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T-MARC TANZANIA
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USAID KIJANA NAHODHA! (YOUNG CAPTAIN)



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Quarterly
Newsletter
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Tumaini R. Kimasa

**Managing
Director**

Message from the Managing Director

I am delighted to present the first edition of the USAID Kijana Nahodha project newsletter, marking two years of impactful work. Since 2022, our team at T-MARC Tanzania, in partnership with USAID, has been at the forefront of implementing innovative interventions to address key social and economic challenges, contributing to the wellbeing of youth from vulnerable environments across the implementation areas.

Through the USAID Kijana Nahodha project, we are empowering 45,000 youth across Dar es Salaam, Morogoro, and Zanzibar by following the principles of Positive Youth Development (PYD). Our efforts focus on enhancing productivity, community engagement, and showcasing the potential of out-of-school youth, helping them transform their futures.

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to our implementing partners, Care International, Tanzania Youth Coalition, and YLabs. Their collaboration and commitment have been integral to our progress, enabling us to reach more youth and make a lasting difference.

This newsletter reflects our journey so far, highlighting the achievements, partnerships, and lessons learned. As we look ahead, we remain committed to expanding our impact and fostering new partnerships that will continue to uplift the communities we serve.

Thank you for your continued support, and I look forward to the journey ahead.

Warm regards,

Tumaini R. Kimasa
Managing Director, T-MARC Tanzania.

A word from the Chief of Party, **USAID** Kijana Nahodha Project

As we celebrate two years of implementation, I am thrilled to present the inaugural edition of our USAID Kijana Nahodha (KN) project quarterly newsletter. Through the project, 45,000 marginalized, out-of-school (OOS) youth are being supported through tailored and holistic interventions that aim at increasing their agency, productivity, physical and mental well-being, employment and community engagement.

Thanks to KN's investments in informal adult education, market-driven technical and vocational training, and the establishment of active youth saving and lending groups, 8,948 OOS youth have secured wage employment or are engaged in self-employment. Of the 2032 youth (844 females and 1188 males) illiterate OOS youth enrolled in KN's adult literacy program, all are now able read, write and do simple arithmetic.

In addition, 2,225 Youth Saving and Loan Associations (YSLAs) with a total of 28,852 members (16,296 females and 12,556 males) were established to enhance youth economic empowerment through pooled savings and small business development. 513 of these YSLAs are fully registered and recognized by local government authorities, making them eligible to receive loans. YSLAs also serve as a platform for OOS youth to access youth friendly health information and connect to services.

We are immensely proud of our progress and remain optimistic about the future. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to USAID Tanzania for their invaluable support, which has been instrumental in driving the success of our project. Together, we are creating lasting opportunities for Tanzania's youth.

Warm regards,

Dr. Tuhuma Tulli.

Chief of Party, USAID Kijana Nahodha Project.



Dr. Tuhuma Tulli

Chief of Party

**USAID Kijana
Nahodha Project**



**Major
Events
Corner**





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U.S. Ambassador's Inspiring Visit to Raha Leo Skills Training Centre

On September 24, 2024, U.S. Ambassador to Tanzania, Michael Battle, visited the Raha Leo Alternative Learning Center in Zanzibar, marking a milestone for the USAID Kijana Nahodha project, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT). The Ambassador's visit highlighted the impact of this USAID-funded initiative, has provided training opportunities to over 4,222 youth across Zanzibar, Dar es Salaam, and Morogoro since its launch in 2022. Ambassador Battle toured training classes and workshops where 210 trainees are actively engaged in vocational courses, gaining skills to unlock new career opportunities. He encouraged the trainees, saying, "You are the future of Tanzania. The skills you are acquiring are not just for today; they are tools that will shape your tomorrow."



Youth Skills in Action: USAID Directors Applaud Kijana Nahodha's Work in Morogoro

On August 23, 2024, USAID Tanzania Education Director Dr. Thomas LeBlanc and Education Specialist from USAID Africa Bureau, Mr. Bradford Strickland visited Morogoro to witness the impact of the USAID Kijana Nahodha project. During stops at Mhonda Primary School in Mvomero, where they engaged with literacy-focused out-of-school youth, and Kihonda Vocational Training Center, where vocational training is paving pathways to opportunity for 158 youths, the leaders shared high praise. "Seeing these youth gain skills and self-assurance is a testament to Kijana Nahodha's success," said Dr. LeBlanc. Mr. Strickland echoed the sentiment, stating, "The dedication here is clear—USAID's partnership is fostering a generation ready to shape Tanzania's future."



