

MUSTARD SEED

eSHG Newsletter

July, 2017 Edition

Inside:

Networking meeting

Productive guarantorship

New products

What can you do with 100K?

Health

Spiritual nourishment

OFFICE HOURS

Tue – Fri: 08:30 AM–05:00 PM

Sat: 09:00 AM – 01:00 PM.

Sun: 09:00 AM – 03:00 PM.

NB: NO office hours on Mondays.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

MPESA

Paybill : 821 915

ACC. No: Member number

BANK:

COOPERATIVE BANK

Acc. Name: ST. PAULS SELF-HELP GROUP

Account Number:

01100083625300

CARITAS MICROFINANCE BANK

Cardinal Otunga Branch.

Acc. Name: ST. PAULS CHAPEL SELF-HELP GROUP

Account number:

1002025000017

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ST. PAUL'S SELF HELP GROUP

"Advancing the social and financial well-being of our members"



Networking meeting held on 17th June 2017

The current tough economic time has necessitated the self-help group to bring together its diverse membership to brainstorm on the possible business ideas and financial solutions available for exploitation.

On the 17th of June 2017, over 80 members converged at St. Paul's Chapel Chaplaincy hall for a networking meeting themed "Productive guarantorship". The meeting commenced at the planned hour giving attendees enough time to discuss on business ideas available for a person with 100k at hand.

One of the members took this opportunity to display her products, a portable solar panel with a variety of applications ideal for a rural setup, (if only you were there to see it).

It was all smiles at the end of the meeting as members were ready to go and actualize the ideas that were discussed.



OFFICE STATISTICS

- Founded on August 2000
- Total Members = 680
- Share Capital = Ksh 52.08M
- Loan Portfolio = Ksh 21.1M
- Investments in (TB'S, BONDS, FIXED DEPOSITS): Kes. 31.84 M

It all started when James promised Jennifer that at the end of their stay in campus, he would go ahead to marry her. The two love birds had met in their first year in campus and they seemed inseparable. In order to plan for their life ahead together, they decided to join a self-help group where they could save for life after school. I mean, everyone fantasizes about having a nice house, a big car and a well paying job immediately after campus. For them, preparations began early. Believe it or not, they were consistent in their savings though they earned little.

"Hayawi hayawi huwa" and the time to leave school had come. After four years of saving and tiring academic work, Jennifer was the first one to come up with an investment plan. After all, what is the point of saving if you can't borrow some of it as a loan and get a good capital to start a business? She had done all her calculations right and was sure of a quick return. James being the supportive boyfriend did not hesitate to guarantee her the extra shares. After all, it was part of building the future family he had envisioned with her princess.

Soon after graduation, James got a job in Mombasa and had to settle there. You can imagine his excitement despite the fact that getting a house and furnishing it would be a tall order. This time round Jennifer came to his rescue. He took up a loan and was guaranteed by his college sweetheart.

Currently, Jennifer's business is booming while James is doing very well in Mombasa.

PRODUCTIVE GUARANTORSHIP

This is a relationship where both the guarantor and the loan applicant help each other to improve their socio-economic growth. For the case of the Self Help Group, the relationship does not only end up in guaranteeing loans but also in encouraging each other to make advances in life.

In order for a guarantor ship to be productive, both parties have to benefit, i.e.

Loan applicant - *getting loans, reputation in repayment of loans, networks, job opportunities.*

Guarantor - *trust of members, guarantees on future loans, networking, spiritual satisfaction.*

Here are some the things to avoid so as to make your guarantorship productive;

(a) Defaults in loan

A good number of people take up loans without careful consideration of how they are going to pay back. One needs to do a personal assessment before borrowing so as to borrow for productive purposes. Before borrowing, ask yourself the 3 Ps;

1) **Purpose** of borrowing

2) **Payment ability**

Hint: debt:income ratio < 40%

3) **Payment history**

It has been noted that most young people borrow easily and spend foolishly. Do not add to this statistic, be different.



Understanding the interest payable helps in establishing a good repayment plan.

(b) Lack of information.

