



WOMEN *for* WOMEN
International



Match *Her*
Courage

MATCH HER COURAGE | *Case for Support*

This is the moment for courageous actors to step forward and support women's empowerment by providing women the tools and resources they need to change their lives.

This is the moment for each of us to join the global sisterhood that will propel the world forward.

This is the moment to Match *Her* Courage.

We are at a critical moment globally.

Across the world, nations and people face insecurity and tumult. The Council on Foreign Relations is tracking nearly **30 brutal armed conflicts** with widespread humanitarian consequences. **Two billion** people live in countries affected by fragility, conflict, and high levels of violence. More than **65 million people** were displaced by conflict and persecution in 2017 alone—more than at any time since World War II. Women bear the brunt of this strife: **Of the 1.3 billion people worldwide living in extreme poverty, more than 70% are women and girls.**

Global unrest causes millions more people to slip into hunger, insecurity, and fear—threatening the prosperity and security of us all. So many conflicts leave scarce resources to serve those most in need. Even more troubling, trusted institutions are stepping back from the world stage and curtailing humanitarian and development activity.

The result? Families falling into poverty, communities tumbling into despair, and countries becoming locked in a pernicious cycle of war and instability.

What is the key to rebuilding these fragile communities? **Women.** Women possess the *courage* to rebuild, the *courage* to stand up, the *courage* to learn, and the *courage* to defy the odds.

Match *Her* Courage

Extreme poverty cannot be eradicated unless women have the tools and resources they need to thrive.

Given access to skills, knowledge, and resources, women can create transformative change in their lives and in their communities—moving them from crisis and poverty to stability and economic well-being. When women gain access to money, they use it to strengthen their family. The international community agrees that gender equality is essential to peace and prosperity. According to the McKinsey Global Institute, an additional \$28 trillion could be added to the global GDP annually if women played an equal role in the economy.

All this untapped potential, and yet, progress toward expanding women's rights remains slow and uneven, at best. Women face persistent, systemic barriers to equal opportunity. Not one single country has achieved gender equality. The pay gap persists even in rich countries, and the maternal mortality rate remains sky-high in poor ones. Levels of violence against women are striking: One in three women globally report experiencing physical or sexual violence, and rates in countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Afghanistan, where Women for Women International works, are as high as 70% to 90%.

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- ▶ *This is the moment for each of us to join the global sisterhood that will propel the world forward.*
- ▶ *This is the moment for **Match *Her* Courage**, Women for Women International's \$75 million campaign to provide the resources women need to create brighter futures and build stronger nations.*

We invite you to be a part of
this moment for change.
Together, we can **Match *Her* Courage**.



Who Is Women for Women International?



Since 1993, Women for Women International (WfWI) has helped women survivors of conflict gain control over their lives and create sustainable change for themselves, their families, their communities and, ultimately, the world.

Operating in some of the toughest places to be a woman, we are dedicated to supporting those who are the most impoverished, the most marginalized, the most excluded, and the most left behind by traditional intervention. Through our programs in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kosovo, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Sudan, and most recently the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, we have helped women activate their courage and find the resources they need to reclaim their dignity and rebuild their lives.

Match *Her*
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What Does Women for Women International Do?



Our 12-month program teaches women skills that enable them to nearly triple their daily income, gain confidence, raise healthy, educated children, and become leaders in their communities. Our intensive training focuses on four key outcomes for women:

1. **Earn and Save Money**
2. **Improve Health and Well-Being**
3. **Influence Decision-Making**
4. **Connect to Networks for Support**

FORM GROUPS

As soon as women enroll in our program, they form classes of 25—tight-knit support groups that work together throughout the year.

LEARN

Every month, groups learn **basic business and vocational skills**, like beekeeping and basket-weaving, that will strengthen their earning power in local markets. They learn **how to manage stress and health**, including reproductive health. They learn about **the importance of good hygiene and nutrition for their families**. They learn **how to defend themselves against violence**.

We educate participants on their fundamental human rights, as well as their legal rights in their country; key topics include land ownership, divorce, and child custody. As women become more aware of their rights, they are better able to influence decisions in their home, their communities, and, ultimately, their countries.

WHY INVEST?

Women for Women International operates at the nexus of gender inequality, extreme poverty, and conflict. It's difficult work, but we've figured out how to do it efficiently while helping as many people as we can. Our knowledge and expertise set us apart from other organizations doing similar work.

HERE ARE SOME FACTS ABOUT OUR HISTORY AND ACHIEVEMENTS.



463,000

Helped over 463,000 women move towards economic self-sufficiency.



