriculture:** We continue to train a new generation of farmers and fishermen on the Organic Demonstration Farm to mitigate pressures on Mfangano’s scarce land.

**Scholarships:** We fully fund secondary school education for promising local students.

**EK Bike Shop:** We provide affordable transportation, offering discounted mountain bicycles to Mfangano residents who participate in HIV counseling and testing.

Local Voices

*We promote the community’s cultural expression, participation and imagination through:*

**Ekialo Kiona (EK) Center:** Our community center is owned and operated by the people of Mfangano.

**Radio Station:** Our Suba-language broadcast station reaches 200,000 residents across Lake Victoria.

**Computer Lab:** High-speed broadband internet at our cyber–cafe gives residents access to digital resources.

Impact Assessment

We implement longitudinal research in partnership with the Kenyan Medical Research Institute, the University of California San Francisco and the University of Minnesota.
2016 Accomplishments

Strengthening Healthy Communities

5,105
Ekialo Members

Increased community membership.
The Ekialo Kiona Center now has 5,105 members, each of whom completes a voluntary HIV counseling and testing (VCT) session every 6 months.

Strengthened our health referral network.
Through partnerships and trainings, we now work with 41 community health workers (CHWs) who support residents by providing HIV, STI, family planning, pregnancy, antenatal and child nutrition referrals.

Provided 24/7 emergency response services to 7 new villages.
Residents of Mfangano’s south sub-location now benefit from on-call emergency response and Health Navigation services through our most recent expansion.

Scaled HIV Curriculum.
Trained 114 Kanyakla groups (1000+ participants) in the HIV curriculum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Stage</th>
<th>No. of Kanyakla Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pilot</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expansion (Phase 1)</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expansion (Phase 2)</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2016 Accomplishments

#### Empowering Youth and Women

**Designed an adolescent girls reproductive health education program, “One Girl, One Goal”**.

Girls and women are among the most vulnerable populations on Mfangano, carrying a disproportionate burden of HIV/AIDS in the community. This pilot enables participants to develop the knowledge and tools to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS and unwanted pregnancies, while also teaching them how to properly manage menstrual cycles and engage in healthy sexual relationships. Stay tuned for our 2017 pilot launch!

**Hosted a Gender Equity Workshop at Kiona Center.**

We provided our staff with the knowledge and skills to act as community health advocates on gender equity.

**Partnered with Kenya Education Fund.**

We supported 12 Mfangano with 12 full scholarships.

**Held the largest World AIDS Day celebration in Mfangano history with a focus on HIV prevention among youth.**

On Dec. 1, 2016, the EU Center hosted a week-long football tournament to create HIV awareness for Mfangano youth. Throughout the week, we counseled and tested 547 community members for HIV (60% which were youth), screened 120 children for malnutrition, and counseled 58 women with reproductive health services.
2016 Accomplishments

Fortifying the Ecosystem

502
Kanyakla participants trained
Delivered agroforestry training to 502 people through kanyakla group education and plantings.

3,898
tree seedlings planted
Planted 3,898 indigenous tree seedlings to reforest Mfangano.

Amplifying Local Voices

1st
community radio license granted in a decade
Granted the official license for the Ekialo Kiona Radio, one of the only Suba-language stations in the world:
After 6 years and dozens of 12-hour trips to Nairobi, we received one of the first community radio licenses granted since 2007.

Building Community Capacity

Income generation: In partnership with Bicycles for Humanity-Colorado, we set-up a retro satellite bike shop on Kenya’s mainland, where residents can purchase the high-quality used bicycles.

Dialogue Moments: We share strategies, best practices and lessons learned in a variety of capacities:

1. Leadership workshop at the Ekialo Kiona Center
2. Partner exchange with Moving the Goalposts Kilifi
5. NEEP Global Meeting 2016: Data Analysis and Research Uptake

Measuring Impact

We evaluated the impact of our social support nutrition curriculum, which was funded through a PATH/Dfid’s Nutrition Embedding Evaluation Program (NEEP) grant.

We concluded a randomized control trial to study the impact of our Kanyakla intervention on retention of participants in HIV care and treatment.
## 2016 Finances

### Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individuals &amp; Family Foundations</td>
<td>85,437.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundations &amp; Corporations</td>
<td>131,587.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Grants</td>
<td>38,344.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Kind Donations</td>
<td>12,250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Earned Revenue</td>
<td>1,612.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$269,230.47</strong></td>
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</table>

### Expenditures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Services</td>
<td>269,083.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Overhead</td>
<td>33,409.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>17,642.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$320,134.95</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Net Revenue: $-50,904

Total Assets: $19,400

Expenditures:
- Program Services: 84%
- Administrative Overhead: 6%
- Development: 10%
The Year Ahead

In the coming year, we expect to:

