

My name is Jenipher Adhiambo, born on 25<sup>th</sup> Nov 1992. My mother died when I was only six months old. My dad had to marry my mum's younger sister to take care of me. Life was good, I had everything. I can say we were among the wealthiest in our neighbourhood. My step mum, took care of me, as if I was her own. I only knew she wasn't my birth mum, when she was about to die, that's when she told me everything.

My dad used to sell clothes, shoes, sandals and kakis. Business was booming for him, while my mum was a house wife. Life started changing when my dad got sick. He had a problem with his legs. The legs used to swell that he could not walk or even work. They tried all types of medication on him, but all was in vain. He died when I was in primary 3. Life became difficult, we wouldn't have all the luxury we were used to anymore.

My mum took over my dad's business, she tried her best to make life comfortable for me, it wasn't like before but still I didn't lack any basic needs like food and clothes. After my dad's death, as per the Luo customs, my mum had to be inherited by another man, so my step dad came into the picture, he was jobless, and so my mum had to provide him with everything, because to him, he was the one helping my mum a whole lot. The only mistake my mum ever did, and died regretting, was that she never went for a HIV/AIDS test with my step dad.

The step dad left all over sudden, with no word, we were left alone again with my mum, by then I was in primary 6. My mum started sickling, it was on and off. That's when my life took a very big turn. I couldn't have all the meals a day, sometimes I would only have one meal a day. Thank to God

was one of the best students in class. I did my primary 8 exams; and was called in one of the best girl school in Kenya, Kisumu Girls High School.

By that time my mum was bed ridden, she couldnot go to work anymore, and it was like everyone deserted us. The only relative who was close to us, could hardly put food on the table for his family. With the support of my mum's friends, I was able to enroll in school; but life wasn't good at all, I was a day scholar so I used to go back home to be with my mum every evening. We used to rent the house we lived in, so the landlord also kicked us out since my mum couldn't pay the house rent.

We moved in with my maternal grandma, I dropped out of school in form 2, and in that same year, my mum passed away. Every little hope I had was gone, a few months later my grandma also passed away, I was totally alone, no father, no mother, no siblings. My uncle took me in; my dad's step brother, and he also have a big family that he couldn't even support well. I prayed to God to give me strength to carry ~~on~~<sup>on</sup>, and to show me the way through. He answered my prayers through mum Naminiel. She is the most wonderful and good hearted person I have ever come across.

She took me back to school, single handedly, bought everything I needed to start school, and paid my school fees. She gave me a chance, I never knew I could have again in my life. I put in my best in school so as not to disappoint her, and also to be someone in the society. New paradigm is my second family. I have younger sisters and brothers in the organisation that are looking up to me as their elder sister.

When I was in form four, I got pregnant, I disappointed the only person who gave me a second chance. Mum Naminel didn't say anything to me, but deep inside I knew she was disappointed with me. I did my best not to disappoint her even more, I went to school with my pregnancy until I was due. I knew it was my mistake and so I had to live with it. I did my form four exams and passed as well, even teachers were surprised by me. After my fourth form, that was when I met another great sister of mine Lena. She gave me hope, and I knew everything will be okay. With the help of Lena, and other Afroskop members right now am in the best university. University of Nairobi.

They provide me with everything, books, transport to school, and food, and I don't feel like an orphan anymore. I have a caring mother, sisters and brothers. Life in University is a bit challenging, we are in class even with old people. There is some kind of influence in University that if someone is not careful can turn into a bad person, for me do what brought you school and do it to your best, like there is no tomorrow. I have a daughter to take care of and who is looking up to me. I want to give my child a good life, she is also my source of strength. I also have to be a good example to my brothers and sisters in New paradigm.