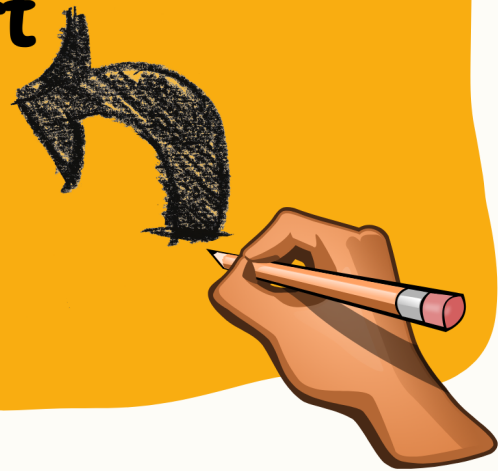




Mtoto News, 2021 Impact Report



**Thank you for helping us innovate, scale and impact the lives of
African children in 2021**

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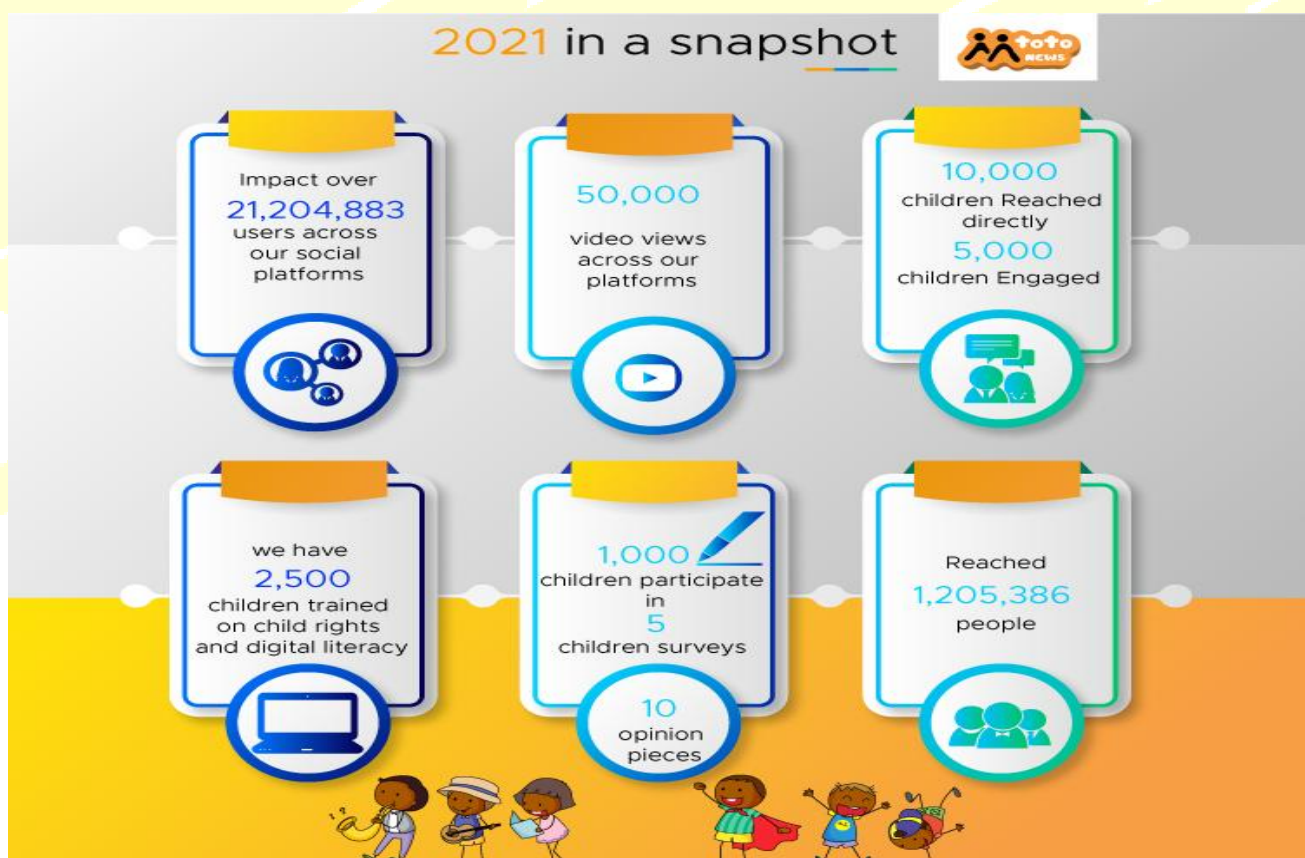
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How we made children visible