One needs some faith in order to commit shares to guarantee someone. Gathering some information about who you are guaranteeing would help you in making your choice on how much you would be willing to guarantee. This will not only give you peace of mind but also a better understanding of the other members in the group.

How can we get to know others? Getting to know one another through phone calls should be

highly avoided but instead creating forums where people interact and share ideas should be encouraged, such as networking meetings, organized group visits, conferences, dinners, picnics among other activities.



(c) Misinformation.

How well do you trust your source of information? Many a times

people lie so as to get what they want. Learn to tell the truth especially when it comes to the purpose of taking loans and what you do for a living. How would you feel if someone lied to you in order to get guarantorship for his/her loan?

INSPIRATIONS

We are taught that it is best to know the answers. School reinforces this over and over, you're supposed to know the right answer to every question asked.

It's a painful moment to have to tell your teacher that you don't know something that you're supposed to know in front of all your classmates who already know it (or at least pretend to). It's embarrassing. It feels exposing and shameful. The "stupid question" — as in, "This might be a stupid question, but..." - points out the places where we feel like we're supposed to know something that we don't....

Trying and failing in business is also the same. Everyone expects you to attempt and instantly be successful. Accepting that you will fail at some point or you won't have a solution to a challenge helps a great deal in making reasonable targets in business.

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH 100K

Unemployment has been one of the greatest challenge the Government of Kenya is facing. Ever considered being self employed? The best question you should ask yourself is "Where do I start?" Not doing anything will still cost you since you have to eat, drink and move around.

The initial step is getting ideas of what you need to do. Once you get what you are comfortable with, carry out a small research on the target market. Will you capitalize on masses and small profits margins on each or concentrate on a small number of clients and a bigger profit margin on each? It's better you do something you love doing.

Next is finding out where get your raw materials or products at the cheapest prices without compromising on quality.

Some of the business opportunities discussed during the networking meeting.

Office food delivery

Requirements:

Cooking utensils, Cooking aparatus, foodstuffs, Packaging materials, Means of transport,

Other requirements:

Marketing, Business registration, Required licenses.

Home diaper delivery

Requirement:

Market research, wholesale pack of diapers,

Other requirements:

Business registration, Licenses, Mean of transport

Printing/Branding

Requirements:

Computer, Printer, Printing materials,

Other requirements:

Marketing, Business registration, License, Bank account.



Photography:

Items required:

A 2nd hand professional camera, lense, a computer & a printer.

Other requirements:

Marketing, Business registration, Operating licenses, Bank account.

T-Shirt Printing

Requirements:

T-shirts, Screen & Photocoat, Inks, Squiggy, Dark room/space, blowdrier

Other requirements:

Marketing, Business registration, License,

Mpesa Shop

Requirements:

Business line, Operating stall, Furniture, Advertising, Bank account,

Other requirements:

Business registration, License, Marketing, Complimentary businesses.

Shoes Shop

Requirements:

Marketing, wholesale supply of shoes, Storage space

Other requirements:

Business registration, License, Advertising.

Agribusiness

Requirements:

Piece of land(hired), Farming tools, Source of water, Market research,

Other requirements:

Temporary/permanent store, Means of transport

"There's no luck in business. There's only drive, determination, and more drive."

Sophie Kinsella, Shopaholic Takes Manhattan



An apple a day can do more than just keep the doctor away, it can also help with claustrophobia. Apparently smelling a green apple will relieve the stress associated with confined spaces, according to research from the Smell and Taste Treatment and Research Foundation. Sniffing a green apple can also prevent headaches and migraines and some homeowners even use the scent to make their houses seem bigger to potential buyers.

HINT

All loans are given at an interest rate of 6.5% per year. this is the same as, 1% per month reducing balance.

Loans less than Kes. 1,000,000 are given for a repayment period of up-to 36 months while loans above Kes. 1,000,000 can be given for a repayment period of up-to 60 months.

Early repayment is however encouraged as per your ability and plan.

NEW PRODUCTS

Employer package

This product is for SME's or Individual employers who do not have Sacco services. The product allows for easy access to credit both to the employees or the employer.

