



SUCCESS STORY

Rural Tanzanian Woman Gains Higher Education and Economic Independence

USAID-supported trainings give young women the skills and confidence to build successful income-generating businesses.



As a result of the training she received, Amina Mpili's was able to launch her own business and independently fund her higher education.

"After dropping out of school, I came to realize that life is a battlefield and I'm in it. So, I equipped myself with the best tools I have and an 'it's not yet over' attitude and ventured into business."

– Amina Mpili

In sub-Saharan Africa, nearly 60 percent of those infected with HIV are women, and young women aged 15 to 24 are most vulnerable. Investing in the economic empowerment of young women is central in protecting them from infection and enabling them to turn the tide of poverty in their communities. Reducing women's vulnerability is equally important for children in the region. In Tanzania alone, more than 1.1 million children have been orphaned as a result of HIV/AIDS.

Amina Mpili, a young woman living in rural Tanzania, capitalized on a micro loan of TSH 100,000 (\$78), distributed by a local nongovernmental organization, to engage in a small business selling new bed sheets. After repaying that loan, she was issued another loan that enabled her to buy a deep freezer so she could sell cold drinks and fresh milk.

It was at this point that Amina discovered a network of female entrepreneurs in situations similar to her own. Cama, created by the Campaign for Female Education (Camfed), is a group of young rural women who are seeking economic opportunities where training and formal employment are scarce. With the support of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Cama in Tanzania is growing into a network dedicated to helping thousands of young women learn about HIV prevention, identify business ideas, establish business and management skills, and become independent income earners.

Through Cama, Amina received coaching to run her enterprise more efficiently, network with other like-minded Cama members, and create greater awareness of her business within her community. To date, her business has earned TSH 700,000 (\$545), allowing her to independently finance her further education at the Vocational Education Training Authority, where she is specializing in hotel management.

When asked how this business has helped her reach her goals, Amina said, "I [wanted] to continue with my studies, specifically in hotel management...That was my struggle throughout, and I think now my dream will come true."

Through PEPFAR's New Partner Initiative and USAID, Camfed is dedicated to fighting poverty and HIV/AIDS in rural Africa by educating girls and investing in their economic independence and leadership once they complete school.