

CHEZA CHEZA

Building
Strong
Minds
Through
Dance

2020
ANNUAL
REPORT

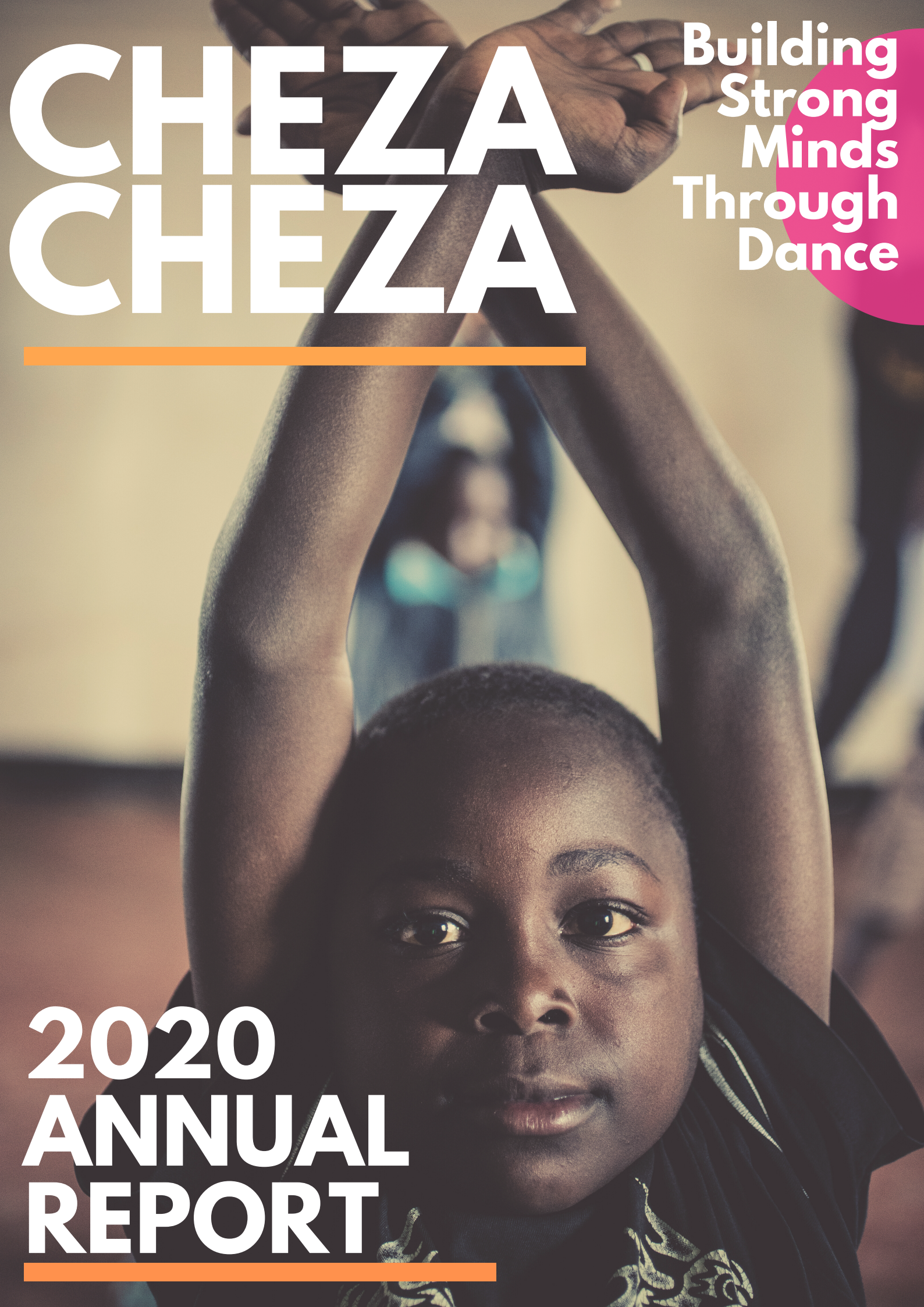




TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the founders	3
The year in numbers	4
Impact stories	5
Our story	6
The ChezaCheza model	7
Why dance	8
2020 milestones	9
Covid-19 response program	9
Health	9
Education	10
Safety	12
ChezaCheza kids say	13
Franco's fellowships	14
Media	14
Looking forward: 2021	15
Financial statement	16
Our donors	17
Join the movement!	17

MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDERS

We will remember this year for the many challenges it presented. However, through this journey, we found that resilience is a defining characteristic of ChezaCheza's identity. Our community, just like the rest of the world, was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. It forced us to change our operational model and re-imagine and redefine our work. We had to ask ourselves hard questions about what children need most in this time of need. How can we support them best? What will the long-term impact of this pandemic be on their life?

