

**Report about the
Significant Change
Stories and Case Studies
of selected Project
Beneficiaries at the Five
UYDEL Safe Spaces of
Mityana, Gomba, Mubende,
Bukomansimbi and Sembabule Districts**

**Submitted to:
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Introduction:

The team visited the UYDEL DREAMS safe spaces for ten 10 days from 22nd January 2017 to 3rd February 2017 in the districts of Mityana, Mubende, Gomba, Sembabule and Bukomansimbi. The team interacted with selected project beneficiaries for purposes of documentation of case stories from childhood to their current situation. It's worth noting that by the time this documentation took place, the AGYWs were still being mentored by the project staff at their respective safe spaces and were waiting for graduation due in March 2017. Therefore some stories herein are an indication of significant changes in the lives of the AGYWs; some stories show the impact of the intervention; uniqueness of the story and others clearly demonstrate the importance of the DREAMS project interventions. Project documentation is an important part of project management. Thus, documentation was intended to lay the foundation for quality, traceability, and history for both the individual clients and for the entire project documentation. This report therefore is one of the ways to keep record of the work done, the strategies used, the changes that occurred among the clients even after the project has been completed.

About DREAMS project:

UYDEL is implementing the DREAMS project with funding from Mildmay/CDC. The project has identified and enrolled vulnerable at risk, Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYWs) into the program through multiple entry points. The project operates in the districts of Mityana, Mubende, Gomba, Sembabule and Bukomansimbi targeting AGYWs in transactional sex between the ages of 15-24. The AGYWs have been identified and enrolled through on-going referrals from the local leaders and other community groups like the women and children groups, and parents/ caregivers, from OVC programs, referrals from health centers, conducting community outreaches in hotspots. UYDEL social workers have also conducted targeted outreaches in most at risk and vulnerable communities, referrals from police and probation offices and other community and NGO programs and referrals from peer networks. The

DREAMS project aims at reducing the incidences of new HIV cases in AGYW between ages of 10-24 years. By 31st December 2016, the project had enrolled 2,482 AGYWs in transactional sex had been enrolled for DREAMS services where 15-19 are 1,420 and 20-24 are 1,062.

Rationale for documentation of significant change stories and case studies

In order to keep record and communicate effectively about the project outcomes, the team undertook documentation of some of the significant change stories of the AGYWs that had benefitted from the DREAMS project, and also did a video recording of the field activities that culminated into a documentary that show cases some of the lives of the AGYWs. This served to show case the impact of the project interventions in the targeted communities.

Methodology

The social workers at the five safe spaces in the districts of Mityana, Mubende, Gomba, Sembabule and Bukomansimbi were requested to identify at least three clients from each safe space for an in-depth interview and follow up within their communities to document their case stories. The documentation team comprising of the UYDEL Senior Program Manager and a television editor developed a self-administered questionnaire and a guiding script for the documentation exercise respectively.

During the field data collection exercise, the team sought consent from the clients before undertaking the interviews. From our experience we knew that some of the stories would be emotional and we therefore encouraged the clients to express themselves freely and should feel free to stop the documentation whenever they felt they couldn't continue with the interviews. Upon completing the assignment, the team generated a report and produced a video documentary for sharing with the project team and stakeholders.

Acknowledgment:

The documentation team would like to thank the management of UYDEL for giving them the opportunity to undertake this assignment which opened their eyes to the issues affecting the girl child in Uganda. The experiences from this assignment are enormous and have been well documented in this report. We would like to thank the DREAMS Project Director, Mr. Rogers Kasirye and DREAMS Project Coordinator Ms. Nabulya Anna for their technical support before, and during the execution of this assignment. Their guidance was crucial for the success of this assignment. We cannot to forget to appreciate the DREAMS project staff at the five safe spaces of Mityana, Mubende, Gomba, Bukomansimbi and Sembabule districts for their assistance especially in selecting the clients and district technical personnel to participate in this assignment and eventual follow ups in the community. We are deeply indebted to all of them for their support which enabled the team to complete this assignment. Lastly, we thank Mildmay/CDC for trusting UYDEL to partner with them in the implementation of the DREAMS project. The technical and financial resources provided for this project have been effectively and efficiently utilized for the benefit of the AGYWs.

