ASPIRES

A photostory
of compelling tales
of reuniting families

Family Resilience project

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AVSI
People for development

This publication is made possible by the generous support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of AVSI Foundation and Family Resilience project and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

Foreword

Family Resilience (FARE) project has been a short but fascinating journey through which AVSI Foundation together with its implementing partners: Fruits of Charity Foundation, Companionship of Works Association and Retrak - a sub grantee, drew robust lessons that will inform future design and implementation of programs that work towards restoring the dignity of the most destitute communities by supporting them to build strong and resilient families.

In a special way, allow me express my gratitude to USAID's Displaced Children and Orphans Fund whose financial support assisted us to reunite 268 children with their families and work with 605 families to face their life's situations bravely, to take up their parental responsibility, and keep children safe and protected from street life.

I also wish to thank FHI360 for the specialized support provided throughout the project life, Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development for providing an enabling policy environment and framework to work with children and families; Kampala Capital City Authority and Wakiso District Local Government for their support and collaboration, local leaders and the dedicated community structure staff who worked tirelessly to deliver tailored interventions to each household.

I embrace my colleagues who moved tirelessly door to door to make sure these stories remain a reality of what the FARE project is leaving behind for a long time.

And finally, to AVSI Foundation management and AVSI-USA, I say thank you for the unwavering support that ensured a level implementation of the project; and to the project participants: I am deeply humbled by your commitment to transform your own lives, your families, your communities.

The family is the best place for a child to grow. I now invite you to enjoy this brief photostory booklet of true situations of project participants whose lives will not remain the same.

Magdalene Ndagire
Program Manager, FARE project.

Introduction

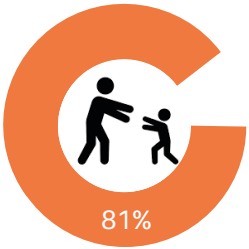
Family Resilience (FARE) is a two year and nine months (November 2015 - June 2018) research project funded by USAID's Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (DCOF), and managed by FHI360. It is implemented in Kampala and Wakiso Districts to contribute to learning under the Accelerating Strategies for Practical Innovation and Research in Economic Strengthening (ASPIRES) project. FARE is led by AVSI Foundation with Retrak as sub-grantee.

With a goal to prevent unnecessary family-child separation and re-separation, FARE has to date reached 350 at-risk families and 268 reintegration children from 255 families with a mix of activities including; quality, appropriate case management to reintegrate children and families at high risk of separation, socio-economic strengthening and family strengthening, identifying needs and providing access to support and services.

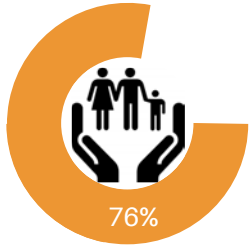
Project Approach:

- Working with existing community resources, people, implementing partners.
- Premised on capacity building of households.
- Use of quality programmatic standards and tools developed at local, national and international levels.
- Multi–sectoral, family–centred approach with a wide menu, targeting members of the beneficiary households.
- Commitment to "fit the project to the people". Family–specific Household Development Plans featuring a mix of activities deemed most appropriate.
- Focus on learning and adapting.