21,000

Reached over 21,000 men to be allies and champions of women's empowerment through our Men's Engagement Program.



420,000

Engaged over 420,000 supporters as donors, sponsors, and event attendees.





SAVE AND INVEST

Every woman in the program receives a monthly cash transfer, a tool we pioneered that has been widely adopted across the development community. They use this cash and the knowledge they've acquired to invest in their businesses, feed their families, and pay school fees for their children.

BUILD CONFIDENCE

Over the course of the program, women gain an understanding of the benefits of working together. They form networks such as cooperatives, associations, or savings groups to pool resources and advance common interests. They help each other find solutions to common challenges. Over time, they become more confident about their abilities while forging life-long bonds of sisterhood.

With their newly gained knowledge about health, women can prevent common illnesses and, when they do fall sick, access health services—shielding their families from potentially catastrophic setbacks that could prevent them from achieving sustainable self-sufficiency.

They share their knowledge and confidence with women outside the program, extending its positive impact exponentially and creating change that reverberates across villages, communities, and populations.

LIFE-LONG CHANGE

At the end of 12 months, women who complete our program are demonstrably well equipped to earn better incomes, collaborate with each other, pool their resources, keep their families healthy, educate their children, and build stronger communities and more stable societies.

The 463,000 women we have served directly, and the many thousands more who have benefitted indirectly, share one defining trait: **Courage**. The **courage** to rebuild shattered lives ... the **courage** to stand up for themselves and their rights ... the **courage** to learn new skills ... and the **courage** to defy the odds that have been so viciously stacked against them.

As we reflect on the last 25 years, we are inspired and humbled by the courageous women who have done this difficult work, and eager to expand our reach to help even more of them.

Now we ask, will you **Match *Her* Courage?**



Women Living Courageously

Caritas' Story

Caritas, a program graduate in Rwanda, shows what a profound impact our integrated training program has on women's lives.

Caritas lost half her family, including her husband and child, in the 1994 genocide, in which 500,000 women were raped and at least 800,000 people were massacred. She was forced to flee to Uganda to survive. When she returned to Rwanda two years later, Caritas joined the Women for Women International year-long program, along with 24 other women. Over the next 12 months, they learned about their rights, health care and nutrition, and business skills. Twenty years later, they continue to support each other.

"Now I have money and I have friends," Caritas said. "All those women are my friends. Recently one of them lost their child and we all went on the farm to help her. It's not only the money, but the way we gather together that has changed my life."

Caritas now leads a cooperative of 125 women in the male-dominated business of beekeeping. There are three beekeeping cooperatives in her district, guaranteeing income for hundreds of women. Caritas even managed to secure investment from the Rwandan government for her business.

Caritas exemplifies the ways in which Women for Women International's program leads to a fulfilled and healthy life. She is one of the more than 69,000 women we have trained in Rwanda.



OUR IMPACT



20% | 63%

More women participate
in savings groups



30% | 87%

More women practice
family planning



26% | 99%

More women practice
nutrition planning



10% | 89%

More women say they share
information about women's
rights with other women

Match *Her*
Courage

Percentages cited
reflect participant reporting
at enrollment vs. at graduation

Where There Is *Life*, There Is *Hope*.

The courageous women we
serve prove that every day.
But they need our support to make
their hopes and dreams a reality.

Talk to women who have completed our program and you will learn how Women for Women International helps them forge connections with other women and gives them a safe space to recover from their shared trauma. By helping women who have been affected by violence develop skills to earn an income, we give them the tools to provide for themselves and their families. While many good humanitarian organizations supply the bare essentials—water, blankets, food, and shelter—Women for Women International provides resources, training, and emotional support to help women become self-sufficient, so they and their families can do more than just survive: They can thrive.

Tens of thousands are helped in every country where we have a program—but tenfold more still wait at our doors, hoping this is the day they will finally be invited in to acquire the skills and tools they need to change their lives.

With your support for
Match *Her* Courage today, we can open
that door a bit wider and say “Welcome.”

   #MATCHHERCOURAGE



Women Living Courageously

Seve's Story

On August 3, 2014, tens of thousands of Yezidi men, women, and children in the Sinjar region in northern Iraq were forced to flee from the Islamic State, or ISIS, which regards members of the religious minority as dangerous and disposable heretics. Close to 10,000 people were killed or kidnapped and thousands of women were raped and/or held as sex slaves.

Among those who managed to escape the chaos were Seve, her husband, and her six children. After a grueling and sleepless journey from Sinjar, they finally reached Khanke, a small town in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI).

