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# A Tale of Youth Transformation

In a world where the voices of the young are louder and more influential than ever, a new chapter is being written. This is the era of peak youth, where the potential of young people is at its highest and their impact can shape the future of nations. In the vibrant and diverse land of Tanzania, this story comes alive.

In Tanzania, the youth demographic is extraordinary—nearly two-thirds of the population is under 25, with 70% aged between 15 and 35. It's a time of unparalleled youth energy and promise. Yet, despite their numbers, young people face barriers to fully participating in society. From climate change and racial injustice to gender-based violence and economic inequality, these young leaders are on the front lines, striving to make their voices heard and drive transformative change.

Our story follows the remarkable journey of 450 young leaders who, supported by a groundbreaking partnership between Restless Development and the Ford Foundation, have taken a stand for their future. These young change-makers, representing 18 youth-focused organizations across 18 regions in Tanzania, have been equipped with knowledge, skills, and confidence to challenge the status quo.

Among these leaders, gender and disability inclusion have been central to the project's mission: 67% are female, 33% are male, and 6% have disabilities. They have been trained to demand accountability and responsiveness from both government and civil society organizations (CSOs), and they are now actively monitoring the implementation of commitments related to youth access and decision-making.

You will gain insight on how through youth-led advocacy and collaboration with civil society organizations, young leaders are breaking down barriers, reshaping policies, and inspiring a new era of meaningful youth engagement with government officials.

In this tale, you will witness the struggles and triumphs of these young leaders as they navigate the complexities of policy-making and advocacy. Through their eyes, you will see how they confront issues of political exclusion, economic barriers, and social norms. Their journey is one of courage, determination, and relentless pursuit of a future where their voices are not just heard but embraced.

As you delve into this story, you'll join these young changemakers in their quest to transform their world. With each page, you'll discover their innovative solutions, their battles against resistance, and their unwavering hope for a more inclusive and just society.

This is not just a story of obstacles but a celebration of the boundless potential of youth. It is a tribute to their resilience and their power to lead us into a brighter future. Welcome to the stories of Change—where every challenge faced is a step towards a world transformed by the voices of the next generation.



# Kibaha's Future Leaders

**Uplifting Stories from the Next Generation** 



# 1. Pwani Youth Network Nurturing Visionary Leadership

Amidst the majestic backdrop of Kilimanjaro. Born the eldest of three siblings, Fred's early years were filled with the love and warmth of his family. However, tragedy struck with the untimely passing of his mother, casting a shadow of uncertainty over their lives.

At the tender age of 14, Fred came across a momentous opportunity, selected to serve as the junior youth chairperson in his church. It was a role that sparked a fire within him, igniting a passion for leadership, service, and community engagement. Over the years, Fred's dedication and commitment saw him ascend to the position of youth chairperson for both senior and junior groups, juggling different responsibilities with unwavering resolve.

### Restless Developing sparking leadership passion in young people

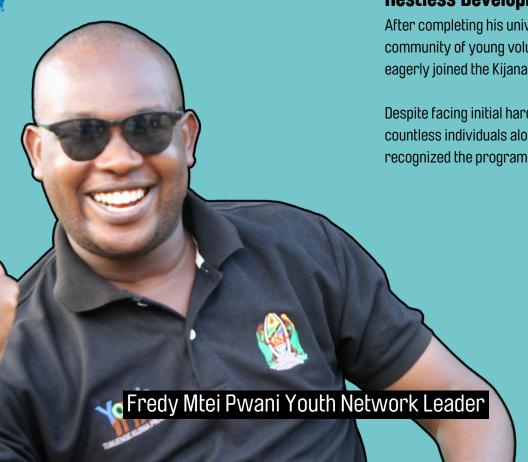
After completing his university education, Fred's path intersected with Restless Development, where he discovered a community of young volunteers dedicated to creating positive change. Inspired by their stories of impact, Fred eagerly joined the Kijana Wajibika Program in Pwani Region, eager to contribute to the transformation of his country.

Despite facing initial hardships, Fred and his fellow volunteers continued on a journey of growth, touching the lives of countless individuals along the way. Their efforts caught the attention of local government authorities, who recognized the program's effectiveness in creating young leaders and driving sustainable change.

As the program drew to a close, Fred and his peers faced a pivotal moment —a chance to build something enduring out of their shared experience.

Thus, the Pwani Youth Network was born – a platform for young people to continue their community work and advocacy efforts long after the program's conclusion.

With support from Restless Development, the Pwani Youth Network flourished and inspired many in the Kibaha region. Through strategic partnerships and grassroots initiatives, Fred and his team addressed pressing issues facing their communities, from healthcare access to youth unemployment.



### **Organisation Growth**

Pwani Youth Network's Partnership with Restless Development has significantly contributed to the growth and success by providing necessary resources and support, and creating a conducive environment for the network to advance. Pwani Youth Network now implements various initiatives to address community challenges, leading to institutional strengthening at both community and regional levels. They have managed to establish systems and structures for smooth operations and successful program implementation, resulting in improved service delivery, increased community engagement, and enhanced accountability. The partnership has also fostered a culture of learning and continuous improvement within the network, equipping members with essential skills and knowledge through capacity building programs, thereby improving their leadership and management capabilities.

Furthermore, Pwani Youth Network has been able to facilitate the establishment of strategic alliances with other stakeholders, including government authorities and non-governmental organisations, expanding the network's reach and influence, and enabling effective advocacy for policy changes and resource mobilisation.

In supporting initiatives like the Pwani Youth Network, we invest in the future of Tanzania, unlocking the potential of its youth to create a brighter, more inclusive tomorrow. Together, let us continue to champion the power of young people to drive lasting change and build a nation where everyone can thrive.

"The road hasn't always been easy, but every challenge has only strengthened our resolve to make a difference. We call upon partners and donors to join us in our mission to empower young people and transform communities."

PYN is esteemed for its exceptional ability to mobilise young people, leveraging their collective power to drive significant change. PYN has effectively harnessed this energy to inspire youth to become active citizens, taking on greater responsibilities and reshaping the narrative about their role in democratic and political processes. At PYN, countless inspiring stories highlight how young people are exercising their rights, assuming leadership roles, and holding duty bearers accountable to address their priorities.

Over the years, PYN has built a strong reputation for establishing positive relationships with government officials particularly at Kibaha Town Council. This trust has led to several collaborative movements in implementing government projects, which PYN has successfully implemented with the Kibaha Town Council's Community Development department, spearheading youth development initiatives. Thanks to PYN's remarkable efforts, there is much to celebrate today, with numerous success stories like that of Abubakar Matumla and Luja, showcasing the profound impact on young people's lives.





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Abubakar Matumla began his lifelong learning in a modest beginning. Born and raised in Kibaha, Matumla encountered early challenges in accessing education due to financial constraints faced by his family. However, his parents' unwavering determination ensured that Matumla pursued his education, instilling in him the values of courage and bravery from a tender age.

Matumla's passion for leadership and community service emerged early on, as he actively sought opportunities to engage in school leadership roles. Running for class monitor positions to aspiring for school president title, Matumla's innate leadership qualities began to flourish.

Despite facing financial challenges, Matumla's spirit propelled him forward. His commitment to education remained, leading him to attend Mwendapole Primary School and later Tumbi Secondary School in Kibaha. Alongside his academic pursuits, Matumla nurtured his dedication for leadership, laying the foundation for his future endeavours.



Abubakar Young Leader from Kibaha, Tanzania

### A Gateway to Realising Aspiration

In 2017, fate intertwined with opportunity when Matumla encountered Restless Development's Kijana Wajibika program. This transformative initiative aimed to empower young people with leadership skills, civic and entrepreneurial knowledge. Matumla seized the opportunity with enthusiasm, recognizing it as a gateway to realising his aspirations of effecting positive change in his community.

Through the Kijana Wajibika program, Matumla gained invaluable insights into entrepreneurship, civic engagement, and effective leadership. Surrounded by a diverse cohort of young individuals, Matumla embraced the power of networking and collaboration, fostering a sense of unity amidst diversity.

Equiped by newfound knowledge and unwavering determination, Matumla embarked on a remarkable journey of leadership. In 2019, he boldly contested in the local government elections, defying all odds stacked against him. Despite facing formidable opponents with superior financial and educational backgrounds, Matumla's leadership acumen and grassroots support propelled him to victory.







### Transformative Power of Perseverance

Assuming the role of chairperson of the local government in Mwendapole B, Matumla wasted no time in initiating transformative changes. He spearheaded efforts to enhance the infrastructure of the local government office, ensuring a conducive working environment for all. Moreover, recognizing the pressing need for improved access to education, Matumla championed the establishment of a school in his ward, demonstrating his unwavering commitment to youth empowerment and community development.

Matumla's leadership extended beyond bureaucratic realms as he endeavoured to toster community cohesion and youth empowerment. Initiatives such as the Matumla Cup football league and charity works during Ramadan underscored his dedication to uplifting marginalised voices and fostering social inclusivity.

As an inspiring leader, Matumla actively engaged with youth, encouraging their participation in decision-making processes and community development initiatives. Through youth committees and advocacy platforms, he amplified the voices of the younger generation, catalysing positive change at the grassroots level.

Beyond politics, Matumla found fulfilment in his roles as a devoted husband and father. Supported by his family, he embarked on entrepreneurial ventures owning a stationery shop and other ventures, further contributing to his community's economic prosperity while nurturing the next generation of leaders, including his own son.

Reflecting on his journey, Matumla shared, "Restless development had this way of running their session to impact us young people to be confident. It prepared my confidence for when I was really out there in the community."

Matumla's story serves as a testament to the transformative power of perseverance, leadership, and community engagement. From humble beginnings to the journey into local governance, his journey exemplifies the potential within each individual to effect meaningful change and leave a lasting legacy of hope and progress.



"Alot of young people fail to participate or be included because of how we carry ourselves unprofessionally. But since the Kijana Wajibika programme gave us the knowledge on how to be good leaders we now have many young people taking the lead to inform and influence the decisions made in the government about our

communities. Abubakar expresses





Luja Said Nangulukata's journey is a testament to the power of seizing opportunities, even in the face of difficulties. Born as the fifth child in a family of six, Luja's early years were shaped by her aspirations, her family's support, and the challenges she encountered along the way.

"Growing up surrounded by my brothers who loved to speak and play football, I developed a passion for the sport. Despite being a naughty child, my greatest fear was physical punishment, especially being caned.

Despite her childhood dream of becoming a doctor, Luja's path diverged when she encountered obstacles in securing a nursing job after completing her studies. Her academic journey began in Mwanza Nyamagana Primary School, where she laid the foundation for her future education. She later transitioned to Mwendapole Primary School, a move that



Luja's journey is deeply rooted in the inspiration drawn from her parents. Her mother's unwavering strength and dedication to providing for her family amidst family challenges served as a motivation of strength, instilling in Luja the values of perseverance and responsibility. Meanwhile, her father's remarkable leadership journey, from serving as a ward councillor to becoming the mayor of Kibaha Town Council, epitomised integrity and equality. His commitment to fair representation and community service left an indelible mark on Luja, igniting her passion for advocating for marginalised voices and shaping a better future for all.

Unfortunately faced with the tragic loss of her father before seeing her dreams materialise, his encouragement echoed in her pursuit of leadership and adependence.

In the face of unexpected challenges, Luja's journey took an unforeseen turn when she became a young mother at an early age. Despite this, she refused to let her dreams slip away. Amidst the demands of motherhood, Luja pursued her education, attending hyrsing school even as she harboured aspirations of becoming a doctor. However, the realities of job scarcity in the nursing field prompted a shift in her aspirations

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"Becoming a young mother was challenging, but my mother's support kept me grounded and responsible. My family has always been my greatest support system"

Luja expressed

### **Redefining Success the Journey of Perseverance;**

In her journey, Luja's path intersected with Restless Development through peer networks, where she encountered stories of young people being changemakers and the diverse opportunities they encountered with the knowledge they got. Intrigued by the transformative experiences shared within these circles, Luja was inspired to join Restless Development's Kijana Wajibika Programme in partnership with Pwani Youth Network funded by Ford Foundation.

Through this initiative, she gained invaluable knowledge on civic engagement, knowing her rights as a citizen, leadership skills, how young people can seek opportunities and the potential for effecting positive change within her community. Armed with newfound confidence and understanding, Luja became a proactive agent of change, leveraging her voice

and skills to advocate for youth leadership and social justice.



Through her involvement in the programme, Luja gained confidence and direction. Embracing entrepreneurship, she co-founded a stationery business, finding fulfilment and economic independence.

"Before joining Restless Development, I felt stuck at home with nothing to do. Now, through entrepreneurship, I've found purpose and independence. My stationery business allows me to meet my basic needs while avoiding risky behaviour," Luja shared.

As a young leader, Luja advocates for greater female representation in leadership roles.

"In WhatsApp groups and peer conversations, I used to have a negative perspective on voting and leadership. Now, I'm confident in standing up for my views and aspire to enter politics one day," Luja expressed with a smile.

