



# Nkomwa Trust News

## Inclusivity is the key

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## Disability Ambassador gets befitting surprise

**Gwanda** – The saying that one good turn deserves another is an experience that Pick Nkomwa, the founder of Nkomwa Foundation Trust encountered this week, when he nearly fainted at his doorstep, following a surprise party that carried him from his house to the office.

Disability Ambassador at his surprise party in Gwanda. *Choice News Africa* Whilst in a state of shock at his own door step, lost as what could have taken place and in his dilemma he winded back to reality as the cheering crowd greeted him making some noise prompting him to realise the surprise that was unveiled in his face.

One of the organizers for the surprise party traditionally saluting Pick Nkomwa at the function. *Choice News Africa* The Celebratory tone saw their long serving youth, Mthandazo Ndlovu detaching his crutches as he rocked the podium, while aged mothers ululated as they surprised their guest.

Gifts poured in during the function. *Choice News Africa* This was time to celebrate in honour of the man who has stood boldly advocating equality and inclusive environment for people with disabilities (PWDs) in Gwanda, as the honour was delivered by parents and guardians who managed to mobilise resources to surprise him for his aristocrat work.

Mrs Evelinah Dube said the establishment of Nkomwa Foundation Trust was a blessing that will be cherished forever. "Ever since I set my foot in NFT office, thus when I made a U-turn to the societal belief that deem people with disability as second-class citizen in our culture.

In our midst PWDs were truly neglected and marginalized up until Pick Nkomwa vowed to be their servant. After facing a number of challenges with my grandson, NFT came to my rescue, hence their work was not supposed to go unnoticed." said Ms Dube. Another respected PWD, Ms Dorica Churu said NFT is a pillar and a shoulder to learn on as far as disability advocacy is concerned in the province and beyond.

"My child has a disability and I knocked several doors in search of help, but some offices shunned me out. The real light shines now, since my encounter with NFT, as my child's life has changed tremendously. She is now among some of the learners in our local

schools all courtesy of NFT and I applaud them for that." Emphasised Ms Churu.

Nkomwa Foundation Trust's Programs and Communications Officer Ms Monitor Ncube was also involved in the logistics and organisation of the surprise party, that befits a symbolic Pick Nkomwa who she said deserves

moon though I almost fainted when the crowd lauded Surprise. I am so honoured by this gesture from the parents and guardians of our project participants.

Indeed, you have shown me that we are a family. I am your servant and indeed I have devoted my life to the uplift my disability constituency.



great honour. "We organized this flourish as a way to honour him, his work sparked our brains. The work he has poured to the community at large is beyond imagination. He has taken the organisation from under the shades, now a lot of people across the province and have benefited from his sharp mind," said Ms Ncube

Addressing the crowd with glass eyes full of delight, the ecstatic Pick stammered, trying to compose himself as he was still in the deep of surprise.

"I don't know where to start, because of this pleasure today, I am over the

It's never my strength but the power from the Almighty. All my officers, this is our honour together.

I am glad that there is a significant change of mindset in the communities as far as disability is concerned. Let us not tire to advocate for inclusivity, together we can," said Nkomwa.

Nkomwa Foundation Trust has become a household name in Matabeleland South Province, with a lot of public offices now having to pull up their socks, as the organisation is spreading like veldfire, in their quest to weed out marginalisation and discrimination of persons with disabilities.

## Disability sensitisation for Datata community

By Liberty Mutamba

**Gwanda** – Matabeleland South based Nkomwa Foundation Trust, a disability organisation has organised yet another interactive disability sensitisation training workshop for Datata community, where villagers were capacitated on disability rights, mechanisms, gender-based violence and welfare.

Datata villagers following the proceedings of the sensitisation workshop.

The eye-opening collaborative sensitisation was meant to buttress the Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) which mandates that people with disability have rights to documentation, right to vote, right to marriage among others.

Ward two senior villager, Head Thabani Thwala bemoaned that People with disability (PWDs) are still infringed to exercise such rights.

Nkomwa Foundation Programmes and Communications Manager Monitor Beloved Ncube doing presentation.

“I grew up in male-controlled society, where women were considered second class citizens. It was much painful when it comes to PWDs. No education was accepted to them nor basic training skills. When it comes to inheritance it was way pathetic, words like “Uzazenzani inkomo yena eyisilima were shared,” Thwala narrated. In the yesteryear, women were victimized or labelled for conceiving a child with albinism. Currently mothers leave their children to relatives, this on its own has fuelled the cases of abuse especially to the children with disabilities. NFT Ward 2 Officer Ms Barbra Nkala stressed on this doctrine. “Families usually do cover-up when a child is physically or sexually abused by



their relatives and such issues go unattended to. As NFT we seek to uproot such doctrine and make sure that justice prevail at any cost,” Ms Barbra Nkala said.

