



STRONGER WOMEN BUILD A STRONGER RWANDA

Creating Sustainable Social Enterprise in Rwanda
Through Women for Women International's
Women's Opportunity Center



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Women for Women International's Legacy to Create Sustainable Social Enterprise

Since its founding in 1993, Women for Women International (WfWI) has helped more than 407,000 women survivors of war and conflict around the world, and distributed more than \$114 million in funds. Today, Women for Women International works in eight countries and our yearlong training program enables women to learn vocational and business skills, rights awareness, and health education so they can unleash their full potential and bring dignity and opportunity to their families and communities.

Three years after Rwanda emerged from the 1994 genocide in which 800,000 people were murdered, another 2 million were displaced, and 500,000 women and girls were raped and tortured, WfWI began its work in Rwanda. Through our training program, more than 66,000 Rwandan women have gained new job skills, knowledge about health and wellness and how to be decision-makers in their families and communities. They have connected to groups of women for social support and to generate sustainable income opportunities through cooperatives.

In its rebuilding process, the Rwandan government has remained committed to gender equality. Rwandan women now have a voice in political decisions, have gained the right to inherit property, and girls are as likely as boys to attend primary and secondary school. However, the majority of women who struggle with poverty, especially in rural areas, have yet to benefit fully from advances in gender equity.

WFWI TRAINING RESULTS IN RWANDA

SAVING A PORTION OF THEIR INCOME

18% ⇒ 100%

At graduation, **100%** of women reported saving a portion of their income compared to **18%** at enrollment.

Two years after graduation, **97%** reported saving a portion of their income.

PRACTICING FAMILY PLANNING

50% ⇒ 88%

At enrollment, half (50%) of the women reported practicing family planning, which increased to 88% two years after graduation.

EDUCATING OTHERS ON THEIR RIGHTS

12% ⇒ 90%

Two years after graduation, 90% of women reported educating another woman on her rights, compared to 12% at enrollment.

RUNNING FOR A LEADERSHIP POSITION

2% ⇒ 47%

Given the strong support from the national government and local communities for women's participation in leadership roles, almost half (47%) of women reported running for leadership positions two years after graduation compared to 2% at enrollment and 8% at graduation.



WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL – RWANDA

WITH ITS FOCUS ON THE MOST MARGINALIZED WOMEN, **WFWI-RWANDA HAS BECOME A CENTER FOR LEARNING AND PROGRAM INNOVATION.** IN RWANDA, THE WFWI TRAINING PROGRAM HAS DEMONSTRATED IMMEDIATE AND LASTING IMPACT FOR MARGINALIZED WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES AND THE VALUE OF INVESTING IN THESE WOMEN. LESSONS LEARNED IN RWANDA HAVE ALSO CREATED MORE EFFECTIVE AND SCALABLE PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT WFWI'S GLOBAL OPERATIONS.

In recent years, WfWI-Rwanda's strategy has included linking rural women to markets. Without access to buyers and without training and resources to move beyond subsistence farming, women in rural Rwanda dedicate their days to cultivating small subsistence farms, fetching fresh water, and scavenging wood for fuel.

In June 2013, with architectural expertise from Sharon Davis Design and initial investments from private donors, WfWI 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 is also a place for rural entrepreneurs to incubate businesses, gain new skills, and transition from subsistence farming to larger-scale entrepreneurial farming.

The innovative and eco-friendly design, created by awarded-winning architect Sharon Davis, is built on a five-acre campus. From the entrance along 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, there is a large commercial demonstration farm in a fertile valley.

Women for Women International is engaging new international and local partners, such as Gahaya Links, a Rwandan-based handicraft company, Sustainable Harvest, international importer of high grade specialty coffees, and Aegis Trust, an international NGO working to prevent genocide.