As a young girl with dreams of becoming a confident entrepreneur and leader, Luja exemplifies resilience and the power of seizing opportunities. As she looks ahead to the 2024 Local Government Elections, calling upon more young women to embrace their potential and join her in shaping a brighter future for Tanzania.

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As a Community Development Officer Leader in Kibaha, I am passionate about championing youth agendas and dedicated to see through youth development. Our efforts go beyond mere advocacy; we actively support young people enabling them economically e.g. formation of youth groups, enabling them to seize opportunities that were previously out of reach. By providing funding and resources, we help these groups implement various businesses, from motorcycle driver to market vendor business and more. — Regina











# \* 4. The Impact Story of Kinara for Youth Evolution

Kinara for Youth Evolution, a dynamic youth-led grassroots NGO, has made significant strides in addressing the challenges faced by young people in Tanzania Mainland, specifically in Chamwino Ward, Morogoro Municipal District. Originally founded as the Morogoro Youth Development Initiative (MOYODEI) in September 2013 by twenty passionate youth. Kinara has grown into an active, inclusive, and participatory organization with a focus on Sexual Reproductive Health and Gender, Livelihoods, Education, and Citizen Data for Advocacy, Kinara's initiatives align with the Sustainable Development Goals and respond directly to community needs.

### **Protect Your Dream: Reducing Teenage Pregnancy**

One of Kinara's flagship programs, Protect Your Dream, aims to reduce teenage pregnancy through participatory peer education sessions. This program targets schools and communities, covering crucial topics such as self-awareness, gender equality, peer pressure, healthy relationships, and family planning.

The program has established three key groups of peer educators:

One of Kinara's flagship programs, Protect Your Dream, aims to reduce teenage pregnancy through participatory peer education sessions. This program targets schools and communities, covering crucial topics such as self-awareness, gender equality, peer pressure, healthy relationships, and family planning. The program has established three key groups of peer educators:

- 1. Big Sisters and Big Brothers: Older secondary school students mentor younger peers, educating them on sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and gender-related topics, while encouraging them to stay and succeed in school.
- 2. Strength of Mothers: A group of women who educate the community about the harms of gender-based violence and harmful cultural practices.
- 3. Community Change Agents: Young community members who mobilize their peers to participate in education sessions, distribute condoms, and provide referrals to family planning services.

**Earning Self-Dependence: Enhancing Youth Employability** 







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To face the issues of limited employment opportunities, Kinara launched the Earning Self-Dependence program. This initiative provides youth with practical skills and business education to enhance their employability and self-sufficiency.

Key projects under this program include:

- 1. Sewing Team: Youth undergo intensive training to become professional tailors. This ten-month program equips them with valuable textile skills, increasing their employability and enabling them to start their own sewing businesses.
- 2. Entrepreneurship Groups: Youth receive business education and support, including business plan preparation and connections to group registration and loan-providing institutions.

### **Working Together: Empowering Citizens through Data**

Kinara's Working Together program empowers citizens, particularly youth, to collect, analyze, and use data to advocate for change. This program includes two projects:

- 1. Water for Life: In partnership with the Morogoro Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Authority (MORUWASA), Kinara helps reduce Non-Revenue Water and improve water availability. Youth Community Change Agents use the MWater mobile application to report water pipe leaks and conduct household water availability surveys.
- 2. Sharing Our Stories: In Partnership with CIVICUS and the Data Shift initiative, Kinara runs participatory workshops to gather contextual data for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, focusing on inclusive and responsive decision–making.

### **Capacity Building and Partnerships**

Kinara's partnership with Restless Development through the Kijana Wajibika Programme has significantly enhanced its organizational capacity. Mr Charles Sallu – The Director, acknowledges that this collaboration and partnership with Restless Development of about 4 years now has led to outstanding success varying from increased knowledge on better strategies to meaningful youth engagement where change has been initiated by increasing representation of young people in decision making from 50% to 80% both in the organization management team and organization Board.









Kinara For Youth Evolution Country Director Mr Charles Sallu

These changes have also happened in our organization systems, we have developed new policies like safeguarding policy, and amended existing policies like the financial policy as well as strengthened our Monitoring and evaluation unit with better tools for example having tools that can better capture data for People with Disabilities. Better improvement is also demonstrated in the fundraising capabilities, resulting in successful grants acquisition from Internews and Swiss Contact. Kinara Director Mr Charles expresses.

Kinara has also become a capacity builder for other organizations, creating a network of ten organizations to share knowledge and enhance capacities in various areas. The organization now boasts a robust Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) structure, effective fund management with accounting software, and comprehensive communications policies.

### **Young People Leading the Change**

Kinara, renowned for its role as an incubator for nurturing young leaders, has fostered the growth of thousands of change-makers. In collaboration with Restless Development through the Kijana Wajibika program, Kinara has witnessed a transformative impact on youth leadership. Young people now demonstrate exceptional leadership skills and gain increased trust from decision-makers, who are delegating responsibilities to them. This empowerment has led to active participation in community development initiatives, with many youths enrolling in vocational training programs like VETA and successfully starting their own businesses.

The Kijana Wajibika project, committed to equal opportunities for all young people, including those with disabilities, has made significant strides through Kinara's efforts. One remarkable success story is that of Miss Latifa, a young girl with a disability, whose life was exceptionally transformed through the acquisition of civic education skills. Her story, along with many others, highlights the profound impact of Kinara's work in creating opportunities and fostering leadership among young people.













# 5. Latifa's Transformation

Latifa, a young woman who couldn't attend school due to financial hardship, found new hope through Kijana Wajibika's programme. As a participant in the Programme, she witnessed firsthand the positive impact of engaging young people and the vast opportunities available.

### Her Breakthrough

After receiving comprehensive civic education and entrepreneurship training from the Kijana Wajibika Programme, Latifa joined an entrepreneur savings group. Through disciplined group savings, she has been able to pay for her child's school fees, ensuring a brighter future for her family. Her progress doesn't stop there; Latifa is diligently saving with the aim of launching her own entrepreneurial ventures, embodying the qualities of self-reliance.

"Beyond personal ambitions, I am deeply involved in my community. I regularly volunteer for various community tasks, such as cleaning up local hospitals, dedicated to giving back and improving the environment for those around me. I actively participate in community work and have become a more well-respected figure and responsible citizen inspiring other young people to engage in volunteerism." -Latifa

Latifa's progress is not only a testament to her efforts but also highlights the critical role of supportive programs like Kijana Wajibika in empowering individuals. Her advocacy for the inclusion of young people with disabilities in these programs is driven by her belief that everyone, regardless of their circumstances, deserves the opportunity to thrive and contribute to their communities.

### **Advocating for Equality for PWD**

In her spare time, Latifa also mentors other young women, sharing her experiences and the knowledge she has gained. She encourages them to join similar programs and savings groups, emphasizing the importance of financial literacy and community involvement. Through her efforts, she hopes to build a network of young women champions who can support each other and drive positive change in their communities. Latifa is now a strong advocate for including young people with disabilities (PWD) as well in these transformative programs. Latifa showcases the powerful example of how access to skills development training, and community support can change lives. Her progress from financial hardship to becoming a community leader and advocate for inclusivity continues to inspire many, demonstrating the far-reaching impact of programs like Kijana Wajibika and the unwavering spirit of individuals like Latifa.





# 6. The Inspiring Journey of Goodluck Dismas Towards Leadership and Change

Meet Goodluck Dismass, born and raised in Temeke, Dar es Salaam, who found his purpose through leadership. Goodluck's childhood was marked by hardship, raised by his grandmother in the Kilombero district, where resources were scarce, and dreams seemed distant. Pushing through his struggles, a flame of determination burned within him. Despite the odds, Goodluck continued to pursue his education, ultimately graduating with a degree in Agribusiness from Sokoine University.

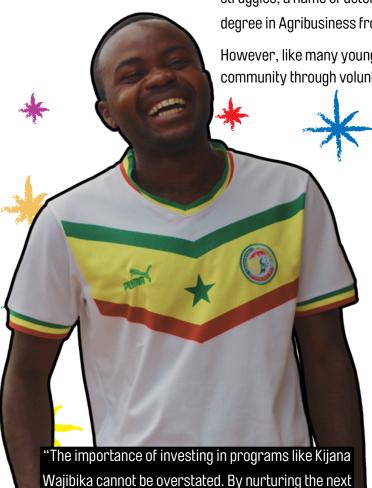
However, like many young graduates, Goodluck found himself struggling again with unemployment but chose to dedicate himself to serving his community through volunteering. It was during this time that he encountered Restless Development's Kijana Wajibika program.

### **Pushing through the challenges**

Through Kijana Wajibika, Goodluck received not only training but also a newfound sense of purpose. Equipped with knowledge in civil rights, leadership and citizen responsibilities, he became a catalyst for change in his community. Recognizing the pressing issue of littering in his neighborhood, Goodluck mobilized fellow youth to take action. Goodluck took part in organised various initiatives such as waste collection initiatives, aiming to address the immediate problem but also inspired neighboring communities to follow suit. Moreover, Goodluck's involvement in decision-making forums at the local level bridged the gap between youth and government leaders. His proactive engagement earned him the trust of community elders and officials alike, paving the way for greater collaboration and impact.

Moreover, Goodluck's active involvement in local governance and decision-making processes bridged the gap between youth and government leaders. His dedication and commitment earned him the respect and trust of community elders and officials alike, paving the way for collaborative efforts aimed at addressing pressing issues and fostering sustainable development.

Today, Goodluck is not only a respected figure among his peers but also a mentee of his local government leaders, who see him as a potential future young leader. Furthermore, through Kijana Wajibika, he not only gained practical skills but also the confidence to pursue his entrepreneurial dreams. Now, he stands as a testament to the limitless potential of young people when given the opportunity and support to thrive.



generation of leaders, we not only create positive change

today but also build a brighter tomorrow for communities across Tanzania." Goodluck Shares



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Veronica Kilapilo, a Community Development
Officer, shared how Kinara's training
programs have changed the community.
Previously, youth were disengaged and
uninterested in community development.
Now, thanks to Kinara's efforts, many have
become entrepreneurs, secured
employment, and actively participate in
available opportunities. This close
engagement has fostered a sense of
ownership and responsibility among the
youth.

Kinara for Youth Evolution exemplifies the power of collective action and community-driven solutions. By addressing critical issues like reproductive health education, gender discrimination, and unemployment, Kinara has empowered countless young people to take control of their futures. The organization's inclusive approach and commitment to capacity building ensure that no one is left behind, fostering a brighter future for all in the Morogoro Municipal District.



# Championing\* Youth Power in Dodoma





## 7. The Impact of Action for Community Care

### **Creating A Better Future For Vulnerable Communities**

"At our NGO, we believe in empowering vulnerable communities for a better future. Through our various programs and initiatives, we aim to provide education, healthcare, and livelihood opportunities to those in need. Our goal is to create a sustainable impact and help individuals and communities lead fulfilling lives"

Reflecting on the strides her organisation has made in partnership with Restless Development For the past four years, We have been working through the Kijana Wajibika project in collaboration with Restless Development to help young people become responsible and self-aware, she said. Her passion for youth empowerment was palpable as she described the transformation she had witnessed.

As an institution, Action for Community Care has gained a deep understanding of how to work effectively with youth. We've seen that young people themselves have received adequate civic education and are actively participating and meaningfully engaged. We feel well-equipped to work with youth using various methods that engage them effectively. Pendo spoke highly of the partnership with Restless Development.

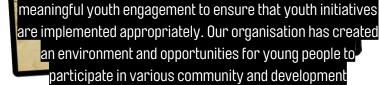
Pendo explains that meaningful youth engagement is driving a significant powershift with her organisation, with young people taking active roles in managerial roles and program management. By placing youth at the forefront, they have successfully run various initiatives through peer to peer education, showcasing their leadership and decision-making capabilities. This approach has not only empowered young people but also earned the legitimacy and recognition as a youth-led organisation in the Dodoma. The tangible impact of this engagement is evident in the vibrant, youth-driven development projects flourishing across the community.

Through education, awareness, and exposure, the youth in their programs had become more involved in developmental activities.

"We also connect them with government leaders and decision-makers. We've organised forums through dialogues between youth and leaders to discuss issues that concern young people, and even to participate directly in community and leadership activities. Youth now have more confidence and are no longer afraid to hold leaders accountable on governance matters."







participate in various community and development

activities."Pendo Maiseli Director of Action for Community

"Restless Development has significantly built our capacity in















With local government elections approaching, Pendo noted, "This year, many young people are coming forward to run for leadership positions and lead their communities.

Through the collaborative efforts with Restless Development, Action for Community Care has successfully empowered young people, including those with disabilities, providing them with the skills, strategies and opportunities to participate actively and responsibly in their communities.

"We are proud of the progress we've made, and we're excited to see what the future holds for these young leaders," Pendo concluded.



"We understand that empowering the youth is key to creating lasting change. Through our collaboration with Restless Development, we have been able to reach more young people, providing them with the resources and opportunities they need to thrive."

