

*Chema chajiuzi, kibaya chajitembeza*, literally: A good thing sells itself; a bad thing needs to be advertised. In other words: Good work is recognized on its own. While this proverb allows us—we hope—to report on our work only briefly, we feel obligated to our loyal sponsors and indispensable local intermediaries to provide at least some information. Regarding the projects in Zanzibar, we will focus primarily on two success stories. In Kenya, in addition to one individual success, there are ongoing projects to report on. The following two stories are based on the account of Sharifa, our trusted CDF secretary.

### **Rising Through Challenges: The Inspiring Journey of Mwaka Moh'd Mussa**



In the heart of Jambiani Kibigija village, Zanzibar, a young woman named Mwaka Moh'd Mussa, born in 2004, has emerged as a beacon of hope and perseverance. As the youngest in a family of four, Mwaka's life has been shaped by hardship, courage, and an unyielding determination to create a better future for herself and her community.

Mwaka began her academic path at Jambiani Primary School, completing Standard Six, before joining Jambiani Secondary School, where she graduated in 2021. Her schooling years were marked by immense personal loss. In 2015, her mother passed away after a long illness, and in 2019, she lost her father as well. Left orphaned at a young age, Mwaka found a home with her aunt, a hardworking farmer, who offered her care and encouragement despite her limited means.

Even with these emotional and financial struggles, Mwaka's passion for learning never faded. After completing her secondary education, she enrolled in a computer and English course to build her skills. She successfully completed the computer studies and earned her certificate, but financial hardship forced her to leave before finishing the English course. Still, her determination remained strong—she knew education was her path out of poverty. Mwaka began, therefore, searching for opportunities to further her studies in the health field. Her ambition was to pursue a Diploma in Pharmaceutical Science, but she faced many challenges, including not having a Physics credit, which made university admission difficult, but eventually she was enrolled in a university. Fortunately, her school principal, Mr. Haji Hassan, and assistant principal, Mr. Kassim, saw her potential and recommended her to the Child Development Fund (CDF), an organization that empowers youth from disadvantaged backgrounds through education.

Mwaka's dream and determination impressed the CDF team, and she was selected to join their scholarship program. Her choice of Pharmaceutical Science was unique among CDF

students, and the organization believed her studies would one day contribute meaningfully to the well-being of the Zanzibari community.

In 2022, Mwaka began her Certificate in Pharmaceutical Science at Zanzibar School of Health (ZSH) in Mchina Mwanzo, Zanzibar. After completing the program, she continued with her Diploma in Pharmaceutical Science, finishing it in 2025. Throughout her academic journey, CDF supported her in every way; covering tuition fees, laptop, learning materials, transport, meals, and even helping her family during times of need.

With that stability, Mwaka excelled in her studies and participated in valuable field training. She gained hands-on experience in several hospitals and pharmacies, including Mnazi Mmoja Referral Hospital, Kitogani District Hospital, Jambiani Health Center, and Paje Pharmacy. These placements allowed her to translate theory into practice while deepening her commitment to community health.

Her hard work and focus paid off—Mwaka graduated with a GPA of 4.01 (Upper Second Class) in Pharmaceutical Sciences. This remarkable achievement marked not only her



personal victory but also a source of pride for her community and the CDF family.

Today, Mwaka volunteers at Jambiani Health Center, where she continues to gain experience and give back to her society. Her compassion, professionalism, and resilience have made her a role model to many young people who aspire to overcome life's obstacles through education.

Reflecting on her journey, Mwaka expresses heartfelt gratitude to the Child Development Fund (CDF) for believing in her when life seemed hopeless.

“CDF has been my greatest pillar of strength,” she says. “Their support helped me rise from my struggles and turn my dreams into reality. When one of us succeeds, we all succeed—and together, we can build a better future for our society.”

### **Breaking Barriers Through Determination: The Success Story of Lutfia Suleiman Haji**

From the quiet coastal village of Jambiani Mfumbwi in Zanzibar, Lutfia Suleiman Haji, born in 2004, has risen to become a symbol of perseverance and ambition. As the youngest of three children, she grew up in a humble family where every step toward education was a struggle—but one she faced with unwavering determination.

