



Zizi Afrique  
Foundation



**ZIZI IMPACT**

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# Greetings from Zizi

## We are ending the year on a very positive note!

As the holiday season approaches, we reflect on the year that has passed as we look forward to the year ahead. Christmas is a season of joy, togetherness, and gratitude—a time to celebrate the connections that enrich our lives.

In this special edition of the Zizi Impact, we are delighted to share heartwarming stories of the achievements we made together in the fourth quarter of 2024. We share with you how we are accelerating the incorporation of life skills and values into education systems in East Africa. We share how we influenced policy discussions and facilitated strategic collaborations to enhance educational frameworks and promote equity in education. We also share how we expanded our strategic partnerships to catalyze our mission to improve life skills, education quality, and economic opportunities for youth in East Africa. Finally, we share how we generated actionable data and evidence to guide policy and practice, with considerable progress in gathering input from diverse stakeholders to shape education and workforce initiatives.

As we close this year, we look back on the year that has been with gratitude, look forward to the coming year with hope, and carry the spirit of kindness and generosity in the festive season.

We are taking a break to rest, reflect and recharge. On behalf of the entire ZAF team, we wish you and your loved ones a joyful Christmas and a prosperous New Year filled with peace and new possibilities.

Happy Holidays!

**Editorial Team**





# Accelerating education systems change across East Africa

## Working with curriculum institutes to improve the incorporation of life skills and values

We partnered with the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) to establish proficiency levels for skills such as communication, collaboration, and critical thinking to ensure that life skills are measurable within the Tanzanian curriculum. Afterwards, we launched the ALiVE Open-Source Platform, East Africa’s first repository for life skills and values. Data and assessment tools provide accessible resources to educators and policymakers as a way of advancing evidence-based approaches to embedding critical life skills in the region’s curricula. Through the ALiVE Academy, we trained experts from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania Mainland, and Zanzibar in item-writing management. This capacity-building milestone bolsters efforts to integrate life skills and values into education systems in East Africa. In Uganda, we collaborated with Uganda’s National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) to create sample schemes of work and lesson plans for Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) aligned classrooms as part of efforts to support Uganda’s commitment to embedding practical skills, like problem-solving, into its education system.

ALIVE OPEN-SOURCE LINK: <https://www.alive-reli.org/open-source/>

## Consulting with policy makers on a proposed program to support educational development in Kenya’s ASAL regions

Zizi Afrique Foundation (ZAF) and partners held a consultative meeting with the Ministry of Education’s Senior Management Team to Present the Proposed Kenya Education Programme for Selected ASAL Counties. The meeting brought together heads of 11 directorates of the ministry including those from Policy, Partnerships and East Africa Community Affairs, Quality Assurance and Standards, Teacher Education, Special Needs Education, Early Childhood Education, Administration, Planning and field services, Basic Education, Secondary and Tertiary Education. Among the ZAF partners present were representatives from the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), Porticus, RELI Africa and UNICEF. The meeting provided a valuable platform for the Ministry of Education’s Senior Management Team to engage with the proposed education programme for ASAL counties. The feedback received will help refine the programme’s design and implementation strategies. Moving forward, RELI Africa and its partners will continue to work closely with the Ministry to ensure that the programme is tailored to the needs of the ASAL regions, with a strong emphasis on community involvement, teacher capacity-building, and gender inclusivity.

## Inspiring Regional collaborative research agenda in Tanzania

A consortium of Tanzanian education stakeholders—including the Ministry of Education, Tanzania Institute of Education, Zanzibar Institute of Education, and various civil society and development partners—launched a collaborative research agenda to support life skills integration in Tanzania’s Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). This initiative, informed by prior co-creation workshops, underscores a “Research for Africa by Africans” approach to building an evidence base for teacher education in East Africa. This was a follow-up of ZAF convening the researchers at the regional level and has now been adopted at the country level.