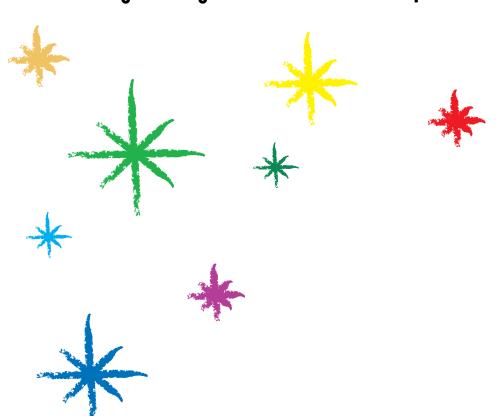
Restless Development has been an instrumental partner in this mission, collaborating closely with Action for Community Care. Together, Action for Community Care has implemented innovative solutions to address the unique challenges faced by young people in these communities. This partnership leverages the strengths of both organisations, combining Restless Development's expertise in youth empowerment with Action for Community Care's deep commitment to providing holistic support.

Action for Community Care is passionate about young people, says a staff member from the organisation.

This partnership has resulted in tangible improvements in the lives of many young individuals, equipping them with skills, knowledge, and confidence to become leaders in their communities. By focusing on education, healthcare, and livelihoods, we are not only addressing immediate needs but also fostering long-term resilience and self-sufficiency.

The synergy between Restless Development and Action for Community Care exemplifies how strategic collaborations can amplify impact, ensuring that vulnerable communities receive comprehensive and effective support. Together, we are creating a brighter future for young people like Neema and Dianna, empowering them to drive positive change and build a better world.

Neema and Dianna are making fully informed decisions and take charge of their lives through entrepreneurship. They have evolved into engaged citizens, championing change by occupying spaces where they can represent other young people. Their journey from passive observers to active participants in their communities highlights the transformative power of empowerment and education. By leading by example, Neema and Dianna demonstrate the profound impact of youth-driven initiatives, showcasing how young people can drive meaningful change and advocate for their peers.



# 8. Neema's Journey In Youth Leadership and Civic Engagement

"Empowering others is the true measure of leadership; together, we can create a future where every voice is heard."- Pendo expresses

Neema Chaopa, a 22-year-old resident of Chang'ombe, Dodoma, stands as a shining example of youth leadership within the Kijana Wajibika Programme. Joining the program in 2022, Neema was drawn to its mission of empowerment, spurred by her innate passion for driving positive change within her community.

Even before her involvement in the program, Neema was already actively volunteering at local government offices, where she took on diverse responsibilities ranging from civil rights education to facilitating meetings for young people to voice their concerns.

Despite having engaged with local government Neema was not aware of how the local government works and lacked access to vital information. Like many young people, she believed that local government offices were only for older individuals and those who were fully educated. This misconception posed a significant challenge and was an obstacle to many opportunities that could have fostered her potential growth. Overcoming these barriers, Neema's journey of understanding and engagement with local governance marked a pivotal shift, allowing her to become a champion of change.

### Witnessing Change through Kijana Wajibika Programme.

Thanks to the Kijana Wajibika Programme that deepened her understanding of the local political structures, enabling her to be more meaningfully engaged as a young person. This program provided her with the knowledge and skills to navigate and influence the political landscape effectively in her village.

### **Championing Civic Responsibility**

Embracing the program's emphasis on civic education, Neema found resonance in its core principles of fostering civic responsibility and critical thinking among youth. She firmly believes that civic engagement is key to empowering individuals and building cohesive communities. Through her voluntary participation and subsequent training in entrepreneurship, civic education, and meaningful youth engagement, Neema has become a vocal advocate for equality and youth empowerment.

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Reflecting on the challenges faced by young people in her community, particularly their perceived disconnect from local government authorities and the consequent lack of access to vital information, Neema takes personal responsibility. She acknowledges that while many express concerns, few actively engage in village development committee meetings. Taking initiative as a young leader, Neema personally visits local government offices, driven by the belief that she can procure essential information and opportunities for youth advancement.

### **Empowering Through Livelihoods**

One aspect of the program that particularly resonates with Neema is its focus on livelihoods. Recognizing the importance of involving communities in shaping their own development agendas, Neema appreciates how the program's livelihood approach empowers individuals to define their priorities and strategies for sustainable growth. This inclusive methodology not only strengthens community resilience but also fosters a sense of ownership and self-reliance.

### **Bridging the Gap**

Volunteering has been the cornerstone of Neema's journey of personal growth and community impact within the Restless Development framework. Through her voluntary efforts, Neema found a platform to align her passion for advocating for young people with tangible action. Looking ahead, Neema aspires to leverage her experiences and expertise to advocate for youth issues on a larger scale. With a keen interest in media, she envisions using this platform to amplify the voices of young girls and fellow youth, advocating for their rights and holding leaders accountable.

Fuelled by her newfound confidence, Neema has begun to occupy spaces on national platforms, amplifying the voices of youth and advocating for meaningful change. She recognizes the challenges faced by young people in accessing vital information and opportunities, particularly in their engagement with local government authorities. Taking initiative, Neema actively seeks out information and opportunities, determined to bridge the gap between youth and governance structures





"Our journey towards progress begins with understanding our role as active citizens in shaping our collective destiny. The world may change, but our commitment to building a better future remains steadfast." - Pendo











# 9. Dianna-Rose Championing Youth Leadership

Dianna-Rose Lucian Materu, is a 21 year old young leader and entrepreneur from Dodoma, Tanzania, living in Chang'ombe Ward. Dianna's journey is a demonstration of resilience, determination, and the transformative power of youth empowerment.

### A Visionary from Early Years

Dianna began her educational journey at Mnadani Primary School and progressed to Miuyu Secondary School. Fueled by a vision to break stereotypes and pave the way for others, she pursued a Bachelor's degree in Economics and Statistics at the University of Dar es Salaam.

Dianna firmly believed that through education, she could stand tall and make a significant impact in her community, particularly in addressing the deprivation many girls faced like not having to go to school. Dianna was determined not to become a victim of these circumstances but, instead, to emerge as a hero and catalyst for positive change.

Since I was little, I wanted to be a businesswoman and be financially independent. But I knew I could only do that by going to school, getting a good education, learning about my rights, and then using what I learned to help other women and girls get educated too ~ Dianna Rose

Astonishingly, Dianna In her first year at university in 2020, she saved 200,000 Tanzanian Shillings from her student allowances to start her first business where she was selling shoes, bangles, earrings, and perfumes to her fellow students after sourcing these items in bulk from Kariakoo Market). She turned her initial savings into a total of 1,200,000 Tanzanian Shillings. With this money, she could afford to pay for her hostel, stationery, meals, and also save some in a bank account that earned interest.



As a young girl, business has taught me the true power of starting where you are with what you have. Fear tried to overpower me in the beginning, questioning my ability to do both school and business. But I refused to sleep on my dreams, I took that daunting step forward, it was not easy, but the courage to embrace uncertainty propelled me to keep going everyday ~ Dianna Rose

Social media can be a powerful tool for creating opportunities, just as it did for Dianna, it is through this platform she came across a Facebook post that introduced her to Restless Development. Intrigued, she sought more information from her local government office and joined the Kijana Wajibika Programme through ACC. Her goal was to contribute to positive change by empowering young girls to understand their rights and play a role in developing their communities.

Despite being an entreprenuer, Diana always understood that good governance, participating in democratic processes, information access and active participation in the community were crucial for her success, especially as a startup. She recognized that local policies could significantly impact her business, prompting her desire to deepen her understanding of governance. The Kijana Wajibika Programme, with its training on civic education, helped her immensely in this regard. It provided her with valuable knowledge about economic policies hence it was easier for her to get services and have relevant detailed information on business such as business registration, requirements for VAT ( Value Added Tax) thus was able to acquire a business licence from the Municipal. Through this training, Diana gained the confidence and competence to navigate the regulatory landscape, laying a strong foundation for her entrepreneurial journey.

## Advocating for Youth Participation in Governance

Having completed her civic education training through the Kijana Wajibika project, Dianna has been passionately advocating for the creation of inclusive spaces and mechanisms that facilitate meaningful youth participation in governance processes such as contesting for leadership roles, more representation of youth in decision making and community programs . She emphasises that governments, civil society organisations, and other stakeholders must ensure young people have access to information, opportunities for meaningful engagement, and platforms to voice their opinions and concerns.

Dianna believes that young people must have a seat at the decision–making table, with representation in key governance structures such as parliaments, local councils, and advisory bodies.

### **Advocating for Youth Participation in Governance**

The Kijana Wajibika Programme has significantly added value to Dianna's life, extending its impact far beyond civic engagement. Upon joining the ACC, Dianna underwent comprehensive training in Entrepreneurship, and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights. This training proved to be helpful to her, leading to a holistic improvement in her life. Not only did her daily sales experience a significant boost, but she also mastered her digital business strategies and effective competition management. Now, with the knowledge gained, she has secured a space in one of the largest markets in her town to sell clothes, paying rent from revenue generated from online sales thanks to ACC for supporting youth initiatives



Joining Kijana Wajibika Program, after a while, Dianna not only excelled as a business leader but also assumed leadership roles as the head of a youth savings group she found herself. She serves as the head of the Young Entrepreneurs Association in her region. Her commitment to fostering entrepreneurship among the youth has made a significant impact on the local business community. Under her guidance, the association has thrived as a vibrant hub for aspiring entrepreneurs, providing invaluable resources and mentorship.

My journey is a message of the remarkable impact of supporting young leaders in breaking barriers, creating opportunities, and inspiring change. To Restless Development, your support is instrumental in fostering stories like the one I am sharing with the world, shaping a future where youth power is the driving force of positive societal change ~ Dianna Rose

### Bridging Youth and Government: A Collaborative Effort with Restless Development and Action for Community Care

Highlighting a significant shift in youth engagement. Through the collaborative efforts of Restless Development, Action For Community Care and local government, a program has successfully reached 11 girls and 12 boys in Chang'ombe Ward, providing them with civic education and assigning tasks within the local government offices. This hands-on experience allows the youth to understand exactly how the government functions and whom to approach in their advocacy efforts.

"With the local government elections approaching, many of these young people are stepping up to run for office. We have to put more emphasis on creating spaces for young leaders and positioning them at the forefront of the development agenda" says Christina (Community Development Officer-Chamwino ward)

She further contemplated that, to disseminate valuable information to the youth, the local government has utilised local media, announcement boards, and community gatherings. This approach ensures that young people are informed, engaged, and ready to participate actively in their communities.

"The partnership between Restless Development and the local government demonstrates a strong commitment to empowering youth, fostering civic engagement, and preparing the next generation of leaders. This collaboration has not only provided educational opportunities but also encourages young people to take on leadership roles and contribute to the development of their communities" Christina.











# Inspiring Sustainable Development for Young People in Shinyanga

10. Youth and Women Emancipation (YAWE) Impacting Shinyanga

Youth and Women Emancipation (YAWE), a youth-led development agency committed to breaking down socio-economic and political barriers that hinder the realisation of the full potential of youth, children, and women was founded by a group of 17 passionate young individuals who recognized the dire need for platforms addressing the challenges faced by young people in their community, YAWE quickly became a catalyst for change.

From its inception, YAWE set out with a powerful vision: to create a society where empowered and responsible youth and women make informed decisions about their lives. Their mission was clear: to contribute to sustainable and inclusive development in Tanzania through education, mentorship, and innovative programs designed to enhance the well-being of youth and women.

YAWE's multifaceted approach encompassed four key program areas, each addressing critical issues: Climate Action & Environment: Recognizing the urgent need for environmental protection, Gender Equality & Child Protection through promoting gender-equitable, non-violent family relationships and strengthening child protection practices, Democracy & Good Governance: With a commitment to transparent and accountable democratic processes as they advocate for governance structures responsive to the needs of youth, women, and people with disabilities and Health and Nutrition ensuring access to gender-sensitive nutrition and healthcare services, while advocating for improved health-seeking behaviours.

### Fostering relevant partnerships

The journey of YAWE took a significant leap forward when it forged a partnership with Restless Development through the Kijana Wajibika Programme. Recognizing YAWE's potential as a local partner, Restless Development provided vital support in capacity-building, organisational development, and program implementation.





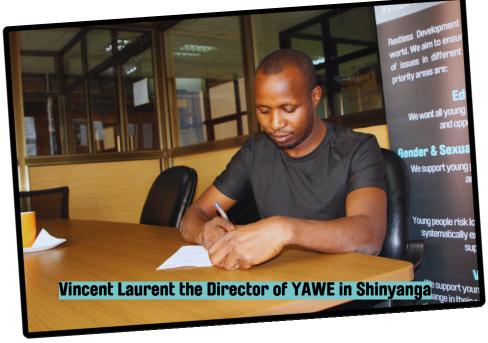






Through rigorous capacity assessments and tailored training sessions, YAWE identified and addressed critical organisational gaps, ranging from financial management to monitoring and evaluation. Equipped with enhanced skills and systems, YAWE swiftly secured funding for impactful projects, including initiatives focused on women's

empowerment and community development.



