

# AKA First Ever TEDx Event

This Saturday 14 January 2017, 100 participants from the Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa community gathered together to share ideas and be inspired by an amazing line-up of speakers of different ages and backgrounds at the TEDx Youth@AKAMombasa event, writes **ALEESHA SULEMAN**.

Firstly, what is TEDx?

"TEDx is a program of local, self-organised events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience.

"At a TEDx event, TED Talk videos and live speakers combine to spark deep discussion and connection.

"These local, self-organized events are branded TEDx, where x = independently organized TED event.

"The TED Conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program, but individual TEDx events are self-organized."

The event is the Academy's first official TEDx event and is one of the first of its kind hosted in Mombasa.

Licensee and Lead Organiser Aalia Visram said "Events such as TEDxYouth@AKAMombasa are important for youth to be able to connect and participate in TED's vision of 'ideas worth spreading'.

It was incredible to see the hard-work and amazing organisational skills of all the student volunteers and team members culminate in such an exceptional



Hezekiah Owuor and Aroha Oyugi performing 'Paukwa Pakawa'.

event."

The theme of the event was "Decrypting Fantasy: Tales of the Unseen" and the topics covered by the speakers ranged from the power of a vision to the relevance of social media to farming.

Joining 13 student speakers from the Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa, were 5 guest-speakers from around Kenya.

Famous hip-hop artist Juliani, Olympic Kenyan archer Shehzana Anwar, filmmaker and producer Hatim Hassanali, Head of External Affairs at the Aga Khan Academy Gulam Juma, and Naheed Hirji, Head of Growth and Mobile Partnerships at Facebook, were all part of the inspiring speaker line-up.

In the opening address, the audience was told that *they* were "the key to change".

This is inevitably true because the talks are meant to spark interest and debate in the audience, cause a shift in thinking and inspire them to make a positive change.

There has recently been an

increase in the use of TED Talks in classrooms to enrich the learning experience by exposing young people to short, powerful talks from different parts of the world which can inspire youth to create solutions to problems in their communities.

Having such an event in our city provides a platform for exposure to new ideas and builds connections between young people of diverse backgrounds based on their ideas and passions.

It inspires confidence in our youth to tackle long-standing socio-cultural and economic issues, while also providing them with a practical network of support.

The hope is that this is only the beginning and that we will continue to see such events grow in size and impact.

According to Saumya Gupta, one of the organisers of the event, "TED's vision is to spread ideas worth sharing. I would add that, it is to show us the potential we have as humans to move forward as one entity, and to accomplish the seemingly impossible."