As co-founders, it was amazing to experience our community of teachers and children coming together with such a strong commitment. Their energy kept us focused on what drives us. Our mission has always been to provide safe spaces where children can grow and realize their full potential. The pandemic and school closure made us realize how essential safety and safe spaces are when children are out of school, parents are away working, and violence and crime increases. We are so grateful that we could provide our ChezaCheza classes daily to stimulate learning and growth in a safe space for our children.

Our work was made possible by amazing collaborations with partners that allowed us to provide food packages and sanitary towels to our ChezaCheza families. Securing nutritious meals was, and remains, one of the biggest challenges faced by families. We also acknowledge all those who supported ChezaCheza through funds and in-kind donations through our GlobalGiving crowdfunding campaign. We are grateful for such a supportive and robust network.

With the necessary creativity and thinking outside the box mentality, we managed to continue the work of ChezaCheza. We want to thank everyone for their continued emotional, financial and social support. This report celebrates our milestones and shares our journey through this challenging year.

With gratitude,

Cherrelle & Franco
Founders of ChezaCheza

2020 HIGHLIGHTS

130

Children reached on a weekly basis

366

Community dance classes provided

1004

Food packages distributed



THE YEAR IN NUMBERS 2020

Who
we
reached

130

Children in Kibera on a weekly basis from 6 to 18 years old in Kibera

121

Families in Kibera as part of our COVID-19 response program

2210

Warm meals provided when schools were closed during the pandemic

1004

Food packages distributed during the pandemic, which ensured families had 4 months of food

What
we
provided

34

Counselling sessions, which included both individual and group sessions

366

Free community classes to children from 6 to 18 years old, before and during the pandemic

372

Sanitary pads for 55 girls, ensuring that each girl had 6 months worth of sanitary pads

IMPACT STORIES

Hi, my name is Kevin Oluoch, and **I am 15 years old and a student** at ChezaCheza. Dance is my talent, and through dance, I release stress and express myself. **I joined ChezaCheza in December 2018, and since then, I have seen so many changes in my life.** I can proudly say now that I am a good boy compared to who I was in 2017 or the start of 2018. I was walking with bad companies, who were using drugs and they were peer pressuring me also to use drugs. I used to roam around trying to find my talent, I tried rugby, but it wasn't my talent, I tried playing football but injured my hand. **I would say, if I did not try dancing at ChezaCheza, I would have fallen to my bad friend's peer pressure. Now I know how to choose friends wisely.** Now, I think critically, so I know that using drugs will negatively affect my life and health, so I would rather not use and advise any peers of mine not to and concentrate on their talents and education.

"ChezaCheza kept me away from bad friends and drugs"



Kevin

Lina



"I can stand up for myself and am more self-aware"

My name is Lina Muhambe. **I am 16 years old,** and I am in form 2. I am a **student at ChezaCheza** in the Ayany hub. Dance, to me, is passion. I love dancing, and it is part of me and my talent. I started dancing in 2017. **I was facing so many challenges when I was not dancing, I was easily falling under peer pressure, and I had low self-esteem and didn't know how to express myself.** After trying so hard to find a safe space to dance because everybody was neglecting me, I finally found one at ChezaCheza. But I stopped dancing for a while when I went to school. But the good thing is that I used to dance also in school. When I would come back from school, I would go dancing at ChezaCheza. **Through life skills, I can stand up for myself, and I am more self-aware. I know how to make wise decisions and understand that these people or bad friends can not control me.** I would advise anyone out there that they should never give up and not be afraid to fail because our failures make us strong.

My name is Esther Wairimu, **parent of Angela,** who is one of the dancers at ChezaCheza. First and foremost, I want to thank the entire ChezaCheza Dance Foundation group for the whole year they have been with Angela because she has learned a lot. She has become hard-working and knows how to manage her time. **Her self-esteem has grown, which helps her know what she wants in life and knows her rights.** She is more disciplined at home and school; she listens to what she's been told and takes instructions very well. Overall, ChezaCheza has helped her to know how to relate with people well and friendly. She is much more mature.