Celebrating **International Youth Day** with the Deputy Chief of Mission, **Andrew Lentz**, in Zanzibar



In celebration of International Youth Day, through the USAID Kijana Nahodha project, participated in the national commemoration in Zanzibar, hosted by the Ministry of Information, Youth, Culture and Sports. This event also provided an opportunity for youth involved in the project to directly share and testify their achievements with DCM Lentz, showcasing the progress and success achieved through various interventions.

USAID Mission Director calls for sustainable youth-led interventions

On September 18, USAID Mission Director Craig Hart visited the Kijana Nahodha project offices in Unguja, Zanzibar, underscoring USAID's commitment to fostering sustainable opportunities for Tanzanian youth. His visit, aimed at deepening understanding of the project's impact and exploring strategic pathways forward, was marked by productive discussions with the USAID Kijana Nahodha team. "To ensure our youth reach their full potential, we must build sustainability through dynamic partnerships with the government, private sector, and civil society," Hart emphasized. His call for collaborative action reinforces USAID's vision of lasting empowerment for young people across Tanzania.





Health Corner

Elevating Youth Health: Increased Capacity of Community Health Workers & Peer Educators

Through the USAID Kijana Nahodha project, 300 Community Health Workers (CHWs) in Zanzibar, Dar es Salaam, and Morogoro have been trained in the Beyond Bias strategy—an approach aimed at eliminating biases in healthcare, especially for young people seeking sexual and reproductive health services. This initiative equips CHWs with the knowledge and practical skills to address essential health areas, including sexual and reproductive health, family planning, mental health, HIV prevention, and nutrition.

In addition, CHWs received specialized training in malaria prevention, covering the correct use of antimalarial treatments and insecticide-treated nets (ITNs). This comprehensive training ensures a well-rounded approach to healthcare delivery, enabling CHWs to provide inclusive, unbiased, and high-quality services tailored to the needs of young people. to strengthen referral systems and promote positive health behaviors among young people.





Joyce Zakayo: A Single Mother's Mission to Transform Bumbwisudi

Joyce Zakayo, a single mother of four from Bumbwisudi ward, Unguja, is committed to uplifting her community as a Community Health Worker (CHW) under the USAID Kijana Nahodha project.

Her journey began when local nurses invited her to assist with maternal care. “I was first called to support nurses with childbirth,” Joyce recalls, which ignited her passion for community service. Through the USAID Kijana Nahodha project, she learned to address critical issues like self-awareness, entrepreneurship, sexual and reproductive health, family planning, mental health, HIV, nutrition, and malaria enabling her to tackle challenges such as drug use and gang involvement among youth. “I’ve helped young people break free from destructive cycles like drug use, prostitution, gang involvement and depression, seeing their lives transformed, give me energy to continue” she proudly shares.

“The USAID Kijana Nahodha project has equipped me with invaluable knowledge and skills to support youth in transformative ways,”

~ JOYCE

Despite facing skepticism from some community members, Joyce’s commitment to her mission remains unwavering. “Some think what I do is strange, but through my dedication, I feel fulfilled” she explains. The knowledge gained from the project not only impacts the youth she helps but has also transformed her approach to parenting. “Now, I know how to guide my children not just physically, but mentally too, to me its more than a job but my service to my community,” she concludes



Joyce participating one of the CHWs meetings hosted at the Bumbwisubi Health Centre in Unguja, Zanzibar.

Enhancing Youth Mental Health Support Through Technology

As part of its commitment to improving youth mental health, the USAID Kijana Nahodha project successfully continued to engaged TANZMED to train 347 community health workers, 110 from Zanzibar, 50 from Dar es Salaam, and 187 from Morogoro-on the innovative TanzMED digital mental health application. This training aimed to enhance the capacity of CHWs to effectively address and promote mental health information and services tailored to the needs of young people in their communities.

