

Catherine Maina Success Story



Catherine Maina is my name and from the Maasai community. I underwent the female genital mutilation hence dropped out of school and married off at an early age. I am a mother of nine children. The oldest has just completed Form Four and now is at home.



I have been living a life of poverty from hand to mouth and most of the time my children would only have breakfast and supper, meaning no lunch for them.

My husband and I both do casual jobs which sometimes are not available and that means going without a meal that day

Poverty on Top of Poverty

Life took a drastic twist when my husband informed me, he wanted to sell part of our land in order to start a business so as to upgrade the life of our family. By then three of our children had been sent out of school due to lack of school fees and uniform. I thought it was a good idea so I gave my consent – not realising I have dug my own grave.

Immediately the land was bought and my husband gave me five thousand [shillings, about \$37] for food and from there he disappeared and never came back home for two good months.

When he returned, he was accompanied by a woman with two children and informed me he had decided to take a second wife because I was unable to provide for the family and him.

I felt humiliated and reduced to nothing. Crying became the order of the day and I had nobody to comfort me apart from my children. Any time I would ask for money I would receive a thorough beating and [be] called names. I would watch them go for shopping with the wife; her children would start mocking my children showing them the goodies they have been brought. This became a wakeup call for me and became a charged lioness. I became aggressive in casual jobs and would do two to three of them in a day. God provided the casual jobs and always I had food for my children.

God Hears My Prayer

God always hears the cry of a mother who is in distress. One day when I had gone for casual job of picking tomatoes I heard other women discussing how an organization called Baraka is changing lives of women by empowering them with vocational training. I gathered more information and I learnt that I can also join the Centre.

My friend and I decided to pass through the Centre after the job. We were amazed to learn that we can join and still go for casual jobs. We enrolled into tailoring and dress making class and agreed to start classes the following day.

In one month my life had changed and felt a changed person. I have received mentorship which has empowered me into a responsible person and making me to be in love with myself. We have also been trained on group formation and registration and I have joined one of the table banking groups. In this group I save 10% on a daily basis according to payment from the casual jobs. My aim is to save enough money to enable me to get a loan [to] buy a machine and materials for a dress making business.

Interactions with other women and sharing has helped me and raised my self-esteem and confidence. I have changed my dressing to be better and always warm for my children. I am able to mentor them and encourage them in what they are doing to better their lives.

Thanks Baraka for rescuing me from the hate I had towards myself and giving me another life. My husband is now seeing a changed woman and comes to my house with shopping. He now talks well of me and my children. I know in two months' time I will have perfected in dress making and will start my own business. I am humbled, in high spirits, and a better mother to my children.

Women should never give up in life and should always be their sister keeper.
Join Baraka Women for a better you, family, and tomorrow.

Story told by Catherine Maina, Beneficiary of Baraka Women Center 2, Rumuruti, Kenya
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Interview and transcript by Wanjiru Ngigi, Program Director, Baraka Women's Center

Contact: Baraka Women's Center: BarakaWomen2015@gmail.com

www.BarakaWomensCenter.com