

Some Success Stories from Beneficiaries

The programme has gathered a number of success stories that demonstrate that participation in MFIs activities enable members to start up new businesses and/or expand the existing ones. Expansion of agricultural land by the MFIs members also attributes to some extent the availability of loan services facilities in the villages/wards. The following are some selected success stories that exemplify beneficiaries from one being a member of MFI.

1. Lighter Kifwe is a female member of Mafinga SACCOS and her membership number is 72. She joined the SACCOS on 5th may 2004 with the expectation of expanding her Maandazi business. Before joining the SACCOS she earned life from a one-kilogram of flour which used as capital for making mandaazi. As a member of SACCOS she started saving. Initially she managed to save tshs.30, 000/=. Then in September 2004 she obtained her first loan of Tshs. 60,000/=the loan which helped her to start a new business of selling charcoal with a capital of Tshs.50, 000/=. She started the business with 30 bags. The volume of the business expanded from 30 bags to 100 bags by August 2005 and by this time she realized a profit between Tshs.5, 000/= to 10,000/= per month. She was then capable of keeping records of her business project. She believed that her family standards of living had improved compared to the period when she was not a SACCOS member. By this time she was able to: send her young sister to secondary school (form I); acquire a piece of land costing 10,000/=; sustain family expenses on basic needs (food and clothes) and pay the rent of the house. By the time of the interview she was temporarily employed at the SACCOS as a Treasurer and that her allowance (wage) was Tshs.40, 000/= per month which had helped her to beef up her savings to tune of Tshs. 150,000/=

Her vision is:

- To expand the charcoal business and start a new business of grains;
- To build the house for her child;
- To open education Account as a deposits for her child.

Lighter is of the opinion that in order to encourage new members to join SACCOS, RFSP needs to continue facilitating capacity building activities including sensitization on credits to different people who are not members.



Left: A woman member of Jiendeze SACCOSs in Mbeya district Ms. Happy Mwakyembe feeding her poultry. The woman started up the poultry project with a loan of Tshs, 100,000/= which she secured from her SACCOS. Happy estimates her poultry project to have grown in value by Tshs. 550,000/= since she received her first loan about one year ago.

2: Christina Chitanda is a married woman with two kids (twins). She joined Mafinga SACCOS on 15th January 2005. Her membership number is 172. Prior to joining the SACCOS she was involved in selling vegetables, by then she had a capital of Tshs. 5, 000/=. She decided to join the SACCOS because she was impressed by the rapid success of one of her friend, who was a member at that time. Furthermore, she was impressed by simple terms of getting loans when one is a member of SACCOS. Having become a member of SACCOS, she deposited Tshs. 50,000/= as her initial savings and in addition she purchased two shares worth Tshs. 10,000/=. With this investment, she was able to receive a loan from the SACCOS of Tshs. 100,000/= Having received that loan, she expanded her business by opening a kiosk where she was then selling a variety of goods in the same line such as coconuts, vegetables, rice and a lot of other food stuffs.

Achievements – Christina admits that her family life has greatly been improved. She can now manage to buy nice clothes for her family and afford improved eating habits in her family implying improved high standard of living for her family.. She has been able to buy a cupboard for her family meaning that she has acquired additional assets for her family. She again noted that the gender training and other crosscutting issues had helped her to manage her family better. She managed to convince her husband to be a SACCOS member. By this membership, he is now able to assist his wife at daily expenditures.

Future Plans - Christina is looking forward to expanding her business; to building a family house. She is of an opinion that other members especially women should join SACCOS to yield benefits accrued by being a member.

3. Angelo Kavindi is a male member of Mafinga SACCOS who joined the SACCOS on 11th January 2005, with membership number 177. He decided to join the SACCOS primarily because he wanted to expand his business (butchery project). Another reason for joining the SACCOS was that SACCOS's regulations for obtaining loans were simpler as compared to those of formal banks. He wanted to expand his butcher business, which was at Mafinga market. He used to purchase four pigs per day and sold its meat (pork). By the time he was joining the SACCOS he had accumulated capital of Tshs. 500,000/=. After joining the SACCOS he bought two shares of Tshs. 10,000/= . Using the SACCOS he was able to accumulate his savings from Tshs. 800,000/= to 1,500,000/= from his business . He applied for loan of Tshs. 3,000,000/= (according to their loan policy of -twice of savings). With the loan he managed to top up from his savings Tshs. 1,000,000/= and bought a transport vehicle for passenger (Toyota Hiace) for Tshs. 4,000,000/= of which he is now a driver himself.

Impact at the family level - joining the SACCOS Mr. Kavindi has successfully managed his family by providing them with quality food (balanced diet) at least twice a day compared to the simple food they were initially eating once a day. Generally, he meets all the family essential needs properly. He is planning to buy a lorry by February 2007.

Mr. Kavindi advices the people of Mafinga and elsewhere to join SACCOS because there are benefits to be gained from them and their regulations are very simple to follow. He also advices that the SACCOS should build front offices and every member must have a SACCOS constitution that will guide him/her accordingly.