



# Young Women Join Hands to Alleviate Illiteracy and Poverty

Isfahan Kilkile Women's Savings and Credit Co-operative (SACCO) is testimony that adversity can breed unity. Started in 2022 with a membership of 43, the Sacco was established to address rampant poverty among the women folk. Currently, each member contributes KES 500 per month to grow the Sacco. The group treasurer, Nimoy Jelle Elmi says that the Sacco runs a grocery shop and a garments shop with a tailoring section and a unique butchery specialising in dried and smoked small pieces of meat locally known as *myiri nyiri*. The group also owns a farm where they grow a variety of crops for both consumption and surplus for sale.

The group's prosperity is attributable to WASDA, which advanced them a grant of KES 390,000 through Girls Improving Resilience through Livelihood and Health (GIRLH) project.

The objective of the project is to improve the well-being of out-of-school adolescent boys and girls aged between 18 and 24. The adolescents are taken through different life skills training including tailoring, salon and beautification, bakery, basic numeracy and literacy (including financial literacy), livestock management and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). Most of the adolescents have no formal education because they never attended any school.

"WASDA has given the beneficiaries various support such as grants of between KES 150,000 and 200,00 to scale up their businesses while others were taken to technical vocational education and training (TVET) to acquire skills in tailoring and hand crafting," GIRLH's project officer, Shamsa Ibrahim Maawiye, states.

They were given start up kits after graduating. The kits include sewing machines and bakery equipment among others. The beneficiaries are now actively engaged in various income-generating activities.



*After drying the meat in sunshine, it is now smoked before being sold.*

The group has so far recorded tremendous growth and currently owns a shop on their own plot acquired at the cost of KES 200,000. Before, they used to sell their wares in open air market at Baraza Park.

The Sacco's field agent, Mr Malak Hassan, says the group's farm is always teeming with a variety of vegetables which they sell at Eldas besides a tree nursery with different tree species such as neem tree seedlings. A neem tree seedling is priced at KES 200.

"We sell meat in Abdiwaqo, Eldas, Kilkiley and Yaqow where a cup of dried meat goes for KES 250 each and is mainly sold on order. Our clothes are bought by mainly Sacco members. We have not been long in this business but have already made KES 26,000 in profits," the Sacco's treasurer, Nimcoy Jelle Elmi, states.

According to Elmi, the Sacco advances loans to members to pay hospital bills and school fees for their children.



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



*Sacco members attending to their tree nursery.*

They have also used some of their savings to lay a water pipeline for the irrigation of their farm and purchase of fertiliser to improve productivity. The Sacco is planning to buy a water tank to store water for irrigation.

“We have success stories emanating from groups that WASDA has supported and today those hitherto vulnerable women are making profits. An example is a group that has three million KES in their account courtesy of WASDA’s initial support,” Mr Hashim Abdi Yarrow, a Senior Cooperative Officer, Wajir County government’s department of trade, cooperative investment and industries, states. More of such stories of project impact can be replicated and rolled out to various groups with sustained support of WASDA and its partners.



*Some group members plant potato vines at their farm.*



Field office  
P.O. Box 209-70200  
Diif Road, WASDA building, Wajir.  
E-mail: [info@wasda.or.ke](mailto:info@wasda.or.ke)  
[www.wasda.or.ke](http://www.wasda.or.ke)

**FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE HORN OF AFRICA**

