

# SCOPE SUCCESS STORY

## KENYA



Mary Ekal Emekwi, a woman who has learned how to read and write courtesy of Katiko Faith Network Committee's adult class initiative.

USAID/World Relief: Photo by Paul Imoni, Church Empowerment Zone Promoter, Turkana

### NAME AND ROLE

Mary Ekal Emekwi, Katiko Faith Network Committee member

### LOCATION

Lakezone Ward, Turkana North Sub-county, Turkana County

### SUMMARY

Through *Making Our Communities Better* and *Family Life Education*, SCOPE is empowering women in their communities by helping them learn to read and write.

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## KATIKO FAITH NETWORK COMMITTEE ENVISIONS LITERACY FOR MOTHERS IN THEIR CONGREGATIONS

Faith leaders play a critical leadership role in communities in Kenya. They can influence decision-making on daily issues for congregants and are often community gatekeepers. Faith leaders can influence personal decisions like where a pregnant mother delivers. SCOPE is educating faith leaders on reproductive health issues so they can help their congregants make critical choices regarding the health of their families. One woman who was helped through this work is Mary Akal Emekwi.

### KATIKO FAITH NETWORK IS WORKING TO MAKE CHANGES IN THEIR COMMUNITY

Mary Akal Emekwi is a 47-year-old mother of four: three boys and one girl. Mary is also a faith leader and a Katiko Faith Network Committee member in Turkana North Sub-county. Mary was trained in *Making our Communities Better* and *Family Life Education* through her engagement as a faith leader in the SCOPE Project. These models engage faith leaders in envisioning their role to improve families' health in their congregations and equip them to do so.

The Katiko Faith Network Committee is a group of eight members from various faith institutions in Katiko. The committee received training on *Making our Communities Better* and was inspired to create an adult education program aimed at teaching community members learn to read and write. Through this program, 14 community members, including Mary Akal Emekwi, enrolled in the classes.

Mary shared how her life was impacted by her participation in Katiko Faith Network Committee's adult education classes "I thank God, thus far, I have learned how to read



Daniel Lobali, a faith leader, taking community members through the lessons.

USAID/World Relief: Photo by Paul Imoni, CEZ Promoter, Turkana

and write courtesy of the regular adult education classes. I can now comfortably transact my business – manage it by properly keeping records, mentor and coach my pre-primary kids and cascade family planning/maternal child health messages as taught during *Family Life Education* to my neighborhood. I am forever grateful."

Mary went on to share that she plans to encourage more in her community to enroll in

classes for their own learning and the good of the community.

### LITERACY HELPS SUPPORT BROADER COMMUNITY INITIATIVES IN KATIKO

Community members have suggested that an active mind is a healthier mind, and literacy is a way to support an active mind. Literacy can further help to accelerate mental health, connection, confidence and employment opportunities.

Katiko Faith Network's adult education classes are a community-led initiative; even so, increasing literacy through the adult education program in Katiko has helped support broader maternal child health across Katiko. Community health volunteers and Care Group Volunteers have benefitted from these classes by increasing their reading and writing capacities. With these skills, volunteers have been able to better serve their clients by providing increased support and care, community-facility referrals when challenges come up and better documentation for their clients.

*This story is written by Paul Imoni, Family Life Education Supervisor, Turkana.*