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# PROGRAM MANAGER'S MESSAGE



Caris Foundation International Kenya is a non-profit organization that deals with community problems that affect the well-being of people in various ways.

To address these community challenges, the Caris Foundation is implementing eight programs that aim to alleviate poverty in various ways. All these programs are implemented through the noble approach of empowerment.

Empowerment is the process of giving power to individuals through knowledge and skills so that they can cause change in their lives.

Caris has also adopted a holistic approach to development because, for an empowerment approach to achieve sustainable transformation, it has to eliminate all the obstacles to change, which include illiteracy, poor health, gender inequality, etc.

Caris enabled some participants to make a significant change in their lives through the TTG, literacy, and gender programs. These programs caused social and economic transformation to happen in the lives of participants who were initially found in pathetic life situations.

The power derived from the support provided by the Caris Foundation has led to the initiation of income-generating activities by TTG members, adult participants' ability to read and write, and the promotion of gender equality within families.

The quality of facilitation provided by the Caris staff has led to the following changes in the lives of participants:

1. Women in TTGs saved money as savings, accessed loans, and invested these loans into profitable businesses through goal-setting.

2. Adult learners who confirmed having the ability to read and write were motivated and inspired to continue attending adult literacy classes so that they could become fully literate.

3. Caris participants who were being oppressed by being denied the freedom to make choices in issues that directly affected their lives were empowered to fight for their rights. This effort allowed women who were denied the freedom to engage in business activities to be allowed by their spouses to do so.

It is therefore important to NOTE that effective empowerment to an individual occurs when this participant is made to understand the faced challenges, then adequate support is given which also includes eliminating all obstacles to empowerment and then giving this individual the power to be independent without continued support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Thoya'.

**Peter Thoya**  
Program Manager

# STRATEGIES TO RETAIN ADULT LEARNERS IN CLASS



Peter Thoya, Program Manager at Caris Foundation Kenya addressing adult learner at an inspiration event in Magarini sub - County. Photo © Emma Kinda/Caris Foundation Kenya

BY EMMA KINDA

On March 21, Caris Foundation Kenya staff came together to motivate and inspire adult learners in Fundisa, Magarini sub-county. The inspiration activity was meant to keep learners in class and cut down on dropouts. The event was for adult learners and took place in communities where Caris Foundation Kenya works. As the adult trainers for Caris gave speeches and a sermon, the room was filled with laughter and lively cheering.

Addressing adult learners at the event, Peter Thoya, Caris Foundation Kenya's program

manager, said, "Those who are dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge are the ones who will benefit from this program. You need to set aside two hours each week to attend classes. This may be challenging due to work and family commitments, but remember your literacy goals and let that be the drive you need to follow through."

Duncan Ziro, a program coordinator for the literacy program, told the learners again that they needed to focus on their literacy goals. "We are here to encourage you to continue learning. You joined the literacy classes to achieve individual

goals. Don't lose sight of those goals. We want to come back here and celebrate together when you have accomplished them," he said.

Learners had an opportunity to showcase the literacy skills they have acquired thus far. Lucy Changawa read two different proverbs printed on khangas (khangas is a vibrantly printed piece of cotton fabric with a proverb that women in East Africa typically wear). "I used to choose khangas by their floral pattern without reading the proverb. Now I have an opportunity to choose what message I would like to convey through the khangas proverbs," she said.

Last but not least, another learner shared her experience. Initially, Tabu Charo was not able to follow along while the pastor read the Bible during church services. After six months in class, she can read the Bible. "This is a big accomplishment for me, and I am yet to finish the learning course, so I believe I'll be much better after," she said, after reading a Bible verse at the meeting.

Meanwhile, Margaret Kaikwahi shared her

story as to why she failed to attend school in her early years. "My father didn't find it important for us girls to get access to education. I'm a mother and grandmother as well, so the dream of learning to read and write had died. I had nothing else to look forward to," she recounted. "But then Caris brought the literacy program, and my dream was revived. I'm now able to write my name and identify other people's names on my mobile phone. Learning has made operating the mobile phone much easier."

