



Helping AIDS Orphans in Rwanda



Photo: NickyLewin

AIDS Orphan Mukamana Pascasie, with her three-year-old sister Solange.

Sixteen-year-old Mukamana Pascasie lost both her parents to AIDS. Her three-year-old sister Solange was born with the disease. Before USAID's help, visiting their home was entering a place neglected by humanity. Mukamana had to care for Solange with no medical or financial aid. The small living room with an earth floor has two adjoining doors, one to a kitchen and one to a tiny bedroom. The living room was bare. There were no possessions at all - not a photo, a toy, a book, a pencil.

Mukamana is now participating in a USAID-funded project which provides food assistance and psychosocial support, as well as vocational training. Mukamana is learning how to sew to earn a living through USAID-funded Child Headed Households, a program geared to 15-19-years-old. The group helps prevent other children and youth from contracting HIV, as well as instructs them on how to save a small amount of money every week to use for small projects for income. The vocational training implements income generating activities for youth using skills developed during courses, while on a larger scale, prevents urban migration so the care of the young children in the community is maintained.

Mukamana is able provide for her family, and her little sister Solange is currently in good health - her situation is improving due to the food resources provided by USAID. With help from private donars, Mukamana's house has been rehabilitated - she has a new latrine and basic households items such as beds, seats, cooking pots, plates, and cups. Her young sister was also provided with clothes and toys.

Photo & Caption

