

A young woman is the central figure, wearing a grey t-shirt with the text 'BOXING GIRLS KENYA' and 'POWER' below it. She is in a boxing stance, with her hands raised near her face and a determined expression. The background is blurred, showing other people in a similar setting. The entire image has a warm, orange-yellow tint.

Transforming Girls, Young Women & Communities Through Boxing



AFRICAN WOMEN'S
DEVELOPMENT FUND

Challenging Gender Stereotypes of Girls and Young Women in Kenya

Why Boxing? ... It challenges gender stereotypes that a girl is not supposed to box. It helps in self defence. It helps to build confidence and self esteem in the girls. It is unique and builds leadership because it needs determination, speed and time management. It's not a rough sport and the girls are not hurting each other. We have packaged it in a way that it is combined with life skills. The reason why we are doing this is to transform the lives of girls and young women. It is also the most viable tool to spark conversations on issues they are going through such as violence against women and child marriage.'

**–Sarah Achieng
Life Skills and Boxing Coach,
BoxGirls Kenya**



Milestones: AWDF Grant to BoxGirls Kenya

With USD 30,000 from AWDF, BoxGirls Kenya set out to implement the following deliverables, between 1st December 2015 and 30th September 2016:

- 100 girls and young women will become leaders within their schools and communities.
- 30 girls and young women will be trained as coaches and deliver training within schools and zones.
- 2,000 girls and young women, ages 8-24yrs, will be reached (directly and indirectly) within programme activities.
- 10 schools and zones will be involved in programme activities.
- Creation of alliances to address issues of SGBV affecting women and also to promote boxing as a sport for girls

30 

community leaders
and parents
involved in National Annual
Stakeholder Meetings

10 

Boxgirls

programme leaders
participated in a popular radio
talk show reaching **100,000**
people within Korogocho and
Eastlands in Nairobi

20 

girls and young
women
trained as coaches and
captains by BoxGirls Kenya

300 

girls engaged in a community
boxing tournament that
reached

700 
community members

30 

girls and young women
involved in **3 days training** and
preparation for a major boxing
league competition

95 

girls and young women
ages 8-18 yrs engaged in a
leadership workshop

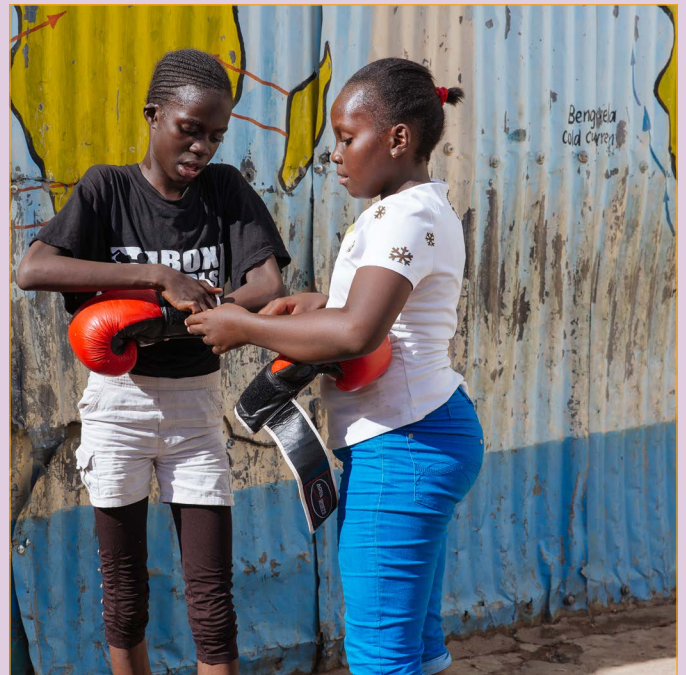
2 
**young
women**

in the BoxGirls Kenya
programme elected school
presidents **to lead 500 girls** in
their schools



BoxGirls Kenya obtained a new
grant from IOC (International
Olympic Committee) for

USD 20,000
to support girls in schools to
actively participate in boxing



‘A girl aged 11 found out that the BoxGirls programme would not be offered in her school the following term. She made her way to the nearest police station and demanded to sue the school and refused to leave until the matter was settled. Amazed at her resolve, the police intervened and facilitated a dialogue between the girl, her parents and the school. Why fight for boxing? It is because it makes the girls come alive. They have passion and the real person comes out. While boxing, they have control and that translates to their daily lives.’

**-Cynthia Coredo
Programme Manager,
BoxGirls Kenya**

In Their Own Words: Change Realised, in Partnership with AWDF

The relationship between BoxGirls Kenya and AWDF is unique. Beyond BoxGirls Kenya primarily using boxing to equip more girls with life skills and as a platform for open and honest discussions on issues they face such as sexual and reproductive health and rights, both institutions collaborate to ensure BoxGirls' interventions are credible, visible and sustainable in the long term. In turn, this has contributed to the achievement of BoxGirls Kenya's stated purpose which is 'to create a world where women and girls lead dignified lives in secure communities where they are valued as equal members with control over their sexuality and economic development.'

