

Women for Women International - Rwanda

Challenges women Face



80 of 208
Rwanda's rank on the UN Gender Equality Index¹

68.2%
Can read²



72%
Complete primary school³

8%
Marry by the age of 18⁴



3.9
Average number of children⁵

41.4%
Believe that a husband beating his wife is a justifiable action⁶



53.2%
Practice some form of contraception⁷



290/ Maternal deaths
100,000 Live births⁸



Photo credit: Allison Wright

Country profile

After the 1994 genocide, which claimed as many as 1,000,000 lives and tore Rwandan society apart, the country has made tremendous strides toward recovery. The economy is growing, birth rates are falling, health outcomes have improved, and more children are enrolled in formal education programs. However, Rwanda remains one of the world's poorest and most aid-dependent nations, with nearly half the rural population living below the poverty line.

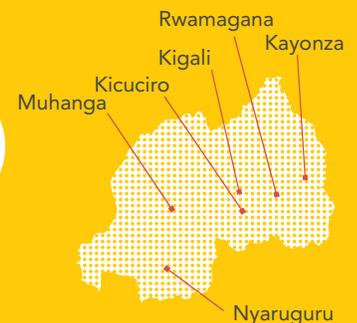
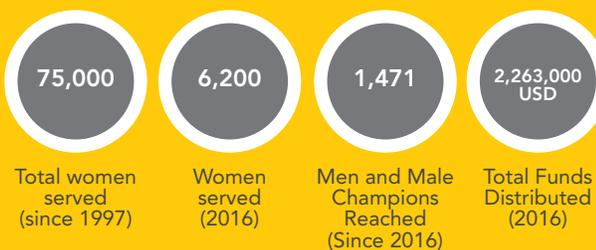
Women's rights have progressed substantially, and now women hold two-thirds of the seats in parliament – the largest share of any country on the planet – and have legal rights to inherit land and obtain credit. Still, many struggle to access the resources and skills to better their lives and contribute fully to Rwanda's development, and intimate partner violence and sexual harassment and violence are prevalent. Oppressive gender norms continue to limit the freedom and opportunities of Rwandan women and girls. Women for Women International is devoted to helping the women of Rwanda take control of their economic, physical, and emotional wellbeing as they continue to rebuild their country.

Where we work

Headquarters: Kigali

Satellite Offices: Nyaruguru, Urugo Women's Opportunity Center in Kayonza

Our reach



Women for Women International - Rwanda

Our program in Rwanda

Participant Profile:



Vocational skills & Training:

-  Hairdressing
-  Manicure & Pedicure
-  Vegetable production
-  Beekeeping
-  Food Processing
-  Basket weaving
-  Beadwork
-  Tailoring
-  Tourism & Hospitality
-  Construction
(Brickmaking, Painting)

Our work

In conflict-affected areas with limited access to services and discriminatory laws and gender norms, women face pervasive insecurity, lack of livelihoods, educational inequalities, threats of sexual violence, and poor health and well-being. Women for Women International seeks to create opportunities for change in the lives of these marginalized women.

Since 1997, Women for Women International has developed a program that offers Rwandan women a constructive, dignified way to regain control of their lives. Our foundational training helps women know and defend their rights, influence decisions at home and in their communities, initiate activities that generate income, and save money for the future, contributing to economic self-sufficiency in their lives and for their families.

Our program

When supported by her peers and provided with the right resources and opportunities, even the most conflict-affected woman can develop the confidence and skills to transform her life, her family and her community.

Women for Women International's 12-month training program provides economically and socially marginalized women living in countries affected by war and conflict with the skills and resources to transform their lives.

Women meet bi-weekly in groups of 25 to learn, share and support one another. Women for Women International creates a safe and comfortable space for women to learn about essential health practices and nutrition, fundamental human and legal rights, household decision making, and participation in civic affairs and advocacy.

To support women to earn and save money, Women for Women International also offers training sessions in numeracy, business management basics, planning, selling products in the market, bookkeeping, group business and cooperative management. Women receive 40-70 hours of hands-on professional and vocational training in handicrafts and manufacturing, agriculture, livestock, food processing or trade and services.

Each program participant also receives a training stipend of \$10 per month. The majority of participants either save this money or use it to cover training-related expenses, contribute to household needs, pay school fees for their children or invest in a small business. For women customarily excluded from economic activities, this may be the first time they have control over their own money.

WfWI has introduced Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) to women in the program. As another vehicle for financial inclusion, these savings and lending groups enable women to save more and access credit to grow their businesses. In addition, advanced training is also provided to graduates to further build entrepreneurship skills.

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Photo credit: Allison Wright

Urugo Women's Opportunity Center

In June 2013, Women for Women International opened the Urugo Women's Opportunity Center (WOC) in Kayonza, an hour from Rwanda's thriving capital, Kigali. The center serves as a central meeting place that bridges the gap between urban buyers and rural farmers and 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 a place for rural entrepreneurs to incubate new businesses, gain new skills, and transition from subsistence farming to larger-scale entrepreneurial agriculture.

The innovative and eco-friendly design, created by award-winning architect Sharon Davis, spans a five-acre campus nestled in rolling hills. From the entrance on a well-traveled road, market stalls are readily accessible to the public. The center operates a website at www.urugowoc.com, promoting the restaurants, guest lodging, celebration space, organic vegetable and fruit gardens, and storage, training and office space for lease to partner organizations and businesses.



Photo credit: Allison Wright

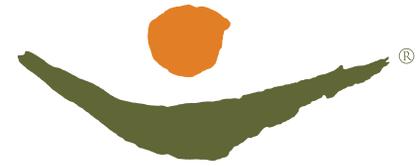
Local partners:

- MINEACOM (Ministry of Trade, Industry and East African Community Affairs)
- MIGEPROF (Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion)
- NATIONAL WOMEN COUNCIL
- MINISANTE (Ministry of Health)
- Rwanda Development Board (RDB)
- Business Development Fund (BDF)
- Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB)
- DISTRICTS
- GAHAYA LINKS
- SHE
- University of Tourism and Business (UTB)
- Workforce Development Authority (WDA)
- IPRC EAST
- C&H GARMENTS (Textile Company)
- Tigo
- Stevia Life Sweeteners Ltd.
- RWANDA NATIONAL POLICE
- SFH
- HAGURUKA
- RWAMREC
- SACCO
- RESONATE
- Rwanda National Girl Guide
- Hotels in Huye and Kibeho (offering industrial attachment and later jobs to WfWI Hospitality Graduates)
- Marriot Hotels

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Photo credit: Allison Wright



WOMEN *for* WOMEN
International

Our vision

We envision a world in which all women determine the course of their lives and reach their full potential.

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 homes and communities, and connect to networks for support. By utilizing skills, knowledge, and resources, women are able to create sustainable change for themselves, their families, and their communities.

Contact us

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1. UN Development Programme, Gender Equality Index. Accessed 6 November 2016. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII>
2. "Literacy rate, adult female age 15 and above." The World Bank Data. Accessed 6 November 2016. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.FE.ZS>
3. "Primary Completion Rate, female." The World Bank Data. Accessed 6 November 2016. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.CMPT.FE.ZS>
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7. "Contraceptive Prevalence (percent of women ages 15-49)." The World Bank Data. Accessed 5 November 2016. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.CONUZS>
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