Nkomwa Foundation Trust Programmes and Communications Manager Miss Monitor Beloved Ncube told *Choice News Africa* that they are pre-



pared to ensure justice prevail especially in rural set-up. “It is shocking to have a cattle ticket while your daughter does not

have a birth certificate or health card. An animal gets better treatment as compared to a child with a disability. We seek to tackle such regular tendency. We advocate for inclusivity and equity among human beings,” Ms Ncube highlighted.

The Disability Ambassador Mr. Pick Nkomwa said it takes one’s open heart to accept persons with disabilities.

“See a person first before disability, that’s an inclusive society we desire. The challenge we have is that our colleagues are being abused by relatives and easily silenced by food, fees or shelter this has seen a lot of people with disabilities living in hazardous environment,” said Nkomwa.

The Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council, was also carrying out the sensitization workshop in conjunction with NFT. The National AIDS Council also supported the facilitation of the Datata sensitization on disability, in their efforts to help in sexual education and precautions.

Mothers and young women with disabilities in the village managed to get family planning services, but however male involvement in such platforms are still lagging behind.



Access to education is a fundamental human right, yet thousands of children with disabilities are kept indoors far from the developing proceedings, due to seclusion from mainstream activities, by their caregivers who are shying away from the public eye, thereby disadvantaging their vulnerable children.

Nkomwa Foundation Trust spearheading disability education workshops in Gwanda.

It is estimated that there are 240 million children with disabilities around the world, and that almost 29 million of these children live in Africa. Children with disabilities in most African countries (including Zimbabwe) are often excluded and marginalized.

Pick Nkomwa fought for the enrollment of this child with disability after she was denied schooling.

They persistently face barriers to the enjoyment of their basic human rights and inclusion in education. In most communities, definitions and interpretations of disability reflected various myths, fears, suspicions and misconceptions.

Consequently, negative attitudes and stereotypes towards people with disabilities hinder their access to quality education. Schooling is instrumental for enabling children with disabilities (like all children) to participate in employment and other areas of social activity.

Although access to education is a fundamental human right, children with disabilities in Sub-Saharan Africa are often excluded and marginalised. The Sustainable Development Goal number 4 is meant to promote and ensure inclusive and quality education for all and to promote lifelong learning.

Despite improvements in recent years, gaps in education outcomes between children with and without disabilities have been increasing over a period of time.

The global inclusive education movement, as guided by international, regional and national policy agreements on the rights of persons with disabilities, is therefore anchored on the principle that disability is not an excluding condition.

Stigma is one of the underlying factors that act as a barrier for access to education. Some studies have shown that the key driver to lack of access to education by children and people with disabilities is the point of interaction between disability, stigmatisation and discrimination.

On the other hand, it is also argued that, public attitudes and beliefs on disabilities in Africa are often based on fear and misunderstanding.

Stereotype individuals with disabilities is exposing prejudice, discrimination, ultimately denial of rights and resources that are afforded to all citizens.



Former Head of State of South Africa-Nelson Mandela once said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

Benefits of educating children with disabilities among others include-independent living, high self-esteem-by being included in regular schools, that children with disabilities can be more confident to display qualities of self-efficiency.

Employment opportunities, build social connections and develop all round as a person. Social skills are learnt just through observation and imitation.

They get a better understanding of the world around them and feel happy about being part of the regular community. Let the community embrace diversity and uphold human rights-based approach on disability.

## Grandmother appeal for schooling of her neglected boy with disability

By *Nontobeko Sibanda*

**Guy Ntepe** – An elderly grandparent of 18 year old teenager with disability (Intellectually challenged) in Ntepe community is appealing for help to send her grandson back to school after he dropped out in 2020 due to financial constraints. Nicky Moyo now aged 18 and in dire need of school fees to return to school.

Nicky Moyo, was left by his mother who went to South Africa in search of greener pastures, as Zimbabwe's economy is deteriorating without any hope of employment.

The mother never came back leaving Nicky and other two siblings under the care of their grandmother, Percy Dube who is now very old and cannot afford to look after them. She told this Journalist that she has since sold out the few goats that she owned, in an effort to send her grandson to school, until they were all finished.

