

The Gitombo Story

Deep in the heart of Kiambu County, nestled in the Komothai location and Githunguri sub-county, lies Gitombo village. Its name, derived from the swampy terrain that once dominated the landscape, is a far cry from what it has now become. Kamau Gathu, a revered elder, recalls that Gitombo is home to approximately 50 households, each comprising an average of eight children.

Today, we delve into Gitombo to explore the village's economy, education, marital status, economic activities, and the plight of the youth.

Gitombo Economics...

The men of Gitombo are mainly engaged in construction work across various parts of Kenya. Some have ventured into entrepreneurship by setting up shop in nearby markets such as Kigumo, Kwamaiko, and Ruiru. Regrettably, only 27% of the men can provide for their families entirely with the income generated. The burden of breadwinning primarily falls on the women. They are the ones who determine what their husbands and children eat, wear, and receive education.

Shockingly, 97% of the women work as laborers, doing odd jobs in financially stable farms owned by men and women. These jobs include pruning coffee, fetching water, and carrying manure, among other farming activities. Tragically, their hard work earns them a meager wage of Ksh 300, barely enough to cater to their basic needs. They lack savings to pay school fees or cater to other essential requirements.

Some villagers engage in farming, growing crops such as maize and beans, and rearing livestock. However, the yields are meager due to insufficient water supply, lack of nappier grass, and inadequate treatment of the animals.

Education

In the past, children in Gitombo would drop out of school after completing class eight. However, progress has since been made, and now, children have a chance to continue their education. The challenge, however, is that even after working hard to complete their primary education, most children lack the funds to continue with their high school education. Parents have no choice but to take their children to the nearest schools, which do not provide the best education. As a result, many children are sent home for lack of school fees, disrupting their education and affecting their performance. If these children could receive support for their education, they could become great trailblazers in Gitombo and beyond.

The Gitombo Youth

The youth in Gitombo face several challenges, such as lack of mentorship, career opportunities, and education. As a result, some innocent boys resort to drug abuse as a coping mechanism, while girls get married at a young age due to the lack of support for their education. These early marriages often leave the girls pregnant and alone. Consequently, many children in the village are raised by their grandmothers, who are depended on by their children and grandchildren.

Conclusion

Education is one of the keys to addressing Gitombo's challenges. The lack of education and opportunities has caused much suffering, and it is time to change that narrative. While it may not be possible for everyone to return to school, we must support those who can and help them become valuable members not only in the village but also in the country and beyond. Let us invest in education and mentorship to transform the future of Gitombo.

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