### The Remarkable Transformation

YAWE's board now boasts 3 out of 7 dynamic youth members, alongside a representative dedicated to advocating for persons with disabilities. Breaking gender norms, the organisation proudly employs more women than men, with a staff composition of 4 women and 3 men. Energised by youth leadership, 6 out of 10 program champions are inspiring young women, with 2 individuals representing the strength and resilience of persons with disabilities. As YAWE launches a groundbreaking program, the aim is to reach 60% of beneficiaries as women, while also challenging societal norms by actively engaging men in the pursuit of gender equality.

Embarking on a journey of collective action, YAWE has flamed a movement, connecting with over 50 youth-led organisations. Through the creation of youth sub-groups comprising 21 agencies, YAWE pioneers collaborations that harness the power of youth leadership. From engaging with government entities to spearheading fundraising efforts, YAWE leads the charge in advocacy work, establishing guidelines for youth government loans. At the forefront of collaboration, YAWE propels youth-focused initiatives to national prominence, advocating for the needs and aspirations of young people across various sectors.

### **Young Minds in Leadership Triumphing**

Amidst YAWE's success story, the threads of empowerment and transformation weave a vibrant narrative. Empowering a cohort of young minds in leadership, entrepreneurship, and civic education has been nothing short of a triumph. Among these bright spirits, one youth-led group in Shinyanga stands as a testament to possibility. Securing a coveted cleaning service tender with the esteemed Tanzania National Roads Agency (TANROADS) marked not only a triumph for the group but also a testament to the burgeoning trust and collaboration between youth and government. Their ongoing partnership with the Municipal in Shinyanga illuminates a path where mutual respect and shared goals pave the way for progress.

Through the Kijana Wajibika program, YAWE nurtured not only individual potential but also the organisational backbone like Edina and Elias. Establishing a culture of inclusivity, YAWE introduced weekly staff meetings, fostering a space where every voice resonates in decision-making. Furthermore, a revamped leadership structure, including a newly constituted board, ensured that relevant stakeholders were at the helm, steering YAWE towards meaningful growth.



At the heart of YAWE's ethos lies a commitment to youth representation and inclusivity. Recognizing gaps in disability programming and gender equality, YAWE embarked on a journey of transformation. Today, youth permeates every facet of the organisation, from boardrooms to management teams, catalysing change and driving progress. In a landscape once devoid of youth voices, their inclusion has become the cornerstone of YAWE's endeavours.

In the fertile soil of community development, seeds of change have taken root. Thanks to initiatives like the Development Committees championed by Restless Development, young voices now resonate in decision-making forums at the ward and village levels. Empowered by the Kijana Wajibika program, these young advocates are shaping policies and influencing decisions, signalling a promising future where youth play a pivotal role in driving change from the grassroots to the highest ranks of governance. This is how young people in Shinyanga have demonstrated true change

















11. Edina Cyprian Supporting Communities through Education and Inclusion

Edina Evodius Cyprian, a 25-year-old from Luende Street, Masekelo Ward in Shinyanga, has always been passionate about education and community development. Born and raised in Bugandikaji. Edina graduated from Misenyi Primary School and, in 2020, earned a certificate in education from Shinyanga Technical College. She then volunteered at Ngweando Secondary School, teaching Social Studies.

### **Overcoming Challenges and Pursuing Dreams**

Despite her ambitions, Edina faced significant challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic and lack of funding hindered her dream of opening a kindergarten. "I believed that proper education was the key to transforming my community and advocating for girls' rights," Edina explains. After a year-long gap due to budget constraints, she raised money from family members to continue her education, passing her qualifying tests and joining the Institute of Adult Education in Shinyanga.

Determined to make a difference, she opened a small centre to teach young mothers basic maths and literacy skills. To support her educational initiatives, Edina ventured into business, starting with a capital of 150,000 Tanzanian Shillings by selling fruits on special orders. With the profits, she expanded into selling women's clothes, travelling to Dar es Salaam to source products in bulk.

### Joining Kijana Wajibika

Edina's journey is a testament to resilience and determination. In 2022, she joined the Kijana Wajibika program after learning about it from her local government office. This program was a pivotal moment in her life.

"Juggling multiple businesses was challenging, but I was driven by the goal of opening my daycare centre," Edina says. Her perseverance paid off, and in 2022, she finally opened the centre."

Edina had long neglected many aspects of her community and, like many young people, she didn't know how to make a lasting impact. Initially, she envisioned change and development on a broader, national scale, unaware that true progress often begins at the grassroots level. She believed that local governance was the domain of older generations, not realising the significant role that young people like herself could play in fostering development within their own communities.









\* \* \*

### Tapping into the Potential of Young People in addressing community challenges

With the training from Kijana Wajibika Programme on inclusion, Edina emerged as a staunch advocate against victimisation and discrimination faced by young people with disabilities. Armed with knowledge and empowered by the program, she dedicated herself to challenging societal norms and policies that marginalised individuals based on their disabilities. Edina's journey involved tirelessly advocating for equal rights and opportunities, ensuring that young people with disabilities are not only included but also empowered to contribute meaningfully to their communities. Her efforts have sparked positive changes and increased awareness about disability rights, setting a powerful example of resilience and advocacy within her community.

"I always believed that people with disabilities have immense potential," Edina says. "Now, some of them are running their own small-scale businesses and making money to support their needs. Others have become professional sewers."

### **Expanding to Adult Education**

As the sky is not always the limit, Edna believes that education has no age limit, so she further extended her initiatives to establish a center to teach elders in her community. Situation revealed that many had not received proper education and lacked basic numeracy and literacy skills. She ensured this was possible and provided them with these essential skills, along with basic bookkeeping for business men and women.

"The change has been remarkable," Edina notes. "Seeing elders in my community gain confidence and improve their livelihoods through education is incredibly fulfilling."

### The Birth of the Day Care Centre

Remarkably, Edina saved up money from her adult training initiatives and carefully considered her next steps. Reflecting on her Kijana Wajibika notes, she decided to open a daycare centre, believing that early childhood education was crucial. She collaborated with the local government, conducted door-to-door campaigns, and obtained her licence to run the centre.

Edina's daycare centre now hosts 50 children, where she teaches them counting, reading, social studies, and sports. She has also provided employment opportunities for six young people as teachers, cooks, and nannies.

Edina credits much of her success to the comprehensive training she received from Restless Development. "The training on accountability, entrepreneurship, and meaningful youth engagement has been instrumental in helping me achieve my dreams," she says. "It provided me with the skills and confidence to tackle challenges head-on and create a lasting impact in my community."

The demand for Edina's daycare center is increasing daily, and she is looking forward to renting a new place to accommodate more children. She also plans to pursue a master's degree in education and open another daycare center.

"Education has the power to change lives. I want to continue making a difference, especially for young girls in my community," she says. Edina aims to advocate for education by influencing national education policies, ensuring that every child has access to quality education.



"One of the biggest challenges was gaining the trust of parents," Edina recalls. "But I didn't give up. I consulted local government authorities, and their support was invaluable in running the centre

effectively."- Edina

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"I believe that small actions can lead to big changes," says Inyasi. "The training I received from Restless Development opened my eyes to the importance of active citizenship and community service. By

volunteering at the local government office and leading cleanliness campaigns, I hope to inspire others to take pride in their community and work together for a better future."

Ilyasi Inyasi Gabriel Ally, a 29-year-old entrepreneur from Shinyanga, Masekelo ward,. Growing up, Inyasi always dreamed of running his own business. After completing his bachelor's degree, he quickly realized that securing employment was a daunting task. "Just like many graduates from universities in Tanzania, I thought getting a job after school would be easy," Inyasi reflects. However, reality proved otherwise, leaving him to care for his brother and fend for himself through various small businesses.

Ilyasi runs a small shop selling vegetables and fruits. Despite his determination, his business struggled due to his lack of management skills. Inyasi recalls, "It was tough managing the shop because I didn't have the necessary skills. The profits were low, and it was hard to sustain."

Despite his strong passion for business, he also had little to do with local governance. He believed his only interaction with local authorities was to obtain permits for his business and nothing more. Unaware of the numerous benefits and opportunities that could come from engaging with the local government, he missed out on valuable resources and support that could have helped him thrive as both an entrepreneur and an engaged citizen.

### A Turning Point: Joining Kijana Wajibika program through YAWE

In 2022, a turning point came when Inyasi joined Kijana Wajibika program. "I heard about the program through my local government office. Initially, I had no idea this would be a game-changer," he recalls. This decision marked the beginning of a transformative journey.

### **Transformative Training and New Ventures**

YAWE through the Kijana Wajibika program provided Ilyasi with comprehensive training in civic education , which he describes as transformative. The training included improving skills on civic education, and meaningful youth engagement, the impact of these training have been evident to Ilyasi as he has been able to understand how the local governance operates and how leadership manifests in young people's everyday lives.

Ilyasi's dedication to civic engagement has led him to gaining trust from decision makers and occasionally volunteers at the local government office in serving community members requiring government service. His responsibilities include managing a pool of citizen data, ensuring accurate and efficient record-keeping. Additionally, Ilyasi has taken the lead in organizing cleanliness campaigns every weekend, fostering a sense of community and promoting a healthier environment for all residents.

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On the other hand, Kijana Wajibika Programme equipped him with essential business management skills that have been crucial to his success. Through the program, Ilyasi learned effective strategies for running his business, from financial planning to customer engagement. This newfound knowledge not only bolstered his confidence but also significantly improved his business operations, leading to increased profits and sustainable growth. Thanks to Kijana Wajibika, Ilyasi has transformed from a passionate entrepreneur into a savvy business leader, driving both his personal success and contributing positively to his community.

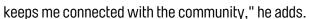
### **Advancing entrepreneurship skills and Managing Challenges**

Ilyasi through entrepreneurship training advanced skills in market research, financial management, and business development skills. Armed with new skills, he conducted thorough market research and identified opportunities and opened a sports TV building where he could show football matches for a fee. Additionally, he also ventured into the dry cleaning business.

"The training taught me the technicalities of managing a business, recording sales, and adding value to my services," Inyasi explains. "I learned how to analyze the market, which helped me make informed decisions."

Despite facing market fluctuations, Inyasi now manages his businesses more effectively. He makes a weekly profit of up to 70,000 Tanzanian Shillings from both ventures, which supports his brother and his ambitions. "The profits are now consistent, and I can support my brother and invest back into my businesses," he says.

On his free days, he also works as a motorcycle driver, offering commercial rides to earn extra income. "Driving the motorcycle not only helps me earn extra money but also















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"Youth engagement is crucial because it harnesses the energy, creativity, and potential of our young people. When we invest in their development, we are investing in the future of our community. Programs like Kijana Wajibika provide the tools and opportunities for young leaders to emerge, fostering a generation that is equipped to tackle challenges and create sustainable solutions."

"

"The Kijana Wajibika program has been a catalyst for empowering our youth. It's inspiring to see young people like Edina become leaders of transformative change in their communities. They are not just participants; they are innovators and drivers of progress." Tesha emphasises,



The power of grassroots activism and youth-led initiatives in Moshi.













Their story begins with a vision born out of necessity and fueled by passion. Founded in 1998 by inspired youth following a national youth forum in Mwanza, White Youth Orange quickly became a platform for action, a conduit through which the voices of the youth could be heard.

"We saw a need, and we answered the call," says John Kessy, Director White Youth Orange, reflecting on the organization's humble beginnings.



White Youth Orange has been steadfast in its mission to champion youth power and combat the spread of HIV/AIDS in Kilimanjaro Region in Tanzania.

Through a multifaceted approach, White Youth Orange is instrumental in bringing about tangible change within the community.

Education stands at the forefront of their strategies, as they tirelessly work to increase awareness of HIV/AIDS through sexual health education sessions and anti-AIDS clubs in primary schools. Their commitment extends to reaching marginalized groups, including deaf children, AIDS patients, and impoverished families in remote villages, tailoring educational events to suit diverse audiences.

Recognizing the influence of peer-to-peer interactions, White Youth Orange launched the "Training of Trainers" project, equipping young leaders with the skills to become effective peer educators. These empowered youth have emerged as catalysts for change, spreading vital information and fostering dialogue within their communities.

"We want more young people to come out, especially youth with disabilities to grab knowledge like the one provided by Kijana Wajibika but also youth to be more active in grabbing the opportunities available in their areas," asserts John Kessy, Director of White Youth Orange.

Through strategic partnerships with organizations like Restless Development, White Youth Orange (WYO) has significantly expanded its reach and impact. Participation in programs such as Kijana Wajibika program has empowered young volunteers, fostering active citizenship, leadership skills, and democratic engagement. WYO is particularly recognized for her dedication to gender equality and disability inclusion. This commitment is evident in their programs, including Kijana Wajibika, which have successfully integrated disability inclusion, making WYO the leading organization in reaching a large number of young people with disabilities in the Kijana Wajibika program. This success is partly due to WYO's active collaboration with The Tanzania Association of the Deaf (TAD) in Moshi. A notable example is Christina, a young person with a disability enrolled in the Kijana Wajibika program. She shares how her participation has profoundly changed her and her parents' perspectives on her abilities, showcasing the transformative power of WYO's inclusive approach.