Esther

"And how they helped me? On my side, I want to give thanks for the food packages that we got during the pandemic."

OUR STORY

Hi, my name is Francis Odhiambo, and I am the co-founder of ChezaCheza. I was raised in the largest slum of Kenya, called Kibera. I am a talented dancer who knows the difficulties of growing up as a child in this area. There are many problems such as crime, violence and drug abuse. I did not know how to handle the pressures of staying away from gangs, drugs and crime. All I wanted was a safe space that gave me the right tools to handle my challenges. After finding the right path, I started to teach the children in my neighbourhood to dance. To keep them off the street and engaged in something positive. It quickly became so popular that the kids knocked on my door every Saturday morning, asking to dance. I also saw a change in their behaviour, more positive attitudes, self-esteem and improved communication skills. I knew dance had the power to transform lives.

In 2018, I met my co-founder Cherrelle Druppers, an education specialist, and together we started working on a context-driven curriculum with an engaging and culturally relevant learning approach, dance! We incorporated breathwork, meditation, and dance movement therapy techniques to let dance be a positive outlet for emotions and a healing mechanism.

OUR MISSION

Increase access to Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) to children in informal settlements through the power of dance

OUR VISION

Empowering children with the capacity to make responsible life choices and realize their full potential

"We want to create safe spaces where you feel like you're growing, where you belong and can make mistakes. We cannot change the environment, but what we can do is build strong minds. Everything starts with the mind"



Hi my name
is Francis!
You can also
call me
Franco

THE CHEZACHEZA MODEL

THE CHALLENGE

We engage with children facing social, emotional and economic challenges, primarily from informal settlements in Kenya. They live in a chronic environment of stress and violence, and without adequate support or life skills, this often leads to trauma or misguided behaviour. It can lead to a vicious cycle of dropping out of school, substance abuse, delinquency, and violent behaviour.

WHAT WE DO

ChezaCheza uses a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) framework to conduct our dance classes. Our holistic and comprehensive dance curriculum incorporates mindfulness, breathing and movement-based exercises based on dance movement therapy techniques to provide an innovative framework to learn. In our class, children experience the joy of dancing in a safe space while building positive behaviour and essential social and emotional skills.

WHY SEL?

Students participating in an SEL program show improved classroom behaviour, an increased ability to manage stress and depression, and better attitudes about themselves, others, and school. SEL programming can positively impact up to 18 years later on academics, conduct problems, emotional distress, and drug use [1].

HOW WE DO IT

We create more safe spaces within communities and schools by training local role models to set up a ChezaCheza afterschool program in their neighbourhood. They are ideal facilitators because they come from the same communities as our children and understand their challenges. Young dancers commit to our training program, enabling them to lead classes in their neighbourhood and schools, become agents for social change, and ultimately transform their communities. This is how we build a growing network of local changemakers and quality afterschool programs.



[1] Casel (2017) Promoting Positive Youth Development Through School-based Social and Emotional Learning Interventions. Source: <https://casel.org/2017-meta-analysis/>

WHY DANCE

1

ENABLES US TO UNDERSTAND AND EXPRESS OUR EMOTIONS IN A SAFE, CREATIVE WAY

2

PROMOTES SELF-AWARENESS, CONFIDENCE AND BENEFITS PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

3

PROVIDES RELEASE OF TRAUMA BY EXPLORING REPRESSED MEMORIES AND UNHAPPY FEELINGS

4

IMPROVES INTERPERSONAL SKILLS, COMMUNICATION ABILITIES, AND GROUP COOPERATION

5

CONNECTS WITH AFRICAN CULTURE AND HISTORY



MILESTONES 2020

HEALTH

COVID-19 RESPONSE PROGRAM

Since reporting the 1st case of COVID-19 in Kenya in March 2020, the numbers have been rising steadily. To control the spread, the Ministry of Health has provided guidelines and instructions to its citizens. One of the most impactful measures was closing schools and prohibiting all gathering forms on March 16th, 2020. In response to COVID-19, school closure presented an unprecedented risk to children's education, protection, and well-being. Schools and afterschool programs, such as sports activities, do much more than teaching children literacy and numeracy. They also provide nutrition, health, hygiene services, mental health and psychosocial support. With schools and afterschool programs being closed, children were more prone to abuse, violence, early pregnancy and other risks. The most vulnerable children are impacted most by school closures, and we know from previous crises that the longer they are out of school and not engaged in positive activities, the less likely they are to return [2].