Lutfia began her education at Kikadini Primary School, where she studied from Standard One to Standard Six, and later joined Jambiani Secondary School, completing Form Four in 2021. Her childhood was shaped by financial hardship. Her father, a small-scale farmer, and her mother, who worked for many years as a housekeeper and later in a hotel, did their best to provide for the family. Despite these challenges, Lutfia remained focused on her studies and her dream of pursuing higher education.

After finishing secondary school, she decided to strengthen her skills by enrolling in a three months computer course, where she earned excellent results and obtained a certificate. When her Form Four results were released, she was proud to see that she had performed well despite



all the difficulties she faced. Deep down, she knew her education journey was far from over, her goal was to join university and study Law, a field she had always admired for its power to bring justice and positive change to society.

So, she began searching for opportunities to continue her education. However, her family’s financial limitations made it almost impossible for her to join college. It was at this point that her school principal, Mr. Haji Hassan, and assistant principal, Mr. Kassim, recommended her to the Child Development Fund (CDF). After submitting her documents, Lutfia was accepted into the CDF Scholarship Program. Her choice to study Law—a rare field among CDF scholars—immediately stood out. The

organization saw great potential in her, recognizing that her education could one day serve as a bridge for justice and empowerment in her community and beyond.

In 2022, Lutfia enrolled at the Zanzibar Law Resource Center, where she began her Certificate in Law. Upon completion, she continued her studies with a Diploma in Law, which she successfully finished in 2025. Throughout her studies, CDF provided comprehensive support—covering tuition, laptop, books, transportation, meals, and even assisting her family when needed. This support lifted the burden of financial worry, allowing Lutfia to concentrate fully on her studies and professional growth.

As part of her training, Lutfia gained invaluable practical experience through placements at the High Court of Zanzibar in both Tunguu and Vuga, where she observed real court proceedings and deepened her understanding of legal practice. These experiences gave her the confidence and motivation to continue striving toward her goal of becoming a respected legal professional.

Her efforts and persistence bore fruit—Lutfia graduated with a GPA of 3.5 (Upper Second Class) in Law. This achievement marked a significant milestone in her journey, proving that dedication and hard work can overcome even the most difficult circumstances.

Today, Lutfia is preparing to take the next step in her academic journey by pursuing a

Bachelor’s Degree in Law at Zanzibar University in Kibele. Her dream is to become a legal advocate who uses her knowledge to protect the rights of others and promote fairness within her society.

Grateful for the support she received, Lutfia expresses deep appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. Schmid, the entire CDF team, and her mentors who stood by her through every challenge.

“CDF has been my foundation,” says Lutfia. “They gave me not just financial help, but hope and direction. My success is not mine alone—it belongs to everyone who believed in me. Together, we are building a better future for our society.”



Finally, regarding Tanzania/Zanzibar, we are pleased to announce the acceptance of two new scholarship recipients with disabilities: Ummul-ayman and Salha (see the CDF website under Profiles for more details).

Ummul-ayman has a hearing impairment, which is genetic, as her father is also affected. It is particularly difficult for her during the colder months (May-August): the cold causes her severe pain, leading her to miss school, which hinders her academic progress. She requires medication prescribed by the hospital. However, she has not yet seen an ENT specialist, which we have arranged to obtain a hearing aid for her.

Our blind scholarship recipient, Mukrim (see his profile on the CDF website), successfully passed the final exams for his certificate, enabling him to begin his two-year postgraduate degree in journalism. Mukrim's ambition has been rewarded with invitations to appear on radio and television programs, and the university has entrusted him with leadership roles.

In **Kenya**, the scholarship programs in Kendu Bay (Lake Victoria) and Mutonga (southeast of Mount Kenya) are proceeding as planned. However, no new students will be admitted to the secondary school program. Three post-secondary scholarship recipients in Mutonga have successfully completed their studies. We anticipate being able to admit two new candidates (Risper and Sharon) to the program after they complete upper secondary school. In Kendu Bay, the current five post-secondary scholarship recipients are enrolled in the program, which will conclude upon their successful completion of their studies.