## Expanding pilot programs to support improved learning outcomes, parental and community engagement in education

Zizi Afrique Foundation, in partnership with the Centre for Mathematics, Science, and Technology Education in Africa (CEMASTEa) are working to address the common challenges in foundational numeracy. First, they organized a three-day Error-Analysis Co-Creation Workshop. The workshop which brought together teachers from five schools, curriculum support officers, and other education leaders from the sub-county to analyze the errors made by learners when solving addition and subtraction problems and collaboratively develop practical strategies to improve learning outcomes. A learner assessment on addition and subtraction tasks was then conducted across five schools in Bungoma West Sub-County with a total of 405 learners drawn from Grades 3 and 2 participating. The results revealed that only 3% of the learners could solve all addition and subtraction tasks correctly, showing weak foundational skills and computing abilities. Follow the link to gain deeper insights into error analysis and its potential to improve learning outcomes.

WATCH THE STORY: [https://youtu.be/p\\_Onfa-ALLQ?si=TNuWKvp-r9kzqDTP](https://youtu.be/p_Onfa-ALLQ?si=TNuWKvp-r9kzqDTP)



## Supporting Value-Based Education (VbE)

ZAF strengthened its collaboration with the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) to integrate Parental Empowerment & Engagement (PE&E) components into the Value-Based Education (VbE) initiative. ZAF Also worked in partnership with Regional Learning Initiative (RELI) Africa’s VaLi cluster, KICD, and Teachers Service Commission (TSC), to launch the ‘Do It Yourself’ (DIY) model to empower parents in teaching life skills and values to their children in Kajiado County.



# Influencing reforms in TVET education and support the future of work for young people

## Engaging the Senate Education Committee on TVET education

On November 14, ZAF engaged with the Senate Standing Committee on education where ZAF staff delivered a memorandum to raise several issues surrounding access and equity in Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) education in Kenya among them push for better TVET financing, funding model for Higher Education and TVET, the need for stronger linkages between TVET and labour market, making TVET accessible to Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). This was a beginning of a collaboration with the lawmakers, and they committed to leading their Counties in creating linkages between training and employment, addressing the demand-supply balance, and establishing a data-driven framework for job market analysis to inform planning. Worked with Mombasa, Siaya, and Samburu counties, resulting in the inclusion of early childhood development (ECD) services for children ages 0-3 in Mombasa County's Safe City Policy, enhancing childcare provisions within the local policy framework.



## Sharing learning from Green Skills project to improve learning

Insights from the Green Business Project influenced a paper published in the UNESCO-UNEVOC Africa Skills Week Book of Abstracts, where Zizi Afrique facilitated discussions on incorporating sustainable practices into TVET systems. This advocacy contributes to creating employment pathways for youth in environmentally focused sectors across Africa. where Zizi Afrique facilitated discussions on incorporating sustainable practices into TVET systems. This advocacy contributes to creating employment pathways for youth in environmentally focused sectors across Africa.

## Improving TVET education and curriculum to support employment and the future of work in Kenya



ZAF partnered with TVET CDACC to strengthen the implementation of agricultural curriculum in Bukura and Makueni Agricultural College and Latia Agribusiness Incubation Center. Workshops held in Kakamega equipped educators to integrate green business skills and adapt the curriculum to meet agricultural sector demands. ZAF partnered with Pratham International to share insights on youth employability initiatives in Kisumu and established a collaboration with the National Skills Sector Committee, which has adopted our skills mapping tool to enhance industry-specific training. Additionally, a partnership with Jobs for the Future Foundation (JFF) aims to strengthen youth employability pathways.

ZAF participated in the Youth Engagement on Future Work Trends and Artificial Intelligence (AI) forum at Daystar University with over 800 youth from various universities and TVETs are engaged, presenting the future of work and the integration of artificial intelligence. This engagement aimed to equip youth with insights into emerging trends and prepare them for the changing job landscape.

## Enhancing capacity of partners in strategic areas of growth and for collective impact in TVET

Zizi Afrique supported Ujima Foundation in obtaining funding from the Schneider Foundation, enabling them to equip five national TVETs with electrical equipment and train instructors. This five-year partnership supports hands-on learning and capacity-building in the electrical field. ZAF also collaborated with Waithaka Vocational Training Center (VTC): In collaboration with Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Zizi Afrique helped secure 50 (30 female, twenty male) sponsored trainees for Waithaka VTC, establishing it as a center of excellence in vocational training.