THE WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITY CENTER

THE WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITY CENTER IS DESIGNED TO BE BOTH ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE AND FINANCIALLY SELF-SUFFICIENT. WITHIN THE 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 BUSINESSES, LEASING STORAGE AND WORKSPACE, HOSTING SPECIAL EVENTS AND OFFERING LODGING AND RESTAURANT SERVICES.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND INCOME GENERATION



MARKETPLACE

Easily reached by motorists and within walking distance to Kayonza, the WOC's market is a center for business and trade where women can sell food, textiles, baskets and other products produced on site. Rentable market spaces generates revenue for the WOC's long-term sustainability.



TRAINING AND MEETING SPACE

Recalling traditional Rwandan meeting spaces, classrooms in the circular pavilions foster intimacy for a group of 20-30 people. These classrooms offer a safe haven for WfWI training and are available to rent to partner organizations.



DEMONSTRATION FARM

The demonstration farm not only teaches women to make an income off the land through organic techniques geared toward commercial production, it also provides food for use in the restaurant and for sale in the marketplace. In addition, animal waste can be converted to biogas fuel for use on-site.



KITCHEN & RESTAURANT

A centrally located kitchen and canteen creates a communal space where food and ingredients harvested at the farm will be used to create fresh and nutritious meals. The restaurant will also provide on-site dining for trainees and lodging for guests, as well as event catering.



LODGING

Lodging options, complimenting the unique and modern design of the center come in two distinct forms –hostel-type dormitories for students and trainees, as well as more well-appointed tented camps for tourists and other overnight visitors.



GATHERING SPACE

The covered central gathering space will be a unique and flexible space for almost any type of large gathering, accommodating as many as 350 people. Set on a hill with views of the valley below, it will make an ideal place for special events, weddings and other celebrations.

“The Women’s Opportunity Center demonstrates the possibilities for social innovation, and for future growth and prosperity, when design meets development. The center allows the rural women in this district of Rwanda to become producers, owners, job creators, and leaders in their community.”

DANUTA LOCKETT

BOARD CHAIR

WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY



RAINWATER HARVESTING

Because water is often not readily available in this area of Rwanda, specially designed corrugated-metal rooftops will channel and filter rainwater into cisterns to provide a steady supply of clean water.



SOLAR PANELS

A total of 12 solar panels, some of which are already installed and operating, will fuel a water pump which fills a central tank to provide water throughout the campus. The panels, powered only by the sun, will also help operate water heaters that provide hot water to the guest lodge and kitchens.



PASSIVE COOLING

The center’s circular structures are modeled after the historic King’s Palace in southern Rwanda. But their beauty, with rounded, perforated brick walls, also allows for passive cooling and solar shading while maintaining a sense of privacy.



COMPOSTING TOILETS

Typical latrines found in Rwanda can pollute groundwater and potentially spread disease. As a solution, the center has specially designed, composting toilets that reduce water use while capturing nitrogen-rich solid and liquid waste. The easy-to-use system naturally produces fertilizer that can nourish the farm or be sold as part of the site’s revenue-generating strategies.



BIOGAS PRODUCTION

In an area already suffering from severe deforestation, women often spend hours gathering wood for cooking fuel. The center will include a biogas system to capture a sustainable fuel source by converting animal waste, produced at the demonstration farm, to clean-burning methane. Access to this readily available resource will not only provide cooking fuel for the center’s kitchen, but will allow women to devote time to more socially productive activities.



BRICKMAKING COOPERATIVE

Economic empowerment for women was central to the WOC’s construction. While men in Rwanda are typically employed as brickmakers, a women’s brickmaking cooperative, KATWICO, chaired by a WfWI graduate, Angelique Mukankubana, was hired to craft the 450,000 clay bricks needed for the WOC’s construction. Working with Sharon Davis Design team, KATWICO used materials found on site and a new, more durable manual press method adapted from local building techniques.

WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL – RWANDA

BUILDING SUPPORT FOR THE WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITY CENTER

PHASE

1

FOR THE FIRST PHASE OF THE WOC, MORE THAN \$1.4 MILLION WAS SECURED TO FUND THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE CENTER. THE SECOND PHASE OF THE WOC IS ESTIMATED TO COST \$1.4 MILLION AND \$200,000 HAS ALREADY BEEN RAISED.