The child who is now fast growing above the school going age and also failing to proceed furthering his studies in school due to lack of income.

The grandmother is appealing for help to accomplish her dream of sending his grandson to school as she is failing to raise school fees and groceries, as required by the institutions.

She fighting hard but age has caught up with her and she cannot work to raise fees.

"I am appealing for money to pay school fees and transport and also groceries required by the institution so that he can go and learn with others than sitting at home," said Gogo Dube.

Ward 13 Councillor Miclas Ndlovu described the teenager as someone who is well behaved despite his condition.



"Nicky is a well behaved boy whom you will never see engaging in fights with anyone in our community." Said Councillor Miclas Ndlovu.

"It is very worrisome to encounter such situations in our communities. Our dear sisters and brothers leave their children in the care of their elderly parents who also need help. A lot of sensitisation is required in the communities starting at family level.

As for the young man, a holistic approach is needed and as an organisation we will engage other stakeholders like Ministry of Education, Ministry of Youth and Department of Social Development Services for the way forward," said Pick Nkomwa NFT Director.

# Matabeleland continue receiving help from NFT

By Nontobeko Sibanda

**Gwanda** – Nkomwa Foundation Trust’s charitable works continue to touch the hearts of many in Gwanda and is also spreading to other parts of the country, in their effort to reduce vulnerability of people with disability.



Nokuthaba Dladla Zhokwe of ward 13, was identified by Nkomwa Foundation in 2020, after completing her grade seven in 2019 she could not proceed to secondary level due to constraints.

**NFT Founder Pick and Councillor for Ward 13 Micah Ndlovu with the beneficiary.**

The recent donation and support for the girl child with disability, who has no basic food, will go a long way, as the young lady has not been able to also pay this term’s school fees. Nokuthaba Dladla Zhokwe with her donation from Nkomwa Foundation Trust.



will keep on working hard all the times. I appeal for a smart phone so that I can be able to attend online lessons.

Ward 13 Councillor Micah Ndlovu commended NFT as a rescuer and a caring provider as evidenced by the work they are doing in his ward. He said that few organisations think of the less privileged like PWDs, but NFT portrays its commitment to people with disabilities in all areas.

“NFT ngumahlangu (rescuer) as it rescued the young lady by taking care of her needs, other organizations tend to give more focus on people without disabilities in the communities neglecting PWDs, but NFT displayed love and commitment towards people with disabilities.” Added Councillor Ndlovu.

Nokuthaba is from a child headed family. NFT came to her rescue by supporting her to commence her secondary education in 2021. The foundation started taking care of all her necessities including renting a room at Lutheran Church-Ntepe to ease the travelling distance to school.

The young lady is now in form three at Ntepe High school. As the world celebrated International Day of Education, NFT considered it fit to share the little they have as part of the celebration in uplifting a girl child with disability.

Nokuthaba applauded NFT for their support and promised to work hard, she is also in need of a smart phone for online lessons. “I am grateful to NFT for their continuous support I

“I wish NFT can develop to a bigger organization with more resources so that they can manage to take care of all PWDs who are under their care. I also wish that they could even have their own educational institute in our district for easy administration and upkeep of these children with disabilities.” He concluded. NFT Director Mr Pick Nkomwa said that educating a girl child with disability opens doors of opportunities in life. With the double layered discrimination, they encounter, it is vital to keep empowering them.

“I am so humbled that as an organisation we were able to assist. Nokuthaba Dladla is one of our project participant we are trying to uplift. On all the girls we are supporting she is in the top five of those doing well. Lastly I appreciate the support from various partners and local leadership in our educational project. Education is key to persons with disabilities”, said Mr Nkomwa.

## Sexual reproductive trainings for people with disabilities triumph

By Nontobeko Sibanda

**Gwanda** – In their extra efforts to improve the lives of people with disabilities, Nkomwa Foundation Trust has successfully held a five days workshop, for people with disabilities and caregivers to help keep the lives of vulnerable communities safe.

