

Reversal of Poverty & Depression

Mariam Adel, 34, lives in Sharona, a remote village in Upper Egypt. She and her husband, Shokry Zaki had two young sons; Shenouda, 7 who suffers from psychological disorders and Melad, 5 years old. Shokry worked as a grain merchant earning 1,000 EGP per month (\$60; ~\$2/day). Mariam and Shokry own their two-floor house. They also borrowed money to buy a small piece of land. In 2019, after 7 years of marriage, Shokry suddenly died of a brain hemorrhage leaving Mariam to assume the remainder of the loan of 120K EGP (\$7,500).

Mariam's world collapsed. She became isolated and had difficulty performing everyday activities including taking care of her children. Her grief was overwhelming, causing her to cry continuously, feel hopeless and resigned to depression, insomnia and anxiety.

With strong encouragement from neighbors she went for psychiatric treatment. She was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Unfortunately, she could not afford either the doctor or the medicines and all was stopped. The PTSD controlled her life and she continued to deteriorate. When Finding Freedom through Friendship (FFF) and the Council of Services and Development (CSD) met Mariam, they immediately paid for a doctor and medical treatment. Marian Gamal, the team facilitator (in the red sweater), played a key role journeying with Mariam through her emotional battles of depression.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized the severity of depression. "There is a real and dire need to determine ways in which to combat depression in the developing world." WHO's plans is to provide training to health providers to assist those in depression. This solution, while a start, does nothing to educate the sufferer to seek services.

Mariam and Marian decided on a livestock grain kiosk as a microbusiness. With a grant of \$120, 30 keilas of livestock grains in large burlap sacks was delivered by a merchant on a donkey. A keila is the standard measurement unit for dry goods and is a capacity measurement rather than a weight measurement.

Today, Mariam runs a successful livestock grain trade. She is expanding by purchasing more grain. Physically and mentally, she is better and works on not letting PTSD control her life. She is surrounded with supportive and loving community.



*The yoke of poverty was reversed. From poverty to self-sustenance
From despair to hope. Mariam was transformed to a productive member of society.*

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