Significant change stories and Impact of project Interventions on the clients:

Case study 1:

Namata Jane (real name) is a Ugandan female aged 23 years, a resident of Katogo, Mityana. She is the fourth born in a nuclear of family of 2 brothers and 5 girls. She is a currently a single mother of 2 girls aged 9 and 5 years. She stays in a single rented room with her children. She notes that life was very hard before she came to UYDEL. She had challenges of low income, and absentee husband who is currently in Netherlands doing odd jobs. The husband occasionally sends her money for upkeep and school fees of the children. He last came back in Uganda in 2011. As much she receives

money from her husband, it's not enough to meet her basic needs because she was unemployed. She ended up engaging in transactional sex for three years now to supplement her income. She was identified and referred by a friend who told her about the UYDEL safe space and available services. She was hesitant at first but later accepted to enroll into the program and now studies hairdressing and catering. She has learnt how to make duddies, samosas, chapattis and local food which she hopes these skills will help her earn a decent living in future. She has been learning at the safe space since April 2016.

She now receives calls from hairdressing clients even before she graduates which is a positive sign as far as she's concerned. She is still completing her skills training at the Mityana safe space till her graduation in March 2016.

"I have acquired vocational skills training in hairdressing and catering. I have also learnt life skills and how to protect myself from HIV. These I consider important achievements in my life. Thank you UYDEL and Mildmay for the support"- Says Jane.

Jane dreams of starting her own restaurant or saloon because she has acquired business skills training, has a passion for self-employment and also finding resources to support her two children. She has acquired knowledge about customer care.

Case study 2:

Desire Nambusi (real name) is a Ugandan female aged 19 years was born and raised in Mityana. She is a resident of Wabigalo currently. She is the first born in a family of 7 children (3 boys and 4 girls). Her mother is alive while her father passed away five years ago. Desire grew up in an impoverished family where her parents struggled to fend for the children. Despite this situation, her parents paid for her tuition fees till S.4 in 2014. Her parents failed to educate her to higher secondary Advanced level and

subsequently dropped out of school. Having stayed home without a job for some time, a friend of her approached her and told her about a job opportunity of working as a house maid in Mutungo Biina, Kampala. She gladly accepted the offer and moved to Mutungo where she worked as a house maid for one year. Due to the hard conditions in domestic work, she decided to leave her employer's house and started staying with friends. At 17 years she started engaging in transactional sex.

“I faced a lot of challenges while in transactional sex such as suffering from sexually transmitted diseases, non-payment by clients, violent clients, and unwanted/unplanned pregnancies” I really felt very bad about the situation at the time because I was putting my life at risk and not even my parents knew where I was and what I was doing to earn a living”- Says Desire.

In 2016, a friend of mine in Mityana called me and informed me about the opportunity of studying vocational skills at free of charge. I didn't first take her seriously but eventually I travelled back to Mityana and interacted with staff at the UYDEL safe space. I found the staff very welcoming and persuaded me to join the DREAMS project. She enrolled into the hairdressing and catering class from April 2016. She has learnt the different hair styles and this has enabled her find employment in a saloon now even when she has not yet graduated.

“I work in a saloon on week days and also work in an outside catering company called Wabigalo catering service over the weekends where I earn money which caters for my basic needs such as clothes, rent, and food. I don't regret having left transactional sex activities because I am now able to save some money unlike before”- Says Desire.

She's now renting a one roomed house in Wabigalo with the necessary amenities of water and electricity. She changed her behavior and no longer engages in transactional sex. She sees a bright future ahead of her and thanks UYDEL for all the support. During her free time she loves visiting her friends. She wants to be self-employed and own a saloon; save money and buy a plot of land and build her own house. She is waiting for her graduation due in March 2017 where she hopes to receive resettlement kits that will boost her economic potential and business ideas.

Case study 3:

Kirungi Anne (real name) is a Ugandan female aged 24 years was born and raised in Mizigo, Mityana district. Her mother is still alive and she's the first born in a family of 4 children (2 boys and 2 girls). The main source of income of her family was selling second hand clothes in the village markets where they earned money for basic necessities of life. They lived in rented room in Mityana town which was congested considering the number of people in the household.

Anne lost her father while she was in primary four and he was only the bread winner at home as he had refused the mother to work. Her father's death was a big blow to the family because survival became very difficult. She was able to continue with her education with support from the extended family. She lost her mother while she was in senior four and then started living with her maternal auntie who also passed away after one year. This state of affairs left her with no option but to drop out of school and start engaging in transactional sex in Kibuye for survival at the age of 17 years. During the course of her business deals she found a stable partner for who she bore two girls (one is 6 years and 2 years respectively). The father of the girls is a mechanic for electronic appliances. That relationship didn't work out and she found another boyfriend who moved her to Mityana. The boyfriend's financial help wasn't enough to meet her demands which forced her to continue seldomly engage in transactional sex. She was able to save some money

and together with her sister they started a diary shop in Mityana in 2015. The diary shop didn't bring in enough money and she ventured into selling second hand clothes to supplement her income.

