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## **A JOURNEY OF HEARTS AND HOPE: MATCH FOUNDATION'S DAY AT JACARANDA FOUNDATION**

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In the crisp January morning of 2024, MATCH Foundation embarked on a transformative journey to the heart of Blantyre to visit Jacaranda Foundation, a beacon of hope and education for less-privileged children.

Welcomed by Mrs. Kookie, the MATCH team began a day filled with revelations and heartwarming encounters. Guided by the visionary founder, Madam Marie Da Silva, they traced the roots of Jacaranda's compassion, starting from Madam Da Silva's childhood home. This emotional journey became a testament to the foundation's mission, grounded in empathy and care.

Their exploration continued to the Jacaranda Mullen Preschool, where the team was welcomed by the headmistress, Mrs. Matupi. Uniform-clad children, provided for free, exemplified Jacaranda's commitment to accessible education. The state-of-the-art kitchen and meetings with teachers added layers to the narrative of dedication and care.

The MATCH Team was then introduced to the Jacaranda Jan Kulczyk Vocational School which unfolded as a realm of dreams and skills under the guidance of the spirited acting principal, Mwayi Jande. From tailoring to entrepreneurship, this space nurtured aspirations, with notable artists like Skeffa Chimoto leaving their creative imprints.

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Beyond education, Jacaranda's impact extended to healthcare. The MATCH team witnessed Jacaranda's positive impact on healthcare through the Jacaranda Community Physiotherapy Clinic, which serves as a haven for children with disabilities. The clinic's physiotherapist, Dorothy Wesley, shared inspiring stories of the children's resilience, highlighting the transformative potential that challenges can hold. These stories resonated with a MATCH staff member, who drew on his own experience to offer encouragement to the women and guardians present. He recounted his mother's unwavering commitment to bringing him to physiotherapy, driven by hope and the belief that he could one day make a significant contribution to the world. His story, a testament to the power of perseverance in raising children with physical challenges, served as a beacon of hope for the women and guardians in the room, leaving them with a renewed sense of optimism.

Engaging in a heartfelt conversation with Madam Da Silva at the main campus, critical initiatives like the Mary's Meals project and the library were discussed. Luc Deschamps, Jacaranda Foundation's executive director, became a collaborator for library initiatives. A call for a social worker, funding, and a mental health expert underscored Jacaranda's holistic approach to child welfare.

The journey concluded with a tour of primary and secondary schools, revealing diverse extracurricular activities supported by global contributions. Madonna's dance house stood as a symbol of international solidarity.

As the sun dipped below the horizon, the MATCH team reflected on a tapestry woven with stories of courage, resilience, and kindness. Jacaranda's unwavering commitment left an indelible mark, prompting the MATCH Foundation to depart Limbe Chigumula with hearts full of gratitude. They carried not just insights and strategies but a newfound relationship and a shared commitment to making the world a brighter place for every child. This journey, from hearts to hope, became a chapter in the ongoing narrative of transformation and impact.

## TADALA ABC PRIMARY SCHOOL PLANTS FOR THE FUTURE WITH MATCH FOUNDATION

A collaborative spirit filled the air at Tadala abc Primary School on a rainy day on January 17th, 2024. The MATCH Foundation joined teachers and students for a tree-planting initiative that transcended beautification efforts.

Dressed in raincoats and armed with hoes and tree saplings, both parties united for a shared purpose. This act wasn't merely about enhancing the school grounds but symbolized the efforts for climate change and the cultivation of a deeper connection between students, staff, and the school community. With each planted seed, a sense of collective responsibility for the environment was established.



The 200 planted trees stand as testament to the power of collaboration in fostering positive change. They not only represent a greener future, but also symbolize the Tadala abc Primary School's vision of providing inclusive education for all learners. As the trees flourish, so too will the school environment, transforming into a haven for learning that aligns perfectly with the school's mission.

At the end of the day, students were assigned to take care of their trees and water them through their life cycle. In their own free time, students were advised to remove weeds, journal the trees' journey by measuring the lengths after some weeks as well as building a hedge of protection against the livestock.

*"To exist as a nation, to prosper as a state, to live as a people, we must have trees."* - Theodore Roosevelt

