



Milele Zanzibar
Foundation

Milele2030 Strategic Plan



**Thriving Children
Resilient Communities**

STRATEGIC PLAN 2026 - 2030

Thriving children resilient communities.



ABOUT MZF

Translated from Swahili to mean, “Forever Zanzibar Foundation”, Milele Zanzibar Foundation began in 2014 as a small initiative by a group of concerned individuals from Zanzibar and around the world to improve the quality of life for the people of Zanzibar.

Over the past decade, the Foundation has built a reputation for holistic, community driven and collaborative partnerships with gov't, civil society and private sector to drive deep rooted community level impact. Additionally, its presence in both Unguja and Pemba, uniquely positions MZF to drive systems change that empowers children, youth and families to thrive.

ABOUT THIS STRATEGY

Over the past decade, MZF has built a strong track record of innovation, collaboration, and community-driven impact across health, education, livelihoods, and governance. This new five-year strategy (2025–2030) builds on these foundations and positions MZF to deepen its role as a systems actor—one that not only delivers programmes but strengthens the environments in which children and youth grow and succeed.

Zanzibar’s development context presents both opportunity and urgency. While progress has been made, persistent gaps in foundational learning, health, and economic opportunity continue to limit the potential of children and youth—particularly in rural and underserved communities.

MZF’s strategy responds to this reality through an integrated life-course approach, focusing on three critical stages of development:



Anchored in education as the foundation of human capital, and reinforced by health and livelihoods, this strategy ensures that children and youth are supported holistically—from early development through to economic independence.

Aligned with Zanzibar’s Vision 2050, ZADEP III, and the Sustainable Development Goals, MZF will work in close partnership with government, communities, and the private sector to deliver scalable, sustainable impact.

OUR VISION

Accelerating progress in education, health and livelihoods through, grassroots, sustainable development practices in rural and remote communities.

OUR MISSION

Vibrant, resilient communities.



Our Core Strengths



Deep community relationships and government partnerships.



Proven impact across education, health, and livelihoods.



Alignment with **Zanzibar Vision 2050** and the Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**).



Strong alumni network of trained teachers, health workers, and community leaders.

KEY ISSUES IN ZANZIBAR TODAY

Zanzibar has experienced notable socio-economic growth, yet significant challenges persist:



Health

Maternal and child health outcomes remain below targets, with high levels of stunting, anemia, and undernutrition. Many children lack access to early stimulation and adequate nutrition, limiting cognitive development.



Education

While enrollment is high, learning outcomes remain low. Many children do not achieve foundational literacy and numeracy, and few develop critical 21st-century skills.



Livelihoods

Youth face barriers to employment, particularly in emerging sectors. Climate change continues to threaten traditional livelihoods, including agriculture and marine-based activities.



Community Governance

Shehia (village-level) governance structures often lack capacity for participatory planning, resource mobilization, and data-driven decision-making.

REFLECTIONS ON THE OUTGOING STRATEGY (2021–2024)

Key Achievements

MZF made significant progress across sectors:

- Improved teaching practices and learning environments
- Expanded maternal and child health services
- Increased agricultural productivity and incomes
- Strengthened Shehia (village) leadership and community planning

Key Lessons

- Sustainable impact requires integrated, cross-sector approaches
- Community ownership is essential for long-term success
- Evidence and data must drive decision-making

Institutional Learning

A critical lesson has been the need to strengthen internal systems. MZF will prioritize:

- Stronger data systems and digital tools
- Improved monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEAL)
- Standardized internal processes for consistency and scale

CORE PROBLEM

Children and the youth in Zanzibar face critical gaps in foundational and holistic development needed to succeed during important life transitions especially in their educational life cycle.

This is caused by limited opportunities to develop socio emotional and life skills due to:

- Unsupported parents/caregivers
- Under capacitated teachers
- Fragmented systems across health, education and livelihoods
- Under resourced communities

As a result:

- Children enter school unprepared
- Learners progress without mastering core competencies
- Youth transition into adulthood without viable pathways



STRATEGIC DIRECTION

MZF envisions vibrant, resilient communities where children and youth are healthy, learning, and empowered.

This strategy adopts a life-course approach, recognizing three critical stages:



Milele Zanzibar Foundation (MZF) envisions vibrant and resilient communities across Zanzibar, where every child and young person grows up healthy, learning, and empowered. Achieving this vision requires a long-term, life-course approach—one that invests at the three critical periods of growth that determine future wellbeing and productivity: early childhood, the formative school years, and adolescence.

STRATEGIC PILLARS

1 Foundations First

Early Childhood Development, Health & Nutrition

Goal: Children enter school healthy and developmentally on track.

- Focus:**
- Integrated childcare models
 - Parenting and caregiving practices
 - Nutrition and early health systems

2 Core Learning

Holistic Learning for All Learners

Goal: Children acquire foundational and 21st-century skills.