As a result of this measure, ChezaCheza had to initially close our office and put a hold on all activities. In response to these measures, we have tried to understand the needs of the families we serve and support them in different ways. We identified 3 focus areas for our COVID-19 response program through parent interviews and house-to-house checkups: **Health**, **Education** and **Safety**. School closure resulted in a lack of safe spaces with rising levels of violence and stress within households. Food insecurity was on the rise, while the current state of the economy and the loss of jobs posed an additional financial burden to the most vulnerable households. Through different local partnerships and an international fundraising campaign, ChezaCheza was able to bring essential services, such as food, sanitary pads and education, to our beneficiaries.

FOOD DRIVES

Food is a basic need and one of the first responses to support families during the COVID-19 pandemic. GA Insurance and I&M Bank Foundation funded an initiative to provide food packages to 2,000 families in Mathare, Kibera, Eastlands, Kangemi, Ruiru Kimbo and Uthiru. They contacted local partners for distribution, and ChezaCheza was one of the selected organisations. In March and May, ChezaCheza distributed dry food packages to 121 families that provided nutrition for a whole month. In August and October, we had the opportunity to organise a food drive through Naivas Supermarket and Amethis. All 4 distributions were handled very carefully, without chaos or disturbances, just smiles, love and gratitude. The ChezaCheza staff had a clear action plan with different roles and responsibilities to make sure distributions ran smoothly and effectively.

Our friends at **Shamas Rugby Foundation** made all of these food drives possible by being the great force that connected small organisations to these impactful initiatives.



Food Drive #1 in Kibera

[2] UNICEF (2020) New guidelines provide roadmap for safe reopening of schools. Available online: <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/new-guidelines-provide-roadmap-safe-reopening-schools>

SANITARY PADS

During a crisis, families and households with limited financial resources are forced to revise their budgets. When this happens, they tend to focus more on the basic needs of food and housing. This makes sanitary towels a luxury item during periods of a financial crisis. Teenage girls suffer the most because, despite their need, they lack purchasing power. On the other hand, the caregivers are overwhelmed with the responsibility of meeting other basic needs with limited resources. As part of our response program, ChezaCheza received 372 sanitary pads from April through December 2020. We distributed them among 55 of our ChezaCheza girls between the ages of 10-16 years old. The distribution ensured that each girl had sanitary pads for at least 6 months.



EDUCATION

DAILY DANCE CLASSES

Schools remained closed in Kenya throughout 2020, and children lacked learning activities and supervision. When Kenya's government allowed gatherings below 15 people, ChezaCheza decided to reopen its classes. Safety guidelines were put in place to ensure the safety of the teacher and children. Before entering the class, wash your hands, keep social distance, no physical contact, and wear a mask during class. Our classes provided structure, a safe space, guidance and warm meals. It was a great way to keep children learning and engaged, and for teachers to check in with students regularly. From July to December 2020, we provided 4 classes a week in 3 locations with small groups of 10 to 15 children. The classes focused on our regular class structure incorporating Social-Emotional Learning and, of course, dancing. We also included more time for talks and sharing experiences, while many children felt anxiety regarding school and home life. Sharing their experiences created a close sense of community among teachers and children. After class, we provided each child with a warm meal and a dry food package to take home to their families.

HOME LEARNING GUIDES

At-risk children in informal settlements like Kibera do not have access to the internet or virtual classes. Schools closed, therefore, it put their education at risk. Together with Metis, an education collective, ChezaCheza put parts of its curriculum in a Home Learning Guide. This guide is a booklet that supported learners, caregivers, and educators to continue learning during the pandemic. It engaged children in self-learning, conducting science experiments, writing, and even preparing for upcoming national exams. Metis distributed 15,000 Home Learning Guides in different communities. ChezaCheza was proud to support part of the curriculum and distributed the booklets to children in all ChezaCheza families.



Ssstt!!
Vincent is
meditating

Our classes are focused on dance, meditation, relaxation, talking about challenges, expressing feelings and just having fun in a safe community! The stress on children brought about by the pandemic, and their environment is often forgotten. At ChezaCheza, we focus on the importance of mental health and reducing effects of stress by understanding your emotions, breathing exercises and therapeutic dance methods.

