



Joyce's Story

Women across the globe face emotional, economic, physical and sexual abuse due to gender inequality. At least one in three of them - aged 15 to 49 years - have experienced physical violence in their lifetimeⁱ. In rural areas, they suffer more because they often lack decision making choices. Many women lack knowledge of their rights and depend on males for livelihoods. Some, like Joyce from Makoni district in Zimbabwe, have experienced and survived violence by close family members.

Joyce married into a family where her in-laws, particularly the mother-in-law and her husband's siblings, treated her badly. She suffered emotional and economic abuse. Family members shouted at her in front of her husband – who never stood up for her. Joyce worked like a slave and was denied fruits of her produce from crop cultivation. Her ordeal was well known in her village.

Culture Fund and partners introduced CultureACTIONS into Joyce's village ward in 2020. A number of project facilitators such as Gladys; were trained in GBV, Child Marriages and Climate Change engagements. Gladys, knowing Joyce's abuse, invited Joyce's mother-in-law to CultureACTIONS community dialogues. She sought to help her first before assisting Joyce directly. On the other hand, Joyce's husband was invited to attend CultureACTIONS male-engagement sessions, where he learnt how men can play a significant part in ending violence against women. After Joyce and her in-law had completed structured GBV sessions, both women were transformed positively

Supported by other family elders and the Village Head, Joyce and her husband were allocated their own piece of land and are thriving in gardening and poultry projects. CultureACTIONS facilitators were key players in this survivor's story.



ⁱ Zimbabwe Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2019