Results

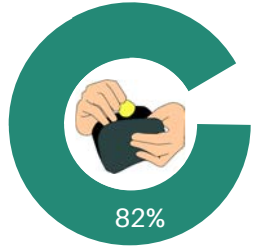


Children supported to reunite with their families

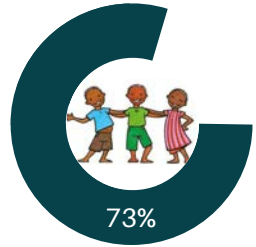


At risk of separation families supported to reduce their vulnerability

Families with reduced economic vulnerability



Families with increased savings



Children who feel safe and supported in their communities

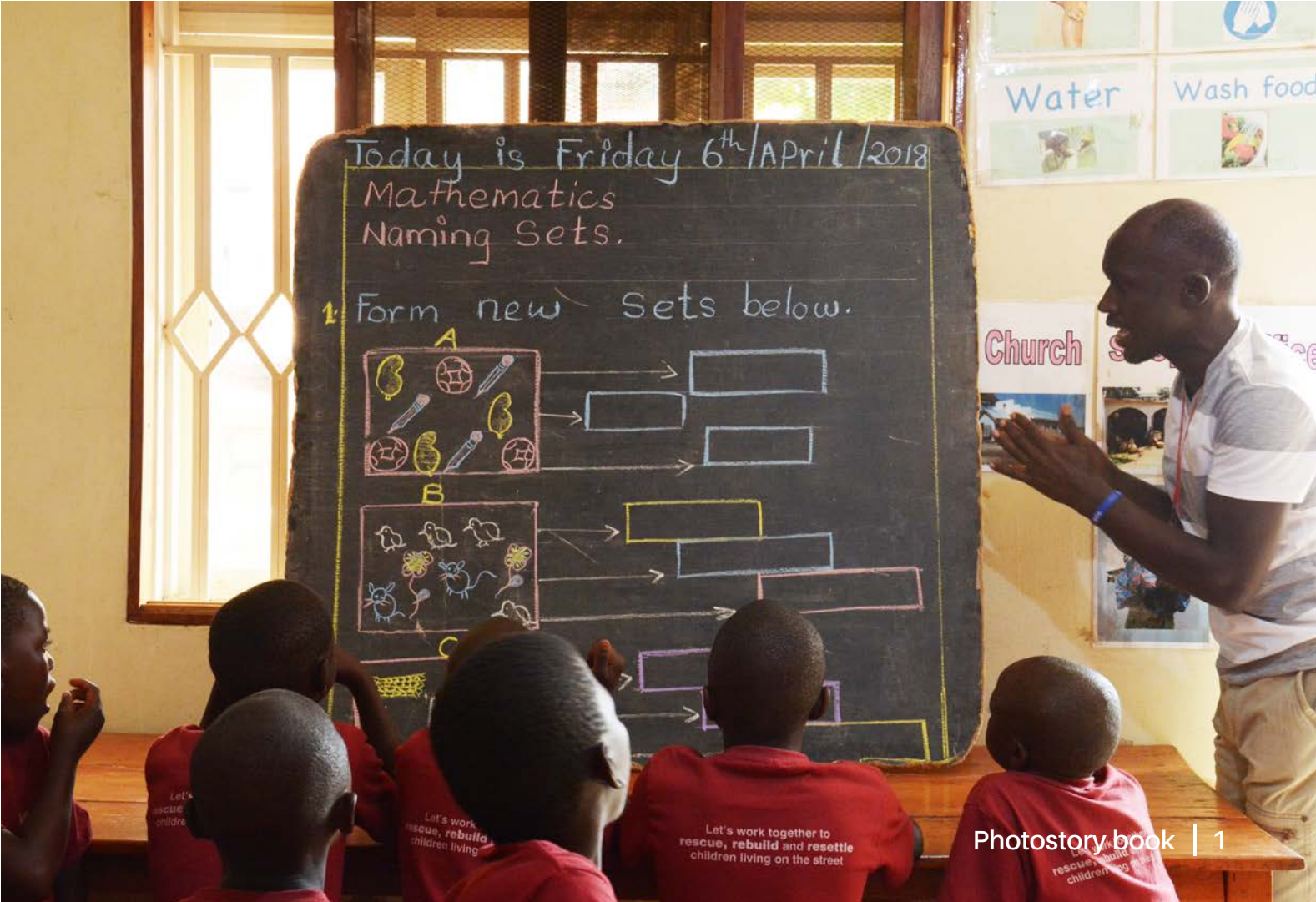
About these stories

Kampala and Wakiso are busy and populated towns with the most separation in families and a street population often cited at over 10,000 (2015 study by ANPCANN Uganda).

Family Resilience project was piloted to identify and support families at high risk of separation and those that had experienced child separation due to different reasons. Project participants were selected through a case management approach that identifies risk factors such as weak parental observation and poor economic conditions in families.

Additionally, five outreach centers in the two districts were equipped with space to have fun, catch-up class facilities, counseling, apprenticeship training facilities and social workers to manage the cases well.

The stories tell how Family Resilience was able to deter at-risk youth from re-separation and how they progressed after they had received support from the project, supplementing Government of Uganda efforts to provide services for the well being of the population.


Today is Friday 6th/April/2018
Mathematics
Naming Sets.
1. Form new Sets below.
A
B
Water
Wash food
Church
Let's work together to rescue, rebuild and resettle children living on the street

A new path for Annet

Thirty-two-year old mother of five gleams with joy in her seedlings nursery.

"I was cruel to my teen stepson. I had two children from a previous relationship and three from my marriage. I had no income. Life was difficult!

May 2018 – "When I talk about my past I get really sad, says Annet, as tears run down her cheeks. She recalls how she mistreated little Elvis and how her actions were straining her marriage. Elvis ran away from home. For more than a decade this was the life Annet knew - a violent home and lack of meals and school fees for her children.

