

SUCCESS STORY

Vocational training courses open the door to employment

Hard work brings satisfaction and appreciation



Walty Deme is sewing a dress for a client

Story and photo by Nicoleta Ursescu/CRS

"Before I was just sitting at home and preparing the meals, but now thanks to APIMA project my life changed."

- Walty Deme

In a small fishing town just outside of the capital city of Senegal, more and more youth have become frustrated by unemployment and want better opportunities to support their families. As in many parts of West Africa, migration is becoming widespread. The youths look for any means to earn a living, including the decision to risk their lives in hopes of reaching Europe.

At 19 years old, hoped that one day she would earn enough money to provide for her family.

Walty's town, Thiaroye sur Mer, is full of small homes that accommodate large families – including grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. She lives with ten other people, including three siblings and extended family.

However, everything changed when Walty met Catholic Relief Services.

Through a regional project implemented in five west African countries, CRS is helping youth and returned migrants, like Walty, receive a vocational training. The project, Action for the Protection of Irregular Migrants in West Africa, also known as APIMA, is linking talented youth and the job market, preparing them to earn a living, gain confidence and new skills, and support their households.

APIMA enrolled Walty in a six-month training focused on sewing at a local tailoring shop.

Now, Walty is working six days a week, creating and sewing dresses and traditional Senegalese clothing. She loves to design new models and dreams of becoming a well-known designer.

Today, thanks to CRS' APIMA, Walty's role in the family has changed as she wanted: from the income (around five dollar a day) she earns from sewing, she can support her parents in providing for daily meals

