



ONE WOMAN AT A TIME: HOW API CHANGES LIVES



PLEASE MEET LINA NZALE A MEMBER OF API'S CHRISTIAN WOMEN FARMERS' ASSOCIATION OF SEBIKOTANE. LINA IS 63 YEARS OLD AND HAS 4 ADULT CHILDREN AND FOUR GRANDCHILDREN.

LINA HAS STRUGGLED ALL HER LIFE. THAT STRUGGLE TOOK A TURN FOR THE WORSE AFTER HER HUSBAND DIED 26 YEARS AGO. AS A YOUNG WIDOW, 37 YEARS OF AGE, LINA HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO FACE THE REALITY OF HAVING TO SINGLE-HANDEDLY TAKE CARE OF HERSELF AND FOUR SMALL CHILDREN.

TO COPE, LINA TURNED TO FARMING. SHE ACQUIRED A SMALL PIECE OF FARMLAND AND GREW FOOD CROPS ONLY FOR HOME CONSUMPTION.

ASKED WHY SHE DIDN'T ACQUIRE A BIGGER PIECE OF FARMLAND FOR COMMERCIAL FARMING, LINA REPLIED THAT SHE DIDN'T "HAVE THE MONEY"

LIFE AS A WIDOW

ACCORDING TO LINA, LIFE WAS A STRUGGLE WHEN HER HUSBAND WAS ALIVE. "AT LEAST WE SHARED THE PAIN THEN. BUT NOW I BEAR THE ENTIRE PAIN ALONE" SHE SAID.

AFTER HER HUSBAND'S DEATH, LIFE BECAME MORE DIFFICULT. SHE LIVED IN A SMALL HUT WITH ALL HER CHILDREN. IT HAD GRASS FOR ROOF WHICH NEEDED REPLACEMENT EVERY COUPLE OF YEARS.

ENCOUNTER WITH API.

LINA ENCOUNTERED API IN MARCH

2011 THROUGH THE CHRISTIAN WOMEN FARMERS' ASSOCIATION OF SEBIKOTANE A VILLAGE SOME 2 HOURS' DRIVE FROM DAKAR. SHE JOINED THE GROUP.

WITH HER FIRST LOAN LINA WAS ABLE TO ACQUIRE A BIGGER FARMLAND AND STARTED FARMING COMMERCIALY. SHE GROWS OKRA, CORN AND MILLET. SHE SELLS HER HARVEST IN THE LOCAL MARKET IN DAKAR AND MAKES MORE PROFITS. NOW SHE TAKES BETTER CARE OF HER FAMILY.

ASKED WHY SHE STILL PROVIDES FOR HER ADULT CHILDREN, LINA REPLIED THAT EXCEPT FOR ONE THAT IS MARRIED, THE OTHER THREE LIVE WITH AND DEPEND ON HER AS THEY ARE UNEMPLOYED IN A COUNTRY WITH MORE THAN 50% UNEMPLOYMENT RATE. BESIDES THEM, SHE HAS FOUR OTHER GRAND CHILDREN TO PROVIDE FOR.

HOME IMPROVEMENT

ONE MAJOR POSITIVE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF LINA SINCE JOINING API'S PROGRAMS IS THE IMPROVEMENT SHE HAS MADE ON HER HOME. SHE TRANSFORMED HER HUT INTO A FOUR-ROOM CEMENT BLOCK HOME WITH ONE ROOM HAVING A ZINC ROOF. FOR LACK OF MORE FUNDS SHE IS YET TO ROOF THE OTHER THREE ROOMS WITH ZINC.

MEANWHILE SHE LIVES WITH THE SEVEN MEMBERS OF HER FAMILY IN THE ONE COMPLETED ROOM.

FUTURE PLAN

ON HER FUTURE PLANS, LINA SAYS SHE WOULD LIKE TO DIVERSIFY HER INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES. SHE WANTS TO PERIODICALLY TRAVEL TO THE REMOTE CASAMANCE REGION TO BUY PALM OIL(COOKING OIL), DRY FISH FOR RESALE HERE IN DAKAR. FOR THAT SHE WILL NEED ADDITIONAL CAPITAL.

API WILL BE LOOKING INTO WAYS OF HELPING LINA ACTUALIZE THAT PLAN.

API'S DONORS IN 2011: THANK YOU

BELOW IS THE LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO MADE OUR WORK POSSIBLE IN 2011.

IN THE USA:
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API'S HEALTH EDUCATION.

WE ARE HAPPY TO INFORM YOU THAT OUR NEW HEALTH PROGRAM FOR UNDERPRIVILEGED WOMEN HAS TAKEN OFF. AS A REMINDER, THE HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAM IS MEANT TO ENCOURAGE BETTER HEALTH FOR WOMEN THROUGH AWARENESS OF AND MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH CONDITIONS. ON FEBRUARY 15, 2012, OUR STAFF TOOK THE BLOOD PRESSURES OF SEVERAL WOMEN FROM THE VILLAGES OF SEBIKOTANE AND YEBA. THE STAFF HAD EARLIER BEEN TRAINED ON HOW TO TAKE BLOOD PRESSURE BY A LOCAL MEDICAL PRACTITIONER. WE WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE WOMEN'S BLOOD PRESSURES AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS AS NECESSARY.

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