It has been close to 5 years since Mtoto News was established, with the desire to make children and their needs visible on the African continent. As a social enterprise and one with very limited resources, this desire has not been easy to realise. Without long term funding, we have had to bootstrap to achieve our goals. In Spite of these challenges, we remain immensely grateful to our partners and clients who have believed and trusted in us, and given us work, out of which we have been able to save, explore, innovate and impact.

Despite challenges faced, 2021 including COVID 19 challenges that changed school calendars forcing us to adopt to be able to engage children, climate change has been a year of great accomplishments. We have seen a greater push for the voices of children to be heard on issues that concern them, innovated modern methods of engaging children and scaled up.

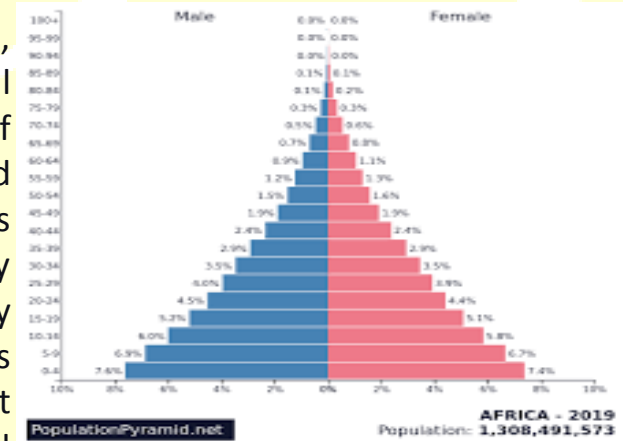
Moreover, we have seen children taking a proactive role in speaking for themselves and pushing for positive action in different areas from climate change to education, among others. As we reflect on the work we have been able to do in 2021, we continue to reaffirm our commitment to our vision of making children visible.



2021 in a snapshot: **1,205,386** people and **impacted** over **21,204,883 users** across our social platforms. **50,000** video **views** across our platforms. **10,000** children **Reached** directly while **5,000** children **Engaged**, we have **2500** children **trained** on child rights and **digital literacy**. We have had 1000 children participate in **5** children **surveys** and **10 opinion pieces**

INTRODUCTION

Africa's child population will reach 1 billion by 2055, making it the largest child population among all continents. However, there is little or no voices of this important demographic in both mainstream and digital media platforms. 5% of all media content is on children, which are mostly negative and hardly any by children. In addition children are hardly involved in the decision making process. This has resulted in children being left out in important discussions in the development, social, political and corporate world. In addition children are rarely given an opportunity to express themselves.



WHO WE ARE

Mtoto News is an Integrated information and media company that is leveraging technology to improve the lives of children by making them visible. Established in February 2017 and registered by the office of the Attorney General, Mtoto News was born out of a need to fill a gap of lack of a platform that is dedicated in reporting children issues and giving children a platform to voice their concerns.



implementers and children.

We aim at making significant change in the lives of children by making them visible in political, corporate, economic, social and development discourse. We are leveraging technology to reach and connect policy makers, project

Our online platforms and communities are designed to trigger conversations on children and come up with solutions, within the shortest time possible. Best Interest of the Child and Child Participation are at the core of our business, hence we ensure to bring in Children voices in every conversation

 Our vision	 Our Mission	 Our Goal
<i>A world where children are seen as players and not spectators.</i>	<i>Making Children Visible.</i>	<i>To improve child wellbeing by leveraging technology.</i>

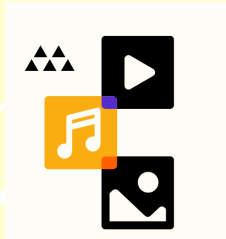
Our Objectives

- To provide a platform for child participation.
- To improve ethical reporting in the Best Interest of the Child.
- To provide a problem-solving platform where child sector practitioners can engage and collaborate.

