

Expensive to Dream: A Letter to Malagasy Youth

[inspired by one of our random lunch chats with Fiti]

To be young in Madagascar, especially in the corners of our communities where poverty clings to every dusty road and broken desk, means knowing that dreaming can feel expensive. Not because dreams themselves cost money, but because everything around you seems to whisper, you can't afford to hope

I know that feeling.

I was born and raised in Glen View, a high-density suburb in Harare, Zimbabwe. In the 1980s, Glen View was alive with hustle, noise, and people who survived on grit, but were they dreaming? That felt like a luxury. Back then, dreaming was a fairytale we only saw on foreign TV shows. Most of us just wanted to get through the day, to find enough to eat, to make it to school, to dodge the heavy hand of hardship.

But even then, somewhere deep inside, I dared to wonder: What if dreaming wasn't just for the wealthy? What if it was for us, too, the ones born into struggle?

That question is what brings me to Madagascar today, 30-some years later.

Through our BreakThru Barn Montessori Inspired Leadership Training, we're not just teaching theory; we're working alongside Malagasy youth to discover the fire already burning within them. This isn't charity. It's collaboration. It's Ubuntu. It's Fihavanana. It's the belief that the village doesn't just raise a child, but that the child can also raise the village.



At Breakthru Barn

- We honor your voice, just as you are. Whether you're from the hills of Anosimasina or the crowded streets of Glen View, your story matters.
- We create safe spaces for leadership to grow, where young people learn by doing, not just dreaming. You gotta love Montessori.
- We walk through real-life community challenges, such as underfunded schools, polluted canals, and youth unemployment, and train young people to lead councils that envision and implement new possibilities.
- We bring together elders and youth, stories and strategy, vision and action, because African leadership is rooted in both wisdom and wonder.



Dreams aren't just wishes. They are blueprints. And at BreakThru Barn, we are building.

“I matter. My dreams are valid. And I will lead.”

So, how do we make dreaming affordable in places where poverty is loud?

- We listen to young people with sincerity and respect.
- We invest in education that sees brilliance, not brokenness.
- We reclaim the dignity of being African, young, and full of hope.
- And we remind each other every day, “ You are not your poverty. You are a possibility.”

Let us be the generation that flips the script, where dreaming is not a foreign concept, but a daily act of resistance, where hope is the new currency. Where a child in Glen View or Bemasoandro can say, “I matter. My dreams are valid. And I will lead.”



visiting Akka Montessori school in Antananarivo

“In solidarity from Glen View to Madagascar”

So dream, young Malagasy.

Dream with dust on your shoes and light in your eyes.

Dream in your mother tongue. Dream with your hands. Dream with your friends.

Dream even when the world tells you not to.
Because I did.

And look where we are now, dreaming together.

And doing the work to make it possible



With love and belief,
Tatenda B Muchiriri-Chief Dreamer