SUCCESS STORY

“Awareness Shifts the Lost Care Seeker to A Dedicated Caregiver”

Mrs. Almaz, is a 30 years old woman from Nifas Silk Sub-city, Addis Ababa. She started to live her life with her family peacefully until her husband passed away unexpectedly and their family lives started shifting the groom’s face.

Consequently, she also became ill and was admitted to a woreda-9 health facility. She was consulted for HIV testing and the result was found to be positive which is totally unacceptable and questionable for her. After lots of counseling effort, she eventually accepted the result and started ART medication instantly. Her son also got HIV test and the same result was obtained.

After Almaz and her son started antiretroviral therapy (ART), eventually they disappeared from health facility follow-up for 7 months and stopped taking their medication, which results in HIV viral increment.

And, as part of routine activities, one of the sub-awardees in the current program named Fayyaa Integrated Developmental Organization (FIDO) Community engagement Facilitator (CEF) collect Mrs Almaz and her son from their ART follow-up. Among those who lost from the health facility were Almaz and her son on the list. Then the journey started to track and found her. After tedious and difficult tracking processes, the CEF eventually traced and found her. Then the assigned CEF prepare an action plan and counseled her on the importance of taking ART medication for leading a healthy life and sustainable life changes. As part of the counseling and follow-up efforts, she finally agreed and decided to resume her medication. Following proper medication regularly, HIV virus in the body has dropped drastically which even makes her and her son hopeful about their future.

Currently, she has become part of the community volunteer working in this project supporting tracing those clients who lost from follow-up and supporting family HIV testing by sharing her own lessons and benefits. Her son also becomes part of a group of adolescents living with HIV (peer group) to ensure long-term adherence to treatment and school attendance. Almaz has participated in the village saving loan association to strengthen her/hers family incore and this shows promising results to strengthen her business attempts.

By now, she aspires to see her son’s bright future and she understands her role in maintaining the family’s health and proper medication follow-up.

By now, her exposure and awareness changed her from a lost care seeker to a dedicated caregiver for others struggling the same battle.

This opens a new chapter to focus on matters that can be improve and she is seriously working on it for seeing her family’s better life.

She expressed her current status as “I benefited because I become aware”.

Remark: This success story is originated from Fayyaa Integrated Developmental Organization (FIDO), one of the 9 local implementing partners working with Mekdim Ethiopia National Association (MENA).

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2 Consent was obtained to use her identifiers for dissemination and awareness creation purpose.