

## **Breaking Barriers: Wakisa Kanjeli's Triumph Over Adversity**

In the remote village of Amos, where the shadows of societal neglect often cast a long and discouraging pallor, Wakisa Kanjeli, a resilient 27-year-old with paralyzed legs, defied the odds to script a remarkable tale of triumph.

Living in Traditional Authority Mwabulabia, Chitipa district, Wakisa's life was confined to the periphery, earning meager wages through piecework on local farms. The constant struggle to make ends meet, coupled with the absence of farming tools, left him vulnerable to acute food shortages.

Wakisa's existence was shrouded in hopelessness, and a lack of vision led to mismanaged finances, exacerbating the challenges he faced daily. However, the winds of change began to blow in early 2022 when the African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP) initiated the Savings for Agriculture and Market project (SAM), generously funded by Financial Access for Rural Markets, Smallholders and Enterprises Program (FARMSE).

This project aimed to enhance financial capacity and security through Community-Based Financial Organizations (CBFOs), promoting financial literacy, and facilitating access to sustainable markets.

Through the lens of this transformative project, Wakisa found a beacon of hope and motivation. In the words of Wakisa himself, "The financial literacy training opened my eyes to a world of possibilities. I decided to invest in my future by joining the village bank, dedicating every penny I earned to buy shares." By the end of 2022, Wakisa's determination bore fruit as he amassed K 210,000 from his village bank shares.

With this newfound financial backbone, Wakisa invested wisely. He purchased three bags of fertilizer and three goats, tirelessly working on his farm to break free from the clutches of hunger. In 2023, his diligence paid off when he harvested an impressive 28 bags of maize. Eleven bags were sold for K550,000, enabling him to acquire cattle, two more goats, and three bags of subsidized fertilizer.

Wakisa's journey doesn't end there. Cultivating two acres of maize, he envisions a harvest twice the size of 2022. Grateful for the intervention of FARMS and AFAP, Wakisa now stands as a testament to the transformative power of empowerment.

Matrudah Salanga, the AFAP extension officer, lauds this remarkable intervention, emphasizing its impact on empowering individuals despite physical challenges. She joyfully notes, "Witnessing people like Wakisa providing for their own needs is the true measure of success for our initiatives, thanks to FARMS"

Wakisa's story is not just one of overcoming physical limitations but also a testament to the resilience of the human spirit when provided with the right tools and opportunities. It's a narrative of hope, determination, and the unwavering belief that with the right support, even the most challenging circumstances can give way to a brighter, more promising future.