Our Values

- Child participation is in our DNA.
- We will put the Best Interest of the child first in all our work.
- We shall endeavor to be Transparent in everything that we do.
- We will provide Quality services.
- We will remain Objective in everything that we do.
- Our work shall be guided by Evidence.
- We shall adhere to the 'Do no harm' principle.

The core of our organisation is an approach that puts the best interests of the child first, while our DNA is child participation. Our vision is a world where children are seen as players and not as spectators. We do this by:



Curating, creating, and circulating: content on children in different ways, including audio, video, written materials, and infographics. We also train journalists on ethical reporting of children's stories, considering the child's best interest, and safeguarding.



Child participation: **We** believe that children should be seen as players and not spectators and hence we capacitate children, create platforms and allow them to participate. We are working to create child led initiative where children take lead in matters that affect them using digital technology



Research and Data: Research has a way of making children who are invisible, more so child led research. Mtoto News is working to enable children to be able to inform policy, program and practice using children voices, child led and child informed research.

How We Made

Children Visible.....

10,000 children Reached

5,000 children Engaged (2,900 Girls, 2,100 Boys)

2000 children trained (800 Boys, 1200 Girls)

The core of our work is Child Participation, where we aim to place children at the heart of development work in Africa. We are always innovating on ways to ensure children are a part of all spheres. To achieve this, we work with children to elevate their voices, co-create solutions, and convene partners to bring them to life. Thus, in 2021, we were able to achieve the following:

1. Digital Literacy

In 2021, we trained **150** young journalists from 3 countries through the Sauti Zetu Initiative. The children and young people were trained on Storytelling, Social media, Writing, Editing videos, Advocacy, and online safety, among others.

We continue to engage and mentor these children and young people on the use of digital media as a tool for advocacy.

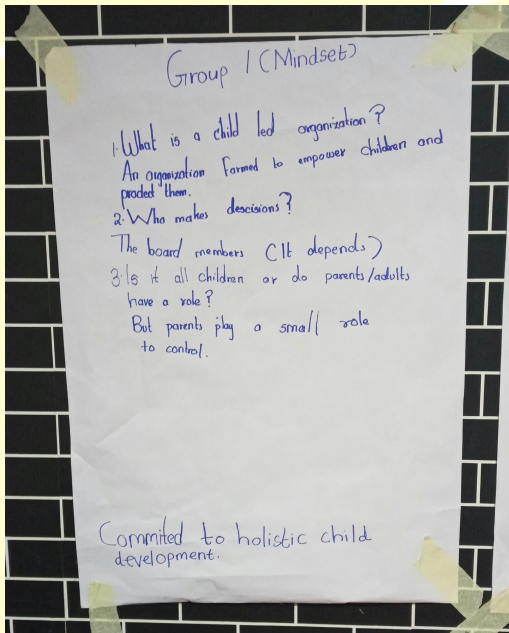
"I was introduced to an org called Mtoto News and there I was not only taught about my rights and how to defend them but I was also given a platform where not only did I get a voice but I also got the opportunity to share the voice with other children in my country and this when I decided that I will not wait to grow up so that I can stand up and speak out and with the help of organizations like MTOTO NEWS I was able to meet other like minded children and adults who have helped in the fight to give the African child a voice." Brian King, 16yrs, Kenya.



2. Supported Child Led Initiatives

Mtoto News established an incubation and innovation hub for child-led initiatives. The first project from the hub was a child-led organization that seeks to facilitate collective child participation across the continent. The organization, known as Pan African Child Led Organization (PACLO) is sponsored by Save the Children. The driving principle of this project is child-led participation, where children are provided with the space and opportunity to initiate

their own activities and carry out advocacy. Instead of responding to ideas or projects suggested by adults, the children are supported to make their own choices or establish their own initiatives and structures for determining which issues are most important to them, and which they want to address.