Our staff in Kendu Bay conducted a mentoring session focused on effective learning strategies. Factors hindering academic success and practices necessary for high achievement were also discussed and shared. A total of 10 learners (9 girls and 1 boy) participated, exchanging coping strategies and reflecting on personal experiences. The session boosted self-confidence, imparted essential life skills, and fostered a commitment to academic excellence.



Students of the Mentorship-Program in Kenduy Bay

Magdaline Rabala from the Lake Region Development Programme (Kendu Bay) shared the following success story with us:

### **Carmelas: Improved Confidence and Well-being**

“My name is Carmelas Idaya, and I am currently a second-year Biochemistry student at the University of Nairobi pursuing a bachelor’s degree in Biochemistry. I was born and raised in Kowuor Village, Rachuonyo North Sub-County, Homabay County. I am a 5th born in a family of seven vulnerable children. I sat for my KCPE at Kowuor Primary, where I got 375 marks (of max. 500). Later, I joined Ole Tips Girls, where I passed with flying colours, which gave me the chance to join the University of Nairobi.

With parents who struggled daily to provide for our basic needs, education was often seen as a luxury. My parents recognized my urge for education and enrolled me in the nearby village school, since my siblings were also on the verge of their studies, and this became a total burden for my parents. My life in primary school became difficult because I was often out of



school due to educational expenses that were hard to meet. It was a miracle that I had some well-wishers who helped me clear up the expenses I had at the primary level. Not to forget that even getting stationery and sanitary towels was like a dream. At the University, the amount paid sometimes does not fully cover the fees, posing another challenge in finding the remaining funds.

*(Picture: Carmelas while in high school in Form 4)*

I sat for the KCPE and passed. My parents had no choice but to start seeking scholarships, including contacting well-wishers like Elimu Scholarship and Equity Wings to Fly, but all was in vain. Knowing that there was no help to continue my education nearly broke my heart. My parents tried again to seek bursaries, but there were still no results. I had lost hope in education till the ChildFund project came to my rescue through the Nielimishe Program, which now fully

funds my yearly school fees, provides revision materials, sanitary towels, and guiding and counselling sessions that helped me build my self-esteem and believe in myself, restoring the hope I had lost. And till now, at the university level, all gratitude and appreciation go to Barbara and Guenther Schmid for their endless support. *(Picture: Carmelas on the left with course mates after a practical class in Campus)*

The program has had a positive impact, helping shape the person I will become. Indeed, it is a pleasure to find this opportunity to be with you through this journey. The program has consistently provided me with sanitary towels to maintain menstrual hygiene. I foresee a brighter future, as it has really taught me the



values of discipline, self-respect, and responsibility. It is my urge and with deep optimism that this chance will not only bring vital change in my education journey but also its future impact will be felt in this generation.”

## **Conclusion**

Finally, we would like to once again promote the CDF website, especially the "Other Media" section: [www.childdevelopmentfund.com](http://www.childdevelopmentfund.com). There you will find all the links to the latest publications related to our work; behind all these publications, even those that may appear somewhat amateurish, lies a great deal of passion. We welcome any feedback on these works and encourage their further dissemination.

In closing, we would like to thank our donors once again for their loyalty to our foundation and their financial and moral support. As mentioned in the last two newsletters, **we no longer expect regular contributions**. However, if you are inspired by our current activities to provide further support, we will consider the necessity and possibility, and certainly do not rule it out. In this case, please let us know. **Our bank details will also be different:** Donation account ChildFund Germany e. V.: IBAN DE06 3702 0500 0007 7800 06. Please be sure to include the purpose of your donation as "Child Development Fund." Otherwise, the amount cannot be allocated to the projects of our (former) foundation.

Günther Schmid and Barbara Schmid-Heidenhain, Berlin, January 20, 2026