

September 2009 case study: Integrated Child and Family Support Project, Tambakha

The Family of Suzan Kamara

The family of Suzan Kamara joined the ICFS project in the rural area of Tambakha in June 2007. The initial assessment of the family showed that Suzan, who is a widow, and her five children were living in a home that was dangerously close to collapse, the roof leaked and there were no windows and doors. The household income was so low that the family were on the verge of starvation. The severe weather conditions in the rainy season resulted in the two younger children suffering serious health problems and they could not afford any medical help. There were no clothes for the children so none of them could attend school and the family were shunned by their community.

Upon joining our ICFS project, the family's short and long term needs were assessed. All of the family were given clothes and the three older children were supported so that they could return to school. The team arranged for the two younger ones to see a Nurse so that they could get the medical attention they needed.

Suzan undertook farming work which generated a very small income as she borrowed money for seeds which she had to pay back at an exorbitant rate of interest after the harvest. The team helped Suzan purchase groundnut seeds and palm oil seedlings. This helped the household income increase and as a result of this, Suzan was also able to send the two younger children to school once they were old enough.

Finally in May 2009, this family was supported by both the project and the local community to renovate the family home. The team provided zinc roofing sheets, assorted nails and board, which were well beyond the family's means, while the community provided the labour and the local materials. As a result of this input the family are now proud owners of a safe and secure four roomed house that is the same standard as others in the community. The family now has the confidence to be active members of their community. Where they had previously been ignored because of their lack of housing, they are now respected. Suzan is asked to participate in the community's decision-making sessions and her opinion is valued.

The children are now much healthier and can now invite friends to play with them in their home. In essence the social standing of the family has improved significantly and they are now fully accepted within their community.

As a result of the Project Sierra ICFS project in Tambakha, the life of the Kamara family has significantly improved. Their home is safe and secure, the children are healthy and in school, they are accepted and welcome in their community and they have a stable income. The Kamara family have now become independent and have exited our programme