Mtoto News facilitated mobilization of and consultations with children that involved a design thinking workshop, virtual meetings, institutional surveys and online survey to collect views from children. From the views collected, we were able to develop a Three-year Strategic Plan, policies for PACLO, a website among other structures and systems. We also facilitated children to elect their officials.

"Mtoto News provides us as children a space to be able to express ourselves responsibly online and offline" - A child

3. Disseminated the HAKI 4 ALL Children initiative

Through our partnership with the Graça Machel Trust we trained over **2,000** children on the Africa Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child complaints mechanisms. Through this training we established 50 HAKI Clubs and distributed over **1,500** HAKI 4 ALL Children self-study workbooks to the 50 schools where the HAKI Clubs were established. The clubs are intended to help children become active members of their communities by advocating for their rights.



We also supported Graça Machel Trust to develop and launch an online platform for HAKI.

Before #Haki4All I didn't know there was a committee that was dealing with children issues ~ Omar Hemed



"Kudos to Mtoto News thank you for allowing the children to deal with their own matters. I am amazed by the way you believe in these children. They have a voice through Mtoto News" - A parent

4. Hosted Children's Forums

We held child participation forums at national, regional and continental level that reached over 10,000 children cumulatively. These forums included CSO Children Forums, DAC celebrations, IDG celebrations, consultations with children on the impact of Covid 19 among many others. The views collected in these forums were compiled into outcome statements that were shared with different stakeholders including government and African Union for action. See the recording of the events <https://www.mtotonews.com/videos/>

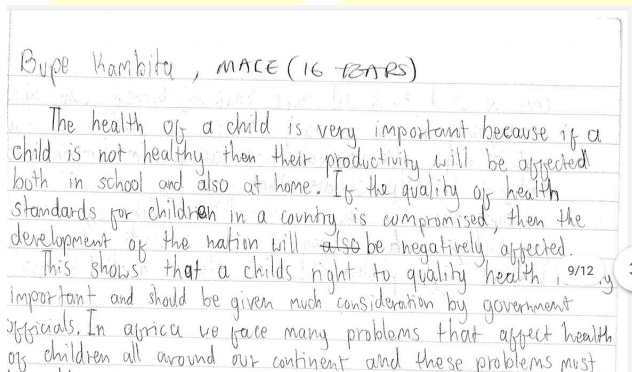
5. Facilitated Kenya's Children Bill 2022 and the UNCRC State Report

We facilitated over **3,000** children from over 50 schools across Kenya to share their views with the National Assembly on the Children Bill 2021.

In addition we have supported the development of the children report to the UNCRC where we engaged and collected views from **160** children (92 Boys, 68 girls) from across Kenya and incorporated their views in the final report.



6. Facilitated Children's Voices on Agenda 2040 Survey



With support from the Pan African CSO Forum and other stakeholders, we conducted a survey amongst African children on the state of implementation of Agenda 2040. We employed a mixed methodology approach that involved an essay and art competition, online survey, children forums and literature

reviews. The outcome of the process was a document that is available in both adult and children versions.

7. Produces/Developed Child Friendly Materials

In our effort to ensure children participate from an informed position, we produced child friendly materials in collaboration with children, which included among other materials the Agenda 2040: Making Africa Fit for Me with support from Plan International MESA and the HAKI booklet on the rights of children.



8. Facilitated meaningful participation of Children in Events



Besides mobilizing children and facilitating their participation in various children forums, we were approached by different partners to identify and facilitate children to participate and even host events. We facilitated children in statutory institutions to participate in the African Child Policy Forum (ACPF) Child Justice Summit in November. Joining Forces Alliance also tasked us with facilitating

children to moderate celebrations for Universal Children's Day. Following a request from NCAJ and the Judiciary, our children attended and moderated the official launch of the Judiciary Children Service Month in November.