"Ironically, several months after Elvis' disappearance from home, life seemed to turn around. Counselors visited us. They looked like they wanted us to have a better home, but I resisted. Whenever I saw them approach the compound, I asked my children to tell them I wasn't in."

Annet had hoped for support from several "opportunities" and she didn't think these counselors were any different. She reluctantly enrolled into the FARE project.

Day by day, she was trained how to save money, but Annet had no maintainable income. She decided to cut her home expenditure and joined Glorious Village Saving and Loans Association near her home where she saved US$28 which she invested in a mango tree nursery business. Six months later, she sold her seedlings at US$430!

Enthused, Annet enrolled and attended the parenting skills training which has helped her raise Elvis happily. Her artisan husband, Gwaza who once considered abandoning his wife is now a happy man.

Annet's skills are helping them rebuild a stronger home. She recently renovated her pigsty and brought in two more piglets, and plans to venture into passion fruit farming. Her shares in the savings group have also grown.

Now that life is getting better, and with support from Gwaza, the couple plans to reunite with their two children who live in the village. Annet and Gwaza's next plan is to purchase equipment for their metal fabrication workshop.

Even though their businesses have only been in operation for twelve months, the couple is realizing the fruits of their labor as their revenue steadily grows. They are on the path to success.

Beginning the journey back home

Crafting a livelihood again: Consolata's life in Katwe slum

"Who can give out money for no work done?... I have struggled with life since I came to this city and no one has offered me money" Consolata wondered.

While still in her marital home in Mityana District, life suddenly took a dramatic turn when she lost her husband. "I immediately became a victim of property grabbing. I was evicted by my in-laws," says Consolata, the fifty-seven-year-old mother of five with six grandchildren.

"Luckily I was taken in by my sister who offered me a single room in Kampala". It was a short-lived relief as I soon got to experience harsh life in the city. With poor health and no source of income, all my children dropped out of school; some of them bowed to peer pressure and ended up on the streets only returning home to change clothes and have meals "I was very worried about my children's future," "I simply wanted to die, I had stopped taking my ARVs because I was depressed. I'd lost everything that brought meaning to my life - my livelihood, my daughters and my land ..." she sighs.

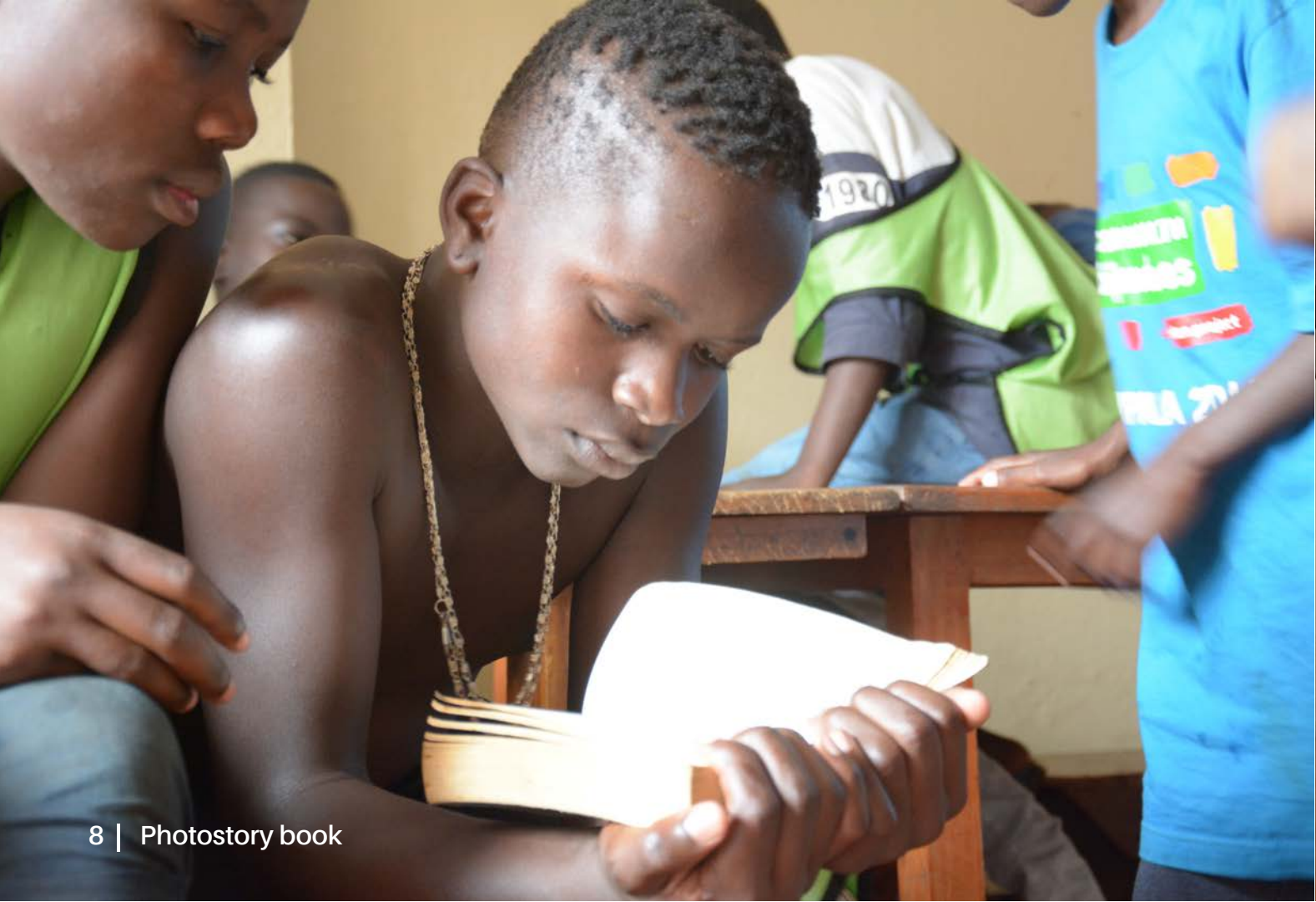
Things gradually started to change in 2016 when we were identified by the community workers. We were then enrolled in the FARE project.
The community workers equipped me with parenting knowledge and skills and provided counseling to my children. Allen who had dropped out of school got an apprenticeship opportunity.

