

Student Runs Social Enterprise To Pay For Children's Chemotherapy

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Shares

Alqaim Lalani, a student at Aga Khan Academy Mombasa has gained recognition for his charitable deeds.

The high school student has been working on a service project with cancer patients in the greater Mombasa area for the last 6 months. The Tanzanian native led a group of students in the organization known as the Cancer Initiative at the International School of Tanganyika while at the school in 2015.

Lalani shared what inspired his work with the community in a recent interview with Capital Campus. He shared, "when I was in Dar es Salaam, I used to volunteer at Tumaini la Maisha – the children's cancer ward at Muhimbili Hospital. I noticed that the children recovering from cancer had a special interest in crafts and were particularly skilled in the making of handbags, pouches and other accessories. It also occurred to me that the parents of these children were struggling to pay for the chemotherapy treatment they needed to survive. I came to a conclusion that social entrepreneurship was the only way in which this problem could be solved in a sustainable manner."

A young philanthropist in the community, Lalani's an AA Level students hoped his efforts to help make chemotherapy payments more affordable would finally pay off. And they did. Selling kitenge bags and other crafts, the Cancer Initiative was able to sell enough products to pay for treatment of two children. In future he hopes selling Kitenge handbags for 400 shillings and environmentally friendly kitenge grocery bags for 100 shillings, all proceeds would go to the children.



Child cutting fabric to create eco-friendly bag ©Alqaim Lalani / File