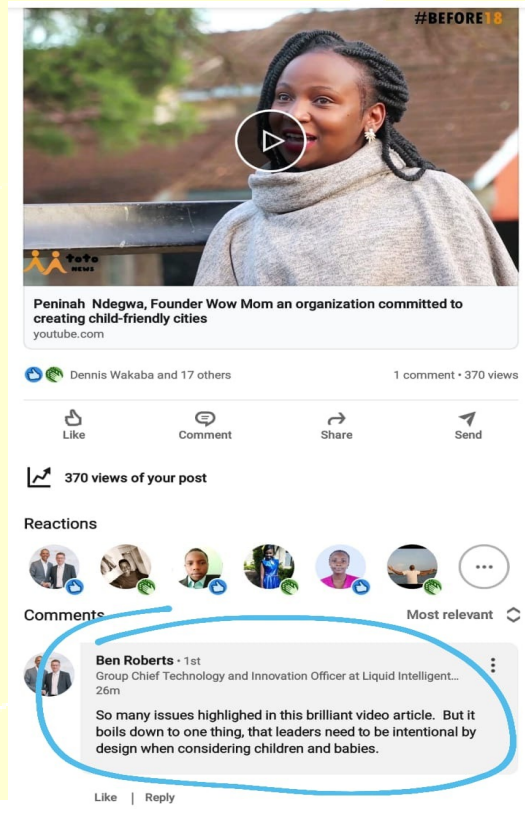
9. Partnerships

We hosted Children Voices Today, a child led organization from Rwanda. The main purpose of the visit was benchmarking; learning, exchanging experiences and strengthening our partnership in promoting children's rights especially advancing child participation.



How Made Children Visible.....

1. Content



Our content continues to impact decision making, entertain and inform, with 50,000 views across our platforms. In 2021 we will have produced 9 documentaries covering different issues concerning children. These include From Cut to Hope; Parenting in Prison; End the Stigma; ending Child marriage; Teenage pregnancy in Africa; the Talibe case; 4th Annual ECD Stakeholder's conference; Linkages between FGM and Child Marriage; mental health and juvenile justice.

We have produced 5 shows that are children centred and highlight children issues. These are News Insights, Shajara ya Watoto, The Diary, Teenz Hyp and Before 18.

We have produced 11 animations on the following: the Communication Procedure of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of Children (ACERWC); Online Child Sexual Exploitation; Child Trafficking; Impact of Mental

Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing of Adolescent Parents on the Growth of their Children; Shajara ya Watoto: Ukosefu wa Haki za Watoto and Komesha Ndoa za Utotoni; Day of the Girl; Effects of the Internet on a Growing Child; Climate Change; Agenda 2040: An African Fit for me; and Violence against Children.

We have written on average 3 blog posts per day in 2021 on topics such as Children of Incarcerated Mothers, Teenage Pregnancy in Africa and Juvenile Justice. We now have readership of an average of 2,000 per month in 6 countries including Kenya, Nigeria, USA, Australia, Tanzania and Ecuador.

This year we also launched our podcast TOTO on PODCAST, the podcast of the season has had a huge success with **100,000** listenership during the first season.

2. Advocacy and Media Campaigns

We provided technical and digital support for over 8 national events and over 10 regional events including the Pan African CSO Forum.

Thank you so much Mtoto News team for making the virtual event a success, the two days were so much fun- Plan AULO

We carried out over 20 social media campaigns including children in the justice system project, Agenda 2040, Early Childhood Development and Violence Free Africa.



Through these social media campaigns on Twitter we have been able to reach over **1,205,386** people and impact over **21,204,883** users.

Mtoto News social media total performance from June 2021 to December 2021

Twitter had an engagement of **1,359,900**, Facebook had a reach of **191,031** and an engagement of **23,615**, Instagram had a reach of **84,642** and an engagement of **176,753**, LinkedIn had an engagement of **21,000** and Google my business had an engagement of **2,357**.

Sustained and Scaled.....

1. Evidence-based Research

In the beginning the importance of evidence-based programming, especially in the media space where fake news is rampant.

In partnership with the Africa Child Policy Forum (ACPF), the government of Kenya, Pan African CSO Forum, Joining Forces Africa and other organizations we were involved in the dissemination of research reports and documentations for policy change.

In addition, we have written **10** Opinion papers that highlight different issues about children in Africa. They include CBC Calendar and Its Impact on the Wellbeing of Children; Trafficking in Persons: A Focus on the Children of Africa; and A Case for the Malabo Convention: Child Protection Online.