SAFETY

WEEKLY EDUCATOR/STUDENT CHECK-INS


At the start of the pandemic, our activities were put on hold, and our teachers had to find ways to keep in touch with their students. ChezaCheza's teachers remained present in their community through weekly check-ins with students and their families. During these visits, they followed all government safety guidelines, e.g. they wore a mask, gloves, maintained social distancing and brought along a hand sanitiser to protect themselves. Surveys, interviews, and teacher's talks with children and their parents allowed ChezaCheza to understand the communities' challenges and take specific actions to address families' need during the COVID-19 pandemic.

COUNSELLING

During the weekly check-ins, the ChezaCheza teachers noticed the emotional distress within families. Parents were struggling to put food on the table, children were home alone, and many children were hanging out in the street. To shine a light on this pandemic's social and emotional impact, we contacted our counsellor, Joyce. She confirmed our observations and assumptions on the rising levels of stress, violence and abuse within and outside the household and the effect on children's well-being. Counselling became a central part of our COVID-19 response programs, with group counselling sessions and regular individual sessions. The group sessions allowed children to share their thoughts and feelings on how the pandemic impacted them and their families. Many children had similar experiences and could relate to another, providing a growing community of support.



CHEZACHEZA KIDS SAY



80% of students said they would be 'very likely' to recommend ChezaCheza classes to their peers

Students give their ChezaCheza teachers a score of 9,6 out of 10

Students would like more of the following: 'a bigger room for classes', 'a toilet', 'more food' and 'new life skills'

80% of students 'strongly agreed' that their teacher helped them to learn new things

'Happy', 'Joyful' and 'Uplifting' were the most common words used by students to describe how a ChezaCheza class makes them feel

FRANCO'S FELLOWSHIPS

Hi, my name is Francis Odhiambo, and I am the co-founder of the ChezaCheza Dance Foundation.

As we all know, 2020 has been a challenging year, but we found ourselves getting more rooted in our purpose through our challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic affected our revenue stream while schools in Kenya were closed, and therefore it was hard to keep ChezaCheza financially sustainable. Children were fully at home to add to our troubles, and challenges rose for food and home violence. More children in our community started to use drugs, and the wellbeing of thousands of girls in Kenya could be at risk with reports of huge numbers of unintended teen pregnancies since the start of the COVID-19 lockdown. With all this, we had to do something for these children in the informal settlement. Fortunately, I was selected as a fellow at **Africa YES**, which really helped me think critically and develop new ideas even at the worse moments. The fellowship taught me how to remain resilient and making responsible decisions. I won the fellowship grant, which really boosted our financial capacity to support our COVID-19 response program. Another benefit was the growth of our network and collaborations.

In the second half of 2020, I was selected as a fellow for the education accelerator **Metis**. The fellowship brings together innovative educators that bring positive change in Kenya and beyond. In the fellowship, I learned how to design classes more properly, making the students the centre of learning. I got equipped with how we could involve our stakeholders in our work, such as parents and schools, to expand our impact circle. The year started as a dark year, but at least we brought candles, and so we shined a light on our way through the year.

MEDIA



ZOOMIN TV

Local Heroes: The dance foundation empowering Kenya's future



CHINA GLOBAL TELEVISION NETWORK

Cheza Cheza: Kibera's dance school igniting our future change-makers



FREEDA EN

ChezaCheza: "Dance Saves Lives"



LOOKING FORWARD: 2021

CHEZACHEZA DANCE CENTRE

We are so excited to share the news of establishing our own ChezaCheza dance centre. ChezaCheza is now the proud owner of a creative community hub that will welcome children, adults, national and international visitors, dancers and not-so-good dancers from inside and outside Kibera to come together and share the joy of dancing, education, creativity, and so much more. We will have an in-house counsellor, a dance hall, a homework class and additional support programs to battle the effects of COVID-19 among our beneficiaries.

ALL-GIRLS CLASSES

Growing up in Kibera comes with many challenges, especially when you are a girl. We realized that we only have male teachers, and girls need a special safe space to discuss challenges and female role models who can guide a girl's life. In 2021, with the support of new female dance educators and female mentors, we provide additional all-girls classes (for girls above 13 years old) that focus on discussing girl-related topics and will provide sanitary pads.

