



Grace



Ashwin

### Entrepreneur Grace Chalera, 38

Grace is widowed with three children and a full-time secondary school teacher teaching life skills, history and Bible knowledge. Her husband died of suspected malaria in 2013, leaving her as a single parent with a financial burden and the need for profits to pay for school fees. As well as working full-time she also runs a school uniform tailoring business, a food supply to schools organisation and Silver Springs primary school. She set up 'Classic Tailoring' in 2008 as she could not find a tailor in her area to produce the right quality clothing for her children's school uniforms. She employs a local tailor to produce skirts and petticoats for school uniforms. She used to travel weekly to buy her rolls of cloth at a market a few hours away and then also travel to sell her product to customers a few hours away.

### Consultant: Ashwin Shridhar, 33

Ashwin is Vice President for Online Advertising and Head of Ideas People Media for the Economist. Completed an Executive MBA at London Business School in 2012. He was introduced to Grow Movement after being inspired by our TEDx video and wanted to put his newly acquired business skills to good use.

### Business challenges and objectives of the project

Grace wanted to expand her tailoring business. Ashwin was keen to carry out a full business evaluation to determine if the business was profitable or not before scoping out the expansion plan. Ashwin created a simple business template of cash in and cash out. They

quickly realised that the business was not making any money. The cost of travel and accommodation for the buying and selling trips on a weekly basis was too high. By moving to twice monthly buying trips and asking her customers to come to her she was able to move her business to being profitable in just three months.

Reviewing her other businesses, Ashwin recommended that she focused on the primary school and the tailoring business as the payment terms from schools were not favourable.

### The results

Grace's profits have increased by 25% and she has been able to employ one new tailor. She has used the profits from her tailoring business to build a small tailors and general food supply shop next to her primary school. With her new-found skills in record-keeping she has applied this to her primary school to ensure she always knows how much money she is making.

### The Impact on Grace

*"Women face a lot of challenges in life in all angles in Malawi; not having knowledge in so many areas. I had no idea about these things. Ashwin made cashflow very simple for me and was very patient with me. Ashwin and Grow Movement came just on time when I needed them."*

### The Impact on Ashwin

*"I was so proud, a momentous achievement to make a material difference to someone, I have never felt the same managing a multi million P and L."*

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