She was referred to the safe space by her friend sometime in June 2016. She enrolled in hairdressing and tailoring classes. She has also learnt pedicure and manicure while at the safe space. She is still being supported at the safe space in terms of counselling and developing her business plan to facilitate her resettlement and reintegration into the community.

In her own words Anne says “she sells clothes where she earns averagely Ugx 60,000 with Ugx 20,000 as profits. I am now saving money to buy my own sewing machine to boost my business in the area”.

She narrates that; “My biggest transformation in life is being a mentor to other adolescent girls and young women who are in similar situation like mine. Now young people look upto me as role model and people no longer discriminate me unlike before I joined the DREAMS project. I am now getting work of sewing clothes for clients using my friend’s sewing machine. A make-up individual has also approached me because of the skills I acquired”.

Anne dreams of buying her own sewing machine; start a bridal salon and dress up the brides bug time and also establish a school to teach vocational skills training.

Case study 4:

Kamusiima Charity (real name) is a Ugandan female aged 20 years was born in Mbarara district though she now stays in Katogo parish, Kasenyi

village Mubende district. She is the third born in family of six children. Both her parents are alive and are farmers/agriculturalists. Her parents did pay her school fees during the primary education but did not pay fees for secondary education despite the fact that they had money to take the siblings to school. Her elder sister paid her school fees from senior one till senior three second term when she got pregnant from a student who was studying in the same school at St. Mary's senior secondary school. When she got pregnant, she was chased from her sister's home and gave birth to a baby girl from a health center. Good Samaritans in the village helped her with accommodation in a mud house but the conditions of living were very bad for both mother and child. While in Mbarara, she had rumors that the father of her child was working in Mubende and that's when she decided to move to Mubende with the help of friends. Upon arrival in Mubende, she traced for the father of her child and failed to find him. She therefore got in touch with a group of girls who introduced her to transactional sex to earn an income to look after her child and also get food.

She engaged in transactional sex for one and half years renting an Ugx 30,000 single roomed house. She used to earn at least Ugx 20,000 daily which she did at the expense of her life. Before renting her own room, she was staying with over six girls in one room. It was a very situation to the extent that she would leave her child overdosed with piliton (sleeping drug) in the evening and would return in the morning. When she looks back at what she did, this was a cruel thing she did to her baby because it was young and needed mother's care. She has not had any contact with her family ever since she left Mbarara.

I overheard my group friends talking about UYDEL DREAMS program and they encouraged me to come and meet the social workers. I have not looked back since June 2016.

"I have gained a lot of knowledge and skills in hairdressing; I am a trainer of other young people in stepping stones which is a sign of leadership entrusted to

me by UYDEL. I have changed my behavior because I am now committed to one man-he is a carpenter and we stay together. He loves my child and that's one of the reasons why I decided to settle with him. I have now gained more respect among my peers and the community as a whole”-Says Charity.

As part of daily routines, Charity does household chores like cleaning the house, utensils, attends vocational skills training at the safe space and then returns to prepare dinner for her husband. She says that the DREAMS project activities have been very enriching and she attributes her behavioral change to her participation in the program.

“I quit transactional sex and I pledge to remain the same even if the current relationship doesn't work out. I know the benefits of being HIV free and I pledge not to engage in unprotected sex with multiple sex partners. Many young girls have attained vocational skills training and reproductive health information but many girls are pregnant largely because of entertainment industry and laxity of life. Bars are wide spread and night clubs are cheap”

“I would like save and start my own a saloon without depending on men for survival. I also want to educate my child to get the best quality education available”.

She advises adolescent girls and young women who have not started engaging in transactional sex not to start. The girls should take care of their lives and not be deceived by men.

Case study 5:

Namukisa Jacqueline (real name) is a Ugandan female aged 22 years resides in Katogo parish, Mubende district. She grew up in a single parent (mother) in Madudu village. She studied till primary seven in 2007 in Lulongo primary school while staying with her grandparent. Due to lack of school fees, she found a job at bar called “*The Boss*” where she earned about Ugx 60,000 every month. She used this money to pay for rent and food. She worked at the bar for six months and was sacked as a result of change in management of the bar. She then stayed with a friend from where she got a job as waitress in a night club earning Ugx 100,000 every month. She worked for four months and she was promoted to a job as a cashier now earning Ugx 200,000 every month. She worked in the position of cashier for six months and was sacked due to lack of academic qualifications. She then hooked up with a friend who sells chips earning about Ugx 3,000-Ugx 5,000 daily which wasn’t enough to meet her transport costs and basic needs. She used her savings from her income in the night club and paid rent as she looked for something else to do.

