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Monthly Newsletter

Mtoto

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ABOUT

The USAID Tumikia Mtoto project is a PEPFAR/USAID-funded five-year project working towards promoting access to county-led quality health and social services for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), adolescent girls and young women (AGYW), and their families as a continuum of care, protection, and capacity building for self-reliance. The project is led by World Vision Kenya (the prime) in partnership with seven local implementing partners (LIPs) - Centre for the Study of Adolescence (CSA), Redeemed Integrated Development Agency (RIDA), The National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK), AVSI Foundation, Beacon of Hope, St. John's Community Centre (SJCC) and Cheer Up Program. The project is jointly implemented with the county governments of Nairobi and Kiambu. The USAID Tumikia Mtoto enjoys complementary support from strong partnerships with clinical partners, the private sector, and other stakeholders in the delivery of quality age-appropriate HIV and violence prevention health and social services to AGYW, OVC, and their families in Nairobi and Kiambu counties.

BUILDING BRIGHTER
FUTURES.

Breaking Barriers: A Story of Resilience and Empowerment



Agnes Neumbe, a resident of Shauri Moyo in Kamukunji sub-county, narrated that her life took a dramatic turn after constant conflict with her husband. In April 2021, these conflicts culminated in a severe beating from her husband, followed by his departure the next day, taking all their household possessions. Left alone with her two children, Agnes was unsure about how to proceed. It was during this trying time that she was enlisted to join the USAID Tumikia Mtoto project.

She stated, "I was feeling lost and disheartened at the time. I had lost all motivation to continue living, and there were moments when I contemplated suicide."

Continuing, she added, "If it weren't for my case manager and community health promoter who kept checking in on my progress and encouraging me to stay strong, not just for myself but also for my children, I don't know where I would be today."

After enrolling in the project, Agnes's son, who was in grade five, benefited from the project's education subsidy. Agnes shared that this was a huge relief because, at the time, she was struggling to make ends meet. As the sole provider for her family, she depended on hawking bananas in the estates to put food on the table.

“The business was not doing well, and I was barely making enough to feed the children, let alone cater to school fees. My son was constantly being sent home from school due to unpaid fees. USAID Tumikia Mtoto came in to support us at the right time,” she noted.

During her participation in the project, Agnes, together with other caregivers in USAID Tumikia Mtoto, attended Sinovuyo positive parenting sessions. Agnes recounted that throughout the 14-week Sinovuyo sessions, her perspective on parenting was challenged.

She stated, “I discovered that disciplining my children can be achieved through methods focusing on positive reinforcement rather than punishment. Moreover, I understood the significance of listening to my children and understanding their emotions to provide enhanced support. These realizations have been instrumental in refining my parenting approach and fostering a more positive and nurturing atmosphere for my children.”

“Being able to provide for my children as a mother brings immense joy. I am no longer burdened by debts and stress.”

In September 2023, Agnes participated in entrepreneurship training sessions that covered topics such as record-keeping, customer relations, saving, and profit utilization. Following her training under the USAID Tumikia Mtoto program in November 2023, she was awarded a business grant of 15,000 Ksh to boost her business.

With the money, she used it to buy new stock. Because she had learned about diversifying her business, Agnes bought other items like potatoes and pumpkins to supplement her banana business. Additionally, she purchased a larger stand to display her products more effectively.

Today, Agnes’s business is thriving as she has expanded her operations to include purchasing potatoes and bananas in large quantities, a move she finds more profitable. In an effort to empower other women in Shauri Moyo, Agnes decided to hire a young mother to oversee the business during morning hours, while she herself handles the sale of some products at Gikomba market. On average, Agnes’s business yields a daily profit of 800 Ksh. (6.15 USD)

Agnes proudly shared that she has managed to finance her daughter’s college education in tailoring and provide for her son’s educational needs. She joyfully stated, “Being able to provide for my children as a mother brings immense joy. I am no longer burdened by debts and stress,” she noted happily.