- Focus:**
- Teacher capacity and pedagogy
 - Curriculum and assessment reform
 - Community engagement in learning

3 Future Pathways

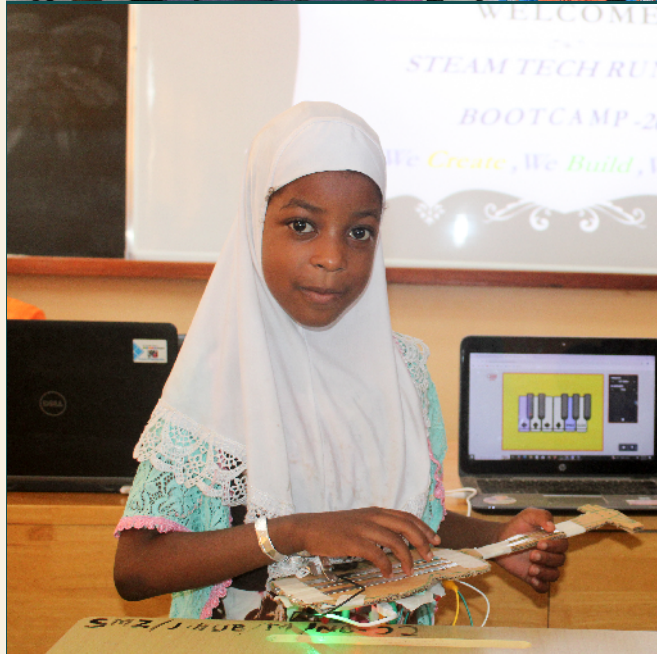
Youth Economic Empowerment

Goal: Youth transition into employment, entrepreneurship, and leadership.

- Focus:**
- Blue and green economy sectors
 - Agriculture and aquaculture as key career pathways
 - Entrepreneurship and incubation

Key Enhancements

- Strengthening public-private partnerships (PPPs)
- Exploring innovative finance models (blended finance, revolving funds, social enterprise)
- Market linkages and enterprise development



THEORY OF CHANGE

MZF's Theory of Change addresses fragmented systems by promoting an integrated approach to human capital development. We believe;

- Children thrive when supported across all stages of development
- Systems must be strengthened alongside communities
- Evidence must guide scalable solutions



Modes of Delivery

1

Community Leadership

Communities as co-owners of change

2

Evidence Generation

Data-driven learning and adaptation

3

System Strengthening

Embedding solutions into institutions

We believe that tackling the challenges of foundational learning and development of children and youth requires a holistic approach that empowers community leaders, capacitates parents, teachers and communities through evidence based interventions, and strengthens systems to sustain the change at scale.

Through this holistic approach we ensure

- Inclusive leadership is capacitated to strengthen advocacy, awareness raising and accountability
- Evidence based, innovative programming and modeling enhancing ECCD/holistic learning and entrepreneurship are co-designed, piloted and scaled for sustainability.

And

Systems are strengthened through implemented policies, increased budgets and enhanced capacities in data and evidence usage.

This will result in the following outcomes under each of the pillars

- **Foundations first:** By 2030, 20% increase in children transitioning to school while developmentally on track.
- **Core Learning:** By 2030, 10% increase in primary learners transitioning to secondary with improved proficiency in 21st century skills
- **Future Pathways:** By 2030, 10% increase in youth employment resulting from improved employability, entrepreneurship capacities and strengthened support systems.

The long term impact of these outcomes will be

500,000 children and youth, 50% girls/women, are growing, learning and transitioning into their next stage of development; supported by capacitated families, communities and systems.



WHY MZF IS UNIQUELY POSITIONED

MZF combines:

- Deep community trust and engagement
- Strong government partnerships
- Cross-sector expertise
- A growing evidence base

Its approach is grounded in locally co-created, evidence-based, and holistic programming, working not only with children but also with the systems and adults that shape their development.

MZF acts as an ecosystem facilitator, ensuring sustainable change by strengthening institutions, communities, and partnerships.

CROSS-CUTTING PRIORITIES

- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Climate resilience (including agriculture & aquaculture adaptation)
- Digital transformation and innovation

PARTNERSHIPS & ECOSYSTEM BUILDING

MZF will work with:

- Government (national and Shehia/village levels)
- Civil society and academia
- Private sector actors
- Communities and families

MONITORING, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY & LEARNING

MZF will:

- Strengthen digital data systems
- Track key indicators across all pillars
- Establish continuous learning loops
- Ensure community accountability

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

MZF will:

- Diversify funding sources
- Explore innovative financing
- Develop social enterprise models
- Strengthen financial resilience

GOVERNANCE & INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

This pillar ensures MZF's sustainability and impact through:

- Blue and green economy sectors
- Agriculture and aquaculture as key career pathways
- Entrepreneurship and incubation

RISK MANAGEMENT

Key risks include:

- Funding volatility
- Climate change
- Institutional capacity gaps

Mitigation:

- Diversified funding
- Strong governance systems
- Adaptive programming

LONG-TERM GOALS

Year 5 Goal:

Children are growing and learning, supported by families, communities, and systems

Year 10 Goal:

Children and youth are thriving in vibrant, resilient, and sustainable communities

CONCLUSION

This strategy positions MZF as more than an implementer—it establishes the organization as an ecosystem builder and systems catalyst, working at the intersection of community leadership, evidence, and institutional strengthening.

By investing across the full continuum of child and youth development, MZF will contribute to a future where every child and young person in Zanzibar has the opportunity to grow, learn, and thrive.



Milele Zanzibar Foundation

