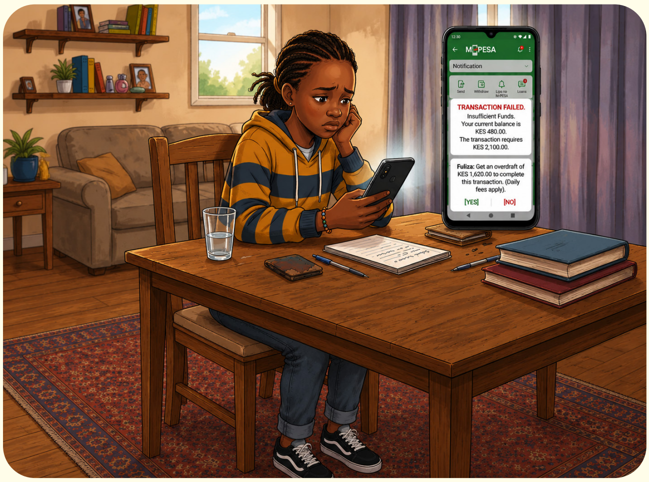
# From Pocket Money to Digital Money

Imagine a world where you can send money, pay for lunch or even save for your goals without ever using cash. In Kenya today, this is becoming a reality through digital financial services. Digital financial inclusion is making it easier for more people, especially young people, to access and use financial services through their mobile phones.

## The Awesome Power of Digital Money

The days of carrying a physical wallet or hiding money under a mattress are long gone. Today, you can buy learning materials online, pay bus fare or send airtime to a friend using a mobile or smart phone. You can also automatically save small amounts of money through digital money. This means that even before getting your first job, you can already start building a saving habit.




## The Hidden Danger – Debt Traps

However, teenagers also need to be cautious when using digital financial services. For example, mobile loans, can be helpful when you run out of money, but they attract penalties and interest if not repaid on time. A small loan of a hundred Kenya shillings can grow to a hundred and ten shillings or more if repayment is delayed. These small loans can also accumulate and reduce your next allowance if there is no proper plan. It is important to always ask yourself: do I really need this loan? can I repay it on time?

## Smart Rules for a Digital Teenager

How do you manage your safety? You should observe these three easy guidelines. First, never divulge the Personal Identification Number (PIN) of your mobile phone; instead, use it as a wallet to keep your money safe. Second, prioritise saving over spending. Over time, even ten per cent of your pocket money put aside will increase your savings. Third, do not forget to pay back on time any loans you take. In some institutions, digital finance is taught in business studies classes, but you can also learn from free YouTube videos. Instead of being controlled by money, be the teenager who takes charge of it.

## Conclusion

Teenagers in Kenya are living, learning and creating wealth differently courtesy of mobile money. If used properly, it can be a very effective tool for self-reliance. The call to action is straightforward: begin saving now, acquire loans you can pay back easily and never stop learning about digital money. You will be grateful in future for the wise habits you develop now. Take a tiny step toward financial independence by enhancing your savings account.