

SUCCESS STORY



PEER COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT PROMOTS IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG PLWHA



Giramatsiko PTC Club members receiving goats to increase House hold income



Giramatsiko Postest Club Drama Performance to the community

Stigma and self denial have always been a common phenomenon in society and among people who have tested HIV positive. This has been one of the factors limiting HIV prevention interventions like disclosure and access to care services including limiting positive practices.

Even though some support groups for PHAs existed, young men and women were rarely seen taking active roles in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Giramatsiko post test club started as a small group of 7 members who had tested for HIV and were HIV infected (they later nicknamed HIV/AIDS “*smart*”). Faced with this situation they started this group to support each other. They believed that one cannot fully access care and support services with out disclosure, family and community support to be able to cope with HIV positive results.

The openness and courage these women had, encouraged more PHAs who were still in denial and those who had not disclosed to come out in the open as the Chairperson of the group narrates “*kurinogira ngwitwe ababandize kwemanya ngutwine akakoko kasilimu, tuturarugireyo tukegamba nokuhindura aha mitwarize, wakushangire abandi batine muhimbo gwokurugayo kwegamba ngubine akakoko kasilimu*”. Meaning had it not been for our openness and behavior change toward positive livings, then more people would not have opened out disclosed and joined our group.

Giramatsiko post club currently is carrying out community sensitizations through drama performances and peer education, hand crafts for income generation. The Chairperson of the Local Council 3 testifies that Giramatsiko PTC has helped a lot because it has supported the community members to seek counseling, care and support services. Because of the success Giramatsiko has made so far, it has been able to attract more support in income generating activities which members are proud of. ICobi has help initiate 92 similar Post test clubs which are taking active roles in the fight against HIV/AIDS.