

SARAKASI TRUST
ANNUAL REPORT

2015

15 YEARS OF
EXISTENCE



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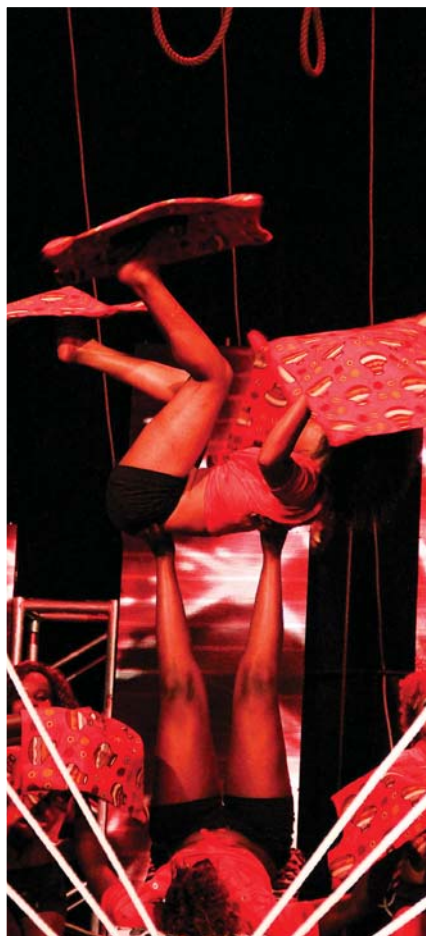
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Foreword

Dear Friends,

Another year has passed. A year of successes and challenges, a year of further consolidation, a year of growth as I believe that each lesson and success can be ticked off as growth. Since 2016 will be our 15th year of existence we thought it a good idea to document our unique and proven Sarakasi model of capacity building and social entrepreneurship. Thankfully this was possible with the help of the HIVOS grant. Because we wanted to reach and teach as many people as possible with the documentation of our model, we decided to make it part of this annual report. Since this is also our narrative and financial account of 2015, you will find this specific information in clearly marked sections. I hope you will enjoy reading this report. I also hope you will learn a thing or two in case you are toying with the idea of starting your own organization.

As always I extend a warm welcome to all of you to pass by the Sarakasi Dome anytime as a friend, as an artist, a client, or as a visitor. We love to share.

With warm regards,

Marion Op het Veld
Co-Founder and Managing Director



What is this document about?

Who can benefit from this document?

Over the last fifteen years, Sarakasi has distinguished itself as a leading organization in arts, culture and entertainment and as such wishes to document its proven training and capacity building model as part of Learning and Knowledge development. The objective is to document the Sarakasi model and share lessons and experiences with the world. The expected result will be a successfully documented Sarakasi training and business model to make it easier for others to replicate it in other parts of the world.

Obviously each country has its own challenges and operating conditions, strengths and weaknesses, but by documenting the model step-by-step we are confident that others with the same vision and desire as us can adapt the model successfully to meet their own environment wherever they are.

What is Sarakasi?

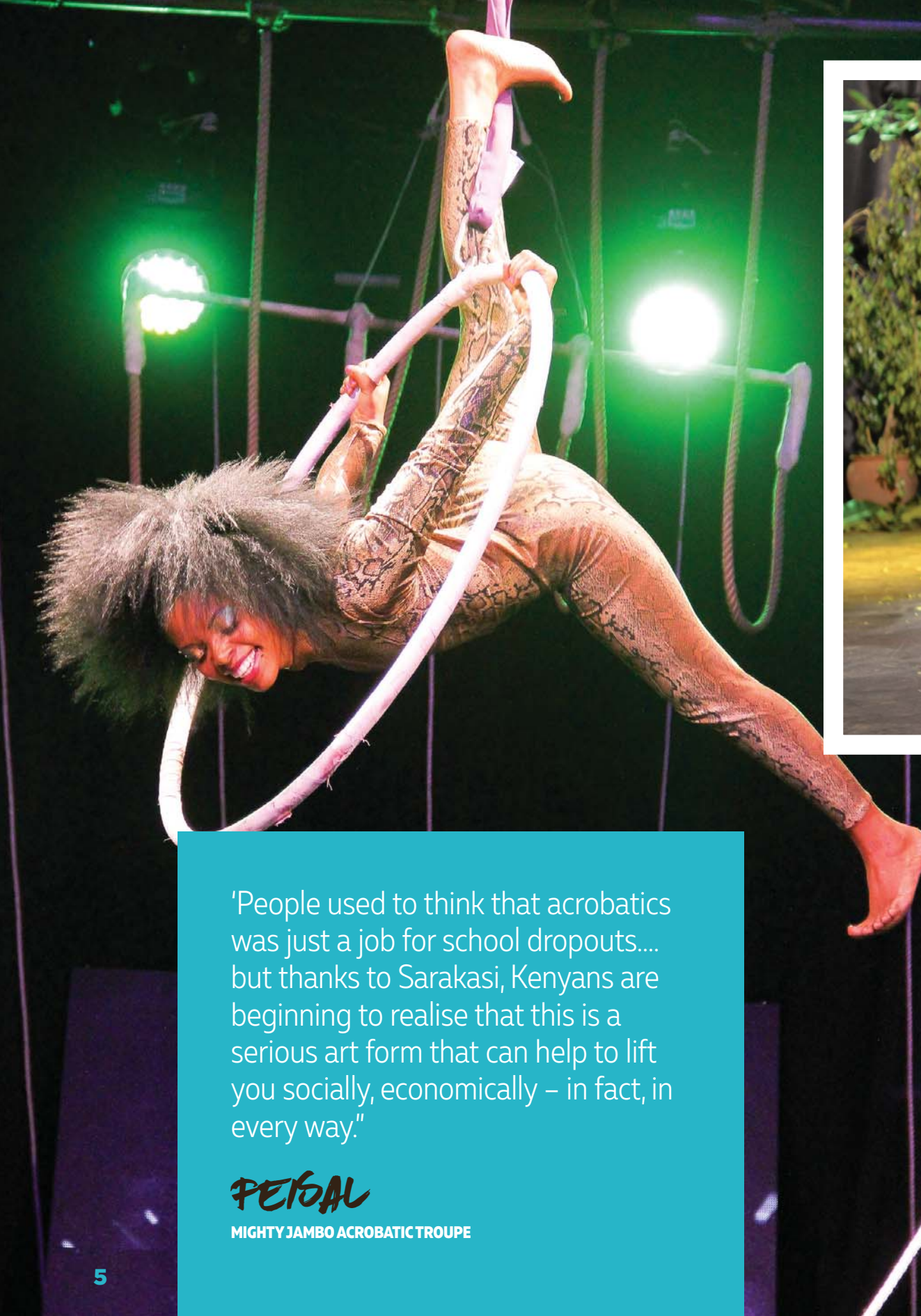
‘Culture for Development’

Sarakasi Trust (www.sarakasi.org) is a performing art charitable Trust based in Nairobi, Kenya working towards building capacity in the arts, culture and entertainment sector. The organization has been working in the area of Culture for Development since its establishment in 2001 by effecting actual and demonstrable transformation in the livelihoods of young people from low income backgrounds.

This is achieved by expanding their scope, networks and capacity through performance based training, exchange programmes and contracts and special projects that influence the young artist's ability to reach a high level and thus access a sustainable income. Sarakasi has grown to be one of the leading organizations in arts, culture and entertainment sector in Eastern Africa. The Trust has always been committed to promoting public awareness, appreciation and access to acrobatics, music and dance. "Sarakasi" is the Kiswahili word for Circus.

Philosophy

In general it is Sarakasi's aim and practice to promote public awareness, appreciation and access to acrobatics, music and dance. Sarakasi also aims to develop contemporary choreographic creation and supports the presentation and diffusion of performance work; supports training and innovation in acrobatics, music, dance and theatre; fosters cultural exchange and cross disciplinary collaboration in the arts; and supports the infrastructure for the development of acrobatics, music, dance etc. Sarakasi aims to promote its



'People used to think that acrobatics was just a job for school dropouts.... but thanks to Sarakasi, Kenyans are beginning to realise that this is a serious art form that can help to lift you socially, economically – in fact, in every way.'

PERSAL

MIGHTY JAMBO AEROBATIC TROUPE



objectives in East Africa and beyond and in this way, to further the social, economic and cultural development of society.

Core Values

The organization's core stems from a firm belief in the use of Culture for Development and the positive role that culture can play in the effort to eradicate poverty. The Trust works as a mechanism for development by effecting actual demonstrable transformation in the livelihoods of young people

from economically marginalized areas, expanding their capacity through performance based training, exchange programs and commercial contracts which immediately and structurally impact their ability to access a sustainable income. We go beyond artistic training and commit ourselves to the social, professional and economic development of our artists. We remain focused on providing them with skill sets and information that will catalyze their long term transformation and inclusion in society.

The 'bottom-up' approach

Even as the scope and nature of our activities grows, the Trust never loses sight of its mission to 'Empower Youth'. This is not just a trendy catchphrase - Sarakasi is not about 'hand-outs' – it's about making young artistes responsible for themselves and their futures by giving them the skills not only to learn and improve their craft but also to handle their finances, health, legal issues and cultural transitions.

This philosophy is the most sustainable way to ensure the artistes can plan for the future and not just exist hand-to-mouth. Sarakasi however does provide a 'safety net' for young, green artistes, charting their course along the way and being there to offer guidance when needed as well as for the successful ones who suddenly find fame – and not inconsiderable fortune – overseas.

Many of our trainees have gone on to be managed by the Trust as company artists and rise up through the ranks to become leaders, trainers and managers. So not only are our artistes beneficiaries of our programmes but they also have the opportunity to be part of the planning and implementation processes.

