

## A Focus on The Youth

Since schools closed due to COVID-19, many young people have been idle, without much engagement. Not so in most CHE villages. CHE trainers in Kenya have dedicated themselves to training, discipling, and mentoring young people as an intervention strategy.

Teen pregnancies account for 25% of the school dropout cases in sub Saharan Africa. According to Africa Institute for Development policy, 2 out of 10 of girls aged between 15 and 19 are either pregnant or have already had a baby, which has been a trend for over two decades. Due to poverty, some girls will trade sex for basic needs such as sanitary pads and food. Teen pregnancy not only robs the young girls of their childhood, but also exposes them and their children to major health risks. Reports have indicated that pregnancy and childbirth related complications are the leading causes of death among girls in this age bracket. Of those who survive maternal death, 68% drop out of school.

On the other hand, half of the drug and alcohol abusers in Kenya are aged between 10 and 19, most of whom are boys. Most of these teenagers engage in drugs because of poverty, peer pressure, an erosion of moral values in the communities as well as easy access to these substances. The resulting consequences include high crime rate, destruction of property, risky sexual behaviors, poor academic performances as well as school dropouts.

Evelyn, a CHE trainer in Western Kenya, has dedicated her time to mentoring young girls, who have so much more time now, as an intervention strategy. She has been having interactive sessions with teenage girls on various issues including lessons on reproductive health. She encourages them to get constructive ways of generating some income so they can meet some basic needs. Ayoo and Achieng, are now helping their mum sell chips (french fries). When they are not helping in the business, they are attending Evelyn's mentorship and training club.



CHE trainers Manasseh and Pr. David have also been discipling and mentoring young boys to use their time constructively. They started a tree nursery, and now they can sell seedlings and earn some income. At the same time, the boys are receiving lessons on reproductive health among other moral value lessons. More than 50 young girls and boys have been positively impacted, with several decisions for Christ made.

In Gituamba, an urban CHE program in Nairobi, CHE trainers, Pr. Caleb and Pr. Amos, have continued follow-up of the youth who were trained on double digging. These young people are not only using their time wisely, but also earning some income from the sale of vegetables from their 'kitchen gardens'. Again, this presents a great opportunity for their mentorship and training.



While Elimus (Not his real name) got sick and could not travel to the communities in the North coast, he started to record children's CHE lessons and sending them via WhatsApp to the communities. It seems what he intends to be children lessons, have become community lessons. Older people have also benefitted from these lessons and are continuing to give positive feedback on the impact of the lessons on them.

*Now all glory to God, who is able, through His mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.*

**Ephesians 3:20**