

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and Senator Chuck Hagel Welcome Women for Women International's National Directors to Capitol Hill

On June 16th, Women for Women International will welcome six national directors at a reception on Capitol Hill sponsored by Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY) and Senator Chuck Hagel (R-NE). The reception celebrates Women for Women International's work with women survivors of war and civil strife, and provides an opportunity for policymakers, supporters and volunteers to meet the directors of its international offices. Directors represent some of the countries in which Women for Women International operates, including Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kosovo, Nigeria and Rwanda.

“The directors of our country offices are the heart of the organization and the reason we are so effective at the grassroots level,” says Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Women for Women International Zainab Salbi. “They are each survivors of conflict themselves, and leaders in their own communities.”

In Afghanistan, as in the other countries where Women for Women International provides services, women receive rights awareness and leadership education on topics including women in the economy and in politics, and learn about their legal rights and how to exercise them. “Women in Afghanistan are excited to again be part of civil society,” says Sweeta Noori, Women for Women International – Afghanistan's Director, “they want to make their voices heard and our programs are giving them the tools and education to do this.”

Women involved with Women for Women International also receive vocational skills trainings and income-generation support as part of a multi-phase program. “These skills give women the technical know-how and confidence to begin an income-generation project to better their lives and the lives of their families,” says Women for Women International – Bosnia and Herzegovina Director Sejda Saric. “They are able to become strong, active and productive members of their communities.”

Women for Women International opened an office in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in May. “There is a critical need for Women for Women International's assistance and skills training in the Congo right now. Women survivors of this forgotten war have no where to turn and desperately need our life-saving programs,” says Women for Women International-DRC Director Judithe Registre.

Women for Women International's rights-based approach provides women with direct aid and emotional support, rights awareness and leadership education, vocational skills training, and income-generation support to ensure women have the knowledge they need to be an active part of rebuilding their lives, families and communities after war and conflict. Since its inception in 1993, the organization has assisted more than 24,000 women and has distributed over \$14 million in direct aid and microcredit loans.