

Project Success stories

Racheal the Shining Star of Edingeni

She has done it again! Yes, Racheal Ngulube (14 years old) has done the incredible thing that will shake heads of people in Edingeni for years and years to come. This is the history in the making. This is an achievement that will amaze Edingeni community for a generation.

For now, you can call Rachel any name you want, call her Child Parliament speaker or a spelling shining master, but Rachel is just more than that - she is a record breaker or be it a history maker. The outstanding story is that for the first time in history of Edingeni Primary School, Racheal has defied all odds by passing her Malawi Primary School Leaving Certificate of Examinations (PSLCE) exams with flying colours. Out of 106 pupils who sat for the exams she is the only one who got selected to a prestigious national secondary school.

The girl just like 'Joseph the dreamer' in the Bible has been selected to Stella Maris Girls Secondary School in Blantyre. This is one of the prestigious national secondary schools in Malawi, and no one from Edingeni Primary school has ever been selected to this particular school before, wonderful, not so? In an interview, an all over the moon Racheal said, this is what she has been dreaming of: "It's the beginning of the journey of my life; this is what I wanted and I am proud I have made it," she said, smiling like a sun coming from its bed in the morning. The head teacher of Edingeni Primary School Austin Nkhata, is equally proud with this wonderful story. "This has never happened before here, and we are all proud. We knew Rachel was going to do it, because she is very brilliant," he said.

Racheal's background story:

They say everything has its dawn in life. True! For Rachael, her journey started from humble beginnings in 2015 when she joined to become a member of Edingeni Children's Corner and Children's council which the programme initiated. At Children council she was the chairperson of the council. In the children's corners, children learn quite a lot in terms of children's rights, child protection and are also encouraged in their education. Rachael was spotted at the children's corner as a young girl with potential. The children's corner facilitator played a crucial role in encouraging her in her studies during reading camps which are conducted during children's corners.

In 2018 during an inter- schools quiz competition which Word Alive organised in the education zone, Rachael emerged as one of best quiz masters and was awarded with a prize. Her school Edingeni, won the quiz competition and received a trophy.

The Power of Small Savings

Marita Nyirongo a grandmother of 6 children is a member of Kaswavipindi Self Help Group in Zikoti village. She had problems to support her children with basic needs like food, clothes and scholastic materials. "The only thing I had to do as a routine was to wake up, go and dig in the garden, go to the neighbourhood to chat with my friends, and wait for my husband to ask him for money for household use, I didn't have any source of income of my own," Narrates Marita.

One day, some women members from Kaswavipindi Self-help group visited her in order to encourage her on the benefits of SHGs. The members encouraged her on the benefits of joining SHGs. Some shared to her their testimonies on how SHGs had transformed their lives. After she was convinced, Marita joined the group in 2017 and got her first loan from the group, she started a business of selling maize and tomatoes in her village and during the market day. Gradually her business started growing. With the profits she made from her business she managed to repay her loan to the group and got a second loan. Through her business she is able make a profit of between MK20,000 and MK50,000 per month. It's through the profits she makes from her business that she is able to provide scholastic materials to her grandchildren and pay medical bills hence improving the wellbeing of her children and family. "Out of my business profits, I have managed to buy three goats and support my husband to build a permanent house. At first we were residing in a grass thatched house, but now my husband built a new house and I bought iron sheets and we are happily living in our new house," confesses Marita.

The self-help groups have improved the life of many women in Kaswavipindi village including Malita's. More women are becoming self-reliant financially as a result of the businesses which they manage through the capital which they access from self-help groups. "My future plan is to expand my business so that I can be able to construct rental units on the plot we have acquired at Edingeni trading Centre out of my savings with SHG," Marita summarizes her story.

Parenting education transforms Patrick into a responsible father

A proud husband and father of two children, Patrick Tchuba, 29 years old shared his story on how parenting sessions have transformed his life. His experience of becoming a father altered the direction of his life, influencing him to find the right path so as to be a role model for his children. During his journey as a father, he became part and parcel of Chizuwula parenting club where he realized the importance of community support through parenting sessions in helping him to achieve his goal of becoming a responsible father.

Patrick grew up in a family where the outward expression of love and care for children was rare. His parents never minded on instilling good morals and behaviours in their children. The poor parenting background which Patrick passed through led him to indulge in immoral behaviours like excessive beer drinking, smoking and beating up of wife and children. Due to his excessive beer drinking behaviours Patrick didn't have time to look after his family. His is family used to experience continuous food shortages and generally lack of parental love and affection." Life was difficult for us, most of the times children could only eat one meal a day just because we didn't have enough food to feed our children," Laments Esther, who is Patrick's wife.

In 2017, when WACRAD was establishing parenting clubs in their village, one community facilitator approached Patrick and invited him to become a member of the parenting clubs. Reluctantly, Patrick accepted the invitation and become a member of Chizuwula parenting club where he started participating in the parenting lessons together with his wife. "Once I had joined the parenting club, I started to learn more lessons on good parenting skills which greatly changed my attitude and behaviours towards my family and children," confesses Patrick. Gradually, through the parenting sessions which Patrick attended he started to adopt positive parenting skills which enabled him to start becoming a responsible parent. This was Patrick's turning point, he stopped drinking beer and started to commit more of his time to farming activities and looking after his family.

Now Patrick is a changed father. He is able to spend his time doing farming activities which has led to improved food production for his family. His children can now enjoy three meals a day and he is able to support them with scholastic materials for their education needs. "Parenting education has helped to bond our family, we are a happy family now. Patrick is now a responsible husband and father," narrates Esther.