She started engaging in transactional sex for survival and supplement her income. While having some discussions with her friends, they encouraged her to visit the UYDEL DREAMS safe space to acquire entrepreneurship skills. She enrolled in catering class in June 2016 and now cooks duddies and chapatis well. She prepares duddies for parents with children in boarding school and also sells food to children. She also notes that stepping stones sessions have opened up her mind to changing from risky behavior to abstaining from sexual relations until she finds the right partner at an appropriate time.

She is still enrolled in vocational skills training at the UYDEL safe space where engages in various activities till 4pm and thereafter visits her chapatti selling business at highway where she employed a boy to help her out every evening. She earns about Ugx 5,000 daily depending on the flow of clients.

In her own words she says that the “biggest change in my life has been being able to learn how to cook especially chapatti, duddies, samosas, traditional luwombo dishes and food for events. I have also learnt how to prevent HIV something I didn’t have much knowledge about before I came to UYDEL”.

She dreams of starting her own restaurant business in Mubende for economic sustainability. She advises young girls to work for themselves because you can’t always rely on men for survival and meet one’s basic needs.

Case study 6:

Najuuko Maureen (real name) is a Ugandan female aged 20 years residing in Bukanaga, Mityana district. She is the last born in a family of 3 children (2 brothers and 1 girl). Only her mother is still alive. Maureen grew up in a descent family where her parents provided for the siblings all their basic necessities. She mainly attended boarding school and would return home in Mityana during holidays. Together with other siblings they would engage in domestic chore activities like cleaning the house, compound, washing clothes and cooking food. Her father provided enough food and other amenities when he was still alive and the family only started struggling to meet the basic necessities after his death.

Maureen studied until senior four (S.4) and sat for her Uganda Ordinary level certificate at Namungoona High school in 2014. Upon the death of her father she didn’t find another sponsor to continue with her studies and instead dropped out of school. She got a boyfriend, who impregnated her and later abandoned her. Maureen’s mother took care of the baby girl who is 2 years now as Maureen looked for opportunities to supplement family income. They stay in two roomed rented house but fetch water from the nearby well.

In the meantime, she found work at her uncle's store but she quit due to too much pressure to make money. He also had a short stint at a sports betting company but also quit because of too pressure from the manager. She then linked with her friends who introduced her to transactional sex activities which activities she did for at least four months prior to enrolling into the UYDEL DREAMS project. She was persuaded to come to the UYDEL safe space by a friend and subsequently enrolled into the tailoring class since June 2016. She has acquired life skills education, business skills, attended stepping stones sessions which have contributed to her survival skills. She is now earning a living which she shares with her mother who is taking care of her baby.

“Because of my good conduct and masterly of the tailoring skills, I was recommended to become a tailoring instructor with Justice and Advocacy For Women and Children Uganda (JAWCU) and I have worked here for three months since November 2016. I have a class of 20 girls. I believe I have fulfilled my grandparents desires and dreams of becoming a good tailor and that’s why I love this work”- Says Maureen.

She further says that; “my biggest change in life is the absence of men whom I was sleeping with prior to enrollment in the DREAMS project. I value myself and I can’t be lied to anyhow by anyone now because I have self-esteem and I am ready to give a testimony to many other young girls to follow my footsteps”.

She dreams of saving part of her monthly income of Ugx 200,000; buy a plot of land and construct a house for herself and her mother so that they have a permanent place of residence. She also harbors ambitions of

enrolling for a diploma course in tailoring to further her knowledge and skills in this trade.

Case study 7:

Nankya Fiona (real name) is a Ugandan female aged 20 years residing in Wabigalo Mityana. She is the last born in a family of eight children (five brothers and three girls). Her mother is the only parent still alive at home. She grew up from a relatively poor family though her father struggled to fend for the household. She completed her S.4 certificate in 2013 from King Faisal senior secondary school, Mityana. Due to lack of school fees she failed to continue with higher education and hence dropped out of school. In 2014, she was influenced by her friends to join a karaoke group and started singing with the group. She used to dress in skimpy clothes to attract the male clients. The group manager was not paying the girls for their services but rather he encouraged the girls to find male clients to sleep with and earn an income. She would sleep with around four men averagely per day. She did this work for about two years but life was very hard during those days. She was earning very little not enough to clear her medical bills, buy food or clothes. She contracted sexually transmitted diseases, and unwanted pregnancies which she usually aborted. Many male clients' loved unprotected sex because they felt that she was young and HIV free. When she looks back at her life she is very grateful for God's love because she is HIV negative despite the many men she had unprotected sex with. She feels very bad about her situation before because she slept with many men without knowing their HIV status. Some men pay for the services while others don't want to pay.

