

## Young People are Leading Change in Nairobi's Urban Slums

Ngei 1 Development Youth Group was started in 1997 by 15 young people in an urban slum area called Ngei 1 within Nairobi's Huruma Ward. The group came together to address community problems such as high rates of youth unemployment and crime, an inadequate supply of safe water, a high rate of disease, and poor waste disposal and hygiene practices.

Ngei1 DYG supports young people to lead honest and self-dependant lives through social and income-generating activities, whilst improving the local environment and community as a whole.



*Photo: John Cornwell and colleagues from Ngei1 DYG © Skillshare/Cliff Allum.*

Three quarters of Kenya's urban population of over 7.5 million people live in slums which lack even the most basic amenities. In Nairobi alone, more than 1.6 million people live in shanty towns made of mud, cardboard and iron sheets, with the slum population growing at 6% per year. Nothing makes the difference in living conditions for slum dwellers more apparent than the mortality rate of children under five. In Nairobi slums, 15.1% of children die before they reach five while in the rest of Nairobi, the rate is 6.3%.

The project's vision is ***a society in which youths are empowered, self reliant and actively involved in community development*** through:

- Creation of permanent employment for about 80 young people.
- Reduction in the rate of crime in Huruma slum and its neighbourhoods.
- Provision of clean and safe water to about 5,000 slum residents.
- Provision of alternative sewage disposal for about 2,000 slum residents.
- Clean local environment free from health hazards for 10,000 slum residents.

Skillshare International have placed two development workers with Ngei1 DYG to support project implementation and to strengthen Ngei1 DYG's strategy development, project management, financial management systems, fundraising, and networking with other local organisations. Funded through the DFID PPA, John Cornwell has assisted Ngei1 DYG to lever funding from other donors, as well as planning for long term sustainability. He says, *"Without a doubt, the recent successful sourcing of project funds is one of the most defining moments in the history of the group.... Many of the members also feel that it is a just reward for many years of hard work. As we know, the potential of this project is to radically develop not only the group but the community as a whole and the impact, if implemented effectively, will be far-reaching and long-lasting. Skillshare's partnership with Ngei1 DYG has provided some considerable success in a short period of time and clearly is critical to Skillshare in the fulfillment of its vision to support the poorest communities to develop themselves sustainably."* With strategic plans in place and resources secured, Ngei1 DYG is now looking to implement business development plans with specific plans for sustainable income generation.