

RWANDA

OUR WORK IN RWANDA

STATUS OF WOMEN IN RWANDA

WHEN THE VIOLENCE OF THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE SUBSIDED AND THE COUNTRY BEGAN TO REBUILD, WOMEN PLAYED A PROMINENT ROLE IN THE RECONSTRUCTION PROCESS. FOR THE FIRST FEW YEARS FOLLOWING THE GENOCIDE, RWANDA'S ADULT POPULATION WAS ESTIMATED TO BE AS MUCH AS 70 PERCENT FEMALE, DUE TO THE TARGETING KILLING OF SO MANY MEN. WOMEN WERE FORCED TO TAKE THE LEAD IN RECOVERY, AND FORMAL GENDER-EQUALIZING MEASURES AT THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS ENSURED THAT THESE GAINS WERE NOT LOST WHEN GENDER PROPORTIONS EVENTUALLY BECAME MORE BALANCED. TODAY, 64 PERCENT OF ALL RWANDAN PARLIAMENTARY SEATS ARE HELD BY WOMEN, AND 7 OF THE COUNTRY'S 14 SUPREME COURT JUSTICES ARE FEMALE.

While women in general have accessed greater political, economic, and social freedoms since the genocide, many women are still limited by traditional views of gender. In rural areas, many women have been left behind from Rwanda's rapid development. In 2011, 48.7 percent of Rwanda's rural population were living below the nation's rural poverty line. Women living in these areas are often the primary providers for their families and have limited access to services such as water and health. Women for Women International seeks to help these women to participate in the economic progress and development others are experiencing in Rwanda.

WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL IN RWANDA

JOB SKILLS ALONE ARE NOT ENOUGH TO EMPOWER WOMEN: THEY MUST KNOW THEIR RIGHTS, BE ABLE TO SPEAK OUT ABOUT THEM, AND HAVE RESOURCES TO HELP THEM MAKE DECISIONS BEFORE THEY CAN USE VOCATIONAL SKILLS TO CREATE LONG-TERM ECONOMIC STABILITY IN THEIR LIVES.

Women for Women International first opened its doors in Rwanda in 1997, and since then we have trained over 67,943 women. The country office headquarters is located in Kigali, and we concentrate our work in communities across the districts of Kayonza, Rwamagana, Gasabo, Muhanga, Kicukiro, and Nyaruguru. In 2014, an estimated 13,335 women will be served in our program in Rwanda.

STRONGER
WOMEN,
STRONGER
NATIONS

OUR MISSION

In countries affected by conflict and war, Women for Women International supports the most marginalized women to earn and save money, improve health and well-being, influence decisions in their home and community, and connect to networks for support. By utilizing skills, knowledge, and resources, she is able to create sustainable change for herself, her family, and community.

WHAT WE DO: OUR PROGRAM

WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL'S 12-MONTH TRAINING PROGRAM PROVIDES POLITICALLY, ECONOMICALLY, AND SOCIALLY EXCLUDED WOMEN IN COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE WITH THE VOCATIONAL SKILLS, HEALTH INFORMATION, AND RIGHTS EDUCATION THEY NEED TO OVERCOME POVERTY, MAKE HEALTHY DECISIONS, AND BUILD LOCAL NETWORKS TO ADVOCATE FOR THEIR RIGHTS.

When women are able to sustain an income, be well, make decisions, and have social networks to support them, they develop the confidence they need to transform their lives, families, and communities. Our program promotes women's social and economic empowerment as the key to building more peaceful and stable societies.

Program participants are assigned to a group of 25 women who meet bi-weekly to engage in learning together. They receive life skills training, including lessons in health awareness, decision-making, negotiation, and civic participation. Women also learn business and vocational skills and gain access to income-generating activities that enable them to move towards economic self-sufficiency.

All of the trainings are led by local trainers and tailored to local contexts and markets. Prior to vocational training, numeracy training covering fundamental arithmetic skills is offered to participants identified as innumerate.

Every month during the training program, each participant receives a small cash transfer as a condition of participating in the program. Participants are free to use these funds however they wish. Many use them to purchase medicine, food, clothing, or transportation, to pay tuition fees for children, or to invest in starting a small business. Women for Women International also encourages participants to save a portion of their monthly training stipend.

RWANDA

COUNTRY OFFICE

STARTED: 1997

HEADQUARTERS: Kigali

PROGRAMS IN:

Kayonza, Rwamagana,
Gasabo, Muhanga, Kicukiro,
and Nyaruguru

AVERAGE

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

AVERAGE DAILY INCOME: \$0.36

CHILDREN IN CARE: 3

ILLITERATE: 30 percent

AGE: 25-50 years

VOCATIONAL

SKILLS & TRAINING

Agriculture • Basket-making
• Beadwork • Bee-keeping
• Bread-making • Coffee
Agribusiness • Culinary
Arts • Food Processing •
Hairdressing • Manicure and
Pedicure • Small Business
• Tailoring • Tourism and
Hospitality

A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE: WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITY CENTER

IN JUNE 2013, WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL OPENED ITS WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITY CENTER (WOC) IN KAYONZA, LOCATED AN HOUR FROM RWANDA'S THRIVING CAPITAL, KIGALI. THE WOC IS DESIGNED AS A CENTRAL MEETING PLACE THAT BRIDGES THE GAP BETWEEN URBAN BUYERS AND RURAL FARMERS. IT PROVIDES A PERMANENT SPACE FOR TRAINING PARTICIPANTS IN LIFE SKILLS AND BUSINESS, AND FOR USE BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY.

