

## Young Women Campaign Against AIDS



*Lucia and grandson, Lewis  
Kibagare, Nairobi, Kenya*

[Young Women Campaign Against AIDS](#) (YWCAA) was registered as a community-based organization in 2002 in Nairobi, Kenya for the promotion of equal rights and social justice for women, young people and the vulnerable. YWCAA founded a group called Bar Waitresses (BAWA) to support women, most of them grandmothers, living in the informal settlement of Kibagare in Nairobi, who were engaged in the dangerous and illegal business of making and selling alcohol from their homes. After years of YWCAA's support, all of the group members are now earning their income through secure and diverse activities.

Nya Nya Lucia Nyangoso is the secretary of BAWA. She started businesses using her group's revolving loan program: water vending and public bathroom stations, a food stand and a fully licensed bar. Here is Lucia's story.

"My mom had to raise us on her own. She sold liquor illegally from home, but there is danger in this

business. The clients are men drinking in your home where children are living. These men make passes at you, so you have to be keen to brush them off. We didn't learn from our parents about how to protect ourselves, so I got pregnant when I was 14 and had to leave school. My mother got sick, so she went to her brother's and I was left to manage the home. I had 5 younger sisters, so I went from being a small girl to an adult overnight. I continued selling the illicit brew, but the burden was heavy. I was so worried about getting enough money for us to eat and about the safety of my young sisters. At night I could never sleep and sometimes I would take a bit of the drink to help me forget."



*Lucia, Trina (Zebia's daughter), Stephen and  
Zebia*

"Along the way, we took in other children who didn't have a home, Stephen who was sleeping in the streets and Zebia, an orphan. I worried constantly about the future of all my children. I continued the illicit brewing until we met up with YWCAA. They helped the women brewers form the BAWA group and we were taught how to keep our children safe from clients, how to work together to save our money and how to stop drinking. After that, they gave us a loan and I started changing. Now I have 3 businesses and I found myself becoming an educated woman. I have learned how to write and take minutes. I have taken trainings and earned certificates. I was taught how to be open about HIV with children and I teach my own and all the children of my community, especially the girls. I can do this because of what I have gone through and what YWCAA has taught me. I have gone from no education to being a teacher in my home, in society, and the whole community."

From *Powered by Love*. An abridged version of Lucia Nyangoso's story, the youngest gogo interviewed for the book, age 36

To watch a 14-minute SLF documentary on YWCAA, click here: <https://youtu.be/pty8Dr59Z1w>