At the Mihayo Primary School in Tabora Municipality, the establishment of the JUU Club has given its pupils the opportunity to take ownership of school development and improvements on learning. Activities of the JUU Club are addressing issues the school is facing, including truancy and bad behaviour. These activities have led to several changes with more still to come.

Mihayo Primary School has a total of 945 pupils from standard one up to seven where 485 boys and 465 girls. There are 20 teachers in the school among them 16 women and 4 men. The school is led by teacher Faustine Paul Kashindye.

**BUILDING LEADERSHIP SKILLS**

Mihayo Primary School formed the JUU club in September 2016. 30 pupils are members of the club. Dafrossa Wilfred, a standard six pupil, is the Chairperson of the JUU club. She has been leading her fellow pupils in conducting different activities and raising their voices on several issues affecting their learning.

“Club members elected me as the Chairperson, I did not hesitate to accept, and it’s a great honor to lead this wonderful club. I believe with my capacity to lead and guide members in solving different challenges which surround us. The position has changed me to become a role model in all that I am doing, my school performance has also increased.”

(Dafrossa Wilfred, JUU Club Chairperson)
ENSURING SCHOOL PUPILS’ VOICES ARE HEARD

JUU club at Mihayo Primary School is very organised and members are committed to seeing improvements in their school environments. Pupils behave accordingly and all speak out on issues related to their welfares.

“We meet twice a month, the club has been a great way for us to speak, discuss and handle issues which are out of control to teachers, we have increased understanding of our rights especially right for quality education. Pupils are becoming more active than before, we are speaking out challenges we are facing and asking teachers and parents for solutions”

said Elizabeth Urasto, standard four pupil and JUU Club member.

Two meetings are carried out each month, through the guide of the Chairperson. The club ensures everyone participates and all issues are tackled. The 30 members of the club set a date for the meeting and the agenda is decided based on the priorities of the different classes, presented through their class representatives. As a result of these meetings, pupils have gained confidence. The club is very successful and many other pupils have requested to join the club.

PEER-TO-PEER PROBLEM SOLVING

In the school, some pupils bring their phones and radios to school and use them in the classroom instead of concentrating on their studies. JUU Club members identified them and raised the issue in a meeting. The members agreed to confront them and ask them not to do it again. Those who did not stop were then referred to teachers for further disciplinary measures.

“Sometimes is difficult to deal with pupils, we use their close friends so that they can advise them to become better and leave aside bad behavior, it has helped and we can see many of them are now in a right track”

explained chairperson.

TACKLING TRUANCY

The JUU Club has been able to address the issue of truancy in the school. JUU club members made the effort to visit those pupils who did not regularly attend school and talking to their friends to help them understand importance of school. During the process, it became clear that, for some children, parents were the source of their lack of attendance. The club members informed teachers so that they can talk to their fellow parents.

Norah Isaack, a dedicated club member who aspires to be a teacher, agreed to take the lead in making sure her friends attend to school regularly and that everyone is active in their study.

“Regina comes every day with radio and uses a lot of time dancing instead of studying. Sunday and Jacob bring their phones at school and spend most of their time chatting, they need to concentrate in their studies as they have final year exams. Let us advise them to stop and also report them to teachers”

Norah presented in the meeting.
JUU club members believe that the club has helped them to improve competences and confidence in speaking and discussion. Pupils now feel better equipped to speak out on different issues they do not like at the school.

“I can confidently say without a JUU Club we would have been still in dark regarding challenges that hinder our effective learning. Through the JUU club, our understanding has increased, we can speak confidently and seek solutions on issues that are affecting our learning,” said Anna Stephen a JUU club member.

“The Head Teacher and teachers are very cooperative, they listen our concerns. I am happy with this amazing group, we still have so much to do to make sure our school is safe and every pupil is enjoying,” said Dafrossa Wilfred (Chairperson of JUU Club).

In 2016 JUU Clubs were established in all schools across the seven regions. The clubs provide a platform for children, especially girls, to receive guidance on managing the barriers to education, to discuss their opinions and to act as change makers in their school and communities. The school-based JUU clubs have implemented advocacy activities around international days addressing gender and children rights issues, such as International Day for Women and Day of African Child.