The Women's Opportunity Center is also a place for rural entrepreneurs to incubate new businesses, gain new skills, and transition from subsistence farming to larger-scale entrepreneurial farming.

The innovative and eco-friendly design, created by award-winning architect Sharon Davis, is built on a five-acre campus. From the entrance on a well-traveled road, market stalls are readily accessible to the public.

On the grounds of the WOC, facilities include a kitchen and restaurant, guest lodging, a large celebration space, organic vegetable and fruit gardens, and storage, training, and office space for lease to partner organizations and businesses.

Inspired by traditional Rwandan meeting spaces, classrooms are shaped as circular pavilions and are at the center of the WOC. Behind the WOC is a large commercial demonstration farm in a fertile valley.

The WOC is designed to be both environmentally sustainable and financially self-sufficient. Within five years of its launch, the Center is expected to be a financially independent social enterprise through a multi-use approach: renting space to partner organizations, creating market and retail space for local small business, leasing storage and work space, hosting special events, and offering lodging and restaurant services.

CREATING NEW ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

THE WOC EXPANDS OPPORTUNITIES FOR RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS TO INCUBATE AND GROW BUSINESSES SUCH AS:

- Bee-keeping
- Coffee & Mushroom Farming for Commercial Purposes
- Culinary Arts

AS A SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE, THE WOC OFFERS:

- Demonstration Farm
- Kitchen & Restaurant
- Lodging
- Gathering Space
- Training and Meeting Space
- Marketplace

OUR IMPACT

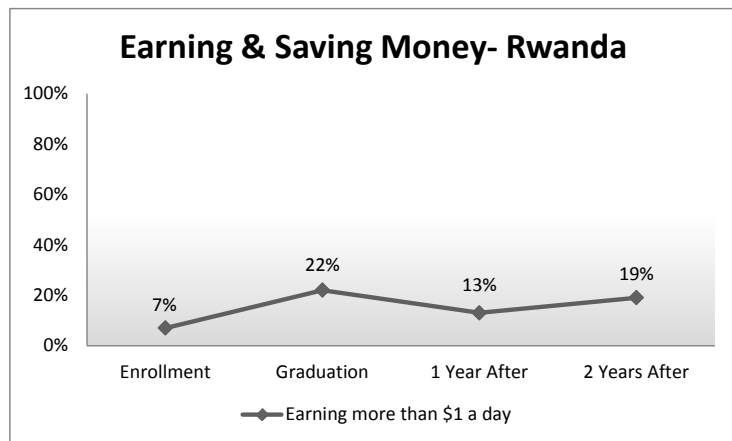
OUR PROGRAM IS FOCUSED ON HELPING WOMEN ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING FOUR KEY OUTCOMES:

1 WOMEN EARN AND SAVE MONEY

When women earn an income, they reinvest a much higher portion in their families and communities, compared to men.

In Rwanda, women demonstrate the ability to increase their daily income even two years after graduating from our program, earning an average of \$0.61 per day two years after graduation, compared to \$0.36 at enrollment.

(See footnote 1)

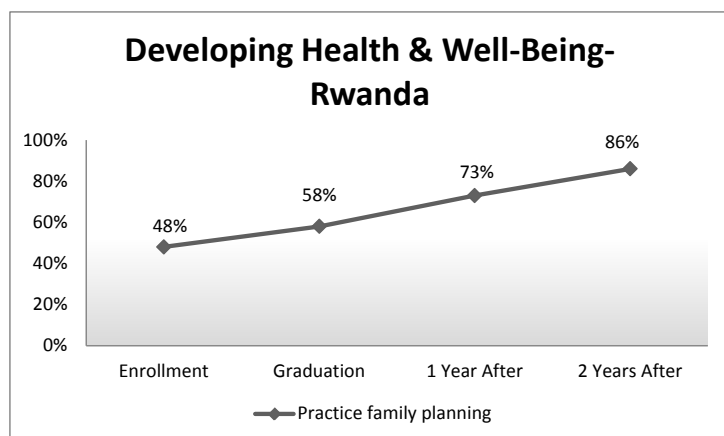


2 WOMEN DEVELOP HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Access to affordable and accessible healthcare – as well as training in disease prevention – significantly reduces preventable deaths.

Women continue to apply improved knowledge about how to protect their health and well-being after graduating from our program. 48 percent of women report practicing family planning at enrollment, compared to 86 percent two years after graduation.

