

## **'I felt like I was re-born!'**

'I am so thankful to God that I had the chance to go to Kira Farm Development Centre. I honestly don't know what my life would be like now if I hadn't been given this opportunity,' says Beckham Ochen.

'Life before Kira was hard and I was tired, I'd lost hope of ever having a bright future. Everything changed once I moved onto the Farm. On my first morning at Kira I woke up feeling like I had been re-born into a new life, every aspect of the centre, from the discipleship to vocational training, was like fuel to me. By the time I left I felt like I was a car filled with enough fuel to drive a thousand miles without stopping!

### **A tough start**

'When I returned home I had nothing, no money and not even a house to sleep in – before I came to Kira I'd been sharing a mud hut with my sister or staying with my uncle.

'At Kira I'd grown into a proper man and I knew I should have a home of my own, so I set about building myself one using the new construction techniques I'd learnt.

'After a week back home I managed to secure a building contract worth £17.00. I used £4.00 to buy some building tools, I gave £7.00 to my family to prepare for Christmas and I spent the rest on some utensils for my new home.

### **A new way of farming**

'While at Kira I'd seen the high yields you could get from Farming God's Way so I started preparing my garden using these new techniques. All my neighbours thought it was a joke and kept staring at me as I measured my garden, made the holes and put in the manure - well before the rains came.

'In the end, tired of everyone mocking me, I told them to wait and see what the results would be. When the planting season came I was ready to plant with the first rains while others were still preparing their gardens.

'As time went by my crops looked healthy and strong while my neighbour's crops looked miserable. We didn't get much rain and the village had the poorest harvest in memory, but I still managed to harvest two and a half bags of maize from my garden. It would have been four bags but my family took a lot of the maize to eat because they had next to nothing in their gardens.

### **Passing on new skills**

'No one is laughing at me anymore, in fact I have 15 families who have asked me to teach them Farming God's way. They are so excited because my maize is still looking good, even though we haven't had much rain.

'The families have identified 3 plots where we can start the training together and Titus, at Kira Farm, is going to come and provide some more technical support.

### **Tragic setbacks**

'It wasn't long before I won another building contract and I hired three young people to help me deliver it. After paying the young guys I made a profit of £60.00. Using the business skills I learnt at

Kira, I decided to invest this money and buy some goats to rear. Everything was going well until my sister died suddenly of malaria – within three days she was gone.

'Her death was heartbreaking and I had to sell two goats to pay for the burial and slaughter the remaining three goats to feed the people who came for the funeral.

'I'm so thankful that we received wonderful discipleship at Kira, because even during such tough times I remained strong, knowing that God still cared for me and loved me.

'My relationship with God is getting stronger every day, I've been given more responsibilities at church and I'm helping advising young people so they can make a success of their lives.

'I have joined a savings group (a traditional bank would be inaccessible to Beckham) and I save over £2.00 every fortnight. Thanks to the business training I received at Kira I have been able to advise the group on how to set up income generating activities. Our group is now keeping three pigs and we are looking into more business ventures.

### **The future**

'When I've saved enough money I am going to set up a ladies' shoe selling business to provide employment for my sisters so they do not have to get married before they are ready.

'I'm so grateful to Amigos for transforming my life. I am growing stronger and wiser every day, so I am prepared for the challenges that come my way. The sky is not the limit, it is just the beginning!'