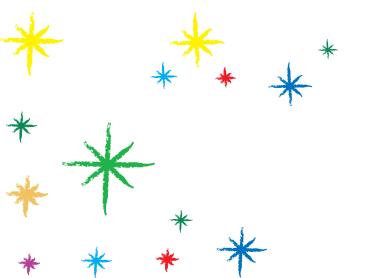
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"The program has enabled youth with disabilities to reach other youth in their communities, encouraging them to be more active participants in community work," remarks a spokesperson from White Youth Orange.

Before Kijana Wajibika training, my parents and community were unsure how to enable a disabled person to lead change. Now, they witness my evolution whereby I proudly work with The Tanzania Association of the Deaf (TAD), known as Chama cha Viziwi Tanzania (CHAVITA), and serve as Secretary for Women and Girls with Disabilities in Kilimanjaro Region."

The emphasis on inclusivity has ensured representation for all youth, including those with disabilities, fostering a culture of diversity and empowerment. As White Youth Orange continues to champion the youth agenda at both national and regional levels, their vision remains clear to inspire a new generation of active citizens, leaders, and advocates. Through collective effort and unwavering dedication, they pave the way for a brighter, healthier future for Tanzania's youth and communities alike





# 14. Young Pioneer and Community Leader Judith Maeda

Judith Steven Maeda, from Moshi, Kilimanjaro Region, is a young woman driven by a profound desire to make a difference. With a diploma in Community Development under her belt, Judith has set her sights on furthering her education by pursuing a degree in the same field. Her ultimate ambition is to become a political leader who advocates for children's and women's rights while representing and addressing the needs of the youth in her community.

### **Passion Meets Opportunity**

Judith's journey took new heights when she joined the Kijana Wajibika programme, a joint initiative by Restless Development and White Young Orange aiming to advocate for young people to take active roles in their communities and participate in decision–making processes

### **Rising Through the Ranks**

Judith's commitment and newfound skills shaped further her leadership journey. Being UVCCM ward secretary, a position that allows her to be a vocal advocate for young people, Judith has identified high youth unemployment rates and gone further to create a plan to champion the youth agendas, such as advocating for fair interest rates on government loans intended for young people.

"Kijana Wajibika has inspired me to develop the true leadership skills needed to aim higher," Judith reflects. "I am now more aware, encouraged, and have experienced a mindset shift. I see the solutions we need in our community and feel empowered to create them, rather than waiting for others to take action."

### A Ripple Effect of Change

Judith's story is not just about her personal growth; it is about the broader impact she has on her community. Her active involvement and leadership have inspired more young people to step up and engage in their communities. By seeing Judith's success, they too believe that they can be the change-makers their communities need.



"Since joining, I've noticed a significant increase in young people voicing their needs in community meetings and various decision—making platforms. This change is even more pronounced among girls, who are now more actively engaged in these spaces."—







### The Future

As Judith continues her education and further sharpens her leadership skills, her vision for the future remains clear: to inspire and mobilize young people, especially girls, to participate actively in community development and decision-making processes. She dreams of a society where young voices are heard and valued, and where young people can shape their future and address the challenges they face.

Judith's journey from a passionate student to a community leader exemplifies the transformative power of education, opportunity, and determination. Her story is a validation to the fact that with the right support and mindset, young people can indeed drive meaningful change in their communities.

### Inspiring Youth in Moshi: Changes Seen Through the Kijana Wajibika Programme



encouraging young people to engage actively in their communities. Today, youth in Moshi are more informed and vocal about their agendas, participating in community meetings and contributing to regional decision-making processes. This newfound engagement has paved the way for a more inclusive approach to local governance, ensuring that the voices of young people are heard and considered in shaping their futures - Dennis

expresses

Since 2017, Dennis Robert, a dedicated Youth Development officer in Moshi Municipal, has been at the forefront of a transformative movement, with Restless Development in the Kijana Wajibika Programme. This initiative has significantly shaped the lives of numerous young people in Moshi, fostering a culture of volunteerism, leadership, and economic progress.

The Kijana Wajibika Programme has not only enhanced the skills of young people but also encouraged them to form peer groups, thereby extending the reach of knowledge and growth. Through this initiative, many youth have taken on various leadership roles, from local positions such as Secretary General (Katibu Wakuu), Councilors in regional contexts to national elections, highlighting their abilities and resolve. This shift has been a powerful testament to Restless Development's impact, motivating more young people to step forward boldly into leadership roles.

A particularly heartening development has been the support of young people with disabilities (PWD) in Moshi. Before the pandemic, many Young PWDs in the region primarily sold their products within the hospitality sector, but the market downturn severely affected their livelihoods. The Kijana Wajibika Programme's training sessions have equipped these young entrepreneurs with new skills and strategies, enabling them to tap into broader markets. As a result, many PWDs in Moshi are now not only able to sustain themselves but are also thriving economically, breaking chains and redefining their place in the community. The success stories emerging from the Kijana Wajibika Programme highlight the transformative power of education, mentorship, and community engagement. Dennis Robert and his team, in collaboration with Restless Development and White Youth Orange, have not just motivated youth; they have sparked a movement of change, making Moshi a symbol of youth leadership and economic growth. As the programme continues to expand, the future looks promising, with young people at the forefront, driving progress and fostering a dynamic, inclusive community.







# 15. The Impact of Okoa New Generation in Arusha

Okoa New Generation (ONG) has been a source of hope and change since its establishment in 2014. This Tanzanian, non-governmental organization, headquartered in Arusha's Kijenge area, is dedicated to uplifting the lives of those living below the poverty line, with a special focus on women, youth, children, and people with disabilities (PWDs). Through a blend of strong governance, transparent financial practices, and robust partnerships with various stakeholders, ONG has positively influenced countless lives across the nation

ONG's mission is clear: to promote inclusive socio-economic development and the rights-based participation of marginalized communities for sustainable growth. Their vision—a just, democratic, and inclusive society free from poverty—guides every initiative they undertake. The organization's approach is rooted in inclusivity and support, ensuring that all beneficiaries are actively involved in shaping their futures.

### **Educating and Advocating for Change**

ONG's efforts in gender and sexual reproductive health rights have been particularly effective. By building the capacity of grassroots groups, ONG has significantly increased gender awareness and worked tirelessly to eradicate harmful practices like female genital mutilation (FGM) and early marriages. Their comprehensive support system includes free legal aid services and extensive community outreach through seminars, advocacy campaigns, and focused discussions, ensuring justice and swift resolution for violence against women, girls, and children.

### **Enhancing Livelihoods and Economic Independence**

In the realm of livelihood and economic development, ONG has been instrumental in supporting women, youth, PWDs, and adolescent girls. By helping these groups establish and strengthen their governance structures, ONG provides essential training in life skills and enterprise development. Their tailored support includes market assessments, business planning, financial literacy training, and access to financial institutions, enabling beneficiaries to start and sustain their businesses confidently. Through strategic advocacy, ONG also influences local government policies to create a conducive environment for economic growth and equality.

### **Leveraging Digital Platforms for Economic Growth**

Recognizing the power of digital technology, ONG has equipped young people with the skills to utilize social media for economic gain. This digital literacy has opened new avenues for youth to market their goods and services, enhancing their economic independence and community engagement.



Leadership with a Smile: The director of Okoa New Generation smiles reflecting the joy and hope brought by our community support and empowerment initiatives — Neema, OKOA New Generation Executive



### **Supporting Governance and Civic Engagement**

ONG's and Restless Development Partnership through Kijana Wajibika Programme has committed to enhancing governance, accountability, and civic participation reshaping community dynamics with young people. By training youth, women, and PWDs to engage with government structures, the collaboration enables them to track and report on service availability, organize forums, and participate actively in decision-making processes. This has led to a notable increase in leadership roles taken by young people, such as Sharifa Mziray and Rhema Shabani, who have risen to significant positions within their political parties. These leaders are now at the forefront, advocating with other peers for cleaner communities and better local governance.

The partnership with Restless Development has further strengthened ONG's capacity. Through this collaboration, ONG has gained valuable insights into organizational development, governance, and leadership, enhancing their ability to deliver impactful programs and support programmes beneficiaries effectively – Neema Okoa New Generation Director shares

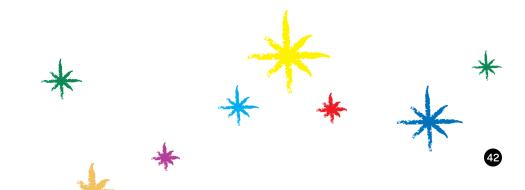


building, and community engagement.

### **ONG's Call to Action**

At the core of ONG's philosophy is a strong commitment to inclusion, particularly for PWDs, who remain one of the most marginalized groups in society. The director of Okoa New Generation urges all stakeholders to emphasize the importance of including PWDs in all aspects of community development and decision–making processes.

Through dedicated effort and a comprehensive approach to support, Okoa New Generation continues to make significant strides toward a more just, inclusive, and prosperous Tanzania. The organization's story is one of change, proving that when communities are supported, they can achieve remarkable results.



### 16. Emanuel Mollel: From Cancer Survivor to Community Leader

Emanuel reflects, "I appreciated the knowledge gained. I now see a lot of change in young people in my community; many had no knowledge about the importance of attending community meetings or being at the forefront of driving meaningful change through **M**these decision-making platforms."

Emanuel Mollel, born in the Arusha region, is the fifth of ten children in his family. His early years were mostly spent in boarding schools, continuing through to his university studies. Emanuel holds a diploma in Accountancy and, while his early ambition was to become a doctor, his dreams evolved towards accounting and politics.

Emanuel's journey was profoundly shaped by his battle with cancer, a challenge that required significant financial support. He was fortunate to receive sponsorship throughout his education, which enabled him to overcome these financial hardships and pursue his studies.

In 2022, Emanuel joined the Kijana Wajibika Programme, a collaboration between Restless Development and Okoa New Generation. Eager to enhance his skills, he embraced the training in Leadership, Civic Knowledge, Democracy, and Entrepreneurship, among other areas.

Emanuel's participation in the Kijana Wajibika Programme motivated his interest in leadership. He has since then attended various local government meetings and has been selected as a political leader as the chairman of the UVCCM youth unionand a member of the CCM general meeting in Arusha. in his community.

He shares, "My journey in leadership gained momentum after joining the Kijana Wajibika Programme. I was honored to be elected as the chairman of the UVCCM youth union branch and a member of the CCM general meeting in Arusha. I am now focused on reaching new heights in leadership, with the dream of one day becoming the President."

As a young leader, Emanuel has taken the initiative to encourage more young people to engage with local government authorities. He states, "I am committed to supporting my community by guiding young people to explore various opportunities, such as government loans and enlistment in the JKT ( Jeshi La Kujenga Taifa (Army) programs. Through my efforts, I hope to continue driving positive change and helping my peers seize the opportunities available to them."

17. Rehema Mziray An Established Leader Realizes the Power of Leadership as a Platform for Change

Rehema Mziray, born and raised in Arusha, Tanzania, is the eldest of three siblings. Despite the challenges of growing up in poverty and only completing her education up to form six, Rehema's dreams and determination were never limited. From an early age, she envisioned herself in various roles, from a soldier to a businessperson, driven by the fear of remaining in the cycle of poverty.

### A Defining Moment in Rehema's Leadership Path

Her journey took a significant turn when she became involved with Restless Development in partnership with Okoa New Generation Kijana Wajibika Programme. They were recruiting young people for the Kijana Wajibika Programme, aimed at training youth in leadership, civic engagement, and entrepreneurship. Before this, Rehema was already actively volunteering at the local government office, engaging in initiatives for youth development through the UVCCM Youth Community. This role provided her with valuable insights and connections, particularly while working with the government executive secretary in her area. Upon joining the Kijana Wajibika Project, Rehema received extensive training in leadership, civic engagement, youth participation, and entrepreneurship.

### **Fueling Her Leadership Passion**

Her pre-existing interest in leadership was further stirred, and she was particularly drawn to developing her entrepreneurial skills to go with. The training equipped her with the tools to effectively use her voice to champion the youth agenda.

After the Kijana Wajibika Training, Rehema, alongside other youth participants, actively sought dialogue opportunities with key leaders. They engaged with the youth chairperson from the Regional Commissioners Office and participated in dialogue platforms at various events, including one of the East Africa Community events. They continued to use meetings with Ward Executives and other community leaders to voice concerns and hold government leaders accountable.

"Many issues raised in these conversations have been addressed because we are not just voicing opinions but are also leaders ensuring we participate and take action on the raised issues," Rehema shares.