This 'bottom-up' approach fulfils our mission to 'Empower Youth' as they not only go on to create livelihoods for themselves within our organisation but act as role models inspiring those coming up behind them and underpins the Sarakasi vision as we place our future in the hands of those we set out to help and empower. Leadership skills gained through our model have also created empowerment towards independence, hence many of our artists now (after having worked with us) have gone on to create their own business, go back to school or have found meaningful jobs elsewhere.



1

**Have a
Vision**

Sarakasi Beginnings

Sarakasi Trust was established by Marion Op het Veld and Rudy van Dijck in Nairobi, Kenya in December 2001 in response to the need for further development and growth in the cultural and performing arts sector.

The two founders, one of which is the current Managing Director while the other is the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, had both been working professionally and voluntarily in the arts, culture and entertainment sector using the performing arts as a tool to instil positive change in troubled young and adult people. When they met an acrobatic troupe in Kenya in 2000 they immediately knew that here was an opportunity to show the world through the performing arts that Africa was

much more than the 'dark continent'. They saw not only the opportunity, but also the need to nurture and facilitate these arts and thus improve the life of the often poor and underprivileged performing artists. The talent was already there and the only thing missing was the structure within which it could be nurtured; systems through which raw talent could be transformed into globally acceptable and marketable cultural products. Sarakasi provided this opportunity through its creative space and training, first at the Godown Arts Centre Nairobi and, since 2008, at the Sarakasi Dome in Ngara Nairobi, a magnificent and iconic old cinema that the Trust acquired and renovated to meet its office and rehearsal space needs and which doubles up as a performance venue.

"Talent's greatest reward is recognition, yet that recognition remains elusive without opportunity'.



2

**Find a
Home**

After starting off in 2001 renting space in the Godown Arts Centre, Nairobi, by 2005, Sarakasi became a victim of its own success, outgrowing the available space for its own rapidly expanding training programme. The need for a permanent rehearsal space for up to 80 performers each day led to Sarakasi's founders to explore different options.

By 2006 the Trust was able to purchase a landmark building in downtown Nairobi, the former Shan Cinema, renamed the Sarakasi Dome and after nearly two years of renovations we finally moved into our new home in May 2008. The Dome is now central to the Sarakasi model and to its long term sustainability -with its office, training, rehearsal and various performance areas – indoor auditorium, a smaller stage at the Sawa Sawa bar, the dance studio, roof top area, foyer and outdoor venue. Apart from outside events, Sarakasi's communication, creative and event management department is in charge of planning and executing the organization's own cultural agenda which includes the monthly Hip Hop Hook Up, concerts and circus and dance events. Clients can book the Dome on a weekly, monthly or case to case basis, thus providing income to Sarakasi. The bar and the second floor above the bar have been rented out on a contract lease

basis. Sarakasi generates income from local and international shows, rental income from the Dome complex, ticket sales, booking fees, parking and services such as the management of events, projects, artists, auditioning, training and choreography.

Having this dedicated, multi-purpose space has enabled Sarakasi to run more comprehensive training programmes, more creative choreographic projects and of course more captivating artistic performances. It has also entailed a growth in the number of training and administrative staff, together with an expanded capacity to host dance, acrobatic and musical performances, art exhibitions, catering and other visitor facilities – in short, everything needed by the city's burgeoning arts community.

The Dome continues to be a vibrant space as we continue to implement a more aggressive campaign to commercialize the space.

In 2015 we hosted 174 events in the Dome, which included DREAMS, DREAMS 2, SKIN, which were our very own in house productions to showcase Sarakasi artists own talent. Others were reggae nights featuring international artists like Chizi Deck from Jamaica, Somali cultural nights, nine monthly Hip Hop Hook Up events for young upcoming talented artists which also featured Kenya's best renown hip hop artists like Wyre, Prezzo, Nazizi amongst others. We had regular secondary school

bookings for their curriculum, kids program where talented kids in dance and acrobats meet with professionals to better their talents, private dance classes, video shoots for local artists, Special Needs Youth Disco among others. We held 6 monthly workshops for our artists (acrobats and dancers) in conjunction with the Barclays bank (Young Achievers) and 3 other monthly ones for upcoming performing artists from around Nairobi dubbed Sound In Motion.

For those following this model you do not need to buy a building to start with! For seven years we rented premises from which to run our programmes. It is however critical to have a space for auditions, training, rehearsals etc. Start with what you can afford and grow from there. Obviously rental of any premises is an ongoing expense so you will need to have a budget for this before you start any programmes. As soon as is practicable start to use your space to generate income. At this stage you will also need to put in place your legal structures (see more below under Step 8).



A full-page photograph with a teal overlay showing three acrobats performing on a high wire. The acrobats are in various poses, with one at the top, one in the middle, and one at the bottom. The background shows a stage with scaffolding and other performers. The text '3 Find Raw Talent' is overlaid on the right side.

3

**Find
Raw
Talent**



'In the beginning of my 'dancing journey' my parents were against it for they thought it would not help me in the future. However this all changed when I began going for performances; I even went abroad; they started seeing me on magazines, gazettes and television. Everything changed and all those against my dancing began seeing it more as a career than a hobby, more educational than a way to mislead teens or myself. I even got an opportunity to attend a campaign on drug abuse, which was very educative on my side. My father couldn't believe it; he didn't take art as something that could take you so far, to do so many things.'

PELAGIAH

SARAKASI TRUST'S TRAINING PROGRAM FOR DANCERS, 2007

The Sarakasi founders, armed with a vision, set out to source raw talent in the poor neighbourhoods of Nairobi. They started by scouring venues such as the Kenya National Theatre, and various community, social halls. They would then meet with group leaders (in the beginning it was just acrobats) and asked them what they needed to further their dream of being professional artistes.

The response was unanimous – training, training space, somewhere to perform and a cohesive association that would unite them and give them strength in numbers. It must be kept in mind that at this time street performers, artists and musicians were mostly seen as drop outs, people without 'real' jobs to be viewed with suspicion and not considered as solid citizens.

Now, with growing public interest, donor support and multiple success stories the performing arts (and the arts in general) is now seen as a viable career path. Many art galleries have sprung up around Nairobi and Mombasa, music

festivals and concerts are being held on a weekly basis and acrobats, drummers, musicians and dancers are being hailed as heroes after returning from performances abroad.

Much of this renaissance has been fuelled by the dancers, musicians and acrobats of the Sarakasi Trust. The Trust has grown to become a major force in all aspects of Kenya's performing arts – partnering with some of the largest music festivals (North Sea Jazz Festival) and acrobatic institutions in the world, including the Russian State Circus and the Shanghai Circus School.

For those following this model you probably have artistes in mind with whom to start the programme. If not, then hold auditions – advertising in poor neighbourhoods – you'll be amazed at what you find. This raw talent becomes your foundation. Here you will also need a budget for some trainers and also for small daily expenses of your trainees so they can attend training and have a meal during the day. Initially Sarakasi obtained funding from the Ford Foundation to get us off the ground.

'With my mum's blessings I joined Sarakasi Trust in 2010 which was one of the highlights of my career. At Sarakasi I found that things were much more organized especially the training program. We also got an allowance to come for training at least three times a week. I finally believed that with hard work and determination anything is possible. With Sarakasi I have been able to perform at very high profile events both locally and abroad. This in turn made me a much better artist which led to my promotion as a trainer so now I'm not only able to perform but also train others and nurture upcoming talent as mine was nurtured. As I now have a steady income as a trainer I am able to help my mum and sister whose school fees I pay for. Since 2012 we have been having weekly and monthly performances at our home, the Sarakasi Dome. Apart from the income it is a great sense of pride to perform in front of the home crowd. The regular performances also help the artist to build up on skill, confidence and stage presence'.

MOHAMED MWAKIDU

SARAKASI ACRBAT

A photograph of a group of people, likely in a training or workshop setting, with a blue tint overlay. The image shows the profiles of several individuals, including a woman in the foreground with curly hair and a man behind her. The text '4' is positioned on the right side of the image.

4

Implement a Training and Capacity Building Model

Sarakasi Model - How we do it

Even though Sarakasi has now grown to encompass a myriad of activities, offshoots and special projects, our success was built on, and continues to be built on, our training and capacity building programme that allows beginners, enthusiasts and professionals to access our initiatives.

Our programme is dependent on, among other things, ensuring equal opportunities are available to all our artistes regardless of gender, religion, physical ability or economic background (we even have a special programme, dubbed Talanta, for deaf acrobats). Because the needs and abilities of the artistes are varied they are organised within four different levels.

TRAINING

Level One

This is the basic entry level for those joining Sarakasi through the outreach programmes in their neighbourhoods. The trainers use informal training spaces to create an interest in the performing arts. At this point no auditions are necessary and all those willing to attend are encouraged to try out. It is at these

informal venues that the Level Four trainers take the beginners through a series of practical workshops. Beyond the performance training the beginners are also advised on the performance business and introduced to health and social education. Within this period, the Trust conducts regular reviews on each individual's performance and selects those who are proficient enough to join Level Two. The movement from Level One to Level Two can take anywhere from one to four years depending on the individual's talent and ability.

Level Two

This is the intermediate level to which an approximate number of 100 artistes are selected. These artistes form the core group of trainees, hosted at our formal rehearsal space at the Dome. At

this level, the trainees are encouraged to learn more about the performing arts, both in its practice and theory. They are exposed to a variety of arts and experiences and introduced to interdisciplinary forms.

As a majority of them come from low income families and/or are still at school, Sarakasi commits to offering them reasonable financial support that will allow them to attend practice sessions on a regular basis. It is at this point that the artistes are encouraged to team up with other members of the training programme to form performance groups.