Case study: How TanzMED emerged as a new hope for Tanzania Youth

Mental health challenges among young people in Tanzania create significant barriers that hinder their potential. The USAID Kijana Nahodha project has prioritized mental health as a critical area of intervention, recognizing that youth in underserved communities often grapple with untreated conditions like anxiety, depression, and trauma, limiting their social and economic growth. To address these challenges, the project sought innovative solutions tailored to the needs of Tanzanian youth.

In 2023, TanzMED participated in the USAID Kijana Nahodha Social Impact Accelerator program alongside four other youth-serving organizations. This initiative, supported by USAID, aimed to develop solutions for the social, economic, and health needs of Tanzanian youth, providing coaching and mentorship in creating effective work plans and refining organizational policies.

At the program's Innovation Lab event, TanzMED's proposal for an AI-powered mental health tool, AminaMD, was awarded a \$20,000 sub-grant. "AminaMD is our ultimate patient engagement solution with a conversational interface," explains co-founder Nyoni. The tool engages users through

conversation in Swahili, addressing Tanzania's unique health challenges.

Using advanced clinical algorithms, AminaMD simulates doctor-patient interactions, rapidly evaluating symptoms and medical histories. This innovative approach helps alleviate the burden of Tanzania's doctor shortage, particularly in underserved regions where youth are vulnerable to mental health issues. "There are many local health conditions that require local solutions," notes the TanzMED team.

As AminaMD continues to develop, TanzMED and USAID Kijana Nahodha project works together to ensure sustainability and effectiveness. With over 10,000 users already, AminaMD represents a transformative healthcare solution tailored to the needs of Tanzanian youth. Our vision is to create an inclusive environment where every young person can thrive, harness their potential, and contribute positively to their communities. With innovative solutions like AminaMD, we are taking significant steps towards bridging the gap in mental health services, ensuring that no youth is left behind." Concludes Dr. Tulli, USAID Kijana Nahodha, Chief of Party.





Education, entrepreneurship and Life skills Corner

Expanding Access to Quality Non-Formal Learning

The USAID Kijana Nahodha project empowers marginalized out-of-school youth in Tanzania through an accelerated learning program, condensing four years of education into eleven months. Partnering with the Department of Alternative Learning and Adult Education (DALAE) in Zanzibar and the Institute of Adult Education (IAE) on the mainland, Kijana Nahodha achieved a 91% mastery rate in literacy and numeracy for 807 youth. During this period, the project exceeded its target by reaching 2,032 youth-127% of its goal-consisting of 1,188 males and 844 females, demonstrating a strong commitment to inclusive education.



Edwin's Literacy Journey: A second chance at literacy and his dreams

At the age of 15, Edwin would normally be a secondary school student; however, he didn't have the basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills.

With his single mother and 6 younger siblings, Edwin's life has been a daily struggle. His mother works endlessly in the farm fields to earn a subsistence income that barely covers the family's basic needs.

From an early age, Edwin felt the weight of these financial burdens which affected his academic journey. To support his family, Edwin spent much of his time working as a daily laborer in local brick factories and on nearby farms. His education was sacrificed as he often skipped school to earn what little he could to help support his family.

Edwin recalls, "I remember the days when my mother would come home exhausted from farming, her face filled with stress. Despite her efforts, there was never enough food or basic supplies at home. I knew that I had to do whatever I could to help. School became less of my priority at that moment."

In February 2024, Edwin's life took a turn when his mother learned about literacy classes for out-of-school youth provided through the USAID Kijana Nahodha project.

Skeptical and nervous, he enrolled in the program.

Edwin began attending classes at a convenient location with a flexible schedule that fit him. He vividly recalls his first day in class:

"I was nervous but hopeful. Seeing others like me, who also struggled with reading and writing, made me feel less alone. The trainers were patient and encouraging, and soon I found myself excited about learning."

As Edwin progressed through the program, he experienced a profound shift in his capabilities and confidence. The skills not only improved his daily life but also inspired him to dream bigger.

"I remember the first time I could read a book on my own, it felt like a whole new world had opened to me. I could finally use a mobile phone properly and follow instructions. Before, I never thought about the future beyond surviving day by day. With my new skills, I have dreams of becoming a businessman, trading food crops," Edwin said with a sense of pride.