In reflecting on the changes realised as a result of AWDF's support, this is what the BoxGirls team had to say:

More Girls and Young Women Engaged Through Boxing:

'More girls have been reached because we now have more mini-coaches and facilitators going out into the communities they work in. In Nairobi, we have reached nine schools and in Kakamega, three. A total of 1,420 girls and young women have been directly reached, ages 8-24yrs. Because of the success of the BoxGirls Programme, other schools are also asking us to partner with them.'

-Coach Analo Anjere

Girls as Leaders and Activists:

'I was first told to come for a BoxGirls session by Mercy. This was when I was a cool kid in Standard 8. I later joined high school. I did not want to join any club and I did not want to join boxing. All I was interested in was music. About two years later when I was in Form 2, I joined BoxGirls Kenya, in the Kayole Zone. The zone did not have a captain. I noticed that the other girls always chose me to lead them. They could tell I was a leader although I did not want them to pick on me. So one day, the elections for the zone captain happened and I was chosen...I used to be very shy. One day I was called by Salome (one of my peers) to make a presentation. When I was done, I even asked myself if it was me or someone else who had done that. It was very good and people clapped for me. I started asking myself how I could be a leader who taught others about self confidence when I had none. So that was my first step in being confident and outspoken because I wanted the other girls to be able to follow my lead.'

-Cynthia Aliya

We have a Boxgirls club in our school (Preschool to Class 8). The girls are trained on the skills of boxing for one hour once a week, each Tuesday. It has really changed them because now they are able to express themselves without fear. They can speak out. They are leaders. They convene meetings and talk about issues that are affecting them and how they can try and solve the issues before they reach the teacher. They are communicating.

Boxgirls has boosted the academics of our school. Many times they organise activities where they engage the girls socially and they interact with other schools. They gave us scholarships for our children – 1,000 KES for three children for their school fees – then there was a second round of three students. They also gave our school a bicycle so that the girls, in their free time, can do exercises. They have given us time to come and learn computer skills here, use the library and that has really helped them to develop a reading culture. Whenever there is an activity, they involve us. They support a number of girls to participate in these activities, even outside of Nairobi.

-Leah Fulasia, Headmistress



Increased Self-Awareness and Confidence:

'I have changed as a person. It was not very easy for me to talk to people and I was not free with girls because my appearance is masculine. Now, all that has changed and I am confident and feel free with girls. I talk to them about sex, how to deal with heartbreak and parenthood because I am a single mother. I tell them to believe in themselves and know there is nothing they can't know. Boxing makes me feel good. I am now on the national team and I want to be better than Sarah (a professional boxer who is also a staff member at BoxGirls)! Before I joined, I never felt I could be something. This place has restored my hope.'

-Beatrice Akoth

'I chose to work for a feminist organisation and be a feminist because I want to see change, I want to inspire other young

girls to live their lives with dignity, to live lives where they feel positive about themselves and are free to make their own decisions. I want to see girls living as independent beings. I want my fellow girls to feel that this world is as much theirs as it is for the men.'

**-Caren Aumer
Programme Coordinator,
BoxGirls Kenya**

Strategising on Growth and Sustainability:

BoxGirls Kenya went through a lean cycle in 2014 and did not have funding for a year. It was then that the organisation realised it needed to develop a fundraising strategy to enable it to continue impacting the lives of girls and young women. Following assistance from AWDF targeting the strengthening of institutional structures and systems, BoxGirls plans and

fundraises for their programmes a year in advance. The organisation leveraged funds received under the project to mobilise additional funding from the International Olympic Committee. Over the last couple of years, BoxGirls has put into practice actual strategies to diversify their funding streams and sustain the work of the organisation.

'I go out to private schools (Happy Land Prep, Thomas Back Primary, Shepherds Junior, all in Buru) where for a paid service, I contribute to the development of their sustainability model. They will pay a fee of KES 3500 from May 2017 and I will target 15-20 students so that they benefit from the BoxGirls trainings. The money will go to the reserve fund. These funds will be used to support an increase in mini-coaches because we need more.'

**- Beth,
BoxGirls Kenya**



BoxGirls Kenya Defines How to Build an Organisation with a Soul:

Innovative; Wellness; Work-Life Balance; Conscious; Reflects to learn and organise; Has a voice; Informed; People do what they love most; Passion; Beneficiaries, staff, board are in sync; Firm; Non-exploitative; Has big arms and embraces people; Has a song on her lips when she is low; A big protruding heart she can burst; Has an appreciation for positive expressions of African culture; Is versatile (just like natural hair); Embraces who she is; Non-Conformist; Believes in Herself.

Bragging Rights: What BoxGirls is Most Proud of With the AWDF Project

'The partnership is a sisterhood. It's not an extractive system. We're small and AWDF had confidence in us. They also do not look at the girls we work with as disempowered. They allow us to be revolutionary. For example, we have a member of staff who focuses on happiness and motivation to ensure we build positive relationships and keep people motivated. We can be honest with them and they have helped us think through the next phase of our growth. Because of that, we have been able to grow the number of girls and young women we are working with.'

-Cynthia Coredo

'AWDF has been an exceptional example. Besides being our funders, they are our big sisters. Walking with us, boosting our capacities. I was once a very shy girl. AWDF has held my hand walking with me. I attended workshops and we had to do an interview in front of cameras and I almost melted! I wish we had more donors like AWDF who look to help us in other ways outside of giving money.'

**-Caren Aumer,
Programme Coordinator
BoxGirls Kenya**