LEADERSHIP CLASSES

We are starting a bi-weekly leadership program where senior ChezaCheza children are selected to train in leadership. Our strategy in 2021 is to provide more growth opportunities and decrease the knowledge gap created through school closure during the pandemic. Different modules on leadership, career and expert talks will be part of the program.

TEACHER TRAINING

In January 2021, we are starting our first teacher training, with 3 new teachers and 3 teaching assistants. The program will focus on essential skills and knowledge to enable teachers to set up a quality afterschool dance program. Two new dance educators are female dance educators and will be implementing the all-girl classes.



Always have
a good
stretch
before you
dance

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

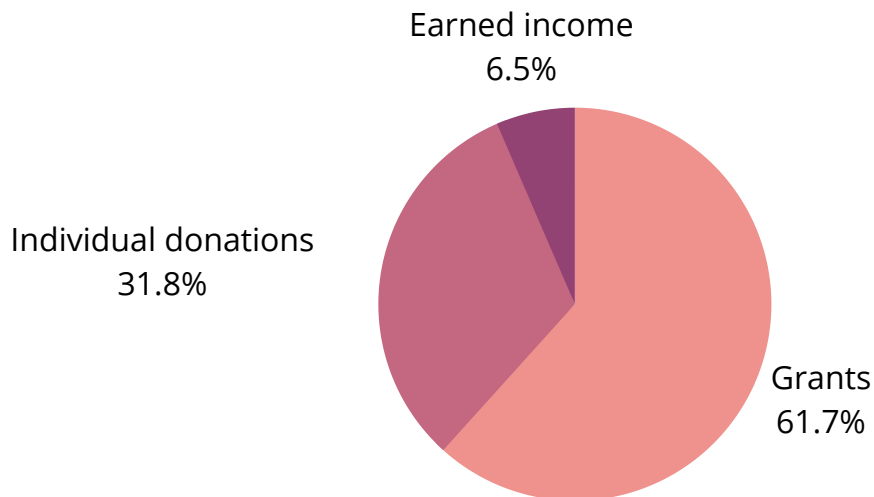
INCOME STATEMENT

Jan-Dec 2020

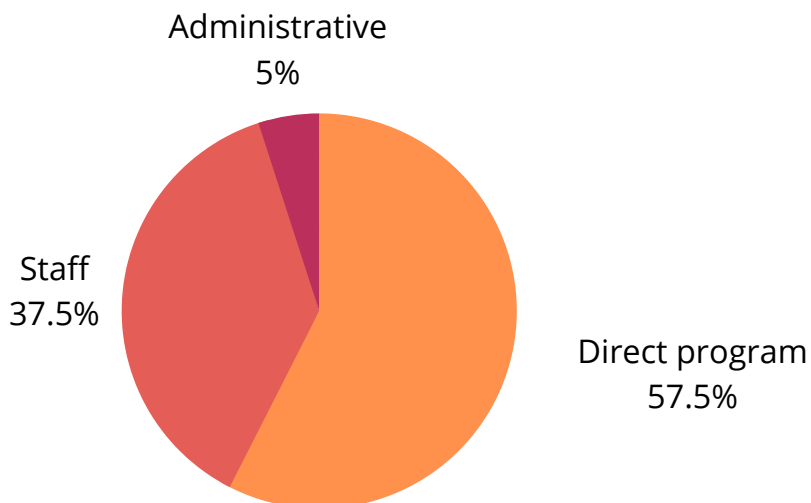
2020 (KES)

Total Income	2,254,192
• Grants	1,390,400
• Individual donations	717,542
• Earned income	146,250
Total Expenses	2,139,792
• Direct program	1,230,038
• Staff	803,198
• Administrative	106,556
Operating surplus (<i>carried forward to 2021</i>)	114,400

INCOME



EXPENSES



OUR DONORS



Our partners



A special thank you



And a **huge thanks** to all our individual donors who supported us in 2020!

JOIN THE MOVEMENT!

Do you want to support ChezaCheza's mission? Here are a few ways you, your school or your company can get involved!

Become a volunteer



Organise a fundraiser



Hire us for classes



Donate on the ChezaCheza website



Interested? Contact us through one of these channels.

 chezachezadance.org  [chezachezadance](https://www.facebook.com/chezachezadance)  [chezachezadance](https://www.instagram.com/chezachezadance)  chezachezadance@gmail.com