# Enriching the future of work and youth employment with data and evidence to support youth skills and employment

# Generating data and evidence to inform education policies and practices

## Improving TVET education and curriculum to support employment and the future of work in Kenya

ZAF's skills mapping tool was adopted by the National Sector Skills Committee within the Ministry of Labor. This tool will be integrated into a Labor Market Surveillance System, initially targeting the hospitality and tourism sectors, to facilitate youth employability and better align training programs with industry demands. ZAF skills mapping tool was adopted by the National Sector Skills Committee within the Ministry of Labor. This tool will be integrated into a Labor Market Surveillance System, initially targeting the hospitality and tourism sectors, to facilitate youth employability and better align training programs with industry demands.

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## Occupational Mapping and Skills study in Mombasa County

ZAF's research team engaged 30 research assistants and 7 supervisors to create a comprehensive database mapping occupations and skills within Mombasa County. This ongoing effort, has reached 1,515 establishments and identified 150 vacancies, will support a predictive Labor Market Surveillance System. We are working with Global Development Incubator to connect youth to the available vacancies and test demand driven skills match in the food and beverage sub-sector of the tourism and hospitality sector. Through the initiative, Zizi is exploring opportunities of supporting the county government of Mombasa on work for development in its TVETS. Following the mapping, the establishments, relationship managers are undergoing training a training to familiarize with the reviewed Kobo tool and equip them with skills on relationship building.



## Situational analysis on foundational skills across three countries

ZAF in collaboration with partners in Malawi (University of Malawi) and Cameroon (ebase Africa), collected data to understand the foundational learning ecosystem. This exercise is meant to identify the data and data systems in the three countries with a view to link data and data systems for increased uses and users by identifying gaps and challenges in data and evidence challenges in the foundational learning ecosystem. This initiative will also lead to a regional community of learning that links evidence with decision makers for impact. In addition, Zizi Afrique initiated discussion with APHRC to establish an academy for data and data use to increase the uptake of data.

## ZAF supported data collection on school re-entry for Adolescent Mothers

ZAF, in collaboration with the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) and the Ministry of Education, organized a co-creation meeting to review data tools and conduct primary data collection among adolescent mothers, caregivers, and relevant county officers in Siaya, Mombasa, and Samburu. This effort seeks to enhance school re-entry policies, creating pathways for adolescent mothers to continue their education.





# Leveraging strategic partnerships to education quality, and economic opportunities for youth in Kenya and across the world

## ZAF collaboration with the Kenya Primary School Heads Association (KEPSHA)

ZAF co-sponsored and participated in the 2024 KEPSHA conference as a strategy for working with school leaders to improve learning outcomes. The 2024 conference took place between 2nd and 8th November, at Sheikh Zayed Hall in Mombasa. It was anchored on the theme, *Transformative Leadership in the Digital Transition for Inclusive and Sustainable Quality Basic Education*. The conference brought together nearly 18,000 primary school head teachers, government officials from the Ministry of Education, political leaders, members of the civil society, corporates, innovators, publishers, and school supplies traders, among other stakeholders. Two ZAF Directors participated in a panel discussion on parental engagement while the ZAF Executive Director presented on how head teachers could leverage technology to improve school management.



## Supporting the Kenya Public Finance Conference 2024

ZAF collaborated with various state holders to convene the National Public Finance Practitioners Conference scheduled for November 21–22, 2024. This two-day conference aimed to address key public finance issues in the current context, including budget financing, budget execution in a constrained fiscal space, equity in budget allocation and implementation, fiscal decentralization, budgeting for basic services, financing the Universal Health Coverage (UHC), public debt management, social protection, and other pressing challenges. The conference brought together policymakers, public finance experts, academics, civil society representatives, and international development partners to discuss and collaborate on sustainable solutions.