She is grateful for her friend who identified and referred her to the UYDEL safe space in May 2016. She did not believe that UYDEL offered free services to the adolescent girls and young women without anything in return. She eventually enrolled into hairdressing class and also attended other life skills and behavioral change sessions which have contributed to her HIV negative status now. She learnt how to counsel fellow peers on

issues related to reproductive health information, HIV, discordance and available health service centers.

As much as she has not yet graduated from the safe space, she is now gainfully employed by Justice and Advocacy For Women and Children Uganda (JAWCU) as a hairdressing instructor since November 2016. She currently resides at the safe space at JAWCU.

She reiterates that; “I abandoned karaoke strip dancing because it has nothing good about it and only wasted my money. I exposed myself to HIV and I still don’t believe that I am HIV negative. I realize how I wasted my life. I appeal to young girls out there to value their lives and endeavor to earn a decent living without engaging in transactional sex”- Says Fiona.

Fiona dreams of starting her own saloon; she has started saving part of her income in Centenary bank to achieve this objective.

Case study 8:

Nakimbugwe Stella (real name) is a Ugandan female aged 20 years residing in Kisasira, Kanoni Town Council, Gomba district. Both her parents died in 2007 and her maternal auntie has been her guardian since then. Her father was a subsistence farmer who mainly grew food for home consumption and little for sale. Her father didn’t have any other sources of income. Her family had their own house but the house was destroyed because of massive rains because it was made out of mud. Stella studied until primary six at Kanoni UMEA because her auntie failed to pay for her school fees. Stella instead remained as a housemaid doing a lot of domestic chores and caring for the auntie’s children. Her auntie has five children ranging from 7-19 years. Because of this maltreatment, Stella left her auntie’s home in 2011 and started working in a bar to earn a living. She earned Ugx 200,000 each month and she was being paid on time. She

stayed with a friend in a rental room where they also entertained male clients in the night. The clients usually paid between Ugx 3,000 to Ugx 5,000 depending on whether the client had protected or unprotected sex. She engaged in transactional sex for three years and during this period her auntie never bothered to find out her whereabouts.

During this time she got pregnant and gave birth to a child who is four years old now. The father of the baby has since pregnancy neglected his responsibilities and not given her any help in any form. She says that she didn't have knowledge about family planning, HIV prevention and condom use. She only learnt about family planning methods and information when she enrolled into the DREAMS project in June 2016. She was identified by the Project Officer, Nakkonde Carol who informed her about the DREAMS project goals and objectives and how she could benefit from the project. She tested HIV negative and was enrolled into hairdressing and catering class. She has particularly learnt various hair styles such as pencil, plaiting hair, pedicure, manicure, and bridal hair. In the meantime, the Project officer worked closely with Stella's auntie and she was accepted to stay at the auntie's home.

“I am grateful for the life skills I have learnt during this rehabilitation period especially the stepping stones sessions. I have knowledge on gender based violence, where to report and how to get help unlike before I enrolled into the project. I have made many friends here at the safe space which has encouraged me to share experiences with my fellow peers and has contributed to lowering my stress levels” – Says Stella.

Stella admits to have given up engaging in transactional sex and now has a stable boyfriend who is a farmer. She also receives clients whom she braids hair and earns an income even before she graduates from the economic empowerment program. This is a positive sign that she has

started on the journey of gradual earning of income from better sources than from multiple sex partners.

My biggest change in life is being able to earn an income and provide my own basic needs and also look after my daughter without any external assistance. I am also engaged in small scale farming where I grow and sell maize to traders. Each kilogram of maize ranges Ugx 600-Ugx 800. I have previously earned Ugx 70,000 as profits from this trade. I dream of starting my own saloon for self-employment but also train other AGYW in similar category like mine” – Says Stella.

Case study 9:

Nakalyango Eva (real name) is a Ugandan female aged 16 years residing in Kanoni Town Council, Gomba district. She is the first born of seven children (1 brother and 6 girls). Her mother is still alive though her father passed away in 2013. Eva grew up from a humble family where her parents used to dig on other people’s farms/gardens for pay. She studied until she completed primary seven in 2013 when her father died. Her other siblings were taken into custody by other relatives and her mother stayed with three younger siblings who are in school now. Like any other child, Eva had dreams of completing education till university but her hopes were cut short after her father’s death because the family didn’t have money at home and couldn’t even afford medical care for sick children. She dropped out of school and got a job as a waitress in Natalia bar where she was earning Ugx 30,000 per month. While working as a waitress, her boss instructed her to also start engaging in transactional sex with clients so that the bar/lodge could earn money or else she would not earn any salary if she didn’t comply. Her customers were mainly boda boda men,

shop attendants, road construction workers who paid Ugx 7,000 each night.