The event was a success because it gave the adult learners a boost of confidence and encouraged them to keep learning. It not only motivated them to stay in class but also encouraged them to pursue their dreams. At least 652 learners out of 925 were reached, and we believe this intervention will go a long way toward improving the literacy levels in the communities we serve.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."



**Jacqueline Madu, an Adult literacy trainer gave a word of encouragement to learners who attended the inspiration event.** Photo © Emma Kinda/Caris Foundation Kenya

# WORKING TO ACHIEVE GENDER JUSTICE



Deborah Mnyazi, a gender facilitator trains gender champions and village elders in Magarini sub-county. A total of 255 village elders and gender champions attended the trainings held in different areas of the sub-county. (Cover Photo)

Photo © Emma Kinda/Caris Foundation Kenya

BY EMMA KINDA

On March 22, 2023, 79 women gender champions and 42 village elders attended a training session in Magarini sub-county. Held by the Caris gender program, the training focused on the right of women to make decisions with regard to economic activities and sexual and reproductive health.

According to Rose Fondo, a program coordinator of the

gender program at Caris Foundation Kenya, the training came about as a result of a baseline survey conducted in November 2022. “This informed us that 867 TTG families experience inequality in decision-making regarding issues of sexual and reproductive health and participation in income-generating activities,” she said. “Village elders and

gender champions from the affected villages live amongst the women whose rights are infringed upon. Therefore, equipping them with skills on the impact of negative cultural beliefs and attitudes was necessary. We expect these leaders to use the knowledge to eradicate such practices in their own households as well as to sensitize families in the area.”

In February 2023, 79 gender champions were selected from the Tuajalie Tujisaidie Groups (TTG) to be a source of change and inspiration to other women. These few selected women are also required to advocate for the rights of women and girls in their communities.

“The gender champions are change agents who make other women understand their human rights. They also inform fellow TTG members on gender roles and the importance of unity in the family unit, which can be fostered in decision-making,” says Enn Ngama, a gender facilitator at Caris Foundation Kenya.

During training sessions, participants learned about the value of family planning services for women and how to encourage men to explore those services with their wives; positive parenting techniques that promote gender equality; and the importance of women taking part in economic activities. Equipped with these skills, they serve as role models and change agents for others in their communities, thus reducing human rights violations in the regions targeted by the training. Menza Amos, a village elder in Msolo village within Magarini sub-county, believes that unity and peace in the home make it possible for human rights to be enjoyed by all. “If a woman fears

communicating with her spouse, how can she effect change in the home?” I reinforce respect for one another instead of fear, as well as having a safe space to communicate within the family,” he said.

Since the training, Mr. Amos has approached neighbors and friends who have held back their spouses from taking part in economic activities. “I talked to them man to man about human rights and the importance of letting their wives make decisions that affect their lives,” he said. Through his efforts, ten families have changed. First, they have embraced dialogue as a form of decision making. Secondly, they no longer reinforce gender roles within their homes.

Rebecca Muindi, a gender champion of Majenje zone in Magarini, has made home visits to help couples understand the importance of letting women make decisions on matters that affect them. “I’ve held one-on-one meetings with fellow TTG members, but there is an instance where one member requested that I visit her home and talk together with her spouse. This was a special case because it was not the first time I had had a meeting with them. The spouse was receptive to my message, and I am monitoring the situation through the wife,” she said.

John 8:32 “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

**“I talked to them man to man about human rights and the importance of letting their wives make decisions that affect their lives,”**

**- Menza Amos  
Village elder**

# GOAL-SETTING RESULTS IN ESTABLISHMENT OF A BUSINESS



Patience Kahindi at the retail shop which she co-owns with her spouse. Its at this same premise where she established her Mpesa business.

Photo ©Topistar Mbugua/Caris Foundation Kenya

BY EMMA KINDA AND TOPISTER MBUGUA

Patience Kahindi, a 36-year-old woman living in Msabaha, Malindi sub-county, owns a Mpesa mobile money service, which she achieved through goal-setting. This is the first business she has established solely for herself.