Level Three

The intense and tailored training at Level Two serves to transform some artistes into arts practitioners capable of being a functional member of a professional group or a skilled solo performer and thus advance to Level Three of the training programme. Sarakasi offers these practitioners training workshops aimed at boosting their professional standing and giving them skills to

navigate the business side of the performance industry (see more below under Capacity Building).

Most importantly, at this level, the Trust acts as an impresario and artist manager (see more below on Artist Management Agency). Sarakasi sources and facilitates employment contracts for these artistes from within Kenya and abroad. The Level Three artistes also continue to use the facilities at the Dome as both a staging area and a rehearsal base for their shows.

Level Four

This is the elite level to which a small group of artistes are selected. Level Four artistes are dedicated and highly skilled artistic practitioners who are invited to pass on their skills and knowledge to the emerging ranks of future professionals. In addition to their phenomenal skills, Sarakasi trainers are required to have the following qualities: *Positive outlook, Spirit of Co-operation, Honesty, Generosity, Integrity and a Desire to Keep Learning.*

For those following this model it is important to already have established at this stage a Code of Conduct that all artistes must sign which in Sarakasi's case include policies on equality.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Alongside the training programme, Sarakasi has a busy programme of social development activities to help performers adjust to the many challenges of their newfound success, including money management workshops which are aimed at helping performers cope with the challenges and pitfalls of making the transition from unemployed or low-income earners to successful salaried performers, specifically on contractual obligations and the place of the performing artiste in the concert pay chain.

As well as standard banking procedures, the participants are advised on personal investment options, insurance and pensions, education funds and other important financial considerations.

Workshops are also run on civil liberties and human rights issues and drug use and abuse.

We also take practical steps to ensure our artists have freedom of movement to continue their growth and development by making sure they have their relevant legal documents, including, ID cards, birth certificates and eventually passports.

Sarakasi also continues to develop and improve its 'cultural adjustment' programmes for performers travelling overseas, providing a wide-ranging series of lectures and practical advice on everything from accommodation options and social services to trickier issues of local customs and personal behaviour. The Trust also runs a health and wellness programme for performers and trainees dedicated to providing practical advice on staying well on the road. The programme also deals with the sensitive but ever-present issue of HIV/AIDS, with a compulsory workshop for all trainees on prevention, testing and treatment, as well as associated issues such as overcoming stigma and caring for people with HIV. The capacity building programme chooses to lay emphasis on character and self worth because those are the attributes that will serve the artistes in their continuing journey out of poverty.

The integration of gender equality into learning takes place concretely within the life skills training. The training aims at enhancing awareness about recognizing the importance of gender equality, as well as attitude changes with regard to traditional gender roles.

For those following this model it is important to form networks at this stage from which to draw upon to help run the workshops. For example local bank manager, legal firm, doctor's surgery, local drug advisory centre, successful performers, local role models, etc. It is also important to start the ball rolling on making sure your artistes have the relevant legal documents to enable them to work both at home and abroad.



5

Build an Audience

An integral part of our model is audience building, without which, our performers would have nowhere to showcase their talents or to derive their income. In other words the development of talent is unsustainable in the absence of an audience. With this in mind, Sarakasi has worked tirelessly to build a consistent and ever growing audience for our artistes.

Together with its training programme the Trust aims to present the best of Kenyan performing arts to the widest possible audience by organizing events, festivals, cultural exchanges, local and international performance contracts and tours. We also implement our own cultural agenda at the Sarakasi Dome, which includes concerts, dance and circus productions, a monthly Hip Hop event and workshops. Through these audience-building projects, media engagements and the outstanding Sawa Sawa Festival we reach thousands of people every year. In addition, the Sarakasi Trust is a member of eight international partner networks (see more below under Partner Networks) and in that way reaches out to an even wider audience.

Sawa Sawa Festival

The annual Sawa Sawa festival was initiated by the Trust in 2007 to be a uniquely African festival appealing to the Kenyan public and reaching out to audiences of all ages, across genders and mixed cultural and economic backgrounds. The festival is a platform that aims to further develop audiences, bring profile and exposure to Sarakasi programs and activities and affiliated artists and build capacity in cultural entrepreneurship and festival production. Sawa Sawa Festival promotes the performing arts through technical workshops, exchanges between local and international artists, community-building themed activities, jam sessions/studio recordings, media activations and the multi- stage, multi-day concerts.

During 2015 the Sawa Sawa Festival, planned for December, did not take place and was postponed to March 2016. This was due to the fact that the donor money for the Festival was held up in Imperial Bank, which was put under receivership because of unsafe practices. Sarakasi will be able to hold the Festival in 2016 because the main donor (CKU, who also funds the Hip Hop Hook Up) has agreed to wire the remaining funds.





For those following this model it is never too early to start putting on performances and raising public awareness and acceptance of your artistes. Use your space for performances or take it to the streets – get people interested and talking about what you are doing. Contact media outlets etc. Now with social media taking over the way information is disseminated it is much easier to get the message out there than when we began in 2001. Other means of spreading our messages are done via our website, new letters, media contacts and so on.



6

Build a Brand

Through our audience building programme we are not only creating exposure and income for our artists but we are also building our brand and marketing ourselves to the wider world - our logo is now instantly recognisable to thousands of people. Over the years our regular staging of professional, well run productions has meant that the name 'Sarakasi' has now become synonymous with quality events and quality artistes.

The public now knows that a 'Sarakasi' branded event will be of the highest quality, innovative, entertaining and safe to attend. Our brand means that we have become known not only for the professionalism of our events but also that our events will fit our brand. In other words audiences know that a Sarakasi event will be contributing towards the well being of others and will be providing positive messages for our audiences.

For example the 'Hip Hop Hook Up' which up to now has been running every second Saturday of the month for four years and which targets an audience of young urban youth aged roughly between 18 and 35. The aim of 'Hip Hop Hook Up' is to reach at least 500 young people at every monthly event and is the leading platform connecting young urban performing artists with new audiences, developing new expressions of contemporary urban art and culture

For those following this model brand building should be one of your ultimate goals as not only does a known and trusted brand lead to consistent increases in attendance levels and income for the Trust and its performers but also to donor confidence and the establishment of the right partnerships - make sure you design a logo at the start that will make your brand recognisable to a wider audience as time goes on.



During 2015, the Hip Hop Hook Up, funded by CKU is fast growing in numbers, while initially we managed to have around 500 attendees, this year the numbers have tremendously grown to over 1,000 and so have the activities around the event. We realized that there was so much talent out there and decided to do street edition of the Hip Hop Hook Up. This way we organized 3 out of Nairobi (Muranga, Mombasa and Limuru) and another one at the Kamiti Maximum Prison where inmates showcased their talents. Some of these street editions (Muranga and Kamiti Prison) were in partnership with our partner Crime Si Poa Campaign (Crime is Not Cool), a program under the Youth Safety Awareness Initiative. Many young Kenyans have benefitted from this platform and have become more confident on performing stages others have recorded their own albums and singles while more have done many collaborations. This particular event has attracted lots of media attention both locally and nationally and more international artists want to be part of it through collaborating their events.

A further example is the Special Needs Youth Disco event held every 3 months at the Dome for which Sarakasi Trust partnered with SEP (Special Education Professionals). The dance for youth with special needs is a special fun event for the teenagers and adolescents to get together and have some fun! Youth from different schools and centres get an opportunity to meet and socialise with each other. It is normally a friendly afternoon of music, dance, fun and entertainment. In 2015 we held 3 SEP events.



A photograph of a man with a beard and long hair, wearing a dark t-shirt, speaking into a microphone. He is gesturing with his left hand. In the background, several people are seated, listening. The image is overlaid with a solid teal color.

7

Establish Partnership Networks

International Exchanges and Performance Contracts

Sarakasi facilitates performance opportunities by identifying festivals, and other performance schools and programmes with a view to establishing partnerships, networks and contracts, that serve to improve the performance skills of its artists, increase international visibility, create exposure to a broader world view, and provide performers with earning opportunities.

The programme also brings to Kenya a wide variety of international performers, instructors, trainers and choreographers who provide training according to their distinctive skills. Sarakasi facilitates performance opportunities by identifying festivals and other performance schools and programs with a view to establishing partnerships, networks and contracts, that serve to improve the performance skills of its artists, increase international visibility, create exposure to a broader world view, and provide performers with earning opportunities. The program also brings to Kenya a wide variety of international performers, instructors,

trainers and choreographers who provide training according to their distinctive skills. Sarakasi has set up an Artist Management Agency to facilitate the contracts (both locally and internationally) of our performers. (see more below under Management Team). Currently most of our international exchanges are done in conjunction with one of our biggest partners FK Norway and our regional exchanges with our partner Bayimba (UG). Our biggest international clients are Butlins Bourne Leisure (UK) and Circo E Dintorni (Italy) (see below at departments under 9.) where our performers return year after year to wow the holidaymakers.

During 2015 and in partnership with FK Norway, we sent a total of 12 artists and received 4 in various exchanges. We sent 4 artists to Norway and 2 to Mozambique as part of the FK Exchange. In return we received 3 artists from Norway and 1 from Mozambique. Between January and May Sarakasi hosted Catarina (dancer from Norway), Arjustel (dancer from Mozambique) and Maria (Events management student from Mozambique). During the same period we sent Collins (dancer) and Hildah (acrobat) to Norway. In June we received Siri and Maria (dancers from Norway) and sent Sharon and Festus (dancers) to Norway and Elijah and Peter (acrobats) to Mozambique.

