

## **Linnie's pig-ride to prosperity**

At 48 years old, Linnie Nyirenda – of Chinseu Village, T/A Nkumira in Nkhata Bay – is not just a single mother; she is a beacon of resilience, facing life's challenges head-on to provide for her five children.

Struggling with severe food shortages and the weight of school fees, Linnie's life transformed when she became a beneficiary of the Direct Aid to people from People (DAPP) project, a beacon of hope in her community.

"Life slowly started promising in 2020 when I joined the village bank through DAPP Poverty Reduction of Vulnerable Beneficiaries through Community-Based Financial Organization Support and Small-Scale Enterprise Development (PROVED) project," Linnie recalls, her eyes reflecting the journey she has traveled.

The PROVED project, funded by Farmse, aimed to reduce economic vulnerability among the poor in Malawi. For Linnie, this project became a lifeline, offering not only financial support but also a pathway to financial literacy and community support.

"Being a single mother, providing for my children was always stressful. They would come home from school hungry, and at times, refused to go without having breakfast. The struggle was real," Linnie shares, capturing the harsh reality she faced.

In 2020, Linnie made a pivotal decision to join the village bank facilitated by DAPP. Despite the weekly challenges of contributing to the shares, Linnie persevered. In that year, she received K100,000 from her village bank shares, a sum that marked the turning point in her life. The funds were judiciously used to pay school fees for two children and purchase two bags of subsidized fertilizer, setting the stage for a more promising harvest.

"Joining the village bank was not easy, but it was the best decision I ever made. The financial literacy and support I received empowered me to take control of my destiny," Linnie asserts, her face radiant with newfound confidence.

With determination as her driving force, Linnie did not rest on her laurels. In 2021, her village bank savings yielded K220,000. This windfall was strategically allocated: school fees for her children, additional bags of subsidized fertilizer, maize seeds, and funds for household needs. The result? A bountiful harvest in 2022—30 bags of maize.

But Linnie's success story doesn't end with a thriving maize harvest. Through the village bank's pass-on system, she entered the world of pig farming. The community pooled resources, each contributing K5000 to acquire three pigs. Today, Linnie owns 10 pigs, a testament to the success of the pass-on program.

Farmse District Coordinator, Jessy Njikhoo, attests to the transformative impact of DAPP on communities. "DAPP has supported many beneficiaries, providing financial literacy and opening

doors to income-generating activities. We witness increased access to financial services and asset accumulation, contributing to a flourishing landscape of livestock and farming," Jessy explains.

As Linnie stands amidst her thriving pig farm and abundant maize harvest, her journey symbolizes not just personal triumph but the collective success of a community uplifted through empowerment and support.

Linnie Nyirenda's story manifests the power of community-driven initiatives, where financial literacy and shared endeavors pave the way for brighter, more sustainable futures.