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Student-athletes proudly display their handcrafted baskets.



Muzu Primary School girls during Girls Leadership training



Mental Health Ambassador training in Dedza

COMING UP IN JUNE

1. **Sports Tournament**
2. **Youth Agripreneurship Launch**
3. **Blantyre Center Expansion**
4. **Sports for Mental Health Manual Launch**

A Learning Visit By Elimu Fanaka

The morning of May 20th, 2025, started like any other at our organization, but it would end as one of the most inspiring days of the month.

Evelyn Mghendi and Beryl Anyango stepped through our doors carrying more than just their travel bags from Kenya. As representatives of Elimu Fanaka—a non-profit transforming rural primary schools across their homeland, Kenya—they brought stories that resonated with our mission. Connected through our shared partnership with the Segal Family Foundation, we had been anticipating this visit with excitement, but nothing could have prepared us for the energy these two remarkable women would bring to our space.



The Elimu Fanaka team observing the TaRL reading session at Bingu Stadium

From the moment our facility tour began, a remarkable connection formed. As we showcased our youth programs and educational initiatives, our visitors' faces lit up with shared understanding. They weren't just guests; they were collaborators, instantly grasping our mission because they were fighting similar battles thousands of miles away.

The conversation flowed for hours. We exchanged stories of student breakthroughs, shared strategies for community engagement, and realized our challenges, despite different countries, were strikingly alike. Their work in remote Kenyan villages, transforming struggling schools into vibrant educational hubs, mirrored our own efforts to empower young people in our community.

Their expertise and passion were undeniable, but it was their profound belief in education as a catalyst for genuine community transformation that truly resonated. They saw schools not merely as buildings, but as engines for generational change. Evelyn and Beryl's visit was a powerful reminder of why we do this work. They proved that when organizations with shared values connect across borders, the impact multiplies exponentially. Their insights reinforced our conviction that sustainable change flourishes when passionate people refuse to work in isolation. Sometimes, the most impactful partnerships begin with a simple invitation to share.

Breaking Barriers: Girls Redefining Leadership

In Malawi, many young girls possess voices filled with promise, yet this potential often remains quietly indirect. Our team launched "Lean in Girls," empowering girls aged 12-18 to become bold, confident, and resilient leaders. The program challenges limiting stereotypes and inspires girls to lead boldly.

Our mission began with our student-athletes, then expanded to Muzu Primary School. On May 13th, we connected with 100 students, and this spark ultimately touched young minds, with each discovering their ideas could reshape perspectives. This momentum carried us to Lilongwe Airbase Primary School on May 20th, 22nd, and 23rd, 2025, engaging 74 more students.

These were vibrant crucibles of discovery, where laughter fueled learning. We explored true leadership – not the loudest declaration, but the quiet confidence of a resonant voice.



Our team is facilitating the "Lean In" Girls session.

Each girl uncovered her unique values and strengths, realizing her individuality as power.

It was moving to witness these young women blossom. Timid whispers became confident articulations as they encouraged peers and embraced new responsibilities. They demonstrated that leadership isn't just taught but awakened from within, preparing them to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

This empowerment journey continues. Seeds of transformation have been sown, and we eagerly anticipate their growth. June promises more inspiring chapters as we remain committed to nurturing the leader in every girl.

From Stress to Strength - Building Resilience in Youth

May, Mental Health Awareness Month, serves as a critical reminder of a global crisis: suicide is the fourth leading cause of death for individuals aged 15-29. These aren't mere statistics, as they represent stolen futures and heartbroken families. It's a silent cry echoing across communities, underscoring the urgent need for proactive mental health interventions, especially within schools. Establishing mental health clubs isn't just beneficial—it's a lifeline.



Students engaging in a group discussion for their new mental health club.

This urgency fueled our dedicated team to transform awareness into action. On May 29th and 30th, 2025, through the Achinyamata Ojaka Mental Health Outreach program, our team arrived at Katsekaminga Community Day Secondary School in Dedza. The school buzzed with energy as over 231 students eagerly engaged in discussions about well-being, learning practical strategies to manage stress, build resilience, and understand their emotions.

The initiative's impact extended beyond the initial outreach. Recognizing that sustainable change must originate from within, the team empowered 20 passionate students to become Mental Health Ambassadors. These young leaders

participated in a specialized workshop, gaining the skills to become peer mentors and establish a new mental health club at their school. This grassroots approach answers a "national cry" from young people, sowing the seeds for a healthier, more hopeful future, one empowered peer champion at a time.

The Art Beyond the Court

At MATCH Foundation, we take pride in providing space for skills development and offering opportunities to our beneficiaries. Through the Play and Stay sports program, we recognize that skills extend far beyond the boundaries of a playing field or court. The sports courts are hubs where young people are also mentored to unearth their full potential, both on and off the field. In the quest for alternative ways to generate income, the foundation has created opportunity for student-athletes to use recycled materials for craft business in order to support the scholarship program.



11 – year old Faith with her craft product

One Saturday afternoon, a group of student-athletes gathered, not in their usual training gear, but surrounded by what most would consider trash or waste such as discarded plastic bottles, old newspapers, egg trays and boxes. “From this day forth,” announced by our executive director, commonly known to them as Coach T, “we’re going to prove that creativity has no limits.” The young athletes transformed these waste materials into stunning pieces of art. Intricate sculptures emerged from paper, boxes, ropes, and unique accessories from fabric. A wave of focused energy and surprised laughter filled the air. Each student celebrated as they discovered the innovative side which they never knew they had, a hidden talent, a different kind of strength.

This isn’t just any kind of craft business, it is made from the deepest part of the hearts of these young athletes who also want to contribute to their own destiny, proving that skills truly go beyond the court.