We also sent 6 dancers to Kampala, Uganda to participate in workshops, competitions and performances during the annual Batalo East Festival in September. The event brought various regional artists and audiences together for workshops, competitions and performances.

Other exchanges included:

- The Kenya Open Circle 2015 Project: In August 2015 Sarakasi Hosted 7 Acrobatic trainers from the Victor Kee Foundation. The

team gave workshops on new form of techniques and acts like wheel balancing, juggling and aerial acts. The also gave workshops on safety and maintenance and repair of training equipment. In total 54 participants (including children from our Kids and Outreach Programs) benefited from the workshops. Lastly they left behind some training equipment for the acrobats upon their return.

- The Fekat Circus exchange: Sarakasi sent its Acrobatic Coordinator Mr. John Washika and 5 acrobats (Black Angels Acrobats) to Ethiopia for a string of performances and workshops. During the tour, which happened between 26th November and 3rd December, the team managed to perform in various venues and hold workshops on techniques, discipline, training and marketing methods. This exchange was funded by Fekat Circus.
- And Boyoung Lee: Korean/ German dance instructor Boyoung Lee joined us in August to learn more of Traditional and Contemporary African Dance Styles and also teach a bit of Ballet and Western Dance Styles.

For those following this model the importance of establishing networks and partners cannot be overemphasised. After our initial funding from the Ford Foundation we began applying for funds by sending applications to likely donors and following up with visits to their offices. As our founders are of Dutch origin it made sense to apply to Dutch organisations, including the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Nairobi and the Doen Foundation who became our long term partner. By virtue of the success of our model, over the years our partners have expanded to include organisations from all over the world who share the Sarakasi vision.



A woman with short hair, wearing a patterned jacket over a dark top, stands at a podium. She holds a microphone in her right hand and points her left index finger upwards. Behind her, another woman is seated at a table, looking down at papers. The table has a white cloth and several items, including a water bottle and glasses. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal color.

8

Put in Place Legal/ Organisational Structures

Sarakasi began operating in 2001 as a simple trust with the registration of a Trust Deed. In 2009 Sarakasi became a registered Trust which meant that Sarakasi became a corporate entity recognised in law. As our need increased to access funds from divergent sources, Sarakasi also founded the NGO Sarakasi Foundation in December 2010.

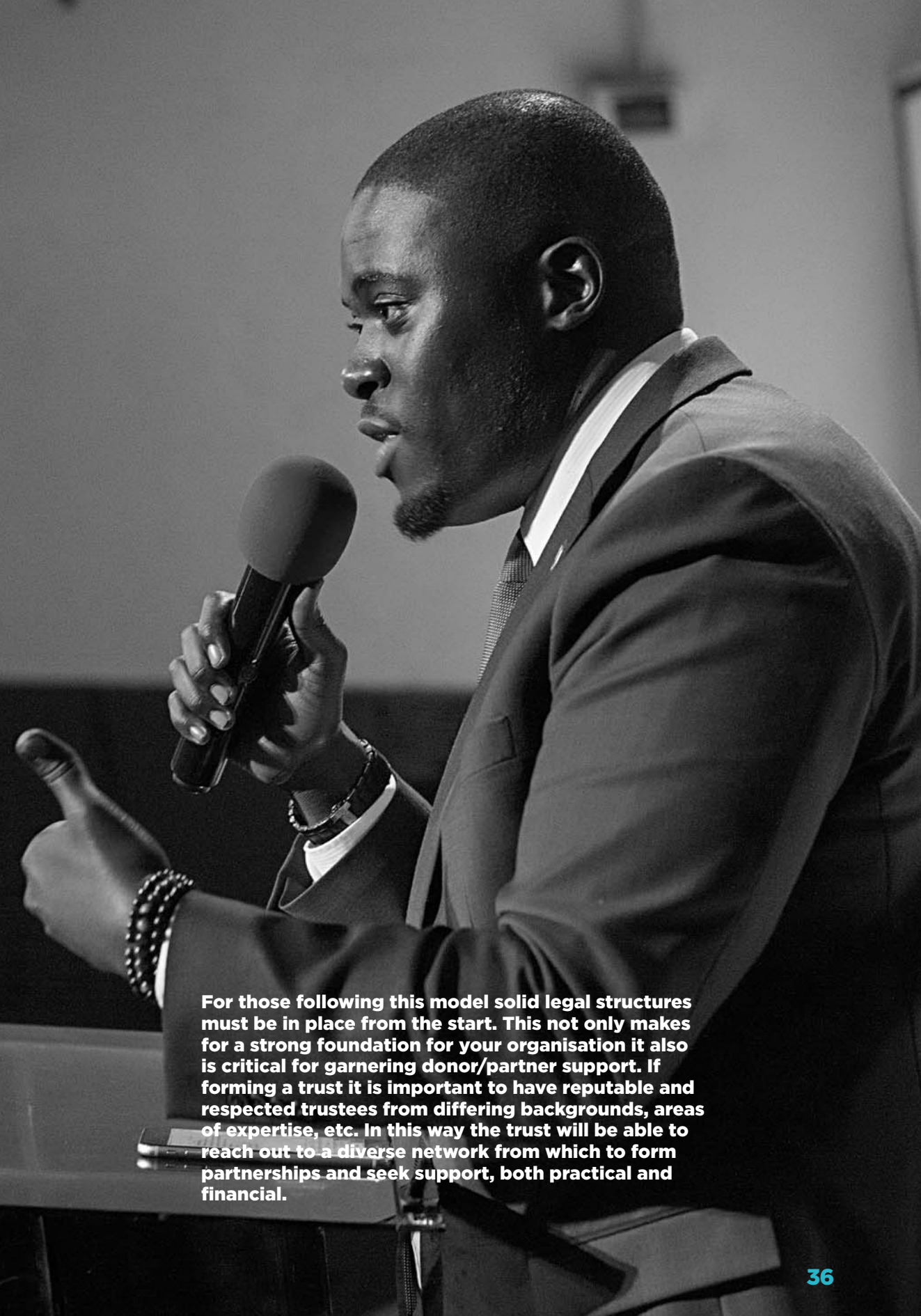
In terms of institutional development, solid organizational structures and plans have been put in place to assist the organization to consolidate itself and be ready for further expansion. To that extent a strategic plan, a business plan, a marketing plan, an artist management plan, HR and administrative manuals and a monitoring and evaluation strategy have been developed. On top of that several legal documents and templates such as artist contracts, staff contracts and rental leases have been drafted and put in place. Business models (companies) have been established and developed for the various (commercial) activities of the Trust or for those it is about to be engaged in. Furthermore, Sarakasi's accounts are audited annually by an independent auditor.

The Sarakasi Trust governance and management structure is made up of a Board of seven Trustees, a Management Team made up of a Managing Director,

Finance and Operational Manager and a Creative Program Manager. All in all Sarakasi Trust employs 24 staff on a full-time basis, including management, project managers, project assistants and support staff.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees governs the Trust by providing strategic direction, formulating and approving policies and decisions, providing overall leadership, supporting the management team and being publicly accountable for the activities of the organization. Furthermore the Board strengthens the organization by being actively involved in fundraising and networking in order for the Trust to become financially sustainable. We have recently put in place a Board Governance Document, which aims to increase the effectiveness of our structures. The Board of Trustees meets a minimum of four times a year.



For those following this model solid legal structures must be in place from the start. This not only makes for a strong foundation for your organisation it also is critical for garnering donor/partner support. If forming a trust it is important to have reputable and respected trustees from differing backgrounds, areas of expertise, etc. In this way the trust will be able to reach out to a diverse network from which to form partnerships and seek support, both practical and financial.



A man with short dark hair, wearing a dark suit jacket, a light-colored shirt, and a patterned tie. He is wearing dark aviator sunglasses and is smiling slightly. The image is overlaid with a solid teal color. In the background, there is a framed picture of a building.

9

**Have a Professional
Management Team**

Sarakasi Management Team

The staff, under the supervision of the Management Team and ultimately of the Managing Director, undertakes the day-to-day operations in the office, the indoor training as well as in the field (outreach training centres, outreach projects, etc), the artist and event management and project management (of the several projects).

The organization promotes a team based management structure, with a view to jointly reach targets, to enhance accomplishments as well as shared objectives and accountability to the organization and its key stake holders.

Supporting structures that have been put in place include HR and Finance Manuals, an Organizational Chart, Artist Management Plan, Business Plan, Strategic Plan, Sales and Marketing Plan, Standard Operating Procedures (SPOPs) for the Creative Program and each Special Project.

Departments

In order to implement its programs in an effective way and efficient manner, Sarakasi formed the following Creative and Events Department.

The creative side of the department is made up of the Creative Program Manager (who also doubles up as a choreographer), the Administrator, and several dance and acrobatic trainers. The Department also boasts of a wealth of talent in 36 dancers and 25 acrobats, 6 of whom also double up as support staff. The Creative team is charged with scouting, developing and managing talent. Every month the department staff is auditioning artists, training and subsequently identifying job opportunities for them both locally and beyond. The team answers directly to the Finance and Operations Manager and Managing Director in extension. The department continued its upward trend in all areas of activity of Training, Performance, Dome Productions and Cultural Exchanges.

Around 75 hopefuls walked through our doors in 2015 looking for a chance to join one of the best dance and acrobatic training institutions in the region. Sixteen of these dancers and eight of the acrobats have now joined our already existing team of able performers, flying the Sarakasi flag high on local and international stages alike and earning a decent living while at it.

The events side of the team is made up of Sarakasi's Creative Program Manager, the Communications and Marketing Officer (who is also in-charge of Sarakasi Public Relations and special events and workshops), the creative administrator in charge of events logistics, the head caretaker / technician / person in charge of all the sound and lighting systems and the cleaning crew who have the responsibility of ensuring the Dome is always spick and span. This events team ensures that all the events in the Dome are run professionally, efficiently and effectively.