- Graduate 70 new kanyakla groups using our HIV curriculum to complete our island-wide expansion (in total, OHR will support 184 kanyakla groups across the island)
- Assist 250 families to create and implement a culturally-relevant birth plan through our Health Navigation program
- Launch 12-hour, continuous daily radio programming on Ekialo Kiona Radio
- Expand IT and computer training services to post-secondary school youth through targeted training programs
- Support 50 adolescent girls with reproductive health education through our “One Girl, One Girl” Pilot program
- Implement an income generation plan for the Ekialo Kiona Radio, one of only Suba-language stations in the Lake Victoria region.
- Design and implement a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system across the organization to better understand our impact
Our Team

Board of Directors

Chas Salmen  Marco Salmen  Gus Lundin
MD, MPhil  MD  CPA
President  Secretary  Treasurer

Matt Hickey  Lily Muldoon  Rajaie Batniji  Adam Sewell
MD  MD, MPH  MD, MA  Fisherman

Katie Fiorella  Ben Pederson  Jenna Hines
PhD, MPH PhD  MD  Organic Farmer

US Staff

Kelsi Hines  Flora Mendoza
Executive Director  Development Director

Kenya Staff


2016 Responders

Fund Development Committee: Jessie Goff Member, Nathan Aulandez, Ellington Arnold
Committee Interns: Kevalin Aulandez (Development), Rosemary Mundi (Communications)

Advisors

Craig Newmark (Founder, Craigslist), Lauren Friedman (Co-Founder, OHR & UN Wildlife and Forests) Dr. Elizabeth Bukusi (Principal Investigator, Kenya Medical Research Institute), Craig Cohen, MD, MPH (University of California-San Francisco), Daniel Zoughbie (Founder & CEO, Microclinic International), Dr. Shailey Prasad (Professor of Family Medicine and Public Health, University of Minnesota), Charles "CT" Muga (Lead Social Scientist, Kenya Medical Research Institute), Dr. Paul Salmen, Eric Blantz (IT consultant), Sam Duby (Founder, Access Energy)
Thank You to Our Supporters

$25,000+
- Craigslist Charitable Fund
- PATH/DFID - Nutrition Embedding Evaluation Program (NEEP) Grant
- Richard and Marianne Reinisch Foundation
- Segal Family Foundation

$1,000+
- Rebecca Falik and Family
- Brian Frederick and Nicole Budd
- Claudia Goff
- Don and Beth Hickey
- Matthew Pasternak
- David Reinisch and the Chicago Community Foundation
- Eleanor Steiger

Sustainer’s Circle:

- Falik family
- Frederick-Budd Family
- James Githans and Valerie Gilliam
- Claudia Goff
- Arthur Steven Graff
- Don and Beth Hickey
- Daniel Narvey
- Michael Orlowitz
- Dave and Barb Palmer
- David Reinisch
- David and Kathy Schaper
- Alexandra Terrana
- Dan, Tina, Tran, and Matthew Werner

How Will You Respond?

There are many ways you can help us make an impact on Mfangano Island!

Make a monetary or in-kind donation.

You can make tax-deductible donations using checks, Paypal or credit card. Visit http://organichealthresponse.org/donate/ for details. Make an even greater impact through your employer’s matching gift program.

Many items, like radio equipment, first aid supplies, bicycles, and low-power computers, tablets and smart phones come in handy on the island. If you are able to make an in-kind donation, please contact khines@organichealthresponse.org.

Make Organic Health Response your charity of choice on AmazonSmile. With every purchase you make, 0.5% will be donated to OHR!

Work with us.

Interested in volunteering? We are always looking for dedicated volunteers and interns to lend an extra hand. Opportunities are available on a rolling basis. Visit http://organichealthresponse.org/get-involved/ for details.

Does your organization want to work with us? Partner with us to leverage and share resources, research and best practices.

Want to host an event? Please contact fmendoza@organichealthresponse.org if you’d like to host a fundraiser, happy hour, screening or panel!

Stay involved.

Sign up for our newsletter to get our latest updates. Follow us on Facebook.
Organic Health Response was created by doers, believers, and learners. We believe that the Mfangano Island can serve as a model of self-reliance and locally-directed success and sustainable development for other rural communities across sub-Saharan Africa.

Why 'Organic'?

“Organic” is not just a health food label. It is a concept that helps us frame our pragmatic methodology of activism.

Years of collaboration, coordination and hard work between two continents have taught us that transformation happens gradually, shaped and reshaped after every iteration, without rigid prescriptions.

For us, an ‘organic health response’ is a community-rooted intervention that adapts, integrates and diversifies. Our flexible and adaptable approach, which relies on local resources and partnerships, gives responders the freedom to develop innovative solutions to complicated problems.

'Organic' describes gradual transformation that is shaped through each and every iteration, without rigid prescriptions.