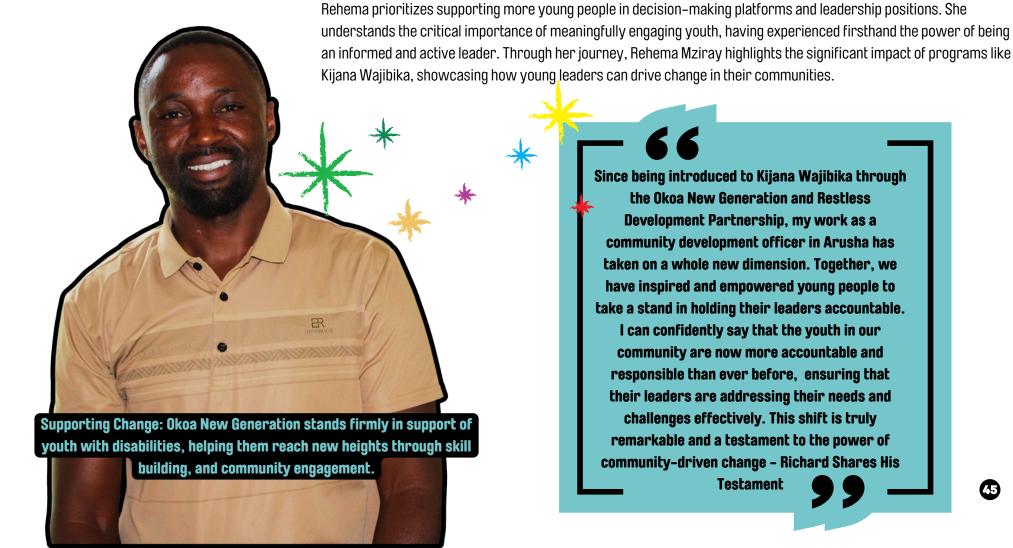


of young people," Rehema expresses.

### **Demonstrating Outstanding Leadership in Her Community**

Today, Rehema continues her leadership roles as the secretary to the local government office in Sekei, Sanawari Street, Arusha. She is also a party leader youth secretary representing the Sekei branch and a member of the local chairperson in her area. In these decision-making platforms, Rehema ensures that the voices of young people are well represented.

"Before Kijana Wajibika, holding a leadership position was merely decorative. Now, I fully participate and engage in all leadership spaces. It has even helped us identify the power of seeking information on various opportunities available for young people," Rehema states.







# 18. Shambani Solutions Transforming Youth in Rural Communities

Shambani Solutions' work is encompasses a wide range of activities aimed at driving sustainable development. From training and consultancy to youth engagement in agriculture, ICT initiatives, rural development projects, and business coaching, the organisation leaves no stone unturned in its quest to uplift communities.

"Our approach is deeply rooted in community-based projects and advocacy," Johnson explains, leaning forward with emphasis. "We believe in equipping young people with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive, thereby reducing poverty and improving livelihoods."

The impact of Shambani Solutions' work reverberates far and wide, touching the lives of countless individuals in rural areas. Through innovative methods and unwavering dedication, the organisation has become a shining example of what is possible when passion meets purpose.

Shambani Solutions also plays a crucial role in facilitating market access for these young entrepreneurs, ensuring they receive fair prices and can compete effectively. Ultimately, our aim is to help them create sustainable livelihoods that contribute to their economic independence and community development.

"We now feel a sense of pride. Our journey has been challenging, but it's also been incredibly rewarding, "And as long as there are communities in need of support, we'll be here, ready to make a difference." - Executive Director

### **Shambani Solutions: A Vision for Rural Transformation**

In 2020, Shambani Solutions formed a strategic partnership with Restless Development to implement the Kijana Wajibika Programme. This initiative is designed to empower young people, placing them at the centre of development processes and ensuring they play a crucial role in holding the government accountable.

"I am proud to say that our partnership with Restless Development has been nothing short of transformative and accountable. Together, we've witnessed profound changes in the lives of many young Tanzanians. Through our comprehensive training programs, we're equipping them with essential skills for both personal and professional growth"

The transformative impact of these programs cannot be overstated. Young participants have not only acquired vital skills but also gained confidence and self-reliance. They are now more aware of their rights and responsibilities, advocating for their priorities and the community at large. Moreover, they have developed critical business skills, enabling them to manage their ventures effectively and sustainably as it has always been a need for the majority of young people in rural areas



the better - - Johnson.





### Comprehensive Training Programs: Building Future Leaders

Shambani solutions has witnessed young people like Joseph and Khadija driving significant change. By taking the initiative to make tangible differences, they have transformed from victims of circumstances into champions of change. Through agribusiness, they have achieved economic stability and taken up leadership roles, becoming meaningfully engaged in their communities. Their efforts not only set a precedent for other young people but also demonstrate the profound impact of youth-driven change and community involvement.

# 19. From Farm Boy to Agripreneur: Joseph's Tale with Shambani

**Solutions** 



Joseph Nicodemus Dominick is a young leader and agripreneur from Manyara, Tanzania. His story is a testament to the power of determination, education, and community support., Joseph has transformed his life from being a farm boy to a thriving agripreneur and a young leader. His journey, marked by resilience and a commitment to empower his community, serves as a beacon of hope for young people in his community.

### A Challenging Beginning:

Joseph's life took a challenging turn early on. He was forced to put his dreams of higher education on hold when his parents couldn't afford to pay for his school fees. Instead, he had to take up various farm jobs to support his family. This experience as a farm boy instilled in him a deep work ethic and a desire for change. On the other hand, Joseph initially was not an active citizen in his community and lacked awareness of how the local government worked and the benefits it could offer him. His understanding of civic engagement and the opportunities available through local governance was limited, leaving him disconnected from the potential advantages of being an involved community member.

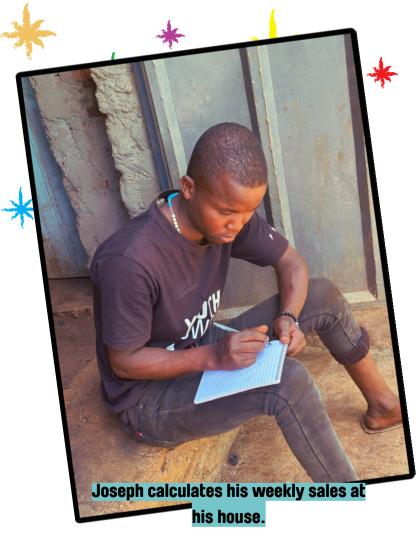






### Joining Kijana Wajibika program

In 2020, Joseph's life took a promising turn when he heard about Restless Development through Kijana Wajibika program which was recruiting young people through his Village office in Halla, through Shambani Solutions as part of Kijana Wajibika Program that empowers young people to take a central role in shaping development and government processes, ensuring they play a key part in holding the government accountable and promoting responsiveness. He was then recruited for the opportunity and successfully joined the program as a Young Leader. It was through this platform that he was introduced to civic education, meaningful youth engagement, Accountability and agribusiness, an area that had always piqued his interest but lacked the confidence and skills to pursue.



### **Encouraging Youth Participation in Local Elections**

Joseph, empowered by the training he received from Kijana Wajibika, champions the active involvement of young people in local government elections. He firmly believes that youth leadership at the local level is vital for safeguarding their welfare, as it directly influences their daily lives.

"Local government authority elections tackle the immediate issues our communities face, serving as a catalyst for grassroots change," Joseph explains. "While local government authority might seem removed from central power, the impact of small-scale changes is profound."

As the saying goes, charity begins at home but should not end there; small changes can be the seeds of larger transformations. Joseph stresses that young people's active engagement in local politics can amplify their collective voice, ensuring their concerns and needs are addressed effectively.

Joseph underscores the importance of the bottom-up approach in local government authority elections. "This approach elevates the true voice of the people," he says. "It empowers communities to shape their own destinies, with grassroots decisions ultimately influencing the national landscape."

### **Pursuing His Passion:**

Apart from being a young leader, Joseph did not neglect his dream of becoming an agripreneur. He continued to pursue his passion through Shambani Solution, an innovative venture that underscores his commitment to agribusiness and sustainable development.

Joseph's transformation began with the knowledge and skills he acquired through training in agribusiness. He used his hard-earned savings from his farm work to purchase a piece of land for TZS 5,000,000. On this land, he began cultivating tomatoes, cabbages, vegetables, and bananas. With newfound confidence and expertise, his farming venture became remarkably successful.



"Honestly, my life took a completely different turn since I encountered the Shambani solution. I had some savings, but my lack of confidence in diving headfirst into agriculture held me back, as those savings were all I had. However, after the three days of training, I found the confidence to take the leap, and I knew I had to give

it a shot and I am proud that I did." - Joseph

### **Pursuing His Passion:**

Joseph's journey in agriculture isn't isn't without challenges. Climate change, particularly unreliable rains, threatens the quality and quantity of his produce, making it challenging to compete in the market. In response, Joseph became a champion against this crisis. He invested in drip irrigation, a water-efficient method that delivers precise amounts of water directly to plant root zones. This technology reduced water wastage, minimised evaporation, and improved crop yield, despite the changing climate.

"Climate change is undeniably real, and I've witnessed its impact on my life. If we continue down this path, in five years, the consequences will be dire. Rather than being a mere keyboard activist, I've taken the initiative to become a role model, championing sustainable farming practices to ensure that the land we inherited from our grandfathers remains bountiful for generations to come." – Joseph

### Taking his Community with him

Joseph's journey is far from over. He now earns up to TZS 200,000 from selling his produce, and his market is expanding beyond Babati Town Market to neighbouring regions like Arusha and Singida. He aspires to scale his business further by acquiring a larger piece of land and starting a factory to process and package his produce, adding value and creating employment opportunities for his community.

Joseph is not only an agripreneur but also a passionate advocate of sustainable farming and efficient water use. He shares his knowledge with other farmers, helping them adapt to the changing climate. He's not just building a successful life but also his own house, all from the earnings of his agriculture venture.

In his free time, Joseph enjoys playing draft with his peers and uses these moments to encourage them to explore the world of agriculture using his own story as a shining example of how one individual's determination and resilience can drive positive change in their community.



# 20. Khadija Embracing Opportunities With Shambani Solution

From her modest beginnings in Manyara, Tanzania, to her remarkable ascent as a leader and entrepreneur, Khadija's journey with Restless Development serves as a powerful testament to the impact of empowerment.

Despite societal norms dictating traditional gender roles, Khadija nurtured aspirations of leadership from a young age. However, familial beliefs posed significant challenges, with prevailing notions suggesting that girls were unsuited for leadership roles. On the another note Khadija lacked basic citizenship and civic skills, leaving her with little understanding of how the local government functioned. She was unaware of the leadership and political structures in place, which hindered her ability to effectively participate in and benefit from community governance.

### **Secondary School Leadership and Community Engagement:**

Undeterred by societal expectations, Khadija emerged as a leader during her secondary school years. Leading initiatives such as the national torch race committee, she rallied her peers to undertake various community projects, demonstrating her unwavering commitment to positive change.

Khadija confronted financial instability and familial resistance head-on, charting her own path to success. Through determination and perseverance, she overcame obstacles, taking on short-term farm jobs and eventually establishing her own banana-selling business.

### Embracing Opportunities with Shambani Solutions in partnership with Restless Development

Khadija's journey took a transformative turn when she encountered a volunteer from Shambani Solutions conducting sensitization for the Kijana Wajibika Program. Intrigued by the prospect of growth, she joined the program, undergoing training in entrepreneurship and governance, which broadened her horizons and enhanced her business acumen.

At times, you must venture beyond your comfort zone. I departed from home with the aim of transforming my community. Pursuing my dream demanded perseverance and dedication. I aspired to become an agent of change, recognizing the misconceptions prevalent among my family and community due to limited education. Thus, I prioritised establishing my own path to demonstrate the potential of girls when provided with support and opportunities ~ Khadija













The trainings I received from Shambani solution together with Restless Development were truly a blessing. They transformed me and equipped me with invaluable skills in various aspects of business. Now, I can effectively manage my businesses with confidence ~ Khadija

### **Catalyzing Entrepreneurial Growth and Advocacy:**

Empowered by newfound knowledge, Khadija propelled her business to unprecedented heights. Through strategic investments and sustainable agricultural practices, she not only achieved financial success but also became a fervent advocate for environmental conservation and responsible land management

### **Returning to Leadership and Making a Community Impact:**

Buoyed by her achievements, Khadija reclaimed her role as a leader, securing a position in the Regional National Torch Committee. Leveraging her influence, she spearheaded vital community projects, including the establishment of a much-needed hospital, epitomising her dedication to serving her community.

Khadija is a remarkable figure in governance leadership and advocacy, deeply engaged in decision-making processes within her local community. She diligently follows up on commitments made by local leaders, ensuring that these promises are implemented effectively. Through her efforts, Khadija constantly reminds other young people of their power to bring about change, inspiring them to take an active role in their communities. This year, empowered by the civic education she received from the program, Khadija will be running for local government elections to represent the youth. Her candidacy underscores her dedication to ensuring that young voices are heard and their concerns addressed, highlighting the transformative impact of the program on her journey.