She expressed her gratitude to the USAID Tumikia Mtoto project for believing in her during her most challenging moments. She concluded by saying, “My prayer is that the project receives additional funding to extend its support to other vulnerable mothers in the community.”

Through the lens



Breaking Barriers: Kanana's Inspira- tional Journey



In the core of Nairobi's full of go Majengo neighbourhood lies the story of Nancy Kanana, a resilient soul whose journey epitomizes the triumph of the human spirit over adversity. At 25 years old, Kanana's life is a testament to resilience, determination, and the transformative power of opportunity. Born in Makueni but raised in Nairobi, Kanana's childhood was anything but easy. As the second of six children in a modest household, she witnessed firsthand the daily struggle her parents faced to provide for their family. With her father crafting jikos in the local market and her mother managing a small eatery, financial stability remained an elusive dream.

The struggle with hefty school fees balances made me feel awful," Kanana recalls, reflecting on her educational journey. "There were even occasions when I had to stay out of school for an entire month."

Despite her academic prowess, Kanana's dreams of pursuing higher education were dashed by economic constraints. "As the second born in the family, I had to forgo college and seek menial jobs to support my parents in educating my younger siblings," she explains.

Her path took an unexpected turn when, at the tender age of 20, Kanana found herself pregnant and abandoned by her partner. "The weight of disappointment grew heavier when my boyfriend abandoned me, leaving me to face the challenges of pregnancy alone," she recounts.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic further compounded Kanana's struggles, plunging her family deeper into financial turmoil. But amidst the darkness, a glimmer of hope emerged in the form of the DREAMS program.

Enrolled in 2022, Kanana found solace and support in the safe space provided by DREAMS. "At DREAMS, I felt safe. I could openly share my worries and discuss my challenges with other girls my age," she says, her voice brimming with gratitude.

Empowered by the program's sessions on entrepreneurship and financial literacy, Kanana embarked on a journey of self-discovery. Armed with newfound knowledge and a seed capital, she launched her own snacks business in Majengo, laying the foundation for a brighter future.

Today, Kanana stands as a beacon of hope in her community. With a thriving business and a steadfast commitment to her family, she embodies the resilience of the human spirit. As she looks towards the future, Kanana remains determined to break down barriers and pave the way for a better tomorrow.



Empowered to succeed Eunice journey with DREAMS

Eunice Mumo is 23 years, she was born and raised in Makueni County. She is the sixth born in a family of seven. Even after completing her secondary school exams in 2021 she was unable to join college due to financial constraints as her mother depended on casual farm jobs which were not forthcoming especially during the dry season.

“Life wasn’t easy, especially after my father passed away in 2016, even during my school years, I found myself being sent home frequently, which had a significant impact on my grades.” She reflected.

In 2022, her older sister, who lived in Ngong, recommended her for a job at a hotel in the area. It was there that she met her child’s father, a frequent customer at the food joint.

Eunice says she was drawn to the luxurious lifestyle her boyfriend promised. He would often take her to fancy restaurants and give her money for necessities like clothes and sanitary towels.

Since her sister was also struggling to raise her own children, Eunice moved into her boyfriend’s place. Two months later, she discovered she was pregnant. She shared, “Throughout our relationship, I never

asked my boyfriend where he worked, and it was only after I got pregnant that he revealed he was a casual laborer at one of the construction sites in the area.”

With nowhere to go she stayed with the boyfriend, she says she felt ashamed and lonely especially after facing hostility from her family who consistently expressed their disappointment.

“As I scrolled through social media, I would see my high school friends heading off to college, and I felt stuck and the consequences of my actions weighed heavily on me.” She said.

In 2023, Eunice and her boyfriend relocated to Bahati. She expressed feeling idle and downcast in their new home, lacking friends and feeling isolated. She often found herself in tears, struggling to come to terms with how drastically her life had changed, feeling as though her dreams had been shattered.

In 2023 Eunice was enrolled in DREAMS and she joined other girls her age for sessions on Shuga II, financial capability, entrepreneurship and SAB sessions.



Mtoto Corner





USAID TUMIKIA MTOTO



Building Brighter Futures