The events team has had a great year 2015 with lots of successful weekly, monthly and bi-monthly events in which the team ensured that all the events in the Dome were run professionally, efficiently and effectively.

In 2015 the Department recorded some 112 contracts locally with total revenue of over 9 million Shillings (approx. USD 90,000). Most of these were activations, corporate functions, launches, thematic productions and private productions. This success is owed to stronger networks, aggressive marketing, outstanding

client relations and quality products. With much needed support from partners like HIVOS and Clients like Safaricom Ltd. (Kenya's largest telecommunications provider) we improved on the shows with better costuming and music production and the Sarakasi departments were able to show a variety of Kenyan audiences the Sarakasi products.

Internationally the above figures were further enhanced with the continuation of close collaboration with major international clients one of which is Italy based Circo e Dintorni. The improvement in quality caught their attention and this led to 3 bookings from them in 2015 alone. The trend seems set to continue in 2016 with the same client already booking 2 shows for March and Summer of 2016 respectively. In 2015 we managed to get revenue of KES 5,400,000 (approximately USD 54,000) through our international exchanges and performance contracts.

Artist Management Agency

The Sarakasi Artist Management Agency serves the dual purpose of ensuring that our artistes are well protected contractually and also brings in income for the Trust from the management fees. It is run through the creative department and the financial department. Most international contracts require the involvement of the Managing Director. For each performance engagement the Agency signs a contract with the client and the freelance artist and takes a management fee.



For those following this model professional management team is essential to the success of your organisation. Obviously at the outset you may not have the funds to employ a full team of professionals but when funds are available it is important not to stint in this area. It is better to have a few highly skilled, motivated staff than a plethora of underpaid unskilled workers. Our intern programme, run mostly in conjunction with FK Norway, helps attract professionals from overseas who are willing to give their time to help run special programmes and projects. Most importantly this is where the bottom-up approach comes into play as we train some of our artistes to take on roles of increased responsibility and therefore become part of the management team.





10

**Be Accountable –
Have Strict Financial
Controls**

Funding/ Finance model/ Income streams

The Sarakasi Trust has grown immensely over the years as a result of a combination of donor funding, the commercialization of Dome and Sarakasi activities, partnerships, creativity and innovation, supported by the effective management of resources and financial accountability.

The Finance and Operations Manager, with the help of the accountant, ensures the accountability in the use of financial resources. This is made possible through participating in budget preparation and control. They also prepare financial and management reports to Managing Director, the Board of Trustees and Donors.

The finance function at Sarakasi is guided by the Finance Manual which details the accounting policies and procedures needed to ensure compliance with international financial reporting standards and with donor requirements. Such exacting standards of financial accountability and reporting ensure the goodwill of donors and partners leading to continued and

additional funding; the elimination of waste; security against fraud; and sound information on which to base investment and disbursement.

After 15 years the Sarakasi Trust has a well-trying financial system with inbuilt checks and balances and a Code of Conduct that has ensured accountability and transparency to all stakeholders particularly donors, with the result that the organization is trusted within the donor community. In 2012, Sarakasi embarked on an ambitious project to establish an endowment fund with clear policies on aspects such as investment, withdrawal, and usage, as a long term strategy to assure financial sustainability for the Trust.

The organization has several income streams which comprise of:

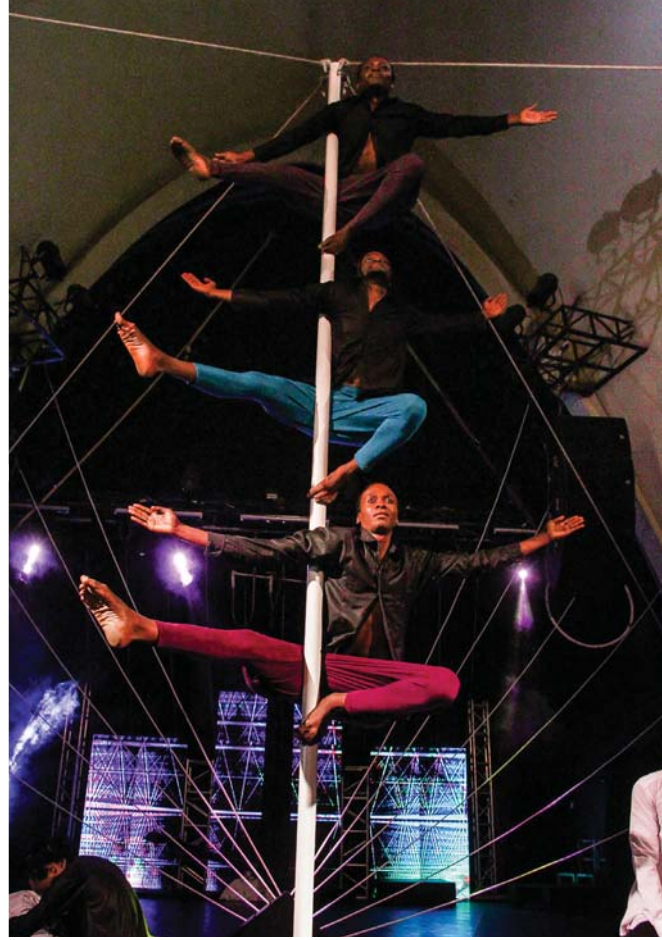
- Grants from donors;
- Dome commercialization;
- Cultural entrepreneurship/artists agency;
- Partner contributions;
- Other donations.

Fundraising is an ever on-going process. Much of the Managing Director's time is spent researching and lobbying potential donors/partners, reporting to and looking after the needs of our existing donors/partners, putting out calls for proposals and networking. The Trustees also play their role in this area,

using their wide and varying networks to constantly keep the Trust in the forefront of potential donors/partners minds.

Sarakasi acknowledges with deep gratitude our donors who, believing in the special mission of the Trust, continue to make available the financial resources to enable Sarakasi to sustain operations and to grow. Core funding is the essential foundation of the organization, providing the means to support personnel costs, operating expenses for the Dome, including maintenance, and administrative costs. A breakdown of our income/expenditure over the years can be found in our Annual Reports.

For those following this model fundraising will occupy a vast majority of your time. Donors/partners will not come knocking on your door – it is up to you to research and reach out – all the time. It is also vitally important to create other income streams apart from donors as soon as is practicable. Even though donations will most likely remain the largest source of income for many, many years – it is crucial for the organisation to generate its own revenue through commercial performances, an artist management agency and renting out your space if possible. Donors come and go and the external environment is constantly shifting thus if your organisation is able to be self-sustaining, to even a small degree, you will be able to weather these changes and ideally be able to fund your basic operations.



11

**Be Flexible/
Adaptable/Face
Challenges Head On**

Not only do we wish to share the success of our model in this document but also the pitfalls and challenges along the way in the hope that those who come after us might be spared to a degree from making the same mistakes. What we have learned is that in order to survive you must be flexible and adapt to the external environment and meet challenges head on.

For us 2008 was a year when forces outside our control combined to nearly bring us to our knees. First, in Kenya, a political crisis revealed virtually irreconcilable differences along tribal lines which resulted in massive violence and insecurity and impacted heavily on all our lives. Sarakasi's work is centred mainly around Nairobi's most economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods and it was in these same neighbourhoods that the violence and loss of livelihoods played out the hardest. A core element of our training programme is field based and when sectorial violence disrupted life in these areas to the extent they became 'no-go zones' our facilities became inaccessible. Many of our acrobats and dancers were forced to flee from their homes and never return. The crisis had the knock-on effect of bringing Kenya's tourism industry to a dead halt. Overnight, during

what should have been the busiest time of the year, hotels went to zero occupancy and stayed that way for the first half of the year. This impacted heavily on Sarakasi's performers who rely on tourism for a good part of their income.

In response to this crisis the Amani (peace in Ki-Swahili) Circus and outreach programme was initiated. The programme advocates peace and reconciliation. The Amani Circus is an educative and engaging circus outreach program in which the process of creating a show together allows the performers, all personally affected by the turmoil, to transform their trauma into art and have a platform to share this art with others. Thus we responded to the violence with our artistes taking the role as ambassadors for peace and came out even stronger. The focus of

our workshops shifted towards peace and reconciliation focusing on skills needed by our artistes to cope with the changes in their lives and mechanisms for conflict resolution and non-violent communication.

The troubles of 2008 did not end there. The credit crisis reared its ugly head in September. After overcoming the challenges of early 2008 thrown up by the post election violence, Sarakasi now faced the challenges of the worldwide financial crisis. The consequences were immediately apparent with further decreased tourism, lower investments and less donor money, upon which we so heavily relied to remain in existence.

It was therefore timely that Sarakasi had already started seriously planning for its future in early 2008, in the form of acquiring the Dome, which looked at strategies to, among other things, achieve adequate and predictable financial resources. This said we were not immune from the toll the crisis took on everyone everywhere. It was therefore necessary to downsize our biggest event of the year – the Sawa Sawa Festival and restructure our staffing needs to reflect the economic downturn. The recession was a stark reminder to us of the importance of this planning and of generating our own income. We also were made aware of the value of donor diversification and the pitfalls of relying too heavily on one or two donors.

In October 2015, Imperial Bank, which was one of our main banks, was put under receivership by the Central bank of Kenya, which aggravated the financial crisis in Sarakasi. This demonstrated how external shocks can impact heavily on organizations even when you have done all that is necessary to put your house in order. We had some project money at Imperial bank and the collapse of the Bank led to the said projects being put on hold upon consultations with the donors.

