

Hope from the Fields

A bi-monthly Ikirezi Newsletter

The story of Liliane

Liliane is a happy, smiling 32 yrs old mother of 3 boys, aged 10, 7 and 4. She remembers vividly and proudly how, when she got married 11 years ago, her earnings from working for Ikirezi, her only source of revenue allowed her to buy all the materials (chairs, mattresses, her own clothes, and various household items including a bike-a special gift for her husband) that a well-respected bride has to take to her new home. This was a miracle because Liliane was raised up by a single parent since 1993 when her father deserted his family and went to Uganda and never came back. He abandoned his wife and his 3 children including Liliane. But she grew up alone as her two other siblings died. Unfortunately, Liliane's mother's left arm had to be amputated because she was shot at and badly wounded during the genocide. Liliane and her mother had to stand up against all odds to live a dignified life instead of begging on the streets. Meeting her basic needs was very hard and she could not even finish primary school because she had to work and support her mother to meet the family's basic needs. In 2007, when Ikirezi started to grow geranium in Gahara, Liliane and her mother were among the first to work for Ikirezi as casual labour. After almost 2 years working for Ikirezi, she had earned enough money to organize a beautiful wedding and started her own family. Working for Ikirezi not only helped Liliane to organize her wedding but it also help her and her husband to build a solid foundation for their family. Their 3 sons are now in primary (the two older boys) and nursery school (the last born).



Liliane and her husband earned enough money from Ikirezi to buy 2 pieces of land, build a very strong, iron roofed house, buy a cow, pay annual health insurance for the entire family, buy food and clothing and scholastic material and school uniforms for their children. Liliane is very grateful to the management of Ikirezi that brought the social enterprise to Gahara and she works in Ikirezi's lavender field; she dreams of a brighter future. She even goes out of her way to encourage other poor young girls to come and work for Ikirezi if they want to have a hope for the future instead of living in despair. Those who did listen to her and joined Ikirezi have also similar success stories.