Matabeleland South Province based non-Governmental Organisation, NFT, held this workshop targeting caregivers for people with disabilities and the community, as a trainer of trainers, as part of the organisation’s target in empowering the vulnerable communities. The workshop was facilitated by Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council- Mat South Province. An estimated 10% of the world’s population is constituted by persons with disabilities. PWDs have the same sexual and reproductive health, just like any other people. However, PWDs often face barriers in accessing inclusive healthcare. In recognition of these barriers, Nkomwa Foundation Trust considered staff capacitation inclusive of caregivers in order to curb information gap in adolescent sexual reproductive health, among persons with disabilities. Adolescents with disabilities are said to be the most



vulnerable groups in the society therefore there is dire need for them to be taught on ASRH for their self-protection. Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council Matabeleland South Provincial Manager Mr. Talent Goremusandu urged NFT staff and its participants to spread knowledge on ASRH in their outreaches. “This is a good opportunity for NFT staff and the care givers to go and implement adolescent and sexual reproductive health in your communities,” said Mr. Goremusandu.

“We have equipped you with relevant skills and knowledge which will enable you to cover the disability sector.” He further said that as ZNFPC they are committed to work with NFT in all areas of ASRH to ensure safety of people in communities. Ms Onnie Mupunga, ZNFPC Service delivery Coordinator urged NFT staff to close knowledge gap faced by youths with disabilities on ASRH services. “As you go into communities I hope you are going to identify more problems faced by the youth as far as ASRH is concerned. I hope you will penetrate more and give knowledge that you gained from this training which will assist and reduce problems faced by young people in the disability community,” said Mupunga. Miss Naledi Lebani NFT-Programs Intern expressed gratitude for the knowledge she gained from the training and vowed to use it in serving disability sector during her internship and beyond. “I was not aware of some ASRH components and Family Planning procedures but after the training my eyes have been opened, I am going to impart knowledge to others in the community on behalf of NFT,” said Lebani.

The NFT Programmes and Communication Manager Miss Monitor Beloved Ncube treasured the training and said it was relevant to their organization. “The training programme is beneficial to the team since they are mandated to work with young people with disabilities. Thus, the training has become a step in the right direction in the inclusive world in all aspects of life.” Concluded Ncube.

# NFT serves Umzingwane's people with albinism



Esigodini –This week has been busy for Nkomwa Foundation Trust Programmes team, as they visited Umzingwane District to distribute sunscreen lotions, to cushion persons with albinism.

The organization has also realised the need for Albinism community in Umzingwane who are desperate for sunscreen lotions to curb cancer.

With this scorching sun in Matabeleland South region People with Albinism remain vulnerable to blisters and rashes caused by the heat which then leads to chronic wounds. Their skin is too sensitive to harsh temperatures caused by climate change and leave them at high risk of skin cancer. Nkomwa Foundation Trust is a disability organisation that also caters for persons with

albinism under its wings. Albinism is considered as a disability according to the Zimbabwean National Disability Policy of 2021. Some section of society's perception claims that people with albinism are able-bodied with nothing connecting them to the disability community.

However, they are more vulnerable beyond imagination. Scientifically, people with albinism have a pale skin which is very sensitive to harsh weathers. This then calls for extra protection by caregivers and the community at large since the consequences pose a serious threat to life. One of the beneficiaries Mr Zwelani Gqoka expressed his appreciation for the sunscreen lotions gift. "I am so grateful to Nkomwa Foundation Trust for remembering us in our district. These lotions are our basic necessities in our daily living. They are expensive and beyond our reach. Having such people as NFT team is a blessing to us. I hope NFT will continue helping us as they also reach to other districts." said Gqoka.

NFT founder, Pick applauded Noble Hands Trust Zimbabwe, for availing sunscreen lotions that they distribute to vulnerable communities. "I am so delighted to meet my fellow people and giving a helping hand in this district. In development work, intended goals cannot be achieved in isolation. I am grateful for the partnership and support we also receive from Noble Hands Trust Zimbabwe in availing this commodity to us for further distribution to the communities. As an organ-



ization, we will continue supporting our friends in whatever way we can." Said Pick Nkomwa. Mostly, people with albinism have a partial visual impairment. People with Albinism can have a variety of visual impairments including involuntary back and forth movement of eyes (nystagmus), inability to focus both eyes on a single point (strabismus), extreme near/farsightedness and sensitivity to light or photophobia.

NFT team also distributed hand sanitizers to minimize the transmission of viruses and encouraged personal hygiene to all community members. The sanitizer packages will go to all age groups as a way to decentralize health service, as a voluntary institution.

## Nkomwa Foundation empowers youth with disability

### Liberty Mutamba

**Gwanda** -The undeterred sketcher Mthandazo Ndlovu is a true reflection that disability does not mean inability, the 22yr Jahunda young man was born with a talent of drawing until his Grade 3 teacher Mrs P Ndlovu showcased the school his fauna in sketching.

