



her first FLS session in February 2018, she was not practicing exclusive breastfeeding.

*"I started feeding him [Nicholas] cow's milk and water because I did not have adequate breast milk."*

Hajira's FLS leader provided breastfeeding counseling and taught her how to prepare porridge when her son began complementary feeding at six months. Hajira also learned about different food groups and how to combine available "energy giving" foods like cassava, potatoes, bananas, and pumpkin; "body building" foods like beans and silver fish; and "body protective" foods like green leafy vegetables, eggplant, and avocado.

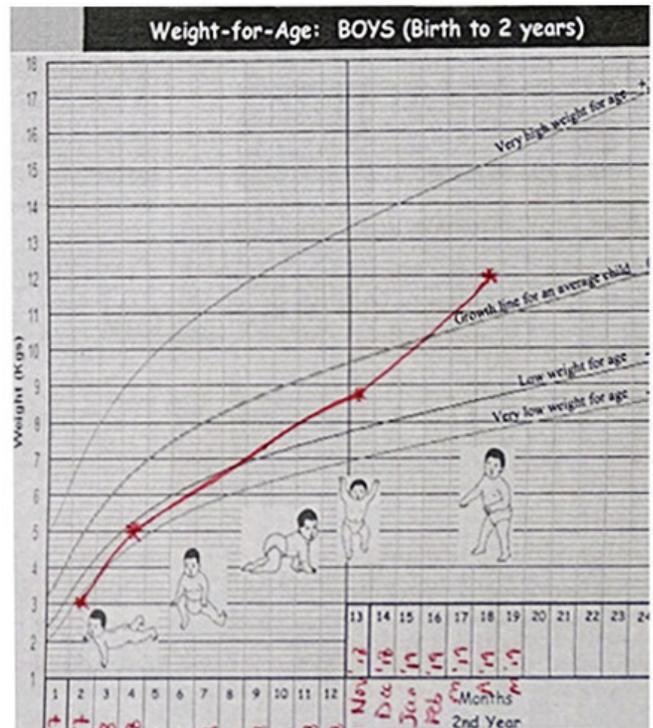
When Hajira started eating diverse, nutrient-dense foods and following appropriate feeding practices, she was able to successfully breastfeed her child "I now have enough breast milk and Nicholas has a good appetite and no longer has frequent diarrhea," said an elated Hajira. At 19 months Nicholas weighed 12 kilograms and is thriving.

With support from key district personnel and healthcare workers, USAID RHITES-EC has established 46 FLS reaching nearly 3,000 households in Waibuga and Ikumbya sub-counties with critical breastfeeding education and health messages that promote improved MNCH.

## The Family Life School Approach

FLS focuses on the critical first 1,000 days of a child's life, beginning with pregnancy and continuing through a child's second birthday. FLS promotes practices that improve maternal, newborn, and child health outcomes, including exclusive breastfeeding, antenatal care, timely immunization, family planning, appropriate complementary feeding, household food/nutrition security, and water, sanitation, and hygiene practices. The classes are organized based on the child's stage of growth within the first 1,000 days.

- ▶ Mama Class: pregnant women
- ▶ Baby Class: families with babies under 6 months old
- ▶ Family Class: families with babies 6-24 months old



Nicholas' growth curve after enrollment in FLS.

Photo: Louisa K. Nakitende, USAID RHITES-EC Project