"Young people have the power to shape the future of our communities, and it's time we take our place at the decision-making table"

Khadija's journey is far from over. With aspirations of expanding her agricultural enterprise and championing sustainable development, she sets her sights on the upcoming 2024 localgovernment elections in Tanzania, poised to continue her legacy of leadership and transformative change.







In my community, accessing healthcare meant travelling long distances. However, I rallied fellow young people to unite and advocate for the establishment of a hospital. Together, as a unified force, we proved unstoppable, showcasing the power of collective youth action. Our efforts contributed significantly to the construction of this hospital, marking it as one of my most significant achievements in advocacy ~ Khadija

#### **Returning to Leadership and Making a Community Impact:**

Kidawa Abadi, an assistant registrar at Non-Governmental Organisations in Babati Council, has witnessed firsthand the transformative impact of the Kijana Wajibika program on the youth in her community. Reflecting on the program's success, she shared her insights with a mixture of pride and optimism.

"One of the most remarkable changes in how young people have gained self-awareness and a deep understanding of their role in the community."

Before the program's implementation, it was rare to see young people attending village meetings or public gatherings to learn about government and national issues that matter to them. They were disconnected, But now, they actively participate, contribute, and become guardians of their community. They receive civic education and foster a sense of patriotism.

Economic empowerment has been another significant benefit. Young people in Babati have joined agricultural and business ventures, bolstering their economic status both individually and in that of their families. They've formed savings and credits groups,

"They've also learned about loan opportunities from banks that offer interest-free or low-interest credits, like CRDB. we have connected them to all these opportunities and This knowledge is transforming their lives."

However, Kidawa believes there's still room for improvement. "To further support the youth, we need to focus on economic empowerment.

The youth face unique challenges," she acknowledged. "So, we must find effective strategies to reach them. Utilising sports, visiting local hangouts, and addressing their specific needs can make a big difference.



# A Better Future For Youth With Disabilities in Bukoba





## 21. The Role of UWASHEMU

UWASHEMU, a dedicated NGO, aims to build the capacity of women and children by creating awareness of their rights and providing legal services and health to the community, particularly to those who have no access to these crucial rights. The organisation's primary objectives are to eliminate violations of women's and children's fundamental rights by creating legal awareness through seminars, training, workshops, and the dissemination of brochures and other related Information, Education, and Communication materials. They also provide legal aid, and appropriate referrals to higher legal institutions. Additionally, UWASHEMU is deeply engaged in the promotion provision of health education,

especially for vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant women, and the elderly.

Allen, the Executive Director, at UWASHEMU, passionately advocates for expanding their initiatives to empower more young people and broaden their societal impact. Through their collaboration with Restless Development on the Kijana Wajibika programme, UWASHEMU has been able to significantly enhance their capacity and outreach.

"We must scale our projects to reach a larger number of young people," Allen asserted firmly. He emphasised their proactive approach in integrating young people with disabilities, recognizing their immense potential often overlooked by society.

### **Strengthening Youth Engagement and Impact**

"Our partnership with Restless Development has not only strengthened our internal and external operations but has also deepened our understanding of meaningful youth engagement," Allen explained. "This understanding is crucial for effectively delivering impactful programs that truly resonate with young people's needs and aspirations."

Through the Kijana Wajibika programme, UWASHEMU has been able to implement a range of activities, like civic education and disability inclusion training that have helped young people have become acutely aware of governance structures, empowering them to take active roles in their communities. These trainings have been particularly transformative for young people with disabilities, enabling them to lead and work effectively alongside their peers. By understanding how local government functions, these young people can now engage in meaningful civic activities, advocate for their rights, and hold leaders accountable.

Moreover, these programs have cultivated essential leadership qualities among all participants, fostering a generation of young leaders ready to address community challenges and drive sustainable development. As a result, young people with disabilities are not only included but are also at the forefront of initiatives, proving that with the right support and education, they can significantly contribute to community change.



Allen says, "Young people deserve a seat at the decision-making table respectively. It is imperative for governments and stakeholders to ensure youth representation in pivotal governance structures like parliaments, local councils, and advisory bodies. By integrating youth perspectives into policymaking, we can ensure their voices are heard

and their insights contribute to effective governance."







"We are proud of the progress we've made, and we're excited to see what the future holds for these young leaders," Allen concluded. The partnership between UWASHEMU and Restless Development exemplifies the power of collaboration in fostering youth empowerment and creating a better future for vulnerable communities especially youth with Disabilities It is through Kijana Wajibika interventions UWASHEMU has been able to play an active role in ensuring inclusion of young people with disability and has witnessed a change through young people like Zulfa and the ability to lead change in their communities

### **Strengthening Youth Engagement and Impact**

Young people like Astrida and Zulfa exemplify the power of youth leadership. These two have risen to national prominence, advocating for inclusivity and equality for all. They are now relied upon by their local government authorities to consult and resolve issues such as family and land conflicts. Through agribusiness and livestock keeping, Astrida and Zulfa have taken full charge of their lives, securing their incomes and successfully making ends meet

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# 22. Astrida Anthony Supporting Youth Power and Reproductive Health

Astrida Kokulyenga Anthony, a 30-year-old girl from Magata village in Muleba district, Bukoba. She completed her secondary education at Kishoju Secondary School and her passion has always been serving her community driven by her passion to champion for sexual and reproductive health education and leadership. Her dedication to health and education was recognized by the Ministry of Health, which selected her as a Community Health Worker. In this role, she provided crucial sexual and reproductive health education to young girls and first-time mothers, covering topics such as safe sex, family planning, and gender-based violence.

Astrida's outstanding work led to her selection by the Ministry of Community Development as a young campaigner, advocating for safe spaces for young people to discuss sexual and reproductive health and rights. She even represented young people's concerns in the Tanzanian parliament, particularly on issues related to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

One of her notable achievements was her involvement in national campaigns that successfully advocated for the return of young mothers to school after a ban, allowing them to continue their formal education.





### Joining Kijana Wajibika program

One of the significant obstacles Astrida faced in her leadership journey was her lack of awareness about being an accountable citizen and understanding citizens' rights. It was often considered taboo for people to even approach leaders, instilling fear and hesitation. Astrida aspired to overcome this barrier, aiming to collaborate with local leaders to cocreate solutions for challenges faced by young people, such as unemployment. Her determination to bridge the gap between youth and leadership fueled her drive to make a meaningful impact in her community.

"Joining the Kijana Wajibika Programme was a significant milestone for me," Astrida reflects. "It provided the training and support I needed to make a tangible

impact in my community."



Astrida dreams of becoming a member of parliament to further her leadership journey and continue advocating for education and youth empowerment at the national level.

"I envision a future where every young person has the opportunity to thrive," Astrida concludes. "I'm committed to this journey and to making a lasting impact." In April 2023, she joined the Kijana Wajibika Programme. Hearing about the Restless Development and Kijana Wajibika Programme through her active involvement with the local government, Astrida eagerly joined. She received training on civic education including understanding her rights and responsibilities and meaningful youth engagement strategies, which equipped her to take various initiatives in her community. With that knowledge, Astrida has successfully been organising sessions in football grounds and schools, educating young people on civic rights and encouraging them to become active citizens. She also shared with them information on various

### **Breaking Stereotypes and Leading Change**

Astrida has always kept the momentum. Coming from a community where girls are often deprived of their rights and not trusted to lead, Astrida has made it her mission to break these stereotypes. She currently serves as a youth representative at the Teachers Association of Tanzania and represents young people at the UVCCM (youth union of the ruling political party).

"Women can lead, and I'm here to fight that stereotype," Astrida asserts. "We have to prove that girls and women can be strong leaders."

Astrida has faced challenges, including being clashed by local government leaders when holding them accountable for their promises. Despite the difficulties, she remains undeterred.

"In leadership, not everyone will like you, especially when you demand accountability and justice," Astrida says. "But change never comes easily, and I am determined to handle these challenges."





# 23.Zulfa's Story



Zulfa Atungaza Suleiman, a 28-year-old leader and individual living with a disability, from Bukoba, Tanzania, Zulfa's journey began like that of any other child. However, from a young age, Zulfa harboured a deep-seated desire to advocate for the rights of young people and women. Her passion for ensuring their understanding of civic rights and fostering their active participation in community development initiatives ignited during her formative years in primary school, setting her on a path of purposeful leadership and social change.

I believe that true leadership is not about the title we hold but the impact we make in the lives of others ~ Zulfa

### A Visionary Leader from Childhood:

From her early years at Mgeza Msato Primary School, Zulfa displayed remarkable leadership qualities. As head girl, she spearheaded various initiatives, from organising community clean-ups to advocating for student representation in the school parent's teachers committees. Recognizing the power of knowledge exchange, she pioneered programs like sports binanzas fostering collaboration between neighbouring schools, ultimately enhancing student performance at her school.

### **Facing Challenges with Courage:**

Zulfa's journey took a challenging turn during her time at Rugambwa Secondary School when she was struck by paralysis in her right leg. Despite enduring excruciating pain and setbacks, Zulfa's spirit remained unbroken. Even as she walked with poles for support and battled doubts about her future, she excelled academically, and passed in her Certificate of Secondary School examination.

My leg paralysis was undeniably one of the biggest challenges of my life. I missed countless classes, faced the change in treatment from childhood friends, and endured the whispers of bewitchment from some community members, even doubting I would make it alive. But my dreams needed me. I had to keep going, not knowing the outcome, yet embracing the uncertainty that made every step of the way exciting ~ Zulfa

As Zulfa's journey unfolds, her dream remains unwavering: to serve as a paralegal and entrepreneur, tirelessly advocating for marginalised communities and fostering sustainable development. With gratitude in her heart, she extends her heartfelt appreciation to Restless Development for their unwavering support throughout her remarkable journey.

### **Joining Kijana Wajibika program**

My leg paralysis was undeniably one of the biggest challenges of my life. I missed countless classes, faced the change in treatment from childhood friends, and endured the whispers of bewitchment from some community members, even doubting I would make it alive. But my dreams needed me. I had to keep going, not knowing the outcome, yet embracing the uncertainty that made every step of the way exciting ~ Zulfa

Zulfa has been instrumental in resolving critical issues in her community, including sensitive cases such as gender-based violence (GBV). For example, she intervened successfully in a case involving a mother experiencing GBV, providing vital legal assistance and support to ensure the safety and well-being of the family. Her proactive approach and dedication to justice have had a profound impact, offering crucial support to vulnerable individuals and families facing such challenges.

I grew up in a community where I witnessed women facing challenges, deprived of land ownership rights and excluded from decision-making processes at both family and local government levels. The relationship between young people and local authorities was fraught with tension. I was driven to be part of the solution because I firmly believe that true people-centred development can only be achieved through collective cooperation, with each individual playing their part ~ Zulfa

Nevertheless, Zulfa's pursuit of education continued unabated, leading her to the University of Arusha, where she pursued a diploma in Information and Communication Technology. Refusing to let her disability hinder her ambitions, she ventured into the workforce as an IT officer before charting her path as an

entrepreneur.

### A Call to Serve: Joining Kijana Wajibika Program

In 2022, destiny intervened when Zulfa received a phone call from UWASHEMU, a Paralegal Office for Legal Aid Assistants collaborating with Restless Development. Impressed by her unwavering commitment to activism, she was introduced to Kijana Wajibika program, embarking on a transformative journey of training in Civic Education and Entrepreneurship.

Armed with newfound knowledge and passion on civic education, entrepreneurship and disability education Zulfa started on a mission to empower the youth to take up leadership roles in her community and become more active citizens which has underscored the belief that they are the centre of development. That has led to a stronger relationship between young people and the local government. Encouraged to seek information from local authorities, young people now confidently express their views and contribute to shaping local policies. This dynamic has led to a more inclusive and responsive local governance structure, where the voices of the youth are heard and valued, driving positive change and development in their communities.



As women, we cannot overlook the significance of financial resources in the fight for gender equality. I yearned for independence, refusing to rely on anyone, which is why I ventured into entrepreneurship. At times, I utilise my personal income to travel to various locations and

conduct empowerment sessions ~ Zulfa







### 24. Acknowledging young people initiatives: A Council Member's Perspective

Kijana Wajibika has garnered significant attention, even from decision-makers who have observed the program's transformative impact firsthand. By integrating civic education with entrepreneurship, the initiative has profoundly influenced the behaviours and attitudes of young people. Muhaji shares his insights on this remarkable shift, emphasising how the program has empowered youth to become more responsible, proactive, and engaged citizens, ready to spearhead development in their communities and these are change narratives about young people.

Muhaji Yusufu Busheko, a council member at Muleba, has known the Kijana Wajibika Programme since 2022 and has observed its transformative impact on young people in his community. The programme has mentally liberated the youth through its comprehensive training, Muhaji stated. "I have seen a significant behavioural change among them. They now possess the courage to start afresh and the audacity to take entrepreneurial risks.