Mthandazo Ndlovu the youngman who defied disability. Despite being born with Spinal bifida (congenital deformity of spine) this was not a hindrance for Mthandazo to pursue his dream of being an exceptional artist, with his unique charisma of sketching the nature the boy rose to fame, as the youngster told Choice News Africa on how nature inspired him.

"I started this project at a tender age and almost all of my drawings are of nature, realizing that our province is unique, as it has beautiful rivers, mountains, hills and wildlife, which I love to pencil on my sketches.

I tend to choose a different part realizing that almost every drawing or sketches are either on celebrities and cars, of which I opted for a different part." He said.

The young man has been outstanding in competition and currently he graduated from



Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) attaining a First-class certificate in Information, Communication, Technology and Basic Sign language. "In my last competition I was number two, in a contest which was hosted at Bulawayo Art Gallery where I penciled a countryside that I once dreamt about, and that was another inspiration to my work.

I still remember in 2020, covid19, deferred my trip to Victoria Falls where there was a global competition. This certificate which I attained recently, I owe it to the Nkomwa Foundation Trust and my parents".

Said Mthandazo Ndlovu. The former Gwanda High student said he encounter nightmare when it comes to market his project to the world.

"I always draw but the challenge that I have is that I don't have a place to showcase my talent. Nkomwa Foundation Trust and my parents have been a standing pillar in my upbringing, I applaud them for their kindness. "Now I wish my project to be seen by the entire world and people beyond, for them to rate my God-given talent which I am still eager to pursue". Emphasized Mthandazo. Nkomwa Foundation Trust Director, Pick said the youngster is absolutely sensational when it comes to drawing, he is a hard working citizen with a vision to transform the world with his artwork.

"I have known Mthandazo Ndlovu since 2016 through his parents, when our Foundation was established in 2020, he was one of the first officers in the organisation serving as the Admin Assistant. He is a hard-working and passionate young man. I gave him enough exposure to the real world of business. As he served as the Admin Officer, I encouraged him to pursue his Art career.

In his latest achievement, he had made us proud. I appeal to the corporate world to invest in such talents." Concluded Pick NFT Director.

# Nkomwa Foundation in capacity building activities

By Liberty Mutamba

**Gwanda** – Nkomwa Foundation Trust, a fast-growing non-profit making organisation based in Matabeleland South, is holding extensive internal staff capacity orientation activities, in an effort to penetrate

bound to drown all efforts. “As an organization thrives to initiate development in the community, there is need to ensure research about the community. While in the implementation of project the issue of equity, fairness and anti-discrimination is of paramount

“One should bear it in mind that they resemble their organization in their activities. Being guided by the safeguarding policy which is supposed to be in their finger-tips,” added Fr Gwarai.

NFT Advocacy Officer Norman Mudadisi, concurred with the facilitator and also added on the strength of an organization, saying it also lies in unity and team work among colleagues.

“If there is good relationship and lovely environment in the work place, a project usually tends to have a smooth-flow. Divisions, gossiping and judging one another usually derail the development in a community,” he said.

In his keynote remarks, director of Nkomwa Foundation Trust, Mr Pick Nkomwa said it is of great impact to have a smooth flow, which is attained by capacity building.

“In this contemporary business world, it is imperative to keep the employees abreast of the changes for effective service delivery to the communities.

I am grateful to our partner for the facilitation and also other sister organisations who attended. I believe the knowledge imparted will go a long way in smooth flow of operations,” concluded NFT Director.



its disability programs into other provinces.

The organisation held an interactive capacity building which was facilitated by Development Practitioner Father Christopher Ngwarai of Roman Catholic in Gwanda recently. Father Ngwarai stressed on the importance of a cordial relationship between the organisation staff and community dialogue at large, because there is need to respect cultural values that a society imposes. “There is need for one to research the background of the community before implementing a project. We have seen a number of organizations failing to bring positive development due to bad approach, which is always

importance,” said Father Ngwarai.

One of the participants, from Hope for Youth and Children Foundation Trust Mr Vusumuzi Ndlovu appreciated the opportunity afforded to learn.

“I am grateful to NFT for the invitation to attend the staff capacitation on development work, team building, safeguarding and protection. The refresher engagement was critical in unpacking the role of CBOs in development work and how to ethically undertake work in the community,” he said. The training facilitator, Father Ngwarai added on the maintaining of order and peace in respect of the safe guarding policy that protect the organization and worker’s welfare.

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