## ZAF evidence shared at Global Conferences and various Knowledge sharing platforms

**ZAF Presentation at UNICEF’s POWER4Girls Community Session:** ZAF presented its household-based life skills assessment tool to a global audience of 60 participants, sharing the tool’s adaptability and implications for measuring life skills at scale. This platform enabled the organization to elevate its role in life skills education in global dialogues.

**ZAF at the CASEL SEL Exchange 2024 Conference in Atlanta:** From November 12th to 14th, 2024, Zizi Afrique participated in the SEL Exchange Conference in Chicago, Illinois, presenting its approach to contextualizing self-awareness and developing a corresponding measurement tool. Insights from large-scale self-awareness assessments in Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda were shared, showcasing their impact on integrating this skill into education systems. The conference offered valuable global perspectives that will guide further contextualization efforts within East Africa’s education frameworks.

## The 4th Edition of Sara Ruto Cup attracts more partners

The annual event, held to support the Tenda Wema project, successfully raised **KES 3,038,005** which was the target for this year’s edition. With approximately three hundred participants, the funds will support children and youth from the most disadvantaged groups access education in the 2024/2025 academic year, demonstrating ZAF’s commitment to harnessing local philanthropy and the agency of staff and like-minded individuals to support learning and give back to society.





# ZAF Received Extensive Media Coverage Mainly on TVET Issues and other Emerging Education Issues

ZAF Director of Innovations, Virginia Ngindiru, participated in a panel discussion on TV47 focusing on “Training a Modern Workforce.” The panel, on TVET and Future Workforce Needs, featured 1,000 youth and 100 attendees. ZAF Director of Advocacy also participated in an NTV panel discussion, NTV TVET and the Future of Work, reaching over 3 million viewers. In addition, some ZAF staff articles were published in the Nation Newspaper and Standard TVET Journal. These platforms sought to use ZAF evidence to highlight issues around TVET funding, curriculum alignment with job market demands, and collaborations between TVET institutions and universities.



## 2nd ZAF-Media Knowledge Exchange

ZAF and ALiVE hosted the second Media Exchange forum this December in Nairobi, Kenya. The general idea was to promote evidence-based education reporting with a bias on key thematic areas including values and life skills, Value-based Education (VbE), Parental Engagement & Empowerment, and education reforms. The forum aimed to encourage a mutual relationship between the media and ZAF and its partners where ZAF becomes a resource pool for journalists on data and evidence to support reporting, interviews, and story ideas. The meeting brought together over 25 journalists drawn from 10 key media houses in Kenya.

