My Story: Fatuma

Fatuma Mohamed started a salon through support from G-Youth and USAID. “In Garissa, most of the youth have absolutely nothing constructive to do,” says Fatuma Mohamed.

“A lot of them are either school dropouts or have finished school but can’t find jobs. So, when the Garissa Youth Project (G-Youth) gave me the chance to start a project, I decided to start a salon so that I can employ them and give them something to do.”

At G-Youth, she learnt how to face challenges, be proactive, and write a CV and cover letter. After this, she went for the G-Youth entrepreneurship program where she learnt how to start, expand and market a business. After speaking to a youth specialist with G-Youth about her idea, Fatuma received funds from G-Youth, family and friends. Using the money she received, Fatuma bought second hand equipment from other salons in the area to start her business.

“At first, business was hard,” says Fatuma. “But later, I got the idea to start handing out business cards and I employed a lady to do henna (hand decoration) which is very popular here. Soon, she attracted people and other customers came to us by word of mouth.”

“G-Youth has made me more confident and it is because of them that I’ve reached this point,” she says. “My parents are also very proud of me because other youth in the area now look up to me.”
What we are trying to do is assist youth to become dependent on themselves, and not to depend on anybody else. That makes a big difference.

—Ibrahim Hussein, Deputy Chief of Party

G-Youth’s 4 Components

Four components form an “opportunities menu” to help youth meet their specific needs and career paths. Garissan youth are empowered to play leadership roles across all components.

Youth Action: G-Youth is facilitating the establishment of an organization rooted in the deep desires of youth leaders to lead positive change in their villages and bring new opportunities for career readiness and community service to their peers. A Youth Fund Steering Committee will enable youth to lead the design and administration of an exciting array of grants and loans. Leaders are hosting an annual Youth Summit to showcase youth voices and articulate a regional action plan to lead change in their communities.

Youth Work: Youth are coached to find or create jobs through career counseling, the Career Resource Center and Work Readiness Program. Youth served as advisors and review efforts to strengthen the Work Readiness Program and ensure that it is youth-friendly. Youth are collaborating in the planning of annual Work Summits.

Youth Education: Youth are participating in making secondary school education more relevant to their needs. They will play leadership roles on a panel to supervise granting scholarship funds, and young graduates will lead English as a Second Language courses at local madrassas.

Youth Civics: G-Youth is developing an Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) civics education program for upper primary school students. Youth are being trained to produce radio programs to be broadcast over STAR-FM.

For More Information Contact

Nancy Taggart, Project Director (Washington DC), ntaggart@edc.org, 202-572-5312
Jacqueline Glin, Chief of Party (Kenya), jhglin@edc.org, +254 717 147 466
Visit: www.g-youth.org / www.equip123.net

Impact

G-Youth Project: Empowering Garissan Youth

The G-Youth Project has had the following impact on the youth of the community:

- 747 completed work readiness training
- 568 completed entrepreneurship training
- 500 attended the first annual youth summit
- 444 have gained internships or work-based opportunities
- 40 received training as work readiness peer educators
- 200 received training in leadership skills

EQUIP3 Consortium

Education Development Center, Inc. (Lead Agency) • Academy for Educational Development • Catholic Relief Services • International Council on National Youth Policy • International Youth Foundation • National Youth Employment Coalition • National Youth Leadership Council • Opportunities Industrialization Centers International • Partners of the Americas • Plan International Childreach • Sesame Workshop • Street Kids International • World Learning

Additional Partners: YouthBuild • EcoVentures Inter-national • Mercy Corps • Family Health International • Microsoft Corporation

Photos by EDC Staff. Art by Michele Shortley.