Now out of immediate danger, Seve remains traumatized by the sexual violence she witnessed, and her children face a new battle: poverty and hunger. They were middle class in their home village and have never experienced such deprivation before. Their emotions are mixed: relief, fear, bewilderment, uncertainty, deep grief, and sadness. They face a long road to recover some of what they have lost.

Women for Women International and our partners will help them on their journey, as we have helped hundreds of Yezidi and Syrian women in the KRI. Our support taps into that same resilient spirit that gives women the courage to flee violent oppressors and start anew, in an unfamiliar place, without the tools and connections that gave them a feeling of control in their old lives. We support them as they regain their strength, learn new skills, and slowly rebuild their lives.

Seve and her fellow Yezidis still have a long way to achieve stability. But since completing her training, she no longer feels so alone. She finds being around other women calms her. More importantly, she has hope for the future. She is doing everything she can to make sure her daughters have the opportunity to go to college and build successful careers.



MatchHer
Courage

Strategic Plan

Through our **Match *Her* Courage** campaign, Women for Women International is boldly **committing to raise \$75 million** to accelerate and expand our efforts to meet our strategic plan objectives.

The following are our five strategic objectives.

1

Deliver and Expand Services

Our vision is to extend our geographic and programmatic reach to help more women and deliver more services to deepen and expand our impact.

Our primary goal is to enroll an additional **50,000 women** in our program. Our integrated training program is already transformational. This funding would allow us to build on it; strengthen program components, like savings groups; and expand our footprint in countries where we already have a presence, to help marginalized women in other states and provinces. Among the areas where our existing teams could transform the lives of thousands of more women in great need, if resources are available, are Nigeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Afghanistan.

We aim to offer more advanced economic support to promising graduates in ways that bring positive change to their community.

Through our Change Agents Program, marginalized women become women's rights advocates and gain the support they need to take their seat at the table in their communities.

Through our Men's Engagement Program, we hope to reach **20,000 men**. Men play a vital role in creating societies where women are seen as equals and can flourish. In our 20-year history of delivering men's engagement programming, we have reached **21,000 male leaders** and relatives to foster an environment that reinforces women's rights and economic activities. With sufficient resources, we can **double** the number of men we reach.

We will continually track participants and monitor and evaluate these programs. This will allow us to assess their impact, strengthen our accountability to stakeholders, and leverage knowledge and expertise to improve programs.



2

Sustain Peace

Even when conflict ends and stability takes hold, it can take decades for countries and societies that have been torn apart by strife to mend and build a foundation for sustaining peace. Women for Women International will respond to the crises of the day—but when conflict is no longer in the headlines, we will remain on the ground, working with marginalized women, helping them become strong and self-sufficient.

When Women for Women International started, first in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1993 and then in Kosovo in 1999, we set up country office programs to serve **over 95,000 women** across the two countries. At that time, Women for Women International employed an “evolution” strategy for our country programs: We transitioned our efforts to independent local NGOs to continue serving women and build a stronger civil society that can engage local actors such as governments to serve women.

Using the funds we raise through **MatchHer Courage**, we will fortify those local organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, to protect and build on the legacy we established 25 years ago and support more courageous women in the coming years.

We will support the evolution of the Rwanda country office to a local NGO, including the new entity’s efforts to strengthen its marketing, operations, and partnerships; and we will continue to provide business support to program graduates. Finally, we will support the Women’s Opportunity Center in Rwanda to strengthen its community engagement activities as it becomes a sustainable social enterprise serving the learning and renewal needs for thousands of program graduates.

“Change happens through women. I love that the women and girls in my program wanted to do something, wanted to change something and not just conform to societal norms.”

– Aynura, Bosnia

3

Respond to Conflict

As we look into the future, the numbers are staggering. By 2030, the World Bank forecasts that 50% of the extremely poor will be living in fragile and conflict-affected states, up from 17% currently. Analysis already shows that the current approaches of our largest humanitarian actors – which focus on short-term urgent immediate needs – will not be enough to stop this trend. What is required is sustainable investment in women to rebuild societies from the bottom up. Women need tailored support to recover from the impact of conflict and sexual violence, re-establish livelihoods, improve their well-being, and claim their full place in society.

This is where Women for Women International shines. Conflict response is a fundamental part of our DNA. Partnerships in the Balkans, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Nigeria, South Sudan, Nigeria, and Afghanistan led us to establish our full programs there. We devote time and energy to understanding the unique circumstances on the ground in each conflict-affected area, then tailor our response accordingly.

