

SUCCESS STORY: BUILDING ECONOMIC RESILIENCE AND AUTONOMY

The SVC Project Helps Aimée Bisouro Furaha Become Economically Independent through GALS Training



Photo Caption: Aimée Furaha Bisuro in her bean field.

Aimée (“Sarah”) Furaha Bisuro is a 25-year-old mother of three. Her life in the village of Muhongoza, in Kalehe territory of the DRC was not easy. At 14, she was forced to marry, and subsequently became pregnant. Her living situation was difficult, and it became even more precarious when her husband left her six years ago and she became an outcast for living alone, leaving her vulnerable and subject to humiliation.

In August 2018, through the group Hope to Live (*Group Espoir de Vivre*), a partner of the USAID-funded Feed the Future SVC Project, Ms. Bisuro participated in the GALS training where she was able to join other women and youth from the coffee, soy, and bean value chains to discuss innovation and entrepreneurship. At the training, Ms. Bisuro was able to draw her vision for the future, including how she would transform “into a resilient woman determined to take care of herself economically.”

On March 29, 2019, during a SVC follow-up visit in her village, Ms. Bisuro said, “When I took part in the SVC training, I was on the verge of despair, my life was spinning out of control, and I was even at the point of giving up on my studies because I lacked funds, child support, everything... My GALS vision reinvigorated me. Now, I have outlined my vision and created a personal action plan that I have been implementing since October [2018].”

“The visioning with GALS opened my eyes. For that, I thank the Feed the Future SVC Project in the Democratic Republic of Congo. I realized that I have resources that I was not aware of because I was poorly organized. I now have a 2023 vision and I will put in all my strength and resources to achieve it.”

After participating in GALS training, Ms. Bisuro realized that she had the resources to make a better life for herself. She began to make money through growing and selling beans and sweet potatoes and was able to send her children to school. With help from a loan from her village savings and credit association, she was able to buy a plot of land on which she built a house. By 2020, Ms. Bisuro aims to buy a new home in the town of Goma. Thanks to her greater sense of self-worth, she is no longer ashamed to raise her voice in her community. She has become an active member of Kalehe's Rural Agricultural Management Board (CARG). Ms. Bisuro also co-created a youth initiative called “*Mabadiliko Yawezkana*” or “Change is Possible” and she has become a role model by teaching other young people how to envision their future and by motivating them to pursue their personal and professional goals.