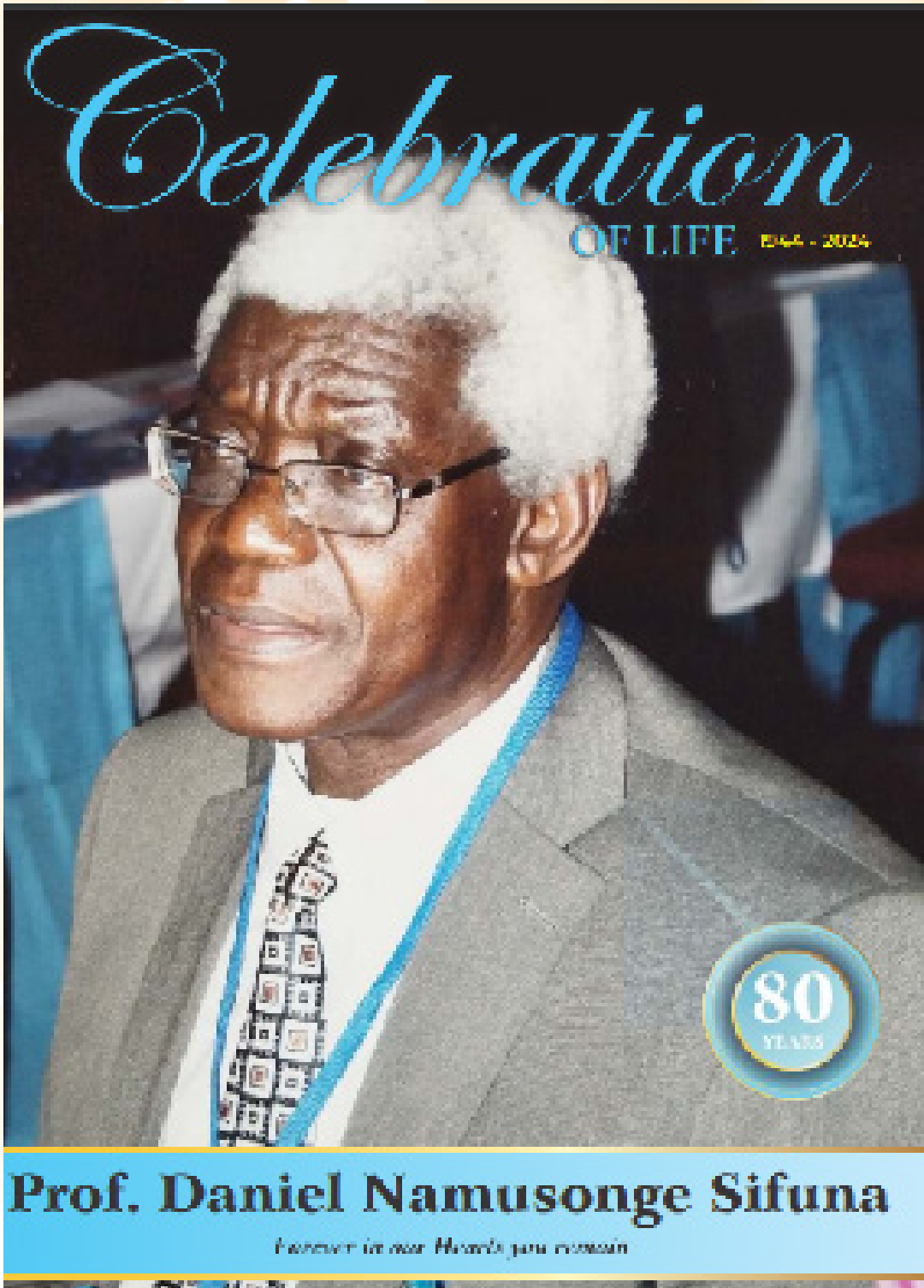
# Bidding Farewell to One of Our Founding Board Members, Prof. Emeritus Daniel Namusonge Sifuna

On a sad note, we bid farewell to one of our Founding Board Members and towering intellectual and academic, Prof. Daniel Namusonge Sifuna. At the time of his death, Prof. Sifuna was a dedicated member of the ZAF Board, where he contributed immensely to strategy and provided thought leadership that drove the organization to greater heights. As a founding Director, he was instrumental and contributed immensely to the conceptualization of Zizi Afrique Foundation in 2017.

The late Prof. Sifuna played a big role in the development of education in Kenya and beyond. He was a renowned teacher trainer having been a lecturer for over five decades at Kenyatta University and an authority as a Professor of Education Foundations. He was a man of great intellect, vision, and courage who contributed immensely to the cause of education development in Kenya and beyond. For the education fraternity in the region, the community remembers with pride that the departed Prof. was passionate about the role of teachers in the education development agenda.

May his beautiful legacy continue to inspire us. May his soul find peace, and may his family find comfort in knowing how deeply he was loved and respected

*Rest in peace Prof!*





# STAFF FEATURE

*In this edition, we shine the spotlight on ZAF staff, Mr. Enock Imani. He is the man at the helm of the ZiPAL Welfare. A welfare fund for ZAF, RELI and PAL Network staff. He shares his perspective on what it is like leading staff members in care, welfare, and well-being.*

**1. Tell us about ZAF Welfare and why you think it is such an important initiative.**

ZiPAL Welfare is a welfare fund established to support the employees of Zizi Afrique Limited, Zizi Afrique Foundation, PAL Network, RELI Africa, and any other organization that has shown interest and been adopted by the members. The fund provides financial assistance for health, emergencies, and other welfare needs. Contributions are automatically deducted from monthly salaries to ensure sustainability and accessibility for all members.

