



ONE WOMAN WHO TURNED ONE LESSON INTO A LIFE SAVING LEGACY.



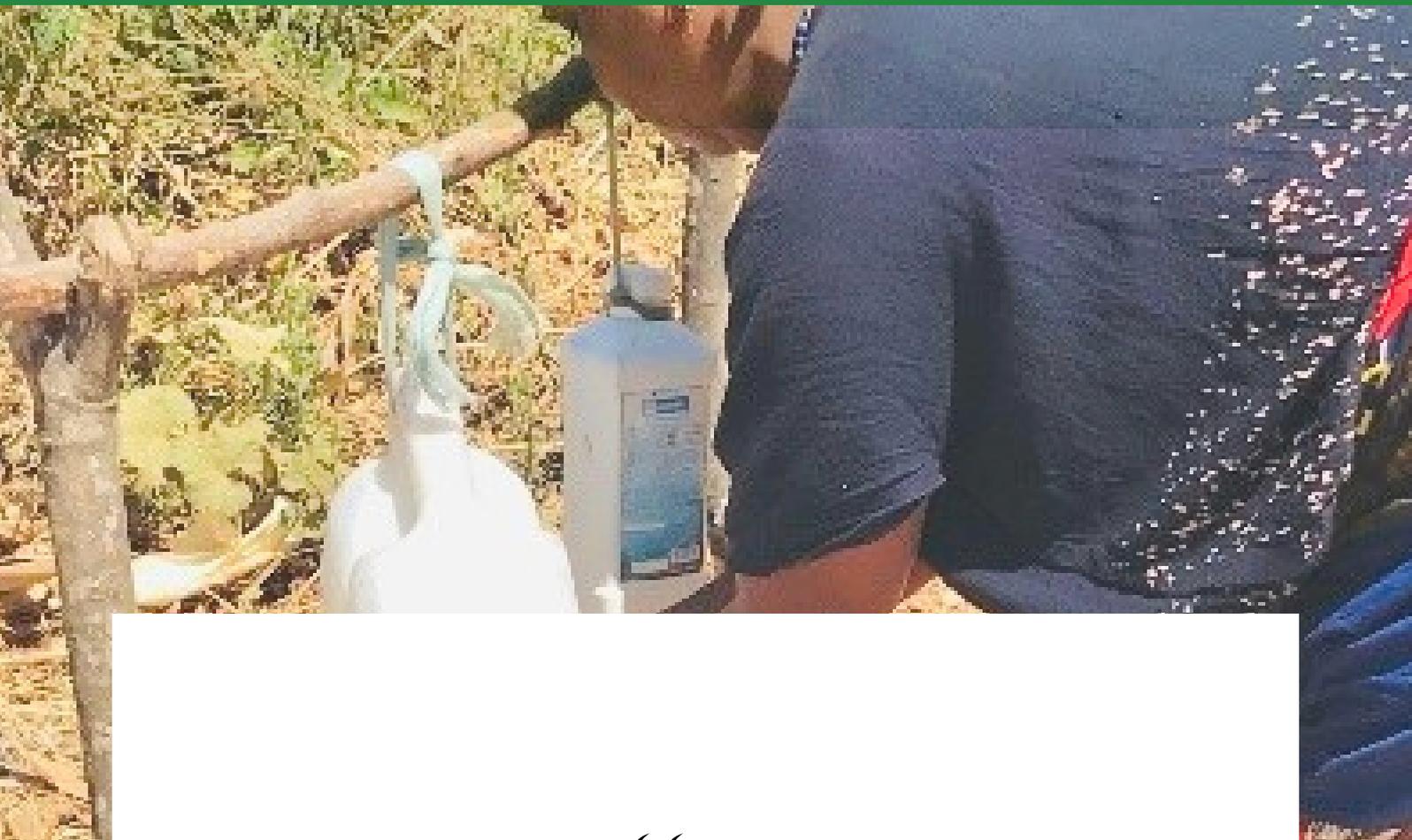
A JOURNEY TO CHANGE

In the quiet sub-village of Mambua, nestled within Lalta village in Chemba District, Dodoma, Rosina Petrol, a 58-year-old mother of nine, she was born in 1965, Rosina's family spans generations, with her eldest child born in 1983 and her youngest in 2009.