Eventually, I was selected for cash transfer and invited to attend the Selection Planning and Management Enterprise training to help me manage the consumption support and use the funds responsibly.

Five months into her savings group, Consolata borrowed US$2, which she was due to repay in a week's time. She purchased supplies and settled at her door step to weave mats and during the noon sun, she carried her basket of fruits around the town to sell to town dwellers.

Her keenly woven mats are an attraction to many who pass by her house to buy. Consolata's earnings have now improved. She counts a monthly income of US$30 and she is an active member of Kwagalana savings group.

Consolata is thankful to FARE for helping save her life. Her family's income and feeding patterns have improved. Her daughter Allen also completed her apprenticeship course in hairdressing and life skills.



Reawekening lost hopes and dreams

The Obedient Teen

In the life of Abas, a typical daybreak involves working casual labor jobs and often facing harsh employers who do not pay his wages at the day's end. Frustrated each day, Abas returned home empty-handed to his financially struggling father.

In October 2016, Abas served eight months in a juvenile detention facility for alleged misconduct. While at the detention facility he attended catch-up classes that allowed him to advance his Grade 5 education as well as life skills training which he valued. On his release from the detention facility, the teen's situation made a dim twist when his father – his only caregiver left home and never returned.

"Dad was happy to see me when I got home, but he later left. He couldn't afford to pay rent, not even to buy us food or pay for my formal schooling.

Abas was alone but found that he was not completely abandoned. Two community members stepped forward to assist him: an "aunt" and a man Abas describes simply as a "Good Samaritan."

Aunt was willing to provide for Abas' basic needs. However, her livelihood was from the sale of homemade liquor and her home was flooded with customers, drinking well late into the night. Instead, the Good Samaritan offered Abas a bed in his nearby home.

Around this time, Abas came to the attention of COWA, a local Ugandan NGO that identifies minors who had been separated from homes in which they were raised to reunite them with caregivers.

"Those eight months for me were amazing because I changed completely," Abas said. "I learned to change my routine for the better - motorcycle mechanics, to select, plan and manage my own business in future and to be a better person." "I feel much better about myself; before I thought I was of no worth". "Now I know I'm intelligent and I can earn money when I complete my training."

Abas' story brings a chain of great people in his life. Aunt who received cash transfer support and assisted Abas with part of it for his basic requirements, the Good Samaritan who enrolled for parenting skills trainings, and another key supporter of Abas – the garage owner who assists Abas and other children in his community with training in motorcycle mechanics.

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Increased economic resources and capacities

Beatrice smiles at life in a slum

Kampala's slums can be tough to live in: tightly packed houses, poor drainage, lacking piped water or electricity. Beatrice's home in Makerere Kivulu is no exception, with dwellings easily described as unfit for human habitation.

