



Our Shining Star – Elizabeth Kananu

“Baraka Women’s Center Transformed My Life”

“My life had taken an unfortunate twist and turn . I could not effort even the basic needs as young modern mother. The year was 2013. Life in Nairobi had many dynamic but poverty had reduced



me to a mere spectator , harsh economic times rendered me hopeless with lots self-hate .I could not dress decently and had a permanent head gear to cover my hair avoiding visiting a saloon due to lack of money. Treating my children to an outing was a mere myth because I could not even make ends meet. A heavy crowd of tears crowned my thoughts.

Elizabeth (left) sharing her life transformation journey with Teresia Gachau of Baraka Center

Joining Baraka women

“In the midst of it all, my cousin called me with lots of excitements concerning a new found Centre for women. I heeded to her call hence joined the Baraka Women center in Nairobi Kenya. It was so amazing to find a huge number of women gathered together for a common course. The numerical strength and sister hood at the center initiated a transformation journey. We benefiting from Entrepreneurship, Money Management , Leadership and self-awareness training. Every sessions added value in my life as a woman. Our training had of positive regard for us irrespective of our background.

Transformation

“Negative self-image crowned my thoughts before joining Baraka women. I had no one to affirm me in life. Ms. Wanjiru took us through self-acceptance sessions which translated into self-appreciation

through treating yourself well. The main blind spot on my side was not accepting to change instantly. I had to change my dressing code, maintain my hair and polish my nail within two weeks. It was all about the new me on a mirror. Baraka Women Center made me into a new lovely women using the resources that I had. It was a journey of self-realization. The Financial Literacy classes taught introduced us to saving a coin daily. It was amazing as Ms. Teresia Gachau taught us how to save ksh 50 daily for a duration six months, our savings grew to ksh 9000 [approx \$90] per person. This was out of living within our means without over spending.

Gaining Financial Freedom

“My family back ground had inducted me to a strong business acumen. Regardless of what I had gone through I was ready to soldier on after receiving my sessions in money management and entrepreneurship from our trainers at the Centre. I walked confidently to a friend and borrowed seed capital for a small business. I did a market research within Nairobi and realized that low income earners loved laced nets to partition their houses; the demand was so high in a place known as Kagemi within the out skirts of Nairobi. Hence I embarked on Laced Net selling business. It was enjoyable. I could make a profit margin of from ksh 500 [\$5] to 1000 [\$10] a day. Life was interesting and enjoyable. I could now afford to meet the basic needs without depending on my spouse. The sales went very high with time and to my surprise I could afford to buy a new phone at Ksh 15000 [\$150]. This amazed my spouse.

Table Banking

“Weekly saving concept was introduced to us by Baraka Centre trainers. We started pooling funds through table banking where saving and borrow options were accessed us. The worst challenge was getting committed members. I followed my business Seasonality Calendar keenly hence could secure loans towards the festive season to boost my business. Baraka Women Trainers paid periodic visits to monitor my business activities. This was so amazing. I was to establish achievable saving goals so as to service my loans and uplift my family life. Regardless of fluctuating economic times in Kenya Money Management sessions helped allocate resources with wisdom.



Joyful Elizabeth narrating her success story to Wanjiru Ngigi of Baraka Women Centre

Dignity

“My life has been transformed by Baraka women’s Centre. I can now afford Electronic like pressure cooker, fridge and Television for my house after my five years of following Baraka Center trainings. From a life of poverty to a life of affluence. I believe the training sessions given by Baraka Women Center have

instilled a life changing wave of confidence, entrepreneurship, and money management skills. I lead a life of dignity where I can earn a decent living. This has transformed my Family. I recommend other women in Kenya to join Baraka Women's Center."

Story told by Elizabeth Kananu, Beneficiary Baraka Women Center, Nairobi, Kenya January 2019

Interview and transcript by Teresia Gachau, Financial Literacy Trainer, Baraka Women's Center, Nairobi, Kenya

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