Young people have gained the confidence and readiness to actively participate in ward development meetings, ensuring they are meaningfully engaged in shaping their communities



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"The government also facilitates platforms where young people can contribute meaningfully to community projects and initiatives. This collaborative approach not only builds the capacity of young leaders but also fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among them towards the development of their wards and municipalities. Overall, these efforts underscore the government's commitment to empowering young people and integrating their perspectives into local governance for a more inclusive and vibrant community" - Muhaji expresses







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# \*\*Supporting Youth in Iringa through a Collective Effort

# 25. Green Future Dream Initiative Equipping Youth in Iringa

The Green Future Dream Initiative exists to empower communities in Tanzania to access quality health services, address domestic violence, promote gender equality, train youth in vocational skills, and leverage economic opportunities for transformative change. The initiative aims to build a future where youth skills are the driving force behind peace and sustainable development. Through its various programs, it offers vocational training and mentorship, helping young people gain practical skills in trades such as carpentry, tailoring, and agribusiness, leading to increased employment opportunities.

In collaboration with the Kijana Wajibika Programme, the Green Future Dream Initiative has significantly impacted the lives of young people across Tanzania. This partnership has enabled a comprehensive approach to youth empowerment, focusing not only on vocational skills but also on fostering civic engagement, organisation strengtheningand leadership qualities. The Kijana Wajibika Programme's expertise in youth-led development has complemented the initiative's goals, creating a synergy that amplifies the reach and effectiveness of their programs.

Together, they have facilitated numerous workshops and training sessions, equipping young people with the necessary skills to be responsible citizens, These programs have also instilled a sense of purpose and direction among the youth. Additionally, the collaboration has promoted a culture of entrepreneurship, access 2 to information as well aslinking young people to potential opportunities such the government loan known as 442 which has encouraged young people to start their own businesses and contribute to their communities' economic growth.

Moreover, the partnership has emphasised the importance of social issues such as gender equality and domestic violence. By addressing these critical topics, the initiatives have created a more inclusive environment where all young people, regardless of gender, can thrive and make meaningful contributions to society.

Through their joint efforts, the Kijana Wajibika Programme and the Green Future Dream Initiative have demonstrated the transformative power of empowering youth with the right skills and opportunities. This collaboration has not only changed individual lives but has also strengthened communities, paving the way for a brighter, more sustainable future.



Stories like those of John and Atupele exemplify how determination can transform communities regardless of one's background. They have learned their rights, made informed decisions, and inspired other young people. Now, they are meaningfully engaged with local government, assisting in local tasks, educating others, and contributing to policy development. This ensures the promotion of economic and social welfare and the effective and equitable delivery of quality services to the people.

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Additionally, there has been a notable power shift within the organisations, with young people taking on leadership roles and driving the programs forward. For the past two years, the Green Future Dream Initiative has been a beacon of inclusivity and gender equality. Through their dedicated efforts, they have empowered young women and girls to step into leadership roles, culminating in a young female leader taking up the position of director. This milestone not only highlights the organisation's commitment to gender parity but also serves as an inspiring example of how inclusive practices can drive meaningful change and foster a more equitable future. This shift has further strengthened the systems of the Green Future Dream Initiative, ensuring that the programs are not only youth-focused but also youth-led, maximising their impact and sustainability.

GFDI partnership with Restless Development has resulted in significant improvement strengthening the organisation's systems such as policies, improved financial system and management leading to better compliance with government regulations, including NSSF, WCF etc. By implementing a robust safeguarding policy, it ensures that their operations are conducted without causing harm to others. This focus on regulatory compliance and safety reflects a commitment to integrity and the well-being of the community.

# 26. Nobert John Latili's Inspiring Journey



### A Life-Changing Accident

Nobert John Latili, a young leader from Iringa, Tanzania, exemplifies resilience and determination in the face of overwhelming challenges. Living in Kalenga Ward at Ipamba District, Nobert's life changed dramatically at the age of 12 when he suffered a severe burn from a pot of hot water. The accident left his skin badly scarred and his vision impaired. "It felt like the end of my life," Nobert recalls. "My friends were scared of me and I felt isolated."

### **Finding Solace and Support**

The cost of treatment at Muhimbili National Hospital in Dar es Salaam was beyond his family's means, leading to a difficult and uncomfortable childhood. Nobert found solace when the Catholic Church intervened, enrolling him in Lialim Primary School. "The school was more than education; it was therapy," says Nobert. "I found a community that gave me love and support."

Excelling in his studies, Nobert received sponsorship from the Catholic Church to attend Udzungwa Secondary School. However, after completing his education, he faced the harsh reality of life without support. Taking on various labor-intensive jobs, he saved 750,000 Tanzanian Shillings to purchase a machine for making bricks. This marked the beginning of his entrepreneurial journey.









### **Joining Restless Development**

In 2022, Nobert's path took another positive turn when he learned about Restless Development through a friend who was a Youth Accountability Advocate. Joining the program he received training in Meaningful Youth Engagement and Entrepreneurship.

One of the challenges Norbert faced was his lack of awareness about local governance structures and how the local government operates. As a young person living with a disability, he was unaware that in 2018, the Government of Tanzania amended Section 37 of the Local Government Finance Act. This amendment mandated all Local Government Authorities to set aside 10% interest–free loans from their revenue to empower women, youth, and people with disabilities. These funds are distributed according to the 4–4–2 principle: 4% for women, 4% for youth, and 2% for people with disabilities (PWDs). However, through the Kijana Wajibika program, Norbert organised himself with other young people and secured 7 million Tanzanian Shillings, which allowed him to scale up his brick–selling business

### Nobert's journey in advocacy.

Ever Since, Nobert has been a staunch advocate for people living with disabilities, tirelessly promoting the idea that they deserve a chance to lead and contribute to their communities. Despite the challenges and prejudices that often exclude people with disabilities from ward meetings and decision–making processes, Norbert has been at the forefront of this struggle. He refuses to be a mere victim of circumstance, instead choosing to champion change. Norbert's commitment to this cause has inspired many, proving that with determination and support, people with disabilities can and should have the opportunity to work and lead effectively. "I want to show that we are capable and ready to take on leadership roles," says Norbert. "It's time we break the barriers and change the narrative."

### **Expanding Agricultural Ventures**

Inspired by his success, Nobert organized ten young people in his area and secured an interest-free loan of 7,000,000 Tanzanian Shillings. This allowed them to scale up their agricultural activities, including groundnut and maize cultivation and pig farming.

"One of our biggest challenges is marketing and fluctuating prices," Nobert explains. "But the comprehensive training we received helps us target the best markets."

Nobert's leadership and determination have not only transformed his own life but also positively impacted his community. He now looks forward to expanding his pig farming business and participating in local government elections. "I want to make a difference in my community, not just through agriculture but by advocating for their needs," he



asserts!



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# 27. Empowering Change: Atupele Journey with Restless Development

Atupele, a driven young leader from Iringa, has embarked on a remarkable journey of empowerment and community transformation through Restless Development. Her story

is a testament to resilience, determination, and the power of youth leadership.

### **Discovering Leadership and Resilience**

Atupele recalls. Despite financial challenges, she excelled as the head girl at Kalenga Primary School, initiating impactful activities like environmental cleanups that showcased her burgeoning leadership skills Determined to pursue higher education, Atupele worked various farm jobs, saving diligently over two years to fund her secondary school education. Excelling as a student and leader, she became the head girl at her school.

Atupele's dreams of attending university were shattered due to financial constraints, leaving her with no option but to find a job to sustain herself. She took on various roles as a street vendor, selling small items like handkerchiefs, shaving machines, sweets, vests, and towels. One day, she heard an announcement that the local government office was looking for a cleaner. She applied for the position and was hired. Atupele's dedication and passion for her work did not go unnoticed. Her commitment and diligence led to a promotion, and she was appointed as the head of security, responsible for overseeing the premises and properties owned by the local government.

While working at the local government office, Atupele noticed numerous meetings and seminars taking place in the building she was protecting. Curious about these events, she hesitated to ask questions because she felt out of place; the young people attending seemed so well-educated. Over time, Atupele observed the changes these young individuals brought about. She noticed how confidently they spoke, how well they interacted with leaders, and how they effectively shared their opinions with local authorities. The local governance setting began to change, with more young people taking on leadership roles at the office. Inspired by these transformations, Atupele mustered the courage to talk to the young people and inquire about their activities. Her curiosity grew, and she wanted to join this collective effort of unstoppable young people.







### Transformation Through Kijana Wajibika

Atupele's life took a pivotal turn when she joined Restless Development's program. "It was a turning point"

she reflects. Through training in entrepreneurship, civic engagement, and responsible citizenship, Atupele gained confidence and skills crucial for community leadership. Empowering Youth and Building Futures Inspired by her training, Atupele mobilised youth in her community, forming groups focused on mutual support and savings. Managing three thriving community farms, she cultivates beans, maize, and potatoes, selling produce at local markets. Her vision extends beyond business; Atupele aims to continue advocating for youth empowerment and community development.

### **Championing Youth Empowerment and Community Safety**

Atupele's advocacy for an inclusive community has fostered trust in young people to lead in local governance. She has also established a youth security group that safeguards the safety of in-school children and upholds the morals of the society. This initiative has strengthened community cohesion and demonstrated the significant role youth can play in ensuring community well-being.

Championing Youth Empowerment "Atupele believes in the transformative power of economic independence for young people," notes a colleague. "She envisions a future where youth are catalysts for positive change in their communities."

Atupele's journey exemplifies Restless Development's commitment to empowering young leaders like her. Through resilience, education, and community engagement, Atupele is paving the way for a brighter future, one where youth empowerment is synonymous with community progress and prosperity.

The government has witnessed firsthand the impactful fruits of the Kijana Wajibika Programme. Young people have unlocked their potential, transforming their communities and demonstrating remarkable leadership qualities. We are proud to share these areas of alignment with Restless Development, acknowledging and celebrating their efforts. The visible changes in the youth, from civic engagement to entrepreneurial success, affirm the program's effectiveness. We see the positive transformations and wholeheartedly encourage Restless Development to continue their invaluable work, fostering a brighter future for our young people.

### **Empowering Youth Voices: The Impact of Kijana Wajibika Programme**

Winston Winston Salace, Village Executive Officer at Mseke Ward, discovered the transformative power of the Kijana Wajibika Programme in 2021, and his commitment to its success has been unwavering ever since. Reflecting on the program's inception, he recognized a significant gap in engagement between the local government and young people. "Many youths felt disconnected from decision-making processes," he recalls. "Kijana Wajibika became pivotal in empowering them to take charge of their futures, start businesses, and understand their rights as citizens."

Through his dedicated oversight, Winston has witnessed profound changes in the community. "I've seen 21 young women and 24 young men flourish," he states proudly. "Their behaviours have transformed, and their lives have taken new directions."

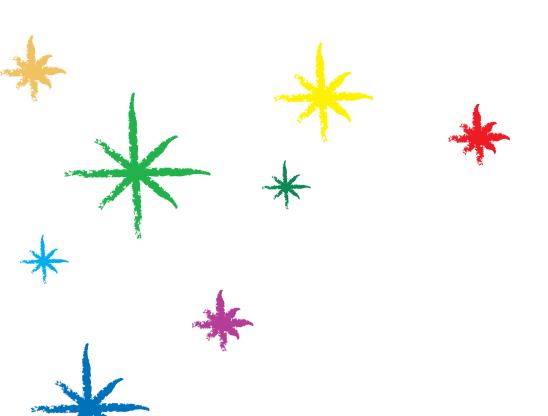




The program's impact extends beyond individual empowerment. Local government capacity has grown, facilitating dialogues and events like bonanzas where youth can voice concerns and shape community plans. "Youth Development Groups now provide easy access to loans for business scaling," Winston notes, highlighting the initiative's holistic approach to fostering economic independence and civic engagement.

Winston's commitment to nurturing young leaders underscores Restless Development's mission to empower communities through meaningful youth participation. "These youth are our future," he asserts, "and Kijana Wajibika is laying the groundwork for a more inclusive and prosperous community."

Through partnerships like these, Restless Development continues to catalyse positive change, one empowered youth at a time.





As we conclude these stories of remarkable youth-driven change, we celebrate the innovation and courage of the young leaders and their allies who are shaping a brighter future. Their commitment to addressing challenges and advocating for inclusive policies highlights the boundless potential of youth to drive societal transformation.

These narratives showcase the power of collective action and the profound impact of collaborative efforts between young leaders, civil society organizations, and supportive government officials. Together, they are breaking down barriers, transforming policy, and inspiring others with their vision and efforts.

Thank you for joining us on this journey of change. The stories we've shared are not just about overcoming obstacles but about the promise of a future where every voice is valued and every challenge met with hope and collaboration. As these young changemakers continue to forge ahead, they carry with them the spirit of progress and the belief that together, we can build a more inclusive and just world.

Kijana Wajibika Programme is grateful for partnership like these with Ford Foundation who shift the power to young people driving youth led sustainable development in Tanzania





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