(See footnote 1)



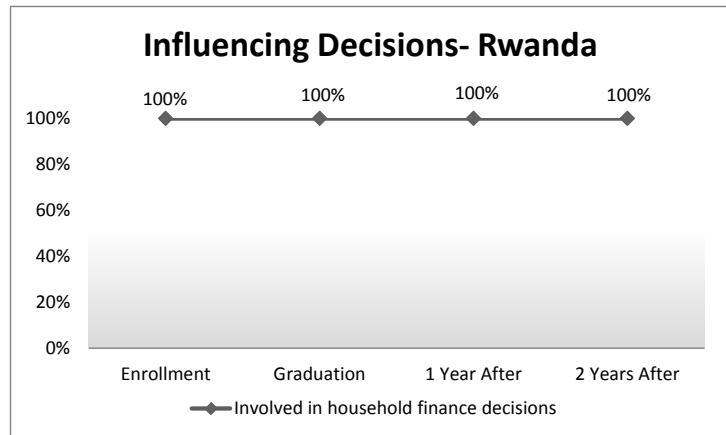
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WOMEN INFLUENCE DECISIONS IN THE HOME AND COMMUNITY

Studies show that women exercise greater decision-making power within their families when they are educated, earn a stable income, and have access to resources such as land and credit.

100 percent of women reported being involved in household financial decisions at enrollment, and maintained the statistic of 100 percent two years after graduation.

(See footnote 1)



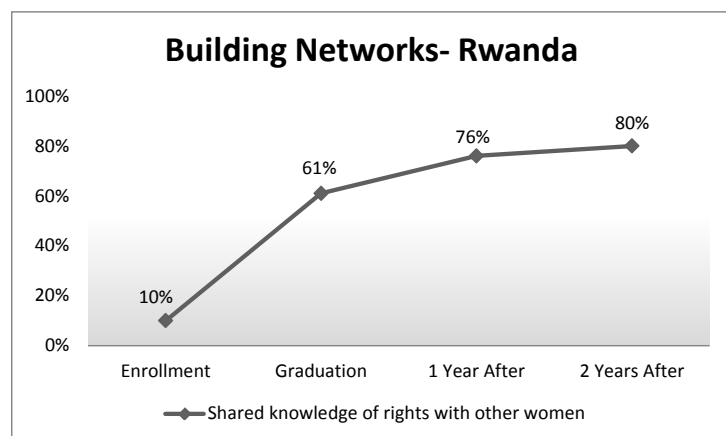
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WOMEN CREATE AND CONNECT TO NETWORKS FOR SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY

As program participants, women learn the importance of working together. By working in groups, they also benefit from a support system and social networks.

Women share what they learn about their rights with other women in their communities. 80 percent of women reported educating another woman on her rights at graduation, one and two years after graduation, compared to 10 percent at enrollment. Educating a woman yields dividends not only for herself, but for others in her community.

(See footnote 1)



FACTS ABOUT WOMEN IN RWANDA

Only 52 percent of women between the ages of 15 to 49, who are either married or in a union, use some form of contraception.²

The average Rwandan woman will give birth 4.6 times during her life.³

Only 69 percent of births in Rwanda are attended by skilled health personnel.⁴

An estimated 56 percent of pregnant women with HIV in Rwanda receive antiretroviral treatment to prevent the transmission of HIV to their unborn child.⁵

Rwanda's maternal mortality ratio is 320 female deaths for every 100,000 live births.⁶

56 percent of women between the ages of 15 and 49 believe that a husband beating his wife is a justifiable action.⁷

Rwanda was ranked 76 out of 208 countries on the UN's Gender Inequality Index, with 41.4 percent of national achievement lost as a result of gender inequality.⁸

LEARN MORE

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FOOTNOTES

¹ Data represents women who graduated from our program in Rwanda between 2010 and 2011.

² "Contraceptive Prevalence (percent of women ages 15-49)." The World Bank. Accessed 4 June 2014. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.CONU.ZS>

³ "Fertility Rate, Total (births per woman)." The World Bank. Accessed 4 June 2014. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN>

⁴ "Births Attended by Skilled Health Staff (percent of total)." The World Bank. Accessed 4 June 2014. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.STA.BRTC.ZS>

⁵ "WHO Africa Region: Rwanda Statistics Summary (2002-present)." Global Health Observatory Data Repository. WHO. Accessed 3 June 2014. <http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.country.country-RWA?lang=en>

⁶ "Maternal Mortality Ratio (modeled estimate, per 100,000 live births)." The World Bank. Accessed 4 June 2014. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.STA.MMRT>

⁷ "The State of the World's Children 2014." United Nations Children's Fund. Accessed 4 June 2014. http://www.unicef.org/sowc2014/numbers/documents/english/SOWC2014_In%20Numbers_28%20Jan.pdf.

⁸ "Table 4: 2012 Gender Inequality Index." United Nations Development Programme. Accessed 6 June 2014. <https://data.undp.org/dataset/Table-4-Gender-Inequality-Index/pq34-nwq7>