All the employees in an organisation can open individual accounts and the employer can throw in some weight by opening a company account.

This way, employees can guarantee each other for loans and the employer can become a guarantor to the employees when they need a loan.

Its uniqueness is that, if agreeable between the employer and willing employees, the company may prepare one saving cheque for all accounts and St. Paul's Self-Help group will distribute the money as per instructions given.

However, this does not mean that employees lose

autonomy of their individual accounts, rather the company cheque compliments their individual efforts. Account holders have freedom to operate their accounts as they wish.

To employers, this can become part of company benefits to employees, seeing that the organisation can willingly set aside specific amounts per month to boost employees' savings, taking an example of say Kes.500 per employee as a benefit. In the long run, this motivates employees and eliminates need for salary advances.



St. Paul's Guarantorship

Getting guarantors is challenging. Random calls within investment groups bear fruits most of the times and loan applicants do manage to get offers. However, sometimes members fail to secure enough guarantees.

Such disappointments have necessitated St. Paul's Self-Help group to also begin guaranteeing members. The group will guarantee your loan, if-:

1. It is not your first loan.
2. You have not defaulted before.

The group will guarantee 25% of the sourced guarantees, that is, if the guarantees are not enough.

Example: Let us assume you need Kes. 150,000 worth of guarantees from members, and you only manage to get Kes. 80,000. The group will guarantee 25% of the offers you already have $(80,000 * 25\%) = 20,000$. This brings the total offer to Kes. 100,000. It may not be the total you wanted, but the increase ensures that you qualify for a slightly higher loan.

The catch is that you need to source for guarantees first, then the group will compliment your effort. But if you can manage to get full guarantee from members this is highly encouraged.

HEALTH

BENEFITS OF EATING HORNED MELON (KIWANO).

You might have seen this fruit somewhere. It is not so popular because it has very minimal sucrose, a characteristic which gives it a bland taste.

However, if it is not interesting to eat, then it most likely is healthy or so the saying goes. In this case, Kiwano is a must eat whether you are health conscious or not.



Here are its benefits to your body:-

1. *Eye health: The fruit has high levels of Vitamin A, an antioxidant that prevents development of cataracts in eye that hinder healthy vision.*
2. *Aging process: Kiwano has many natural antioxidants and organic compounds which protect the integrity of the skin and reduces age spots. Also, these antioxidants induce intense antioxidant activity which slows down onset of chronic diseases.*
3. *Digestive process: Due to its high fiber content, its consumption keeps the bowel movement regular, preventing bloating, gastric ulcers and constipation.*
4. *Bone Strength: The fruit has high calcium content, which aids in bone development and enhances bone integrity, not to mention the presence of zinc which aids in bone repair.*
5. *Antioxidant capacity Like mentioned on point 2, the fruit has a lot of antioxidants which neutralize free radicals, these are by products of cellular metabolism which are harmful and potentially cause everything from cancer to heart disease.*



CAUTION: Do not eat unripen Kiwanos, they can have dangerous levels of chemicals which disappear when the fruit ripens.

For more on horned melons, please see this link;

<https://www.organicfacts.net/health-benefits/fruit/kiwano.html>

SHG AS A HOME FOR SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT

ST. POLYCARP

Polycarp, as a holy man and bishop of Smyrna, found there was only one answer i.e. to be true to the life of Jesus and imitate that life when faced with the difficult moments. When faced with heresy, he showed the "candid face" that imitated Jesus' response to the Pharisees. Marcion, the leader of the Marcionites who followed a dualistic heresy, confronted Polycarp and demanded respect by saying, "Recognize us, Polycarp." Polycarp responded, "I recognize you, yes, I recognize the son of Satan."