When we visited Beatrice's home, she greeted us with an apology: "sorry there is no place to sit", says Sarah a FARE project community worker.

It wasn't hard to tell that Beatrice was being polite. All around her was stuffed, in a small one-roomed mud house with one bed for her and her three beautiful daughters.

Beatrice, a forty-seven-year-old woman struggles to take care of her children after her husband could no longer bear the financial hardships in the home, and he left.

She went about her petty trade business selling scanty tomatoes through one of the windows in her house when we met her and her children who were home during the school term.

"... they often miss exams and at times disappear from home; they go around to look for what to eat", says Beatrice, uncertain of her daughters' whereabouts whenever they are away.

She had become accustomed to their situation when she was identified by FARE as fit to enroll into the project for the cash transfer intervention and financial skills growth, after her small food vending business collapsed and her landlord threatened to evict her from the house because of rent default. But Beatrice was determined to work. She learned to utilize her earnings, kept some in her Twegatte Savings Group and progressively boosted her vegetable business.

In fact, Beatrice's progress attracts attention. After the parenting trainings she received from FARE, Beatrice's daughters can now hold onto their mum to stay together and tell stories. The once school fees defaulter is happy that her daughters no longer miss their school programs. "I often go to school to check on their classwork: their performance has greatly improved."

Beatrice is certain that a good education will work her children out of poverty. She is thankful to the team of social workers who tirelessly encouraged her. Here, she said, "we are looking at a better future. The important thing is my children's education will not be compromised and we are assured of two meals each day."

Apprenticeship for youth

Courage to trust

Faridah is a single mother of five aged ten, eight and two. Her older daughters are nineteen and eighteen years old.

“I didn’t want to hear about the project a second time because it wasn’t fixing my immediate needs. I didn’t believe this would work for me.

Faridah who formerly hand-washed her neighbors’ clothes for a small pay is a happy woman at her small investments that are earning her a good income. She owns a brick-making business which brought in a profit of US$570 eight months after FARE project workers trained her in enterprise planning.

Faridah’s next step is to purchase land on which she plans to construct her own house and break free from paying monthly rent. She has furnished her house with a bed, mattress and she recently bought a television set to keep her girl-children from strolling around the neighborhood.

One of her daughters, seventeen-year-old Rita is a hairdresser after recently completing her apprenticeship through FARE.

Forty-year–old Faridah is now a confident woman. Her mates assigned her the Chair of Jolly, their savings group where she stands to address group members in Wakiso.

Psychosocial well-being through games and play

A story as told by Jefferson the carpenter

Jefferson was only twelve when he became a street child. His mother passed away and his dad remarried. Here is his story...

Life was good when I was young. I lived with my parents and dad was very strict, but then things changed when dad and mum returned home only during the weekend due to their work demands away from the city. I was left home with my siblings Sharon, Lyns and nine-year old David.

Dad struggled to pay our tuition with the salary from his Office Attendant job. He struggled to find food for us. One day I just decided to run away from home. I didn't return on the first, second, for so many nights, until police surrounded my group and we were taken to the rehabilitation center where I spent three months.

On the streets I spent one year. The nights were painfully cold, we slept on cardboards. At times we stole to survive, but we didn't enjoy stealing. Hunger was part of our daily lives. Then I began substance abuse – it's a "normal" way to survive on the streets, you have to be "high" to fit well with other street children. We used to wake ourselves up before dawn so that the police wouldn't find us, and then walk downtown to find food and water. At times we slept under market stalls.

The police arrest shook us but turned out to be a good thing because eventually we were in Naguru rehabilitation home. The aunties and uncles at the home are great. They counseled us and gave us big hugs.

A week or so later I began catch-up classes and life skills training. I worried a lot about my siblings and how dad and mum felt about me. But I knew I was now a better person.

In June 2016, Jefferson was reconnected to his family. His dad, Kenneth Odida and mum were excited to have him back home. Kenneth enrolled in FARE where he learned parenting skills, received cash transfer support and trained in how to select, plan and manage small businesses. He now owns a hair dressing salon.

Jefferson enjoys his carpentry lessons. He is able to man most of the machines as he completes his Carpentry and Joinery course at Companionship of Works Association, where his trainer hopes to retain him for his good behavior and hard work.

“I am enjoying life at home and my behavior is good. I’ve been here for two years now and my parents say I’m a good role-model to my siblings, I am happy to be back home again and I know carpentry will help me stand on my own two feet. I am grateful to the aunties and uncles at the center who gave their time so that I could have this opportunity”, says Jefferson.

ASPIRES

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