The idea of the Mpesa shop came about when Mrs. Kahindi chose to leave employment and establish her own start-up business. “The goal-setting initiative enlightened me on what I could achieve. I started small,

with home items and livestock. Then I dreamed of bigger things,” she recounts. continued to operate a retail shop business she co-owns with her spouse.

Sometimes customers would ask if she offered Mpesa mobile money service at the shop. Realizing that there was only one Mpesa shop in the neighborhood confirmed that there was a gap in the market for mobile money services in her community, and she decided to capitalize on it. Therefore, she chose the retail shop as the location to establish the Mpesa service. She believed that this would attract more customers who preferred the convenience of accessing multiple services in one location. In addition, the mother of three benefited from business mentorship offered by the Caris Foundation Kenya. “I learned to establish good relationships with customers, which resulted in repeat clients. I knew that these would also be the same customers I would need for my Mpesa shop,” she says.

At the next Tuajalie Tujisaidie Group (TTG) meeting, she shared the Mpesa idea with Topistar Mbugua, a Caris Community Facilitator who further advised her to find out the start-up costs. “This helped me set a realistic timeline,” she says. With a set start-up cost of Kshs. 120, 000 (\$1000.00), Patience began to save some more. She also sought advice from Caris’s business mentors to learn more about managing finances and growing a business. In addition, she communicated with the customers who requested mobile money service, informing them that the service would be available at a later date.

According to Ms. Mbugua, patience is determined to succeed. “She had set other goals in the past and achieved them. The Mpesa service is her dream business, and even though the start-up costs were high, I believed that she would achieve it,” she said.

In October 2022, Patience’s savings amounted to Kshs. 133,000.00 (\$1108.3) in the TTG. She opened her Mpesa service, and it has been operating ever since. In November 2022, she earned Kshs. 6,327 (\$52.73) as profit. The profits have continued to increase as her customer base expands. In December 2022, it was Kshs. 8,324 (\$69.37); in April 2023, it reduced slightly to Kshs. 8,284 (\$69.03). Her cumulative profits since October are Kshs. 44,105 (\$367.54). She uses this extra income to purchase stock for the retail shop. “I am keeping track of my progress so as to ensure sustained growth,” she says.

Patience credits her success to her determination and hard work, as well as the support she received from the Caris Foundation’s community facilitators and business mentors. She hopes to inspire other women in her community to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams.

Proverbs 15:22 “Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed”.

**“The goal-setting initiative enlightened me on what I could achieve. I started small...Then I dreamt of bigger things,”**  
**- Patience Kahindi**  
**TTG Participant**



# PICTORIALS

## Right: Agriculture

Sara Kanze, an Agriculture program officer trains chicken farmers on growth and development in Mongotini sub - location. The training which was also held in other areas had a total attendance of 128 farmers.



## Below: Business Mentorship

Business Mentees benefitted from a one - day workshop conducted by Caris Business Mentors. The training focused on business growth strategies. 1290 business mentees in the communities we serve attended the training. Photos © Emma Kinda/Caris Foundation Kenya





**Above: Youth**

In March, 85 youth parent representatives (YPR) attended a three day training which equipped them with skills to enable them enhance sustainability of the youth mentorship program.

Photo© Mwendu Mutinda

**Below: Health**

Scholar Kabaila, a healthcare officer addresses health support group members at Chumani dispensary in Kilifi North. This was the first meeting which brought together individuals who registered high than or low than normal blood pressure levels during free clinics held last October 2022. There are now 25 support groups, with a total membership of 1,148.

Photo© Rose Fondo





**Above: TTG**

Esther Salama, a community facilitator addresses Tuajalie Tujisaidie Group (TTG) participants in Kaloleni. 5,239 participants were reached in the high level goal setting initiative held in all the communities we serve. Photo©Emmanuel Mramba

**Below: Youth mentorship**

On April 26, 2023, young people in Magarini received mentorship on peer pressure and making the right choice, while the gender team, which was present at the meeting, sensitized them on the importance of equality in household chores. Photo© Rose Fondo





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