

## Alternative caregiver managed to change the family life.

Msunga chacha 62 years old is a grandmother to 6 children who are orphans. She was enrolled in the program in the year 2010 and used to work hard until the year 2013 when she started suffering from arthritis, which hindered her movement. Her oldest daughter Amina Ramadhan 40 yrs old was married and living with her husband until the year 2006 when she became a widow. Amina got frustrated and left her 2 children with her old mother to look for casual work at a nearby region. One day she came back to visit and found her mother is very sick. Seeing her mother's struggle she decided to shift and live with her and help her to take care of the children. Life became difficult. At this time her mother being supported by FS program but her attendance to various program activities was very minimal due to her health. Family Strengthening (FS) staff suggested that Amina becomes an alternative caregiver.



Old house

Amina agreed and started to attend trainings and workshops and also joined the VSL group. Amina became an active member, took a loan and started a business of selling grain. The business grew and earned a good profit. After three years she managed to construct a permanent family house since the old house was not having enough space for accommodation to 10 family members. She used the loan and her VSL profit earned after a one year cycle and got the amount of TZS 1,160,000 equivalent to 580 USD. Her saving in VSL group is good and she manages to re-pay the loans. She once said ***“VSL is everything to me, I get to listen to other people’s testimonies which encourages me to work hard and I also get the opportunity to save as I plan of what to do in the***



New house for Masunga Chacha.

## Bilali Hemedi – with a promising future.

Bilali Hemedi 21 years old is a third born among the six children of Tatu Abdu. The father abandoned the family since 2009 due to economic hardship. He left the family with a reason to search for a better job but since then he never returned to join the family.

After the family was recruited in the program in 2010, staff noticed Bilali with a real interest in mechanics. He used to collect different metals and wires to try and come up with something. For example, he will collect used batteries, join them with wires and come up with a light. After completing elementary school, Bilali did not qualify to continue with higher level of education. However, this did not kill his ambition in life. He kept on requesting FS to give him a chance to join a technical college ***‘ I know very well that I can achieve something because I am clever, I failed the examinations by accident but if given a second chance I can do better and support my mother... he said.’*** FS staff therefore, discussed and agreed that not all children are able to excel in education, there are some who have different talents and can be considered for support. Therefore, Bilali was supported in line with his interest and he was enrolled to a college known as Kirumba Technical College for a foundation course. He studied hard for one year and six months and qualified to sit for mechanics level one examination. Surprisingly when the results came out, he was among those who passed to join level two. Her mother could not believe it because she was doubting his ability. She said ***‘Now I know that it is not only high level of education that take people far but also it depends on hard work and self-***

**determination**'. FS continued to support Bilali for level two where he joined Igogo vocational training centre for one year course and during his studies her mother supported him with money for fare and lunch while the program covered the fees cost from Jan 2014 to Jan 2015. Bilali managed to pass level two and is now waiting to join an advanced institution under Vocational Educational and Training Authority (VETA) for the level three in August 2015.



During vacation, Bilali do not want to sit idle. He has introduced himself to the drivers who operate public transportation as a mechanical personnel. Therefore, he is sometimes called to fix the vehicles and also support in collecting fare. In four months' time he has been able to accumulate TZS 300,000 equivalent to 140 USD. ***'I am so glad to start supporting my mother with little i earn and big enough is the experience I gain every single day which will help me to pursue my dream of becoming a professional mechanical personnel after attending level three at VETA. Here at home I now contribute to the family expenses... I feel proud ...and this is just the beginning'***

While at home, he helps his mother in weaving bed sheets and table mats.



Bilali assist her mother in weaving

When he was asked how he came to like such work he said ***'my mother is everything to me, her work is my work. My friends laugh when they find me weaving saying that it is the work for women. However it is a different skill I am gaining, more so it brings me closer to my mum and I feel proud to feel the lonely gap to my mother because we have time to discuss family matters, he said...'***

On the other hand, Tatu Abdu received various trainings which include parenting skills, psychosocial support, child protection, business management among others. And also tailoring and embroidery training for one year to enable her to manage the family. She bought embroidery machine for sewing bed sheet and table mats. Currently her business capital has reached 350,000 TZS and she has a savings of 80,000 TZS, equivalent to 200USD. Tatu says ***'My life has really changed a lot as I am able to take good care of my children I can afford treatment when they fall sick. I take part in supporting school needs this make me feel as***

***a real mother meeting my responsibilities to my family. My goal is to construct a permanent family house through joint efforts with my son Bilali... she laughs '.***



Bilali has his own future plan. ***'To support my siblings in education. They should not fail like me, but if they fail, they should not believe that it is the end but follow my example.*** When asked about supporting family house construction he said ***'it is among my priorities I shall join my mother on the way as she starts... he laughed.'*** His last comment was ***'I pray to God that SOS continues with this kindness and meet other youths who have lost hope and need support. I am ready to advise them not to give up because their future lies in their hands.'***