On the other hand when faced with Christian disagreements he was all forgiveness and respect. One of the controversies of the time came over the celebration of Easter. The East, where Polycarp was from, celebrated the Passover as the Passion of Christ followed by a Eucharist on the following day. The West celebrated Easter on the Sunday of the week following Passover. When Polycarp went to Rome to discuss the difference with Pope Anicetus, they could not agree on this issue. But they found no difference in their Christian beliefs. And Anicetus asked Polycarp to celebrate the Eucharist in his own papal chapel. Polycarp faced persecution the way Christ did. His own church admired him for following the "gospel model" -- not chasing after martyrdom as some did, but avoiding it until it was God's will as Jesus did. They considered it "a sign of love to desire not to save oneself alone, but to save also all the Christian brothers and sisters."

One day, during a bloody martyrdom when Christians were attacked by wild animals in the arena, the crowd became so mad that they demanded more blood by crying, "Down with the atheists; let Polycarp be found." (They considered Christians "atheists" because they didn't believe in their pantheon of gods.) Since Polycarp was not only known as a leader but as someone holy "even before his grey hair appeared", this was a horrible demand. Polycarp was calm but others persuaded him to leave the city and hide at a nearby farm. He spent his time in prayer for people he knew and for the Church. During his prayer he saw a vision of his pillow turned to fire and announced to his friends that the dream meant he would be burned alive.

As the search closed in, he moved to another farm, but the police discovered he was there by torturing two boys. He had a little warning since he was upstairs in the house but he decided to stay, saying, "God's will be done." Then he went downstairs, talked to his captors and fed them a meal. All he asked of them was that they give him an hour to pray. He spent two hours praying for everyone he had ever known and for the Church, remembering all who had at any time come his way, small folk and great folk, distinguished and undistinguished, and the whole Catholic Church throughout the world." Many of his captors started to wonder why they were arresting this holy, eighty-six-year-old bishop. But that didn't stop them from taking him into the arena on the Sabbath. As he entered the arena, the crowd roared like the animals they cheered.

Those around Polycarp heard a voice from heaven above the crowd, "Be brave, Polycarp, and act like a man." The proconsul begged the eighty-six-year-old bishop to give in because of his age. "Say 'Away with the atheists'" the proconsul urged. Polycarp calmly turned to the face the crowd, looked straight at them, and said, "Away with the atheists." The proconsul continued to plead with him. When he asked Polycarp to swear by Caesar to save himself, Polycarp answered, "If you imagine that I will swear by Caesar, you do not know who I am. Let me tell you plainly, I am a Christian." Finally, when all else failed the proconsul reminded Polycarp that he would be thrown to the wild animals unless he changed his mind. Polycarp answered, "Change of mind from better to worse is not a change allowed to us."

Because of Polycarp's lack of fear, the proconsul told him he would be burned alive but Polycarp knew that the fire that burned for an hour was better than eternal fire. When he was tied up to be burned, Polycarp prayed, "Lord God Almighty, Father of your beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, through whom we have received knowledge of you,



God of angels and powers, of the whole creation and of the whole race of the righteous who live in your sight, I bless you, for having made me worthy of this day and hour, I bless you, because I may have a part, along with the martyrs, in the chalice of your Christ, to resurrection in eternal life, resurrection both of soul and body in the incorruptibility of the Holy Spirit. May I be received today, as a rich and acceptable sacrifice, among those who are in your presence,

as you have prepared and foretold and fulfilled, God who is faithful and true. For this and for all benefits I praise you, I bless you, I glorify you, through the eternal and heavenly High Priest, Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, through whom be to you with him and the Holy Spirit glory, now and for all the ages to come. Amen."

The fire was lit as Polycarp said Amen and then the eyewitnesses who reported said they saw a miracle. The fire burst up in an arch around Polycarp, the flames surrounding him like sails, and instead of being burned he seemed to glow like bread baking, or gold being melted in a furnace. When the captors saw he wasn't being burned, they stabbed him. The blood that flowed put the fire out.

The proconsul wouldn't let the Christians have the body because he was afraid they would worship Polycarp. The witnesses reported this with scorn for the lack of understanding of Christian faith: "They did not know that we can never abandon the innocent Christ who suffered on behalf of sinners for the salvation of those in this world." After the body was burned, they stole the bones in order to celebrate the memory of his martyrdom and prepare others for persecution. The date was about February 23, 156.

Courtesy of; Editorial Team

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