The key financial lesson that we learnt with the collapse of Imperial bank is that as an organisation you should not only diversify your donors but of key importance is the need to ensure that funds realised from either donor support or commercial income is safeguarded by banking with at least more than one bank. It is also important to assess the financial capital base of the bank in order to avoid the pitfalls and risk associated with small and unstable banks, which may be luring clients with better interest rates on deposits.

Also when faced with a financial challenge we have learnt that restructuring is an option, which helps in scaling down activities and thereby saving on associated costs.



Other lessons we have learned and responded to include:

Political

Most of the organization's stakeholders have been exposed to post election violence of 2007 and 2008. Sarakasi has learned to make cultural or ethnic background a no-issue within its organization. This was done by first recognizing the issue and making it very clear that within Sarakasi all are equal.

Gender Equality

Generally speaking Kenya still has traditional attitudes to the roles of males and females in society and is on the whole a modest and conservative society. So for a girl or young woman to want to branch out into the performing arts is not a concept readily accepted or encouraged by their families or even themselves. Sarakasi recognizes this fact and that gendered roles in society are often connected with employment opportunities or lack of them. In order to encourage more female performers to try out for our programmes and to be accepted as equals in every respect we developed a Gender Mainstreaming

Policy which stresses the importance of mainstreaming gender into all of our activities.

Corruption

Corruption is something that is prevalent in all layers of Kenyan society, including in the entertainment business the organization is part of. Sarakasi has learned to deal with this issue by making it clear that no kickbacks are handed out and no services are paid for extra. The organization plays by Kenya's legal structures as set out by law and stands strong in fighting corruption by believing that when you stick by your rights and follow the procedures; services and goods will come your way in a transparent way. With this in mind, with the assistance of Transparency International Sarakasi developed an anti-corruption policy that is incorporated into our Code of Conduct. We believe this is one of the reasons Sarakasi remains so strongly rooted.

Rapid Growth

In the beginning most staff was handpicked which in a few cases proved to be a challenge as some staff could not

keep up with the speed the organization was growing: suddenly much more was expected from them in terms of administration, office procedures, communication, budgeting and so on. Sarakasi has countered this by sending staff for training and by re-structuring departments, adding managers in key positions and by advertising positions after job descriptions and terms of reference were written.

Ill-fitting partnerships

Over the years many opportunities and partnerships have been offered to the organization. We have learned it is important and crucial to stick to our core values of integrity, respect, and professionalism as some opportunities and partnerships are not what they seem and Sarakasi should never (and never has nor will) compromise on these core values. This means that we have learned to say 'no', to stand our ground so that our objectives, values and brand are not diluted.

Socio-Economic

As most of not all of Sarakasi's stakeholders hail from low-income (poor) backgrounds, food security, access to healthcare and security related issues are often issues the Trust deals with on

a daily basis. By listening to the needs of its stakeholders and filling the needs related to this issue Sarakasi empowers by offering regular like skill workshops on related issues, pays medical bills where and if needed and lobbies for jobs and contracts to enhance income.

Security

Security or rather the lack thereof in the low income neighborhoods is something everyone at Sarakasi is faced with on an almost daily basis. One lesson learned is to embrace the youth gangs and individuals by including them into Sarakasi's activities by giving them a platform to perform, to offer them the opportunity to be part of workshops or hiring their services as security.

Environmental

As a participating resident of Ngara, Sarakasi is doing its best to beef up the neighborhood by keeping its surroundings clean and staying in touch with the local government so they do the same; the latter being an ongoing exercise. To this end we have developed an environmental policy that ensures that our presence in the neighborhood impacts positively not only economically but also where the environment is concerned.



‘Culture for Development and Peace’

As the world's focus shifts to the global threat to peace and security brought about by poverty, climate change, dwindling resources etc. we believe the current need is for Sarakasi to align herself with these emerging global issues in order to remain relevant and maintain an appeal for donor funding.

This shift is in line with our strategy of being flexible and adaptable in an ever-changing environment. This does not mean moving away from our core philosophy of 'Empowering Youth' but more that arts and culture will not be an end in themselves but instead a means to an end of promoting peace and security. This added goal would

achieve the dual purpose of not only enhancing our artistes lives by bringing them out of poverty but of also enhancing the lives of the wider community through our artistes as not only entertainers but ambassadors for peace – which ultimately brings security.

For those following this model you will have your own challenges that are unique to your environment – be they political, cultural or socio-economic. Some are predictable, others are not. The important thing is to have in place solid structures, plan ahead and maintain your core values - so in times of crisis things do not fall apart. It is also critical to move with the times and not be afraid of shifting your focus to remain relevant to wider global issues.





12

**Plan
Ahead**

In 2008 Sarakasi was responsible for around 158 staff members, both directly employed and, employed against special projects, coupled with 40 centres in Nairobi, an international exchange and performance contracts programme, a festival and several special projects. It was now time to do some serious planning.

After a thorough consultative process, which involved meetings and discussions with members of staff, the Board of Trustees and some key stakeholders, a first draft strategic plan was produced.

To date we have developed three Strategic Plans (2009-2013, 2012-2014 and 2015-2019). These plans keep us focused on the tasks ahead and are aimed at ensuring, like our artistes, that we do not exist hand to mouth. We are continually shining a light at ourselves from the outside to ensure that we continue to grow and adapt and meet new challenges head-on.

The 2015-2019 Strategic Plan focuses on internal capacity building and strategies towards further financial self sustainability of the Trust. Therefore from 2015 we will focus more on income generating activities, i.e. artist management, and marketing of our creative products and productions as well as the Dome as a multi functional

creative space. Of course we will continue to implement our other projects and activities too. As fundraising is an ever on-going exercise we will continue on the path towards financial independence and sustainability through donor diversification and by maximising on our commercial activities and fundraising strategies.

As of Jan 2015 most of our funding comes from donors, some investors and private sources - 64% is donor funded and 36% is business income from the Dome and the creative products. Our strategic direction is to grow the business income levels (to 60%) and with that become financially stable, increase private investments and diversify our donor resource base with 40% investment / donor funded programs. There have however been major developments towards generating own income to supplement donor funding.

This is in line with the organizations objective of achieving adequate, predictable and sustainable financial resources through:

The expansion of income generating activities

The Sarakasi Dome is developing an appeal to people as the ideal place for entertainment. The Dome is now professionally equipped as a training and performance centre. We have improved our flooring, sound and stage lighting. As a result, we have witnessed increased Dome bookings by diverse clients, i.e. music bands, theatre groups and private institutions. The Dome is becoming a very popular venue and at the close of 2014, we had bookings for theatre performances that would attract Secondary school students from Nairobi and its neighbouring counties for a period of over two months. We do recognize that these students are the same people who will visit the Dome even after graduation from high School thus adding to increased sustainability for Sarakasi. We plan to establish a rooftop bar but a lot of capital expenditure is required, including mounting a lift from the ground floor and this will require structural adjustment to the building. In the meantime we have set up the Foyer bar which is normally open whenever we stage our events/ productions.

Reaching out to private donors

The Managing Director, together with the Trustees, will redouble their efforts to reach out to potential and existing private donors, reminding them of the value of what we do and the difference their contributions will make to those less fortunate.

Establishment of an endowment fund

In conjunction with funding from the DOEN Foundation, the Trust is in the process of establishing an endowment fund, through which Sarakasi hopes to become financially self-sufficient before the year 2025. This fund, with clear policies on investment, withdrawal, usage, etc. can be created with deposits derived from a percentage of revenues and through donations from donors and private funders. As the endowment fund grows with time, it will cover the costs of core staff and other core costs related to the proper functioning of the organization to enable the Trust to continue fulfilling its purpose and mandate. It is important to observe that Sarakasi is already on the journey towards self-sustainability and that once the endowment fund is established it will be possible to bridge the gap that is needed to cover the core operational costs.

Strategic Goals

Our most recent Strategic Plan focuses on the period 2015-2019. The organizational areas in which the goals are formulated are: Programs, Human Resource Development, Finance and Resource Management and Governance.

- **Strategic Goal 1: Programs** – All Sarakasi processes, events and activities will be implemented in a participatory and professional way with the aim to empower, train and educate youth and enhance their financial situation and progressively sustain the organization.
- **Strategic Goal 2: Human Resource Development** – Design an optimal structure and capacity building programs for development of staff

(individual and team) to ensure progressive improvement of quality and performance standards in the organization.

- **Strategic Goal 3: Financial Sustainability and Resource Management** – Enhance the financial viability of the organization and develop more efficient finance, operational and management systems for programs and assets in support of the organization's aim to achieve sustainability.
- **Strategic Goal 4: Governance** – Establish enhanced governing systems for effective leadership and management for smooth operations and sustainable growth of the organization.

For those following this model planning ahead is perhaps the greatest lesson we have learned over the last 15 years. It is not always easy as most of the time (especially in the early years) you are just trying to survive day-to-day and lurching from one crisis (usually financial) to the next. If this model can make it easier for anyone to plan ahead then it will have been a success. As we have outlined here the survival of a charitable trust is often precarious due to the unpredictable nature of donor funding. By planning ahead – having goals, strong partner networks and clear strategies – it is possible, to a large extent, to control your own destiny and successfully face the challenges that you will invariably encounter along your journey.

A group of young children, likely of African descent, are shown in a close-up shot. They are wearing matching school uniforms consisting of a checkered jacket over a white shirt with a dark collar. They are also wearing white paper hats with a circular logo that includes the text 'WESLEYAN' and '0409'. The child in the foreground is laughing heartily with their mouth wide open. The other children behind them are also smiling and looking towards the camera. The entire image has a blue color overlay.