We have been involved in conducting studies specifically on child participation. This includes the State of Child Participation in Kenya highlighting the developments over the years in terms of program, policy and practice. The paper also points out gaps and provides recommendations on the same.

In partnership with the CSO Forum and support from Plan International, we conducted research on the implementation of Agenda 2040 and wrote a detailed report on the same and a child friendly version.

We keep track of the trending topics on children which has resulted in us publishing 6 social media trend reports under social media trends with statistics.

2. Capacity Building

We carried out 9 capacity building sessions where we trained Beacon teachers on the rights of children. These teachers are set to train children in the schools where they teach.

We trained 32 teachers drawn from five counties under the Beacon Teachers Group on the HAKI 4 ALLChildren. The teachers have since rolled out the project by establishing HAKI Clubs in their respective schools.

3. Media Engagement



We continue supporting child focused journalism and in 2021 we trained **120** journalists from across Africa on Agenda 2040, in addition we gave **small grants** worth **USD. 5,000** to 15 journalists to produce stories on children.

Through the Child Focused Journalist network we have seen increase collaboration between journalist from different countries and also seen peer review of different stories posted by children

4. Technical support

Our mission is to make children visible, this means working with others.

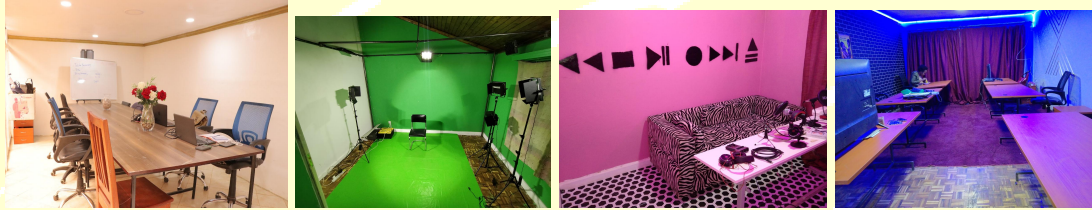
We supported the development of the Burundi Child Rights Network website to ensure that their work continues to be seen. We continue to support the ACRWC CSO Forum on communication

Justice for Children

In 2021 we were also involved in establishing the African Council for Juvenile Justice. This is a network of child justice actors in Africa that aims at pushing for a child friendly justice system.

5. Our New Office and Equipment

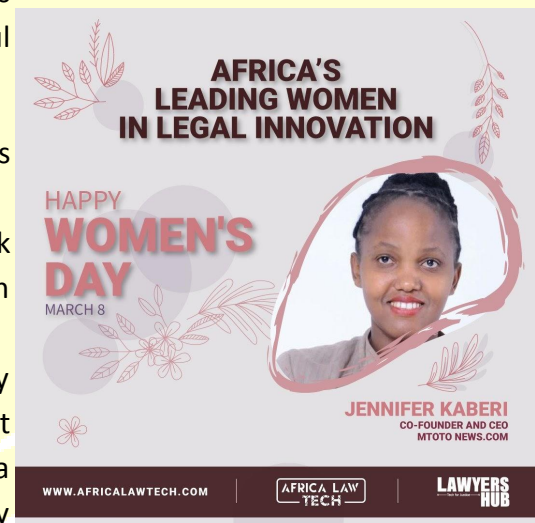
Early this year Mtoto News was able to acquire a fully functioning office. The office is located at Ngumo Highview Phase 1. The office is equipped with a boardroom, green room (TV studio), Pink room (Podcast studio) and a working space. Most of the live recording including news, interviews, webinars and livestream are recorded at the office.



Recognition

As we continue to grow, Mtoto News in 2021 was recognized by different organizations for its impactful work with children, media and technology:

- We were recognized by the Africa Lawtech as leaders in Children Law and Tech
- CIO Africa and UK Tech hub recognized our work in use of technology in advocating for Children Rights
- Mtoto News took part in the Media Viability Fellowship by the DW Akademie being the first and only digital media company in Eastern Africa to be accepted in the organization capacity develop fellowship in 2021.
- Mtoto News was recognized and accepted in Bettina Fund, a fellowship by Thomson and Reuters for being a female led media company championing for girls rights.