“I seldomly used protection because I didn’t have any knowledge on family planning. Luckily I never got pregnant. Many times the young girls borrow money from fellow peers and therefore end up having unprotected sex to save money more quickly and pay back the simple loans. I used to take a lot of alcohol to overcome stress and be able to sleep with many men. I did this work to cater for my mother’s basic needs. I have learnt that life is more important than anything else in the world” - says Eva.

Eva engaged in transactional sex for almost two years until she was identified by the social worker who came to their workplace and talked to them about the DREAMS project in June 2016. She was surprised that she tested HIV negative because she had exposed her body to unprotected sex many times.

Her friends used to say that “HIV has become fever/malaria while others used to say that HIV doesn’t kill the customer. Other girls had a feeling that when you carry out HIV testing in the evening, the HIV virus is sleeping and therefore undetectable”. One of her friends tested HIV positive and now is taking ARVs.

Eva eventually enrolled into tailoring and catering courses at the safe space. During this period she was identified and recommended by her fellow peers to become their Ambassador for Gomba DREAMS project. This is probably due to her change in behavior, attending sessions at the

safe space daily and willingness to learn from others. She now educates her fellow peers about HIV prevention, gender based violence prevention, coping with life's challenges among others.

In order to find income for the family, she saved money from her out of pocket allowance she earned during the workshops she attended as a DREAMS Ambassador. She also added her mother's savings and small loans and consequently established a shop that sells general merchandise since September 2016. She also fries and sells food stuffs to make some extra income.

“My biggest change in life is that UYDEL have me hope which I didn't have, I am HIV negative and I am self-reliant. I have attended sessions about health, family planning; I am a girl mentor and DREAMS Ambassador. I have since last year abandoned transactional sex after enrolling into the project. I know that condoms are used for dual protection to prevent pregnancy and STDs. Men no longer call me for transactional sex because I am busy in more productive work” – Says Eva.

She further says that “I feel good about my current situation because I make my own money and don't have time to waste. I have one boy friend who rides a boda boda in Kanoni and we practice safer sex”.

She dreams of becoming one of the biggest suppliers of bakery products in Gomba district and she hopes to supplement this by buying a sewing machine to start working from her mother's shop.

Case study 10:

Nakiseka Halima (real name) is a Ugandan female aged 17 years residing in Kyegonza in Kanoni Town Council, Gomba district. She is the fourth born of six children (2 brothers and 4 girls). Her father operated a bar/pub while her mother had a restaurant. The family constructed their house on family land in Kanoni. All was good in the home until her father married another woman. Her father chased Halima's mother away from home and the children too were chased away and told to relocate to their maternal grandparents.

She dropped out of school while in senior three in Kasaka senior secondary school because she got pregnant. She was impregnated by a fellow student who denied responsibility. She went through a tough time throughout the pregnancy with little assistance from her family. She gave birth to a baby girl who is two years old now but doesn't have a surname because the father denied responsibility. She earned about Ugx 3,000 to Ugx 5,000 while pregnant and continued with transactional sex even after giving birth for another five months.

She has been surviving from handouts from her boyfriends and income from transactional sex clients, a situation she regrets until she enrolled into the DREAMS project. She had gone to Botanical beach where she saw a tent with health workers undertaking HCT. She talked to the UYDEL project officer who encouraged her to test for HIV and she was HIV negative. She couldn't believe the results and tested another time and still received the same results. She then vowed to keep herself safe.

She enrolled into hairdressing and catering courses in June 2016 to acquire skills for economic survival till today. She boasts of acquiring life skills, behavioral change sessions and business skills which have helped her to cope with life.

“My biggest change in life is being able to reduce the number of men clients from ten to three. I now protect myself from HIV and unwanted pregnancies by using

condoms. The business skills I learned enabled me to start my own business of selling few household items like sugar, bread, and doughnuts”- Says Halima.

She stays at her grandmother’s house and two of her siblings are in school (primary one and primary six). They stay in an old house with a sizeable compound and many grand children around. She is grateful to UYDEL for having provided training materials and all the necessary support to enable her reach this level. She harbors ambitions of starting her own bridal saloon which she hopes will enhance her economic survival and the family.

