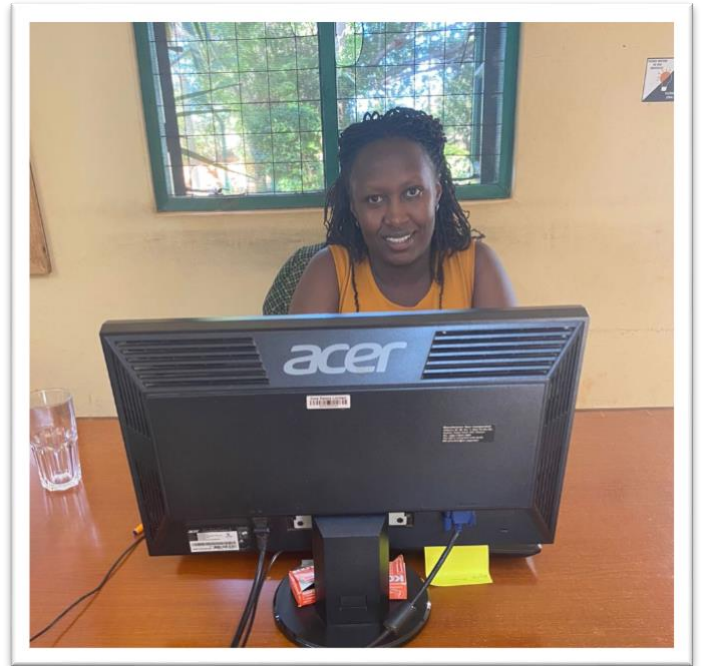


### **‘High school is the basis of anyone’s future’** *How FDC made a difference to Monicah’s life*

Monicah Kibaru comes from a family of six surviving siblings. Until she was seven, she lived with her family on her father’s ancestral land, but when he died in 2003, the family was evicted. With no other choices, Monicah’s mother took her children to Dagoretti village, just outside Nairobi, where she earned a living doing odd jobs.

In one respect Monicah was luckier than her older siblings, because in 2003 the Kenyan government introduced free primary education. Although there were still costs, such as school uniforms and books, there were no school fees to pay. Monica attended a local primary school until 2010, where she came top of her class in her Primary Certificate of Education. Secondary school, however, was not automatic, as unlike primary education it was not free. Monicah’s mother, proud of her daughter’s achievement, asked other parents how she might get sponsorship for her daughter. That’s when she heard about FDC.



#### **Hard working and disciplined**

After the usual assessments, which included home visits, Monicah was admitted to an FDC programme and enrolled at Uthiru Girls High School. She was a natural student – hard working and disciplined. In her first two years she topped the class of 46 pupils and continued in the top 10 for the final two years. She passed her Secondary Certificate of Education with a B and was admitted to Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology where she completed a BSc in agri-business management.

Today Monicah works for a sisal company in the human resources (HR) department, something she enjoys so much that she is considering a career in HR after getting appropriate qualifications. “Without FDC”, she says, ‘it’s unlikely that I would have gone to high school and university. And as a girl child this would have had a detrimental effect on my life. High school is the basis of anyone’s future.’ Moreover, peer interaction during the school holidays, has given Monicah more self confidence and a better social life.

It’s not only Monicah who has gained from FDC’s intervention. Now that she is earning, she pays for her younger brother’s college education. “And for my mother, who is a very strong woman”, she adds, ‘it has made a difference to see her child as a success and know that her hard work was all worth it.’