

Women for Women International Talking Points

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Below are some general talking points about Women for Women International. The Organizational Information contains brief facts about the general overview of the organization. The Program Information section contains general and specific information about Women for Women International's core programs and the support it provides. Depending on the forum for these talking points, the speaker may or may not want to go into program specifics. The Get Involved section can be used if the audience is looking for a way to participate in the organization and may not be appropriate for all venues.

Organizational Information:

- **Mission:** Women for Women International provides women survivors of war, civil strife and other conflicts with the tools and resources to move from crisis and poverty to stability and self-sufficiency, thereby promoting viable civil societies.
- Women for Women International focuses specifically on women survivors of war. Its goal is to help women move from victim to survivor to active citizens.
- Women for Women International is currently working in the Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kosovo, Nigeria, Rwanda and Sudan.
- Since 1993, Women for Women International has directly assisted more than 153,000 women and approximately 655,000 family members have benefited from its programs. Women for Women International has distributed nearly \$42 million in direct aid and microcredit loans since 1993.
- Women for Women International believes that stronger women equal stronger nations. When the women in a country are healthy, understand their rights and have access to income-generation, the entire country fares better.
- Women for Women International is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization that receives funding from individuals, foundations, businesses and governments.
- Women for Women International is proud to exceed industry standards by spending 78% of all donations on program activities.
- Women for Women International is the recipient of the 2006 Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian prize, a renowned award given to organizations that work to alleviate human suffering around the world.
- Women for Women International has been awarded a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator for three years in a row – a accomplishment that only 12% of other non-profits have achieved.

Program Information:

- Women for Women International uses a multi-faceted approach to help achieve its goals. The program is comprised of direct aid and emotional support from the exchange of letters through the Sponsorship Program; rights awareness and leadership education and job skills training through the Renewing Women's Life Skills (ReneWLS) Program, and microcredit loans and access to other economic opportunities through the Income Generation Program. Together these services help women rebuild their lives following conflict.

Sponsorship

- The Sponsorship Program provides direct aid and emotional support, through monthly financial commitments and the exchange of letters. Women from all over the world are matched with a woman survivor of war in one of the program countries.

- Sponsors send \$27 a month to benefit their sister. A portion of these funds are given directly to the participant so she can provide her family with basic necessities. The remaining funds are used to provide her with rights awareness, leadership education and vocational skills training so she can continue to support her family in the future. In all countries in which we operate, \$5 of the monthly contribution is used to pay for the administrative support of the program, such as mailings and delivery and production of communication materials.
- The woman receives a monthly financial commitment from her sponsor, which she can use at her discretion. Participants use their sponsorship funds to fulfill basic needs, such as obtaining food, clothing or shelter; pay for their children's school fees; invest in an income generating project; and otherwise buy things that will help benefit themselves or their families.
- In addition to the financial commitment, Women for Women International encourages sponsors and their sisters to communicate through the exchange of letters. Women for Women International believes that emotional support is an important part of helping a woman to rebuild her life.

Rights Awareness Training and Leadership Education

- Women enrolled in Women for Women International's programs also receive rights awareness and leadership training. These workshops are based on *A Woman's World*, a proprietary training manual developed by Women for Women International.
- The training is designed to help women understand their unique rights: politically, as victims of war, ethnic and religious conflict and as voices in bringing about stability; economically, in understanding their rights to earn a fair income; legally, in acquiring skills to fight discrimination, domestic violence and other civil wrongs; and personally, with respect to understanding reproductive systems in women and men, pregnancy and childbirth, nutrition, stress and stress management and the spread, treatment and prevention of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases
- The goal of the trainings is not to tell participants what to do, but to give them the tools to make their own informed decision, whatever that may be.

Job Skills Training

- Women participating in our programs also receive job skills training, in traditional or non-traditional skills, based on their scope of interest. Women for Women International staff conduct local research to determine which skills will be sustainable in the local economy. Training is provided by local instructors in such areas as: food processing, bee keeping, horticulture, leatherwork, animal husbandry, carpet weaving, shoe repair and many more. Literacy classes may also be available in some of the countries where Women for Women International works.

Income Generation Support

- Upon completion of the program, women are eligible to receive income generation support.
- In Afghanistan and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Women for Women International operates a microcredit lending program. Loans are available based on the Grameen bank model. To date, there is a 99% repayment rate on all loans.
- In countries where microcredit lending is unavailable, Women for Women International provides access to microcredit loans through other organizations and other opportunities in the forms of cooperative stores, small business trainings, and support and organization of small group businesses.

How to Get Involved:

- Sponsor: Become a sponsor to a woman survivor of war.

- Donate: You can make a donation to Women for Women International for a specific country or to a general operating fund. Donations help support Women for Women International program activities around the world, as well as support the organization.
- Volunteer: Tell your friends and colleagues about Women for Women International. If you are in the Washington, DC area there are volunteer opportunities at the Women for Women International office. From time to time, there may also be opportunities outside of the DC area. Please contact the organization if you are interested.
- Host an event or coordinate a fundraising project: Spread the word about Women for Women International by hosting an event or brainstorm ways that would interest your friends, family and acquaintances. For more information, visit www.womenforwomen.org and click “Get Involved.”

Contact Information:

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