

A Wealth of Knowledge

“I need to rush to the market place because there is a big truck from the city coming to pick some sacks of food that I sell to them on a weekly basis. They always get here at around this time, so I have to get there before they do,” says Virginia.

Virginia, 37, is a jovial woman and full of stamina while she goes about her work. Her face is lit with joy as she fervently shares the story of her transformation. She is a farmer. Virginia owns gardens where she grows bananas, corn, yams, pineapples, and sweet potatoes among other crops. She also owns a piggery and other livestock.

However, a few years ago, Virginia’s story was different, and very sad. The mother of four could hardly fend for her family. She was vulnerable, poverty stricken and didn’t know how she would ever live a better life. Virginia was already practicing traditional agriculture, but she and her family were living hand to mouth, growing enough food for one meal a day. “My husband lives with a disability so I was the only bread winner. We used to only eat one meal per day. It was a miserable time, especially seeing that I couldn’t feed my children more than one meal a day,” she recalls.

Life had become a nightmare and at times she would worry where her next meal would come from. She didn’t have any hope that she would grow financially because she believed that was for educated people, yet she was without an education.

A few years ago, Virginia enrolled in a savings group in her village. This savings group is where her life’s transformation began. The savings group, dubbed Twigire Ruhore, was initiated by World Vision. World Vision trained Virginia and others about savings, loans, agriculture best practices and about unity and peace in families. Virginia says that her mindset was transformed through the training that World Vision conducted. She now has a wealth of knowledge and skills. She not only improved her household’s income but now lives in peace with her husband.

“I was overwhelmed trying to make ends meet to provide for my family. I felt frustrated about my husband’s state of living and I would insult him, making him feel inadequate since I was the only provider. Today we live in peace with my family and my children enjoy three meals a day. I can now buy health insurance for my family, buy scholastic materials for my children and meet many of the needs of my family,” she says.



Mother & daughter sharing a moment

Virginia happily says, “Through World Vision, I learned about the importance of saving, accessing loans and using them to generate more income. Since then, I now save on a weekly basis and I have gotten loans to expand my livestock and agriculture businesses that are flourishing. I managed to install electricity in my house.”

Her five-year-old daughter, Honorine, is a feisty and joyful girl. Honorine says, “I love that Mama buys me books and all the fruits I love to eat like pineapple. I enjoy playing with Mama and my friends.”

Virginia is one of thousands of beneficiaries in Rwanda who have been introduced to World Vision’s THRIVE—Transforming Household Resilience in Vulnerable Environments. This is an Economic Empowerment program seeking to empower rural farmers and vulnerable households with knowledge and capacity building, enabling them to increase their income.

by Maria Kaitesi, World Vision Rwanda



Virginia’s bounty of fruits & vegetables are ready for market