Empowering Youth Through Savings & Loans

The Youth Saving and Loan Associations (YSLAs) are vital in mobilizing and uniting Tanzanian youth through weekly meetings that promote skill development in areas such as leadership, entrepreneurship, nutrition, and health education. In this quarter, the USAID Kijana Nahodha project supported the formation of 1,406 new YSLAs, engaging 17,495 members—9,950 females and 7,545 males. By the end of Project Year 2, a total of 2,225 YSLAs have been established or strengthened, highlighting a collective membership of 28,852. Interestingly, while the ideal group size is 15 to 25, most youth prefer smaller groups of 12 to 15, fostering deeper connections and effective learning.

From Adversity to Enterprise:

Tausi's Inspiring Journey

At just 17 years, Tausi's educational dreams were shattered. Born and raised in Mvomero district in Morogoro region, she unfortunately became pregnant shortly after finishing her form four studies, her dreams of further education seemed out of reach. "When I became pregnant, my dreams felt like they were slipping away. I knew I had to find a new way forward for my daughter and family. I couldn't let my circumstances define my future," she recalls with determination.

Facing financial struggles, Tausi sought new skills from local potters, learning to craft clay stoves. "Even a small skill could open up new opportunities. Each day spent learning was a step closer to rebuilding my life. I learned the value of hard work and perseverance," she reflects.

Her life transformed when she joined the USAID Kijana Nahodha project, where she received training in self-awareness, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship. Joining the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) allowed her to save money and secure a loan to start her clay stove business. "The USAID Kijana Nahodha program was a light of hope. It showed me my potential and gave me the confidence to turn my passion into a successful venture," Tausi shares proudly.

Today, her thriving business generates an impressive 200,000 TZS monthly, enabling her to grow her business and support her family. Through connections built after joining the USAID Kijana Nahodha project, Tausi supplies clay stoves not only locally but also to regions like Dodoma and Dar es Salaam. She dreams of expanding into a large production unit with nationwide distributors. "I am determined to end the cycle of poverty in my family and be a role model for my daughter. With hard work and the right support, dreams can come true. Setbacks can be stepping stones, and I'm committed to making a difference in my community," she confidently concludes.





**Civic
Engagement
Corner**



Empowering Youth Through Civic Engagement: Expanding Access to Essential Rights & Information

In this quarter the project held a public youth dialogue in Morogoro, bringing together 183 young people (40 males and 143 females) aged 18-25, from Youth Savings and Loan Associations and youth clubs across Morogoro. Supported by representatives from local youth organizations, the dialogue aimed to build understanding and empower youth to engage effectively in democratic, economic, and development processes. Through discussions facilitated by local government officials and KN representatives, youth participants gained insights into digital rights, ways to navigate entrepreneurial and leadership challenges, and strategies for political participation.





Pictorial Highlights

1. Farmer's Day commemorations - Nane Nane in Morogoro and Zanzibar

During the recent Nane Nane Farmer's Day commemorations in Morogoro and Zanzibar, youth entrepreneurs had a unique opportunity to showcase their products and expand their businesses. Supported by the USAID Kijana Nahodha project, twelve young entrepreneurs-six from Unguja and six from Morogoro participated in the exhibitions, which provided them with vital exposure to national markets. For many, it was their first time engaging in such a large event, and they used the platform to network with industry professionals, gain new business insights, and explore market opportunities.

@Morogoro



@Zanzibar



2. Malaria SBCC awareness campaign

In this quarter, the USAID Kijana Nahodha project, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, district authorities, and SAIMAL Communications, conducted malaria and mental health awareness campaigns across all 11 districts of Zanzibar. These efforts focused on youth, engaging 25,504 community members, with 70% aged 15-25. Using public announcements, community theatre, and environmental cleaning bonanzas, the campaigns reached thousands of young people, empowering them to play active roles in malaria prevention and mental health advocacy in their communities.

@Zanzibar



@Morogoro



3. Physical activities and environmental clean up campaigns

The USAID Kijana Nahodha Project, in partnership with local authorities and SHADAKA Sports Management, organized vibrant youth bonanzas. Targeting YSLA groups and youth clubs, these events combined sports like football, netball, and running races with cultural performances and health education. The goal was to promote active lifestyles while raising awareness about communicable diseases. Engaging 9,901 youth-5,199 in Morogoro, 2,146 in Dar es Salaam, and 2,556 in Zanzibar-the bonanzas created a fun and holistic approach to both physical and mental well-being.



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