**2. What was its origin and in what ways has it helped members?**

Zizi Welfare was initiated in 2018 by the pioneers Winnie Cherotich and Agnes Furo, along with other founding members, united by a shared vision of supporting each other and creating a strong community within their organizations. The group began with members of organizations that shared the same room, with members coming together to discuss and address their collective welfare needs. This vision of mutual support led to the establishment of the fund, which has since grown to include employees from various organizations. Since its inception, Zizi Welfare has supported its members in diverse ways, including financial assistance for health emergencies, medical bills, and other welfare needs. The fund has also provided support during key events such as weddings, graduations, housewarmings, and the birth of children, as well as assistance for members leaving the organizations.

**3. How is it juggling your job at ZAF and running the welfare? What are the challenges?**

As the elected Chair of Zizi Welfare, my role is voluntary and driven by passion. Balancing this responsibility with work at Zizi Afrique Foundation (ZAF) can be challenging, especially given the diverse needs of our members—from medical emergencies to life milestones like weddings, graduations, births, and the loss of loved ones. Managing these demands often requires working beyond regular hours. Working with a supportive and dedicated team in the welfare committee —Treasurer Caitlin Mboya, Secretary Nyambura Thiong’o, and Sheila Obanda—makes the work much easier. Their collaboration and commitment help ensure the smooth running of the welfare fund.

**4. How did you get yourself at the helm of this association?**

I became the elected Chair of Zizi Welfare through passion, trust, and a shared vision with the founding members. Over time, I got more involved in the fund’s activities and contributed to its growth and development. When the position of Chair became available in November 2023, I was nominated, and the members trusted me to take on the responsibility. I was motivated by the opportunity to make a positive impact on the well-being of our members and the shared sense of community made it a natural progression for me to step into the role. I am honoured to be at the helm and I remain driven by the vision of supporting each member in times of need, joy, and challenges.

**5. What motivates you?**

I am deeply motivated by the sense of community and the positive impact we have on each other’s lives through Zizi Welfare. Seeing members supported during difficult times and celebrating their milestones is incredibly rewarding. The joy and gratitude from members remind me of the importance of this work. Additionally, the positive feedback and constructive criticism from members are key motivators for me. Their input helps us improve and ensures that we are meeting their needs effectively. Working alongside a dedicated team also keeps me inspired, as we all share the common vision of supporting one another and fostering a culture of well-being.







#### 6. What is your advice to organizations on staff welfare groups?

My advice to them is to prioritize staff welfare as a key component of fostering a healthy, supportive, and productive work environment. Staff welfare groups, like ZiPAL Welfare, create a sense of community, promote well-being, and encourage mutual support among employees. Organizations should ensure these groups are inclusive and accessible, with fair contributions from all members. Clear structures, such as elected leadership or committees, help maintain transparency and effective management. Beyond financial assistance, organizations should also consider promoting physical and mental wellness by integrating fitness programs, wellness activities, and stress-relief initiatives into the welfare. Encouraging open communication is also crucial, allowing staff to voice their needs and suggestions. When employees feel supported—whether through health assistance, celebrating milestones, or promoting fitness—they are more engaged, motivated, and loyal. Welfare groups should not only address crises but also build a culture of care, trust, and holistic well-being.

#### 7. What is the future vision for the ZIPAL welfare group?

The future vision for Zizi Welfare is to expand its reach and impact, ensuring that it continues to meet the evolving needs of its members. We aim to build a sustainable fund that can provide comprehensive support, from financial assistance in times of crisis to promoting overall well-being through wellness programs, including fitness and mental health initiatives.

In the long term, we envision creating a network of organizations with a shared commitment to staff welfare, where resources are pooled together to enhance benefits for all members. We also hope to implement more robust systems for communication and transparency, allowing members to actively engage and contribute to the group's growth. Ultimately, we want Zizi Welfare to be a model of employee care, where members feel valued, supported, and empowered to thrive personally and professionally.







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