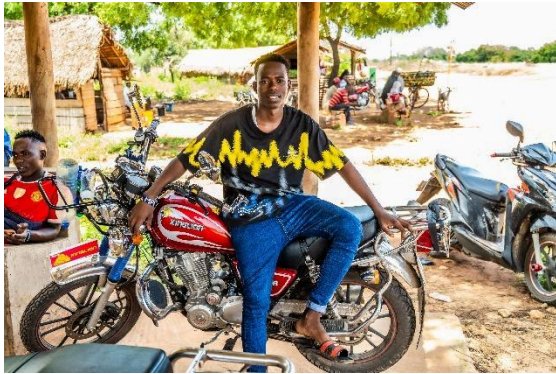


UJANA SALAMA PROJECT



I started joining peer groups when I was in school, and I ended up dropping out of school. My sister is a healthcare provider, and lives here in Tanga at Kigombe contacted my parents and took me here. Her goal was to transform me psychologically and take me back to school.

When I arrived here in Tanga, my sister did not give me a business to do rather she first asked me 'Why did you drop out of school?' I told her father and mother did not have money to send me to school. Then my sister told me, she would support me to continue with my education, but she wanted to give me a business first and thereafter take me to school, and if I did not go to school, she would take me to the Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA), and I agreed with her.

After a short period, my sister opened a fruit shop for me, and the business grew well because there were customers and a profit. In the fruit business, I was doing it properly such that, my sister was enjoying seeing me making a profit. After a while, I met some bad friends here in Kigombe and they convinced me to go to the local night club, known as Vigodoro, and I thought it was right for me. We used to go to Mapojoni, Kerare, Mtiti, and Bago, and on New Year's Eve, we used to go to the Masai (Molel) area.

Sometimes we went up to the Pangani district to look for girls for Vigodoro. It came to a point that my sister started to see a change in me, that is, my mischievousness. I would have been a little late to realize myself I would have grown up to be a drunkard because I grew up using drugs, but they still have not stayed in my blood.

Going to the local disco one must have a girl, it is normal that if you go there you don't dance with other people's girls. I thought it was okay for me because I lacked self-awareness, and I could not handle my emotions and by that time I had not joined the Ujana Salama project.



One day, my sister took me to the theatre and community dialogue held by Ujana Salama youth champions at Msakangoto Village here in Kigombe ward. I did not know if there was such an event. My sister's goal was that I should take her on a motorcycle but also stay and listen to the knowledge shared by my peers. However, I was not interested, and I did not see if the knowledge being shared was productive for me because I saw my peers whom we met in the local music, and I assumed there was nothing new. I said to myself, it is better to do other things than listen to this, then I dodged my sister and went to the "cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana" point and my sister does not even know if I drink alcohol.

There was another opportunity for young people to join the Ujana Salama project here in Kigombe. My sister found out and wanted me to join the training. I went for the signing at the King Fisher Hotel. When I got there, I registered, then I met two of my colleagues and they told me they went for the youth champion training. I wanted to leave but the two friends explained to me a little about the project and this led me to say to myself, let me stay and see what kind of training there is.

On the first day, we were taught to believe in ourselves, and after that day I found something very important, how to believe in myself and set my goals as a young man. The other day I learned more about how to protect myself from sexually transmitted diseases such as gonorrhoea, especially after receiving education from a health care provider. I did not know the correct way to use a condom but now I know and, I learned to stop having unsafe sex.

To my fellow youths, let's not underestimate the education we get about our reproductive health. I have received an education and I have realized myself and I will educate my peers not to get involved in bad actions in society because they can end their goals.

"My community my responsibility"

My name is Jumaa Msumari (30 years of age). I am a youth champion from Makole ward. I joined Ujana Salama project since its firstly introduced in Muheza District in 2022. Before the Ujana Salama project, I grew up as a young man who did not have the courage or understanding to follow up on issues of gender-based violence. But I also grew up not knowing if hitting someone and hurting them is violence, and yelling at someone with sarcastic words is also cruelty. In short, I did not know what

gender-based violence is and the types of gender-based violence because I did not have the knowledge to recognize the types of violence and how to report GBV acts.

The significant changes and success after getting involved in Ujana Salama project, First, self-realization and determination, I can now manage my goals in my life. Through the Ujana Salama project, I realized the meaning of sex and gender. I realized that there are many opportunities that we do not see because of gender issues. I have



also realized that my responsibilities as a man can also be done by a woman and vice versa as the roles of a woman can also be performed by man without oppressing each other.



Thanks to the Ujana Salama project, I have now become a very different youth, so far, my community has trusted in me, and they are using me to help solving problems that arise in my community. For example, I have helped members of my community by reporting two cases, one of which I have taken one lady to the community welfare office to get child support right because the man whom she gave birth with, has abandoned her. I am thankful that, currently the lady has succeeded in getting the right to raise her child since she can now receive a sum of TZS 70,000/= "Seventy thousand Tanzanian shillings" per month which is divided into two terms that after every 15th day of a month she receives 35,000 Tanzanian shillings.

Secondly, I managed to help a young man to go to the police station after being sodomized by three men until he could not walk. Currently, the case is with the police and there is a report book (RB) document to arrest the perpetrators despite being escaped.

In my community at Makole ward, I gained respect by being selected by Ward Development Committee (WDC) to attend a meeting and make representation of my sub-village chair. It was also an opportunity for me to directly participate in as the only young person in the session. It is an indication that youth representation in these committees is now valuable and possible.

Finally, I promise to continue providing knowledge that I have gained through Ujana Salama project to my peers to change their attitude, so as build a society where young people are trusted as change agents and champions of raising and fighting against sexual violence, Violence against children and being young people of modeled in society.

I congratulate the Ujana Salama project through Femina Hip for educating and empowering youths. I would like this project to be sustainable so that we can reach more young people and build a unity that will help us eradicate the issues of child pregnancies, child marriages, abuse, and violence in general.