

## Hope from the Fields

A bi-monthly Ikirezi Newsletter

**Josephine Muhawenimana** became an orphan of both parents aged 14. One of 7 siblings, she has only one remaining living sibling. After both her parents died, life was extremely hard for Josephine and her only surviving younger sister as they could hardly get basic needs such as food and clothes met. She couldn't continue her formal education as she abandoned school after grade 4 of primary school trying to get food first!!!

In 2008, Josephine and her sister moved from their home village in Northern Province of Rwanda to the Eastern Province in Gahara as a survival move and stayed with a friend of her late father. Josephine quickly became a cheap casual farming labour for people who could give them food. One good day, someone who was working with Ikirezi couldn't come and she was asked to come and replace her for one day. Josephine liked the opportunity to work for. Ikirezi and the following day, she came to ask for a job herself!

In 2012, she was offered a job as a casual labour but she was very happily surprised to learn that her daily wage was double of what she was earning prior to joining Ikirezi. Through her hard work and commitment, she became an Ikirezi "permanent" farmer, managing her own plot and having a better daily wage.

What she likes more about working with Ikirezi is an assured regular income with which she can cater for her needs and achieve some of her dreams. She was able to buy a piece of land, built a 2 bed room house for herself and her young sister, bought a cow and has a few hens. She has enough food, pays her own health insurance "mutuelle de santé", buys herself and her sister clothes.

Currently, she is able to take care of her young sister who has 2 children and does not have a job.



**Josephine is weeding her geranium plot at Ikirezi's farm**

Providing for her basic needs, having her own house and having acquired some other properties made Josephine more confident. She is no longer looked down by her community as a poor young lady. Instead she is now saving money and buying necessary household items hoping to get married someday soon and have her own family. She is very much involved in her community and she became an active Christian and she is now following a discipleship training course at her Church during the weekends. For Josephine, there is now hope for a brighter tomorrow.