



“Rescue Gave Us Food... and Happiness Also.”

Once compelled to trade sex for food money, Zarifa is back in school with plans for college.

Zarifa beams at the interviewers.

Bundled in a sweatshirt against the mild Kenyan winter, she sits in a plastic chair across from a Destiny Rescue interview team, grinning from ear to ear. The group has gathered together on the roof of our local project. The busy slum is alive with activity below, from stall owners chatting to day laborers hanging out near a local factory hoping to get work.

Morning sun slants in on the group as they try to speak over the noise. Zarifa’s bright smile and confident personality are infectious, and the interviewers can’t help but smile back. When asked about the source of her joy, her answer is simple: **“Having God.”**

“When I came here, (my life) changed abruptly—in a positive way,” Zarifa said.

Shortly after rescue, she accepted Christ into her heart. She’s turned from the negative influence of a toxic friend group and made great strides to shrugging off the weight of depression. Even Zarifa is surprised by the change, exclaiming, “I became a leader in the church, which I wasn't expecting!”

Her sunny demeanor belies the darkness she faced not long ago.

As the interview progresses, Zarifa's answers hint at the grim reality she'd been coping with. When asked about her hopes for the future, her knee-jerk response is telling: **"I hope for a future that is safe."**



Zarifa at the time of her interview

A few months earlier, that hope seemed out of reach. Zarifa's family was struggling to afford meals, and she wanted to find a way to contribute. Her older sister began selling herself to help pay for food and school fees for her siblings. Eager to help and influenced by some less-than-ideal peers, Zarifa decided to follow her sister's example.

Soon after venturing into exploitation, one of her customers was extremely rough with young Zarifa, leaving her **traumatized and frightened**. Rather than coming to her rescue, Zarifa's friends pressured her into taking drugs to numb the pain and fear so that she could go back to work.

Zarifa was spiraling quickly. Depression crept in to join her anxiety. There was no discernible goal ahead of her, no light at the end of the tunnel. **"My life was... stolen,"** she said to our interviewers. "My life was just a mess."

Now, everything is different.

Zarifa was introduced to Christ during her trauma resilience training course. God's work in her heart, coupled with the award-winning trauma resilience training, gave her internal freedom that equipped her to move forward in life. But **true rescue must address the vulnerabilities** that led to exploitation in the first place. That's why we equipped her father to begin a small tailoring business, which would supply the family with a vital source of income.

Zarifa no longer needs to depend on abusive men to afford a meal, and that freedom shows. When asked what it felt like to join the program, she responded, **"I felt secure. I felt protected."**

For a child, feeling safe is foundational to a thriving childhood. Now that Zarifa has that, she has room to dream for the future. "I want to be a lecturer. I want to lecture university students to tell them about life," the diligent girl said. "I would like to help others the way you helped us—the way Destiny Rescue has helped."

Rescue doesn't just end exploitation for a child. It gives her the chance to be a kid again. For Zarifa, rescue went beyond just practical needs.

As their time together wound down, our interviewers asked what rescue had done for her, and she responded, **"Rescue gave us food and everything, and happiness also."**

More children like Zarifa long for safety and stability; they'd give anything for the freedom to return to school and pursue their dreams. Rescue makes happiness possible for exploited children.