Through **MatchHer Courage**, we will establish a Conflict Response Fund to speed up our ability to support women in need, through partners that are serving vulnerable women in crisis-affected regions. Right now, scarcely 2% of humanitarian funds are programmed by local NGOs. Through our Conflict Response Fund, we will issue small grants to local organizations that can provide immediate support to women in their community who are affected by conflict. With these partners, we will begin to build relationships, trust, and understanding of the situation on the ground, and assess whether and when to expand to deliver our full year-long program.

This approach of starting our work with partners and then building out our fuller program alongside those partners is how we were able to open, in 2017, a new office in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. We plan to replicate this process in Jordan to serve more Syrian refugees and their host communities, and are exploring a similar approach in Uganda to serve South Sudanese refugees. There are dozens more countries where we can stand poised to engage and start rebuilding as soon as it is safe and viable to do so. A dedicated Conflict Response Fund will allow us to do this with greatest professionalism, impact, and speed.

4

Seed Innovation

Women for Women International has been at the forefront of developing new approaches in humanitarian and development interventions since our founding in 1993. Some of the tools we have pioneered – like cash transfers – have become standard practice among international NGOs. Other approaches like holistic social and economic programming and men’s engagement are gaining ground.

Now, as we celebrate our 25th anniversary, we want to honor our history by funding initiatives dedicated to encouraging creative ideas, particularly from our country teams, that will build stronger connections between graduates; incorporate technology to enhance program quality; intensify our work preventing violence against women; and establish strategic partnerships with global and local NGOs to help women achieve stronger economic outcomes.

5

Build Influence

Gender equality, conflict, extreme poverty, and the intersection of the three are high priorities on the global agenda. So far, 133 governments have signed onto the Sustainable Development Goals’ commitment to eradicate gender inequality and extreme poverty by 2030.

Women for Women International, the women we serve, and our supporters are well positioned to influence the global agenda. Our aim by 2020 is to become the go-to agency for Women, Peace, and Security, and to have a seat at the growing table around Fragile and Conflict-Affected States within the Sustainable Development Goals agenda, while forging and strengthening alliances with other advocacy agencies. Through collaborations with academic institutions and researchers, we plan to champion the voices of the women we serve and use our data to influence the body of research being produced on women in this context.

In addition to influencing the policy agenda, we will also address outdated social norms that prevent women from participating in decision-making in their households and villages. We have a responsibility to listen to them and amplify their voices to break down barriers to equality and empowerment, and give women the tools they need to influence change.

Match *Her* Courage will enable us to invest in advocacy at all levels—purposefully and strategically—and connect our grassroots advocacy work with global influencers who can amplify its impact.



Can you Match *Her* Courage?

To learn more about how you can be a part of the Match *Her* Courage campaign, email matchhercourage@womenforwomen.org

*25 Years of Service,
Millions of Lives Touched,
More Work to Do.*

JOIN US...

It's been nearly 25 years since the Beijing Platform for Action was signed at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. In that time, the world has made great strides to advance women's rights and expand access to opportunity. More girls are in school ... more women are working ... more women hold political office and leadership positions ... ending violence against women is a public policy priority ... and women have greater legal protections in employment, property ownership, and marriage.

When Women for Women International was founded 25 years ago, it was out of a passion to stand in solidarity with women experiencing horrific violence, conflict, and extreme poverty, and to help them recover and thrive. Over the years, thanks to our generous supporters, the programs we have pioneered have become staples of international development and humanitarian response efforts—ideas like direct cash transfers, savings groups, women-only safe spaces, and more.

Now it is time to build on our knowledge and experience, so we can continue to be on the cutting edge of efforts to lift up women affected by conflict. Now is the time to **Match *Her* Courage** and reach more women with our life-changing program.

Right now, there are dozens of countries on our “watch list”—places where women and their families desperately need our support. And thousands more women in countries where we already operate wait patiently, hoping that today will be the day we can

offer them space in one of our programs and give them the opportunity to learn and grow.

The fact is, we don't have the capacity to serve everyone. There is an urgent need to expand our efforts to support the most marginalized women around the world. The success of this campaign will have a profound and positive impact on thousands of women's lives.

The courageous women we serve are peace-builders at the front lines, rebuilding war-torn societies from the ground up. Women for Women International arms them with the tools and skills they need to escape poverty and become self-sufficient, for themselves and their children.

We need your help today to create economic resilience, social cohesion, and women's leadership in the world's most troubled regions.

Join us, and **Match *Her* Courage**.



Laurie Adams
Chief Executive Officer,
Women for Women International

Match *Her*
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“Women for Women International
changed my life. I was an orphan
and watched my parents killed.
Today I have a good life.”

– Natacha, Rwanda



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