



# CHANGE STORIES



*"This is my story. I put it on paper so that anyone in the world can know what peace means to me. I wrote it down because of what happened to me. My name is Rose Edward..."*



**“During the crisis I lost my property. Before my eyes, my husband was killed, leaving me to fend for the family, with the fear that I and my children would not survive another day. Peace has different meanings to different people. Peace to me, would have made him (husband) to be here with us today. Peace for me is for people to be with their loved ones. Peace to me is where there is no blood shed. Peace to me is sleeping well at night with hope of seeing tomorrow. My hope for South Sudan is peace, peace, peace and peace. Peace that will bring about opportunity. Peace avoids destruction. A beautiful South Sudan where my kids will never experience the fear that is associated with a war again.”**



*Rose Edward Zomai, 52 years old, member of Savings Group*

**This is an excerpt of a short document that Rose wrote concerning her experiences, thoughts and feelings while she was an internally displaced person in Yambio, Western Equatoria State of South Sudan.**





*Some members of a Savings Group in which Rose is a member*

**“When we came back after running away from the war, there was nothing much left and nothing much to do. In general, women have been struggling a lot in their life and for their kids. For this reason, we formed a 10 women group so that we could put our resources together to help us do better farming and therefore have more food for our children. We are committed to helping each other, including sharing ideas and giving each other advice. I appreciate what Solidarity did for our women’s group. They trained us how to do business - how to buy, sell and earn a profit, and then gave us money to help us start up businesses. At first, we were given 100 000 South Sudanese Pounds (SSP)<sup>1</sup> and since there are 10 members in the group, each of us got 10 000 SSP to start up a business. In the second year, we were given 320 000 as a group and so each person got 32 000 SSP. In the third year, we were given 500 000 SSP and in the fourth round, we were given 1 000 000 SSP and so each person got 100 000. After making a profit each time, every member must save some money. We also struggled and did our best to pay back the money that we had been helped with.”**

<sup>1</sup> Inflation continues to rise at an alarming rate in South Sudan. The exchange rate last February was \$1 = 800 SSP. Currently it stands at \$1 = 5120 SSP.





**“My first business was nice. I used the 10 000 SSP from Solidarity to buy flour, oil, baking powder and sugar to make mandazi (fried bread) plus other cooking supplies. I sold the mandazi with tea and also cooked and sold other kinds of food. After that, with the additional money that we received over time, I started other businesses including bee keeping, selling cassava, palm oil, charcoal and fuel. I also built a tukul (mud thatched hut) and a separate room for myself. I have also started laying the foundation for another house.**

**The main challenge is that the price of goods keeps getting higher and higher. Our currency is getting weaker and weaker. However, we will keep working hard and the good thing is that all the women in my savings group are all hard working, and are very busy with different business activities. We have been helped out of poverty and are now much better off now.”**

THIS CHANGE STORY IS SIGNIFICANT because women are gaining valuable knowledge on starting and managing businesses, along with practical skills in saving money—tools that will benefit them for a lifetime. These women not only use these skills to improve their own lives but also share their knowledge with their spouses and children, fostering stronger, more independent families.

These newfound skills enkindle hope, empowering these women to believe in their ability to financially support their families. Instead of languishing in poverty or relying on constant assistance, they are now building a foundation for self-reliance and long-term stability.



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# STAY CONNECTED

Rose's journey is a testament to the power of determination coupled with support. Want to learn more about how we're making a difference? Stay connected with us! Follow our journey on social media, explore more stories, and discover how you can get involved. Together, we can create even more inspiring stories of change.



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