Partners

We would not have been able to do all this without the support from our partners.....



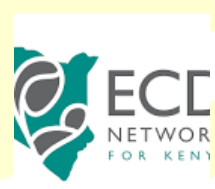
CSO Forum



World Vision



Save the Children



CEFA
the seed of solidarity



FAWE
Forum for African Women Educationalists
Forum des éducatrices africaines



JOINING FORCES
For All Children



GIRLS
NOT
BRIDES

The Global Partnership
to End Child Marriage



Centre for
Human Rights
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA



Child Rights Network for Southern Africa



The Eastern Africa Child Rights Network

Mtoto News, 2022 Outlook



Looking Towards 2022

This year we have learned the importance of being user obsessed and user-centric. We have engaged over 2,000 children directly and they all have told us about ADULTISM, where even when the content, project, the decision is to be done by children, ADULTS feel their ideas and opinions are superior. Adultism came out very clearly when we went through an Organization Capacity Assessment by DW Akademia as an organization we had to evaluate and really reflect on are our USERS and we decided we need to put our Users at the Center as we grow.

Hence,

For 2022 we would be very intentional in putting Our User who are children at the center and focus. We are changing how our website looks so that it speaks to our users, we are changing how we do and the language of our content, and most importantly we will co-create everything with children through our innovation hub (Mtoto Innovation and Solution Hub), where we intend to support children to come up innovations and scale them up. While we have been working to amplify voices of African children, we have recognised the lack of sufficient voices of African children in the global platforms.

Child-friendly research papers

Children want to learn and engage with content that is created in their name, but most of this content is very adult-centric. We aim at changing this by translating popular research on children into child friendly formats.

Children Conference

We are learning that children are able to present facts; we intend to work with children in producing their own research and presenting their findings in a child centric conference.... This will be interesting.

The Small Voices

What we have learnt establishing a child-led organization is that even young children can participate. In 2022 we intend to make this a reality by working with children below the age of 8 years and making them visible.... Watch out for a very dynamic and fun approach to child participation!

Children's Magazine

We will be publishing a child friendly magazine that will have a wide range of content from children's rights, stories by children, fun facts etc,, all done by children.

Animation

We will work on educational short animated stories on topics that include equitable access to quality education, FGM, ending Child Marriage, Climate change, Girls in Science, among others.

Documentaries

In 2022 we are aiming to increase the number of documentaries we shoot outside Kenya. We want to be able to produce at least 6 major documentaries outside Eastern Africa.

We are also looking forward to increasing the number of in-house documentaries. In 2021 we were able to have 2 in-house documentary productions. As we move into 2022, we are aspiring to do at least 4 documentaries that are fully researched, planned and funded by Mtoto News.

New Technologies - Mtoto Innovation and Solutions Hub (MISH)

In the last 5 years, children have challenged us that they are able to be innovative and come up with solutions for challenges that they and their communities face.

In 2022 we aim at co-creating solutions with children and work on scaling up these solutions. We will organize hackathons with children and design thinking workshops to help them ideate and conceptualize these solutions and then link them with organizations that can support in

implementing and growing the solutions.

We will also be exploring Virtual Reality and augmented reality in making children visible.

Children and Elections

Kenya is heading to the elections in 2022, and we intend to work with the ?? put children as a key political agenda. Starting in January, we are planning to engage with politicians to ensure that children are included in their manifestos. In collaboration with partners, we will work to ensure the upholding of children rights in the election process.

Investing in Children: A child-led campaign

We will engage in a child-led campaign to increase National budgets allocated to children. When we speak of investing in children we mean that children need to understand what size of cake they are getting in the National budget cake and how they can ensure that the cake size increases by involving them in advocating for themselves.

Support to child-focused organizations

In the spirit of collaboration and partnership, we intend to continue supporting more child-focused organizations in areas of communication, technology and advocacy, including working with journalists and media houses.

Child Centered, Fact Checked Content

Produce more children news by children in collaboration with other media outlets:

- Producing a show on Child Rights Now that highlights the rights of children
- Train Children during the March holiday on digital and media literacy
- Fact checking children stories
- Data journalism stories
- Work with journalism clubs
- Child produced programs