



Fund for Innovation and Transformation

Fonds pour l'innovation et la transformation

L'AMIE

Byuka bakobwa (Réveillez-vous les filles!/Wake up girls!)

Context

In Rwanda, gender-based violence (GBV) is the leading cause of pregnancy among adolescent girls (USAID Rwanda, 2019, p.40). GBV itself is widespread in Rwanda, with 35% of women and girls aged 15 to 49 admitting to being survivors of physical violence and 22% admitting to being survivors of sexual violence (National Gender Statistics Report, 2019). Survivors who become single adolescent mothers face not only economic hardship, but also stigma and discrimination. As a result, girls often drop out of school if they become pregnant, limiting their earning potential and isolating them from their community.

The Innovative Solution

Supported by FIT, L'AMIE and Rwandan NGO Centre Marembo tested an innovation called "Byuka Bakobwa!" (Girls, Wake Up and Stand Up!) focused on promoting equitable access to developing personal and professional skills; and increasing self-confidence and personal agency through a safe and empowering environment for the young women and girl survivors of gender-based violence (GBV). The innovation included vocational training and mentoring in sectors that are non-traditional for women - namely motorcycle transportation and tiling. It also included education and psychological support for participants, including capacity building on sexual and reproductive health. During the training, women and girls received financial support, as well as childcare and other basic needs to ensure their full participation would be possible. Activities with targeted groups (employers, male counterparts, etc.) were delivered to raise awareness in the community about the participation of women and girls in non-traditional sectors.

Advancing Gender Equality

The innovation's Gender Equality Strategy focused on three main areas of intervention:

- 1) Providing equitable access to non-traditional training
- 2) Creating a safe and empowering environment
- 3) Fostering the development of self-confidence and personal power

All testing activities were consistent with the action plans and implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy. The activities were created based on an in-depth analysis of gender-related issues which validated the close and reciprocal links between poverty, low schooling and the prevalence of gender-based violence. It also corroborated the risks of violence for GBV victims within traditionally male educational and professional environments



COUNTRY

Rwanda

AMOUNT

\$229, 577

TESTING PERIOD

14 months
Ended July 2022



GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE (GE3)

THEME: LIVELIHOOD

Testing Framework

Baseline data was collected from various stakeholders at the beginning of testing, including young girls and boys in training, Marembo stakeholders, local authorities, staff from professional training centers, mentors and employers. An advisory group, which included a member of each stakeholder group, was set up and meetings were held on a quarterly basis in order to collect data from this group and validate or inform the hypothesis in the process. The primary beneficiaries elected a committee to represent their interests at these quarterly meetings. Local gender and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) consultants were hired to conduct data collection, analysis, and processing, with expertise on gender issues in the design and collection process. Data collection was conducted throughout the pilot to track progress in achieving planned outcomes, impact on stakeholders, and to provide insightful conclusions and recommendations. Final meetings were held between the stakeholders in order to evaluate the trial and plan the sharing of learnings.

Results and Impact

All participants benefited from the equitable access provided by the innovation. Activities were designed to reduce the impact of socio-cultural barriers to girls' participation including childcare, nutrition, health services, menstrual hygiene, a per diem and material support.

For those in the motorcycle transportation cohort, the 12 women and girls who obtained the provisional driver's license were moved to the practical courses; for the 15 women and girls in paving, those who received their certification were able to begin training in tiling.

The other participants continued to improve on the knowledge they had previously acquired.

Due to the short testing timeframe and the training being extended to the end of the project due to different learning speeds, and feedback from the evaluators, it was not possible to support the girls with a reintegration process through the cooperatives. However, this activity will be completed later, once all the girls have received their certifications. Providing the girls with mentors throughout the project also contributed to the girls' emotional well-being, confidence, and overall success in the project. It was thus agreed to extend the presence of a mentors for the last months of the testing period.

The project was successful in creating a safe and empowering environment for the girls. Activities that contributed to this included, the adoption of the Policy Against Sexual and Psychological Harassment Training for the project team and all staff at Marembo Center, as well as training and awareness-raising activities encouraging the involvement of local men and boys. The girls also took part in workshops on gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender-based violence, which provided an opportunity to reflect, learn, and evolve.

Key Lessons

1. Selection of participants: The number of applicants wishing to take part in the trial proved to be much higher than anticipated. Centre Marembo established priority criteria and verified the interest of those who qualified.
2. Sustained psychosocial follow-up: The services of a psychologist were sometimes required in order to deliver effective support. This was not originally considered, but these services were accessed through Centre Marembo.
3. Individual learning pace: Centre Marembo evaluated the training program halfway through the test, including the adequacy of the resources committed to the quality of learning and the timetable for implementation of the project and determined that it would be useful to extend the time/length of professional development.
4. Financial planning: It is necessary to ensure that all the basic needs of vulnerable girls are met when determining budgets. Per diems had to be increased. Additional funds were also needed to worn-out tools used in vocational training.

PARTNER ORGANIZATION

Centre Marembo

TARGET PARTICIPANTS

60 girls between the ages of 16 and 25, survivors of gender-based violence, majority (70%) between 21 to 25 years old, 97% are mothers

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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ABOUT FIT

The Fund for Innovation and Transformation supports Canadian small and medium-sized organizations (SMOs) testing innovative solutions that advance gender equality in the Global South.



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"I now see a good progression. I used to live in loneliness after dropping out of school, and I had a hard life as a young mother. But now I have hope again and all I want to do is learn and get a driver's license"

- 23 year-old woman participant