Case study 11:

Nabukeera Maria (real name) is a Ugandan female aged 24 years residing in Kabulunga, Bukomansimbi district. She comes from a family of five siblings (1 brother and 4 girls). Only her mother is still alive. She grew up from an extended family of eight people where all members supplemented family income through the coffee plantations, and farming. Her mother owns a two bedroom roofed house; they collect water from the well and also have solar power at home.

She got married at the age of 15 years after dropping out of school in primary six. She used to have headaches, skin rash and could fall sick regularly which eventually led to her dropping out of school. She gave birth at a tender age. She suffered gender based violence at the hands of her drunken partner. She left that home after giving birth to four children. Maria now lives with her mother in Kabulunga and the condition at home is not good since the mother only depends on farming for a living. It is this condition at home that forced to engage in transactional sex in 2015 to supplement family income.

Through her sister, she was identified and enrolled Maria on the DREAMS project for six months now. She is in the tailoring class and she received a donation of a sewing machine from a local CBO called BACHI in January 2017. Maria now earns an income. Before she comes to the safe space,

she first cultivates her garden, does household chores and then comes to the safe space for economic empowerment activities.

She is still being monitored at the safe space to ensure that she doesn't relapse in her behavior and she is always being encouraged to be resilient and engage in other productive activities at the safe space or in the community. During her stay at the safe space, she has learnt how to use condoms, and has attended various family planning and gender based violence sessions.

In her own words she says that “my biggest change is being able to learn tailoring skill, receive a sewing machine and now able to earn an income without engaging in transactional sex. I have learnt how to protect myself from HIV and other STDs; practice family planning because I already have four children to care for. I am now self-reliant, resilient, mentored, Aids free and safe”.

Maria dreams of educating her four children and guiding them as a mother in the best way she can to raise responsible children. She intends to establish a large tailoring shop where residents in Bukomansimbi can buy clothes and have their tailoring needs met.

Case study 12:

Naluggo Maria (real name) is a Ugandan female aged 16 years residing in Kyanakibi, Bukomansimbi district. She comes from a family of five children (2 brothers and 3 sisters). Her father is a farmer who plants and sells the produce and then provides for his family. They live in an old house her father inherited from his grandfather. She grew up loving education but unfortunately she dropped out of school in primary five due to lack of school fees. She became a victim of sexual exploitation at the age of 14 years while staying with her grandmother because she wanted to

supplement family income and she had no other means of survival. Maria engaged in transactional sex for money. She had unprotected sex with several men most of whom were boda boda men, and business men in the community.

Maria was identified by the social workers during an HCT activity conducted in the district. She was oriented about the DREAMS project and the opportunities she would gain from participating in this project. She was enrolled into the hairdressing class in May 2016. Apart from the vocational skills, she has received counselling sessions about the dangers of having unprotected sex with multiple male sex partners which exposes her to unwanted pregnancies, HIV and others STDs. She has learnt about condom use, gender based violence, economic empowerment and business skills.

Maria has acquired hairdressing skills and she now plait hair of her neighbors. She now earns some little money which she uses to buy home necessities such as sugar, maize flour and other household items.

She says, “I feel happy that I am now responsible; I cannot sleep with anyone now until I find the right man for marriage. I will first go for HCT before engaging in sexual relations with any man because I now value my life than ever before”. I am dreaming of owning a saloon, be self-reliant and support my family too”.

Case study 13:

Nasaazi Hawa (real name) is a Ugandan female aged 18 years residing in Mucwa, Lwebitakuli Sembabule district. She is the third born in a family of eight children (5 boys and 3 girls) ranging between 8 years and 20 years. She stays with her mother now while her father died when she was six years old. The family mainly survives through proceeds from agriculture

(selling maize, coffee, beans, and ground nuts). The family also rears goats for family survival. They stay five people in a three bed room house.

Hawa's family income was very unreliable since they were relying on agricultural produce. She studied until primary seven in 2013. She helped her mother cultivate the garden to plant crops but this didn't bring in enough income. She eventually got five boyfriends (one was mechanic, farmer, boda boda man and business man) who were providing money to her in exchange for sex. She narrates that she underwent HCT with all the boyfriends before engaging them in sexual relations though she is not sure whether that those men didn't have marital relations with other girls. She would be paid between Ugx 2,000 to Ugx 6,000 which she would use to buy clothes, soap, and other needs.

A UYDEL social worker identified Hawa from Mucwa in May 2016. Ever since she enrolled into hairdressing and catering class she dropped the five men because she now values her life. She now has a bright future ahead of her and can afford to buy whatever she wants. She appreciates the knowledge on life skills, business skills and staying safe she has acquired from various professionals during her time at UYDEL.

