

12-year-old saves with MiBank

By JOSEPH KA'AU

ONLY a month ago, Ikai Joseph was just another ordinary 12-year-old Grade 6 student at Hagara Primary school in the nation's capital.

It was a routine: Going to classes during weekdays, having the week-ends off and then back to classes again the following week.

Ikai enjoys going to school. But now, still an ordinary school girl, and apart from her Grade 2 completion certificate, she has a few other items added onto her CV.

A month ago, she came into possession of a barbeque plate and borrowed K100. The barbeque plate was from her sister-in-law and the K100 from her elder sister.

Now, after school, completing her homework and helping her parents with chores in her home, she fries and sells sausages to customers in her

community

After repaying the money she borrowed from her sister, she began to save the profits she made, in a piggy bank she bought. There seemed to be no other option to secure her savings.

This changed last week when the women in her community got together and formed a group, in their attempt to secure SME funding promised by their newly elected member of parliament, Lohia Boe Samuel.

The women were advised to open personal and group accounts with reputable banks so that funds secured through the SME process would be deposited into these accounts.

But their attempts to open accounts with some of the leading banks in the country was impossible due the cumbersome requirements of these banks. Most of the members of this women's group are illiterate and did not have an identity which was ac-

Ikai Joseph with her old savings account (piggybank) and her new MiBank Hibiscus Card. Mother, Kalki Henao, helps her with the sausages.



ceptable to these banks.

Their final attempt was to little known MiBank. To their surprise MiBank officials visited the women a few days later and within hours opened their accounts.

Ikai was the first member of the group to open her account. Five days later she was the first to receive her Hibiscus bank card.

She does not have to worry about the security of her savings now. Her very

secure MiBank account has replaced her piggy bank.

Ikai wants to become a teacher when she finishes her education. But now she is being educated to save so that she can supplement her salary, if she ever becomes a teacher.

She wants to use her savings now to help her parents and to meet some of the expenses required to complete her education.

"All that the bank required of me was an identification letter from my school and a functioning mobile phone. Within minutes my account was opened."

She encouraged all mothers and girls who are having difficulties opening accounts with other banks, to try Mibank.

"Their requirements and terms are very helpful to mothers and girls."