



**UNLOCKING POTENTIAL
THE POWER OF COMMUNITY-LED EDUCATION**

In the vibrant district of Mchinji, a remarkable transformation is taking place, driven by the ambitious "Tikwanilitse ndi Kuteteza Ma ufulu A Ana (TiKuMA)" project. This initiative, with its vision to secure every child's right to education and protection, has found a strong foothold in Mchinji, igniting a passion for learning and community involvement.

At the core of this project's success in Mchinji is its focus on Child Rights Governance, Child Protection, and Education. By promoting a strong and accountable government system, the project ensures that children's rights are respected and protected. Additionally, by addressing issues like child marriage, sexual and gender-based violence, and teenage pregnancies, the project creates a safe and nurturing environment for children to thrive.

One of the key catalysts for change in Mchinji has been the training sessions conducted by GAYO and its partners. These sessions, held in various communities, have empowered parents with innovative teaching methods. Take, for instance, the story of Jenny Doneksi, a resident of Kafaniya Village. Jenny, after attending a training session in Ludzi, discovered a newfound passion for education.

Jenny's enthusiasm was infectious. She began training other mothers in her community and even reached out to neighboring communities, sharing her knowledge and skills. The response was overwhelming. Mothers, dedicated to their children's education, eagerly escorted their little ones to Jenny's home, creating a vibrant learning hub.

The impact of Jenny's initiative is profound. Children in Mchinji now have a safe and stimulating environment to learn and grow. After school, they gather at Jenny's place, engaging in interactive lessons and building their foundational skills in literacy and numeracy. The community's support is evident, with parents encouraging their children to attend these sessions, fostering a culture of learning and curiosity.

The TiKuMA project, with its focus on Mchinji, is not just about providing education but also about empowering communities. By involving parents and children alike, the project is creating a sustainable and self-driven system of learning. As the 5-year program progresses, Mchinji is poised to become a beacon of educational excellence, inspiring other districts with its success story.

Jenny Doneksi, a resident of Mchinji, has become a beacon of hope for children's education in her community. Utilizing her kitchen utilities, she marked them with numbers and letters, transforming her kitchen into a unique learning space. With her innovative approach, Jenny teaches children the sounds of alphabetic letters and numbers, engaging them through interactive demonstrations. She repeats this process, allowing children to identify and name the numbers and letters, reinforcing their learning.

To make learning fun, Jenny incorporates songs, creating a joyful and memorable educational experience. As children gather at her compound, they sing these songs, eagerly awaiting their turn to learn. Meanwhile, parents patiently wait, witnessing the power of Jenny's initiative.

Even during her daily routines, Jenny finds opportunities to educate. While cooking with her children, she involves them in simple mathematical tasks. For instance, she might ask a child to count tomatoes and then solve a basic mathematical problem, enhancing their understanding of numbers and problem-solving skills.

Jenny's dedication and creativity have had a profound impact on her children's education. Her unique methods, combined with her passion for teaching, have created a supportive and engaging learning environment. Through her efforts, Jenny is not only educating children but also empowering them with essential life skills, ensuring a brighter future for the next generation in Mchinji.



Jenny and her community in Mchinji have implemented an ingenious strategy to foster a love for reading among the children. They have transformed their surroundings into a living, breathing learning environment. Windows, doors, and walls are no longer just functional elements but educational tools. The community has taken the initiative to write the names of these objects in both the local language and English, creating a constant reminder for the children to engage with words and expand their vocabulary.

Picture 1.. Children lifting cards with names

As the children go about their daily lives, they are surrounded by these labels, encouraging them to read and recognize the names of familiar objects. This innovative approach not only enhances their reading skills but also promotes a deeper understanding of their environment. By incorporating both local and English languages, the community ensures that the children develop a strong foundation in literacy, regardless of their primary language.

Jenny's dedication and the community's collective effort have created a unique and effective learning experience. This simple yet powerful initiative has the potential to inspire a generation of avid readers and lifelong learners, leaving a lasting impact on the educational landscape of Mchinji.



Picture 2. Showing door marked with names



Picture 3. Toilet entry with marked papers

In conclusion, the TiKuMA project, with its holistic approach to child development, has sparked a revolution in Mchinji, empowering both children and the community. Through innovative teaching methods, the project has not only enhanced educational outcomes but also promoted a culture of learning and curiosity. Jenny Doneksi, a true champion of this initiative, has inspired countless parents and children, creating a vibrant learning community.

The impact of Jenny's efforts extends beyond the classroom. By incorporating everyday objects and activities into her teaching, she has made learning an integral part of daily life. From marking kitchen utilities with numbers and letters to writing the names of objects on windows and doors, Jenny has created an immersive educational environment.

Mchinji is a testament to the power of community-led initiatives. By involving parents, children, and the wider community, the project has created a sustainable and self-driven system of learning. As Mchinji continues to thrive, it serves as an inspiring example of how dedicated individuals and communities can unlock the potential of every child, ensuring a brighter and more educated future.

With the collective efforts of organizations like GAYO, Save the Children, including other implementing partners and the passionate individuals within the community, Mchinji is well on its way to achieving its vision of a well-educated and protected generation. The story of Jenny and her community stands as a beacon of hope, reminding us that education is not just a right but a powerful tool for transformation.