13

**Give
Back**

One measure of success of the Sarakasi Model is that not only do we sustain our core activities but over the years we have been able to start other programmes, which give back to the wider community – so in a way we have also become a donor.

Acrobatics has been brought to the youth prisons and the authorities want more. Sick and dying children have something to smile about each time our artists of the Hospital Project visit the hospitals. Through the Talanta programme deaf people have been incorporated into the Sarakasi Dome training prompting the hearing artists into learning sign language. Youth gangs are involved in the Amani Lazima Peace movement and provide security during the events and The Hip Hop Hook Up provides a platform connecting young urban performing artists with new audiences. Some of our special programmes/activities have gone on to become independent and self funding after initially being incubated by Sarakasi. Examples of these are Africa Yoga Project (AYP) and Ghetto Radio.

Africa Yoga Project

This initiative was launched by Sarakasi in 2009 using the transformational art of yoga to empower communities and change lives. Yoga classes are offered free of charge to diverse communities fostering peace and improving

physical, emotional and mental well-being amongst some of the poorest communities in Kenya.

Ghetto Radio

Ghetto Radio was launched in 2007, housed within the Dome annex, to give a voice to the disadvantaged youth of Nairobi. Along with providing entertainment, the station brings a number of socio-economic issues to the fore as well as acting as a platform for recording artists who find themselves excluded from the playlists of mainstream radio stations.

Our Local Community

The effect of our move to the Dome on the surrounding area of Ngara cannot be overestimated. Ngara, like the old Shan Cinema, had been left to decay over the previous decades. With the renovation of the Dome and the clean-up of the surrounding area, new life has been breathed into the local community. New businesses have opened up, new apartments have been built and real estate prices have risen. Much of this can be attributed to the positive effect our

performers have on the local residents who see through them hope for the future. The fact that we have invested heavily in the area for the long term provides the locals with the confidence to do the same. We also employ local people where possible as our support staff. Our long term goal is to make Ngara Nairobi's Cultural District and to that end we have begun a series of talks with the Kenyan Government to garner their support for this exciting vision.

Hospital Project

The Sarakasi Trust Hospital Project was initiated in 2006 as a special project under Sarakasi's wings. A tailor made edutainment program, bringing art en laughter to vulnerable children under institutional care. Our team comprising of two administrative staff and nine artists visit various locations within Nairobi, Kiambu as well as the Rift Valley. We reach out to children and youths who are hospitalized or undergoing rehabilitation as well as children with special needs.

We love what we do, bring laughter to children who are admitted in hospital for a long period of time and are often far away from their parents, relatives and friends. This result can be achieved by simply blowing a bubble for a child that is crying, creating awareness on hygiene through puppetry, sitting at the bedside and reading a story to a very sick child, dancing with the mums of hospitalized children at ward or letting a doctor play guitar. In addition, we also create platforms for youth in

correctional facilities and remand homes to openly discuss issues affecting them e.g. drugs and crime. Tap into their hidden talents like acrobatics, music or even craft making e.g. beading and card making. It is all about a positive change! Since its inception in 2006 to date, the edutainment program is running in 11 locations and reaching around 1200 youth per week.

In 2015 the project reached out to a total of 15,351 vulnerable children and youths who were hospitalized, in schools, undergoing rehabilitation, or living with disability. For the latter, their parent/caregivers learnt fun ways in which to interact with their children whilst promoting their motor –neural skills. The year also saw the inception of the first Sexual and Gender Based Violence community awareness campaign that ran in 5 schools in the most affected areas, reaching approximately 10,000 pupils. Teachers, institutional staff, and pupils were able to identify their role in preventing child sexual abuse.

Organizational capacity was also improved as the project has its first ever External Evaluation. Consequently, a Project Monitoring Evaluation Plan was developed and the project strategically changed its name to "Smiles for Change". This contributes towards the continuity and further sustainability of this worth while initiative.





Prison Program

Sarakasi (through its Hospital Project) expanded to Kamiti Maximum Prison a few years ago, where we taught art to a group of 14 clients twice a month, which was done in partnership with Crime Si Poa (Crime is not cool).

From 2015 Sarakasi has offered other talent classes like acrobatics and music (the latter in cooperation with Sauti Academy). Crime Si Poa Campaign (a program under an NGO called Youth Safety Awareness Initiative), founded by a Kamiti inmate, is a lobby and advocacy program that seeks to engage youth in Kenya against crime and delinquent behaviour through advocacy and cultural events. Other activities Sarakasi has organized in 2015 in cooperation with Crime Si Poa were a clean up of Ngara in March, a Hip Hop Hook Up Street edition in Muranga town in August and a Hip Hop Hook Up Talent exchange event in Kamiti Maximum prison in October.

youth who are and continue to be susceptible to negative influences in their communities, creating opportunity which pull them towards livelihoods that are influenced by crime and drugs or may even rob them of their lives. The program set out to identify at least two disenfranchised youth from nine distinct areas within Huruma, an informal settlement in the heart of Nairobi, for life transforming training and to date twenty two youth benefited from the program and have become part of the Sarakasi Dancers and have continued to train professionally under the supervision of the creative department heads.

In 2015 the program set out to identify at least two (2) disenfranchised youth from eight (8) distinct areas each in Huruma, an informal settlement in the heart of Nairobi.

The areas were Huruma Roundabout, Huruma Center, Huruma Flats, Redeemed, Madoya, Mbuthia, Ngei 1, and Kambi Moto. In the period that the program run in these eight different areas, the performing arts platform was utilized by over 130 potential upcoming artists and over 200 potential dancers either performing solo dances or in groups. Of those that performed on the stage, over 15 (nearly 10% of those that auditioned) were absorbed into a dance program managed by Sarakasi Trust providing a vehicle for further advancement in the performing arts industry



Amani Lazima (Peace is a Must) Project

After the conclusion of the original Amani Lazima program in 2011 the Amani Lazima Program Phase 2 was launched by Sarakasi Trust in February 2014, in partnership with the Civil Society Urban Development Program and with the support of the Swedish Embassy in Nairobi. The objective of the program is to act as a grass root intervention mechanism for disenfranchised

Talanta Project

The Talanta Project (Talanta is Kiswahili for 'talent') began in January 2010 and ran for one year. Founded by the Disability Millennium Foundation and Sarakasi Trust, this project involved training, capacity building and performance opportunities for blind and visually impaired musicians and deaf acrobats and dancers recruited from informal settlements and slums and in the process alleviating poverty. The project's mission was to protect and promote differently abled people's rights and advocate for their proven abilities, gifts, talents and bequest in society. Sarakasi continued to involve deaf and hearing-impaired artists in its training program.

In 2015 the project offered training to 15 artists every Thursday in dance, acrobatics and Yoga. They also got to perform in 2 events; Disability Awareness at The Boma Hotel in July and Human Rights Day in December at Uhuru Park.

Hip Hop Hook Up

Hip Hop Hook Up has been running every second Saturday of the month

for four years and which targets an audience of young urban youth aged roughly between 18 and 35. The aim of 'Hip Hop Hook Up' is to reach at least 500 young people at every monthly event and is the leading platform connecting young urban performing artists with new audiences, developing new expressions of contemporary urban art and culture.

Hip Hop hook is fast growing in numbers initially we managed to have around 500 attendees as time has gone by the numbers have tremendously grown to over 1000 and so have the activities around the event.

Many young Kenyans have benefitted from this platform and have become more confident on performing stages others have recorded their own albums and singles while more have done many collaborations. This particular event has attracted lots of media attention both locally and nationally and more international artists want to be part of it through collaborating their events



For those following this model it is possible to 'give back' even from your early days. For example the 'Hospital project' really just requires the artistes to give of their time when they can to visit sick children in hospital and engage with them for an hour or so. Not only does this bring joy to the children's lives but it also makes the artistes feel good about themselves and their important role in society. Similarly giving back to your neighbourhood is something that can be done from the outset.





14

**Judge your Success
through the Impact
on the lives of your
Artistes**

In addition to the financial sustainability of the Trust we judge our success by the tangible economic benefits and personal growth of our artistes. Over the years there has been tremendous growth in the area of local shows especially for our dancers which not only serves the purpose of promoting arts but also creation of employment for a lot of young people who have dedicated themselves full time to doing dance and acrobatics.

This has become a vibrant economic industry. Acrobats who once lived in the slums (without decent housing as mere tenants) are now landlords and have become respected members of their communities. As one lady so aptly put it at a Level One training session:

Not that we ever question why we're doing what we're doing but if we ever had cause to we would only have to remind ourselves of the real and positive impact the Trust has had on many, many lives. Here are just a few stories of some of our key staff, in their own words:



'I told my son, if you want to get ahead, you'd better become an acrobat'.

Renee

'I am very passionate about dance. After the breakup of a rap group I used to dance for, my aunt suggested I try out at Sarakasi. I auditioned and got through. I was living with my grandmother, after a year I earned enough money to move out. I am now able to support my daughter who is at boarding school and I have performed abroad in countries such as Holland, India and China. I believe that you should love what you do... it's not about the money! My advice to girls out there is to follow your heart and never put yourself down and always believe in yourself..... the only failure in life is the failure to try.'

Maurice

'I left school after primary because we didn't have enough money. I joined a group of gangsters and became one of Nairobi's most wanted criminals. My saving grace came in the form of football for which I showed a lot of talent. When I was playing football in Norway for Mathare under 16s we were entertained by a group of musicians which triggered my love for drums. I started playing the drums and joined a group called 'Urban Era' who toured China on behalf of the Kenyan government. I joined Sarakasi in 2003 and they have kept me alive by keeping me so busy that I left gang life and started to make positive changes through my work. The money I earned from a tour to the States enabled me to develop myself and my family. I have moved out of the slums, I have built a house for my parents and made them self-sufficient, I put my younger brother through journalism school and he now works for Super Sport, I have formed a youth group in Eastland to promote change and positive living. I believe that you have to work hard to survive and that nothing comes easy and that only people can influence other people to change.' Not that we ever question why we're doing what we're doing but if we ever had cause to we would only have to remind ourselves of the real and positive impact the Trust has had on many, many lives."

