

CASE STORY

RUTH IMINZA

AGE: 24

SEX: F

COURSE: DRESSMAKING.



Ruth is a mother of 3 currently although we started working with her at age 21 while a mother of two. She is married to a John Juma, a casual labourer in their village 5km from Kitale town. By the time we met Ruth, she looked miserable, could not feed her children, her elder child had attained school going age but was not enrolled since Ruth could not afford the requirements to enrol her children in pre-school classes.

She used to work as a casual labourer, weeding people's farms, harvesting maize or whichever casual job was available although this type of job is seasonal. This meant that at some times, she would go without any job which made her life very miserable as she had to struggle to feed her young family.

She was invited to our meeting by a youth mobilizer that our team had identified through the local administrator, during the first meeting, she looked worn out, hungry and with her was a one-and-a-half-year-old still pulling her breasts in need of milk which was evident that it was not available, this picture prompted our staff to get close to her to find out what her problem was. In tears she told us that she had not had a meal the previous night and her children were hungry. We had to stop the session to get her milk and bread for herself and child, she kept some for the elder daughter.

She became a committed member of Flying bird association, she would attend regularly and follow all the requirements in order to be supported to enrol for skills development. She chose to do tailoring and dressmaking but since our programme is only 6 months, she had to only do dressmaking.

CRK carried out all the necessary assessment to enable Ruth start her course, she was enrolled near her home whereby she would attend the training in the afternoon with her children after she had worked and gotten some food for them. She did not mention her husband most of the times; during one Focused Group Discussion session with married youths, she opened up and told us that her husband was not supportive, he would come home late, sometimes drunk and eaten. This made Ruth not to talk about him since she thought he was not important in her life, she was bitter and hurting which we have so far dealt with in different emotional and wellbeing sessions.

She completed her course and continued to work with the trainer until we bought her a new sowing machine and gave her Ksh. 2000 as start-up capital. She moved from the trainer and started working from her house, this was easy for her since she would do all

her household chores and still attend to her customers that she had moved with to her new business.

A year later, we visited her and the face had changed, the old looking woman at the beginning of the association was now looking younger, relatively kept and she could smile. She told us the milestones she has achieved since completing the course and starting her small business. One of the major achievement was enrolling her elder daughter to a private pre-school, they ate three meals a day, she had moved from the previous small mud house to a relatively bigger mud house. She told us that on average she earned Ksh. 7000 per month, which she used Ksh. 1000 to pay for the house rent, Ksh. 1000 would pay school requirements and on average Ksh. 3000 was for food. She told us that she saved Ksh. 1000 in her Mpesa account and the evidence was that she had Ksh. 5500. She was still very active in the group where they have a weekly saving scheme of Ksh. 50 which later they can borrow and refund with some interest to keep the group account active.

She was confident that her life and that of her children would not be the same again. One setback though, she was pregnant which she was quick to tell us that she did not intend to have another child after the one she was carrying.

She promised to train one other girl from a nearby association for free, though we gave her time to sharpen her skills, deliver and then we will assign her a trainee in future.

Compiled by Youth Workers