PHASE

2

To realize the WOC's full potential, WfWI is launching the second phase of the WOC Campaign to raise an additional \$1.4 million to complete construction of the WOC's gathering space, purchase and install specialized equipment, and to provide supplemental operating support over the next four years, as new revenue generating activities are launched and the WOC becomes financially self-sufficient. \$200,000 has already been committed to the second phase.

SOME OF THE KEY RESOURCES NEEDED INCLUDE:



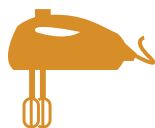
Landscaping and paving of outdoor areas



Water taps and cistern for the marketplace



Farm improvements including animal pens, biogas facilities and a greenhouse



Specialized restaurant and food processing equipment for the canteen



Temporary operational support for lodging, restaurant and farm management



Budget: \$1.4 million

- \$400,000 for capital improvements and equipment
- \$1 million for supplemental start-up operating support (over 4 years)

WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL – RWANDA



WAYS TO SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN

AND HELP BUILD A LASTING LEGACY FOR WOMEN IN RWANDA

OUTRIGHT GIFTS AND PLEDGES

A gift of cash or appreciated securities makes the most immediate impact and allows you to receive full tax benefits to the extent allowed by law. All donations for the second phase of the WOC campaign will be used to support the capital investments, to complete construction of the WOC's gathering space, to purchase and install specialized equipment, and to provide supplemental operating support over the next four years, as new revenue generating activities are launched and the WOC becomes financially self-sufficient.

DONOR RECOGNITION OPPORTUNITIES

All donations of \$25,000 or more will receive special recognition on a donor plaque permanently installed onsite at the WOC in Rwanda.

TO LEARN MORE,

Please contact Anne Adams, WfWI Director of Development at (202) 888-2307 or aadams@womenforwomen.org.

SUCCESS STORIES FROM THE WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITY CENTER

ANGELIQUE'S STORY

"AN ACHIEVEMENT OF WOMEN
IT WILL LAST FOREVER."



As construction of our Women's Opportunity Center in Kayonza, Rwanda continued in 2012, WfWI graduate, Angelique Mukankubana, became a critical leader for the success of the project.

In 2007, Angelique was widowed, had lost her two children and was struggling to survive. But friends encouraged her to enroll in Women for Women International's year-long training program in Kayonza, Rwanda. As part of the vocational skills training, she learned how to make bricks, a job typically reserved for men in her community. After completing the program, Angelique joined a brickmaking cooperative of 30 women and began earning money for each brick she made. As her skills improved, her income doubled.

As Angelique's skills and confidence grew, she was elected to lead the cooperative, overseeing the production of nearly half a million handmade bricks for the construction of the Women's Opportunity Center in Kayonza. Recognizing the incredible accomplishment of her cooperative members and the importance of the Center to her community, she said, "This is an achievement of women, and it will last forever."

Because of her leadership as an entrepreneur, Angelique was selected to participate in the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women initiative, and is using the advanced business and management education to develop new ideas for her cooperative. They are working to diversify their efforts, through producing tiles, agriculture, and goat rearing.

Investments that support women's entrepreneurship are unleashing not only Angelique's potential, but also the talents of the women in her community. Angelique says that now, "Women are no longer job seekers, but job creators for the entire society."

IMPROVING ACCESS TO COFFEE MARKETS



On February 18, 2014, the Women's Opportunity Center was proud to host an interactive convening for female coffee farmers and roasters, along with government and industry leaders to share lessons and provide hands-on training to improve access to coffee markets. Let's Talk Coffee-Rwanda, a program developed by Sustainable Harvest, was interactive, engaging female farmers, merchants, and marketers to exchange ideas, lessons and experience new practices. The event was one of many we hope to convene at the Center, which is intentionally designed to bridge the gap between urban buyers and rural farmers.

THANK YOU.

WfWI is grateful to the generous donors who saw the possibilities of what a Women's Opportunity Center could provide to rural Rwandan women and have helped make the WOC's construction and start-up possible:

- Bloomberg Philanthropies
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