James

'When I finished high school I formed a group which focused on uplifting youth via dance, music, acrobatics and art. We did not have a place of our own to rehearse. In 2002 we found the newly opened Sarakasi Trust entertainment centre at the Go Down where acrobats and dancers went to practice and share skills. Most groups went to train there one or two days a week but I opted to go every day. I am now the acrobatics co-ordinator and trainer for Sarakasi at the Dome. I have learnt sign language, become a trainer for outreach programs, I have performed both locally and abroad and have given workshops in Afghanistan, Holland, Ghana, Ethiopia, South Africa, Uganda and Tanzania. I believe that if you give to this world, the world will give to you. My advice to the youth is to follow your hearts desires and never let anyone put you down and remain positive to the world!'

Rahim

"My name is Jeffrey Rahim Otieno. I joined the Organization in early 2005 as a Project Assistant. Prior to this I was a musician with the 'Jomenes Boys na Band' and an aspiring Events Organizer. To be included in the organization of Sarakasi Trust has been a real eye opener and has exposed me to skills I otherwise would never have experienced. From all these changes, the most significant for me is the one related to my family. I go back to the birth of my son. When Jerome was conceived I was going through a really rough patch.... To cut a very long story short, I was not doing very well. I didn't have a roof above my head and yet she was expecting a baby, this was in late 2004.

My life is all about second chances, seconds shots at life. As a musician I was living a good life and I wasted it... and then I got my second shot. So, relating with these people, being in a position where I relate to people who are trying to pick themselves up, people who are trying to make something out of their lives... I wouldn't have it in another way. I am in an environment where I am constantly reminded of where I am from and what needs to be done for other people like me. I am most grateful for the second opportunity Sarakasi Trust has accorded me to pursue my dreams and live a more meaningful life."

Sylvester

"My name is Sylvester Odour Ondiege, I am a dancer, acrobat and drummer, above all I am married with two children. I was brought up in the slums in Korogocho. As a young and talented artist I managed to attend various dance, acrobatic and music sessions to help me get off the streets, improve my talent and to add to my skills, since the age of 10, courtesy of Sarakasi Trust.

My journey as artist started in November 2003 when I joined Sarakasi Trust as trainee under an intense training program. My parents didn't like what I was doing, I suffered rejections from them and my friends, and even my brothers and sisters, but that couldn't stop me pursuing my dream. They didn't like what I was doing because they believed that people dancing or doing art are people who don't have anything, don't have a meaningful life for the community.

In October 2006, Sarakasi Trust organised the outreach program. Its aim was to go out there to teach young people and to preach the gospel of peace among the community within the slums of Nairobi. To me it was as if my dream were turning into reality, because I had a passion for teaching young people and empowering them with my talent.

I recently started my own acrobatic training program in my new community, to train young people free of charge, hoping that one day it will help them. I am happy with the fact that the training is free, because it allows many interested young people to attend, as it is done by me, one of their own, who has achieved a level of success as performing artist. I was brought up in a difficult situation and maybe this is the reason why I love to see children's smiles, because I didn't find someone to put a smile on my face in my childhood".

For those following this model it is important to document the journeys of your artistes along the way. Not only can you look back with pride on their success but it will serve as tangible proof of the economic and social benefits of the programme which is critical for donor support.

Financial Report

As demonstrated in the financial report below, we are happy to have completed the year 2015 at an above break-even position. This is despite several setbacks that the organization suffered in the course of the year.

Sarakasi Trust is grateful and wishes to thank every individual Donor, Partner and Friends of Sarakasi Trust for the continued valuable support which helps the organization to continue having a positive impact in the arts industry as well as economic empowerment of hundreds of young people through the Cultural Entrepreneurship wing of Sarakasi.

Although we had reduced donor funding due to a stop in core funding by the Netherlands Embassy, the organization managed to capitalize

on Dome Commercialization and Cultural entrepreneurship in order to bridge the funding gap. In total these two sources of revenue amounted to 52% of the total income for 2015 (excluding the amount brought forward from the previous year).

We wish to thank the Netherlands Embassy for supporting us for a period of over ten years and for having enabled Sarakasi build a strong brand and structures that provide the basis for the realization of the 52% of the revenue cited above.



The income for the year 2015 amounted to **Kshs. 68,727,108** and it was drawn from the following sources:

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Balance Brought forward 1 January 2015 | 23,653,797 |
| Grants from Donors in 2015 | |
| Netherlands Embassy | 2,624,992 |
| HIVOS East Africa | 4,426,100 |
| Terre des Hommes | 1,208,732 |
| CSUDP | 2,350,040 |
| CKU | 5,396,040 |
| Sub – Total | 16,005,904 |
| Dome commercialization | |
| Rent/Dome Income | 8,595,072 |
| Sub-Total | 8,595,072 |
| Cultural entrepreneurship / Artists Agency | |
| Local Shows | 9,384,965 |
| International Shows | 5,766,235 |
| Sub- Total | 15,151,200 |
| Partners Contribution | |
| FK Norway | 1,465,372 |
| Sub – Total | 1,465,372 |
| Others | |
| Hospital Project Funds | |
| Friends of Hospital Project | 1,488,335 |
| Friends of Sarakasi | 2,367,428 |
| Sub Total | 3,855,763 |
| Total Income in 2015 | 68,727,108 |

Expenditure Section

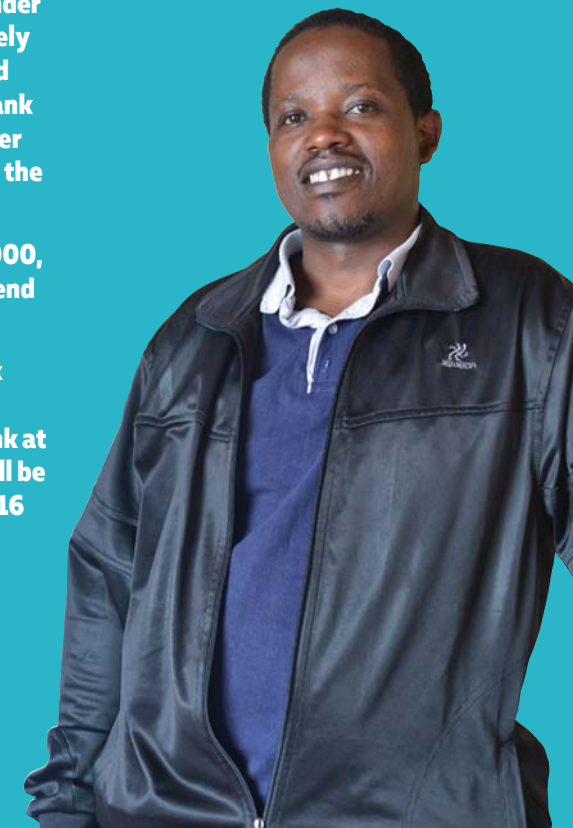
The absorption of the above income into expenses and activities is as shown below.

| Code | Category | Expenditure (KSHS) |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1000 | Personnel Component | 19,753,387 |
| 2000 | Cultural Entrepreneurship | 28,252,771 |
| 3000 | Premises and Equipment | 4,241,012 |
| 4000 | Communication and Promotion | 1,231,966 |
| 5000 | Miscellaneous Component | 2,003,328 |
| Total Expenditure | | 55,482,464 |
| The fund balance outstanding as at 31 December 2015 is works out to Total Income less Total expenditure, which is Kshs. 13,244,644. | | |
| Fund Balance as at 31 December 2015 | | 13,244,644 |

In October 2015, the Central Bank of Kenya put Imperial Bank under receivership. This was a major setback since we had approximately KSHS 8.9 million in the bank at the time. This money represented project funds for activities that had to be put on hold until the bank is either revived or we are allowed to access our deposits at a later date. We have managed to recover 1 million Kenya shillings from the bank, but 7.9 million remains locked up at the bank.

The fund balance at the end of the period includes KSHS 7,900,000, which is held at Imperial bank. The actual accessible cash at the end of the financial year is KSHS 5,344,644.

We greatly regret the closure of Imperial bank and wish to thank the donors, particularly CKU and HIVOS East Africa, for their understanding since much of their fund balances were at the bank at the time of the collapse. We do hope that the bank depositors will be allowed to access the funds by Central Bank of Kenya later in 2016 in order to complete the implementation of the proposed donor projects.





It is impossible to cover in a single document every success and highlight along our journey – along with all our challenges and how we have faced them – but we sincerely hope that it will inspire others to follow in our footsteps in other parts of the globe or move the wider community to support us in what we do – either through the giving of time, expertise or financially. If you would like to know more about us or contribute to our Trust please find us on Facebook, on our website or contact us directly on the following numbers/ emails.

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Nairobi.

Account Name:

Sarakasi Trust
Euro A/C No: 1105310299
Dollar A/C No: 1108440126
Kshs A/C No: 1104970414
Swift Code: KCBLKENX

Procedure for donating through Mpesa PayBill.

Go to Safaricom Menu on your mobile phone
Select MPESA option
Go to LIPA NA MPESA
Select pay bill
Enter business number: 943700
Enter account Number: Sarakasi
Enter amount to donate
Enter your MPESA Pin
Confirm and send

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