“My biggest change in my life is that I am now working from home; I get clients who pay me for their hair and I charge each person Ugx 10,000. I feel good about my situation now and I dream of establishing my own saloon for self-reliance and not to rely on men for money”- says

Hawa.

Case study 14:

Natasha Dorcus (real name) is a Ugandan female aged 20 years residing in Kyetume, Sembabule district. She grew up in an extended family with her grandparents. Her mother stays in Lwengo with three children (1 girl and 2 boys). Dorcus' grandparents were farmers who relied on the agricultural

produce for survival. She completed primary seven at Kawesi Memorial Standard primary school while staying with her uncle. When disagreements broke out between her uncle and his wife, she left her uncle's home in Kampala. She then went back to Sembabule where she got a job as a waitress in a bar. She paid her own school fees from senior one to senior three at Kyetume senior secondary school. She used her earnings of about Ugx 30,000 each month and also savings from transactional sex to pay her school fees. She then rented a house which also doubled as a bar in 2015 in Lugusulu but closed it in 2016 after enrolling into the DREAMS project.

She engaged in transactional sex with several men daily in the area to supplement income to meet her basic needs. She used to drink alcohol, sniffed marijuana to withstand the sexual acts. In the process she got pregnant but unfortunately the baby boy died at birth in January 2016. She then left her partners house after some disagreements and decided to stay alone.

Sometime in May 2016 a lady police woman brought me to UYDEL for services. She realized the good work at the safe space and thus enrolled into the project. After several counselling sessions about HIV prevention, alcohol prevention and how to avoid risky behaviours, she decided to close the bar and sold the assets she had. She loaned a percentage of the proceeds to someone and she's now receiving re-payments worth Ugx 70,000 each month. She rents a house worth Ugx 30,000 each month.

"I am not earning anything now but I feel much better because I am in control of my life. I now have skills which I will use to earn an income without engaging in transactional sex. I know I have a bright future ahead. I was looked down upon by my neighbours because of sleeping with many men everyday but now they are wondering what made me change my behavior. Thank

you UYDEL/Mildmay for this transformative opportunity”

– says Dorcus.

Case study 15

Nansubuga Jolly (real name) is a Ugandan female aged 16 years residing in Lusalira Mateete, Sembabule district. She is the third born in a family of four children (2 boys and 2 girls). Her father died while she was five years old but her mother is still alive. They live in their family home of two bedrooms. Her mother used to cultivate land for community members to earn an income to buy food for the family. Jolly studied till senior two in 2013 and eventually dropped out of school due to lack of school fees.

Jolly was then convinced by a friend whom they grew up together in the village to move to Kinoni to engage in transactional sex to earn money. She engaged in transactional sex for two years. She says that each man would pay her Ugx 2,000 and this was too little to meet her needs. She wouldn't eat nutritious food but would eat junk food. She used to share her house with the friend and they had to pay Ugx 15,000 each month. Men would sometimes want to use lodges which were rented at Ugx 5,000 each night. She charged men who wanted unprotected sex Ugx 5,000 which she now says wasn't the value of her life. In the process, she got a boyfriend but when he discovered that she was engaged in transactional sex, he beat her and they separated. Some male clients would refuse to pay for the services and she couldn't report such incidents to anyone because her activities are illegal. She regrets using many men and this was a very bad experience in her life which she doesn't want to think about or even remember.

In June 2016 when she had visited her mother, she heard about the services offered at the UYDEL safe space. She inquired about the activities from the social worker and she was enrolled into the DREAMS project after testing HIV negative. She enrolled into the tailoring and knitting class and now she can sew shirts, pair of shorts, trousers, girl's dresses, and baby's dresses. She can also knit sweaters for school children. She has

learnt life skills, business skills, customer care relations, resilience, and friendship formation. She now doesn't take anyone as a friend. She has actively participated in the group and individual counselling sessions on HIV/STDs prevention; where and how to report cases of gender based violence and becoming a peer educator in the community. She is still being mentored at the safe space and she hopes to graduate in March 2016.

In her own words she says that; "I am no longer cheap because I have acquired vocational skills, business skills and customer care. I rent a house of Ugx 15,000 per month and I pay rent using earnings from sewing clothes in the community. My self-esteem is high".

About her future plans, she says that; I dream of acquiring a sewing machine and start my own clothes boutique/shop in Masaka where there is market for my services. I also intend to teach other young girls in similar circumstances like me so that I contribute to the wellbeing of others too."



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