Life in Lalta was simple but fraught with challenge one of the most pressing being the lack of proper sanitation.

As Rosina reflects on how her life has changed from suffering to joy, sometimes to her, it feels like a dream. Rosina recalls vividly the days when makeshift toilets were the norm in her community.

These fragile structures, built from grass and other temporary materials, posed a constant threat to health and safety.



IN ROSINA' WORDS



“ The toilets weren't safe, her voice tinged with the memory of fear.

They often harbored dangerous insects like snakes and cockroaches that could spread diseases, It was a challenging moment when my child needed to use the toilet, instead of feeling relieved that his digestion was functioning well.

I found myself anxious, fearing smething bad might happen. During the rainy season, they would collapse, and we would have to rebuild them two or three times a year.

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ROSINA PETROLWORDS OF VULNERABILITY.

“Cleaning these toilets was another challenge, and the unsanitary conditions led to frequent outbreaks of diarrhoea diseases. Rosina admitted that hygiene education was virtually non-existent in her village. We didn’t wash our hands after using the toilet,

it meant nothing to us. At times, **our clothes would absorb the unpleasant smell** from the toilets, but it didn’t bother us much. We simply resorted to removing some of our clothes while using the toilets as a temporary fix, though it was far from a permanent solution. It was simply how we lived, not knowing any better. ”

CHWS HAVE TURNED INTENTION INTO IMPACT.



in 2023, a beacon of change arrived at Rosina's home in the form of Mr. Justine Matano, a dedicated Community Health Worker. Justine, a familiar face in the community, was known for providing health education.

On this visit, however, his focus was transformative: the importance of proper toilets and the simple but impactful practice of washing hands with running water using a local innovation called a kibuyu mchirizi (a handwashing station made with basic materials).

Mr. Justine explained how unsafe toilets could harbor insects like cockroaches, which spread diseases like cholera and worm infections,

Rosina sighed and said,

Mr. Justine shared a piece of advice that replayed in my ears like a song "Washing hands with running water, especially after using the toilet and before eating, was critical in preventing illnesses such as diarrhea, cholera, and intestinal worm infections.

He explained that running water is more effective than still water because it washes away germs and contaminants rather than allowing them to linger on the hands, ensuring better hygiene and reducing the risk of disease transmission."



THE MESSAGE DEEPLY RESONATED WITH ROSINA,

For years, her children had suffered from stomach aches, worms, and frequent bouts of diarrhea. Justine's education opened her eyes to the connection between these health issues and the lack of proper sanitation. Before, I didn't understand the importance of modern toilets. We had grown up with traditional practices, and it was all we knew, no one questioned anything. she admitted.

Inspired by Justine's advice, Rosina decided to act. During the harvest season, her family sold some of their crops to raise money. With that money, they built a modern toilet and set up a kibuyu mchirizi for handwashing, following Justine's guidance.

Now, we have a proper toilet and a handwashing area, Rosina said proudly. "It's made a huge difference for our family." The results were immediate and life changing.

We're so grateful for the education Justine provided. My children no longer suffer from stomach aches or diarrhea. We've been able to protect ourselves from diseases.



Rosina's story doesn't end with her family. She vowed to be a good ambassador and spread words on the importance of proper sanitation.

Nowadays, more than 50 households here use proper toilets and wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet.

Her mission is clear:

To spread the message of how simple changes can lead to profound health improvements. These small steps building a safe toilet and washing your hands with running water can protect your family and improve your health, just as they did for mine," she said with conviction.

Rosina's journey is a testament to the power of community health workers and the ripple effect of education. One visit from Justine didn't just transform her household; it set off a wave of change that continues to uplift her entire community.