

## INSPIRE!africa 2023 Year in Review

### Projects we supported in 2023

Below is a summary of projects that we supported in 2023, please refer to [INSPIRE!africa website](#) for more detailed description of the projects. Our 2022 Fundraiser raised \$52,000 which was distributed in 2023. In addition, we raised \$3,000 for solar lights and livestock which we distributed during our volunteer trip to Rwanda in May.

### **Vocational Training Program**

The skills training provided in 2023 include barista, tailoring, hairdressing and auto mechanics



- 12 second generation survivors received support for vocational training. Of those 7 survivors obtained employment after completion
- The cost of attending a vocational training program is only \$550 USD including travel to school and school materials.
- *“Eric and Jean de Dieu are among the young survivors supported by Inspire Africa to attend vocational training. They were in the Barista training program and learned about making coffee and tea. “I am very thankful for having these skills of making coffee, after 6 months I will be able to make any kind of coffee needed. I am very sure that I will get a job as the hotels, bars and coffee shops are opening every day. I*

*have a vision of working for others for at least three years, as after that I will start my own coffee shop”.*

### **Helpline**

The Legal and Counselling helpline was established to fill the gap in support for young survivors with legal and mental health challenges, so that they can access support regardless of where they are located. The helpline was launched with the intention of being primarily phone-based support. However, since its establishment in August 2013, the helpline has grown from a small pilot telephone-based service to an innovative, all-encompassing legal and counselling support service. Assistance is provided to survivors dealing with various challenges, including land disputes, domestic violence and divorce



- From January to September 2023, 320 calls were received by the helpline. Individuals were seeking assistance with issues related to land disputes, domestic violence and divorce
- 70% of the legal cases were resolved through mediation
- **Five widows received legal representation in courts of law and successfully won their cases.** “We are

*very happy and thankful for SURF and its partner Inspireafrica! for the legal aid service provided to us while we had no money to pay the lawyers. It has been very helpful having legal support and now we got back our land and property through legal support provided by the helpline lawyer. **The property value is given to be about \$25,000.***

- This is one of the only free and accessible services for young survivors who are incapable of affording to take their legal cases to court, or they lack the confidence or ability to find someone to talk to about a mental health issue.

## Entrepreneurship

Supporting local entrepreneurs and small businesses is crucial for economic growth. Survivors Fund (SURF) works with (GAERG) Survivors Youth Association to provide training in entrepreneurship and business start-ups. After the training the youth develop their business plans and are supported to access finance for their business ideas implementation. INSPIRE!africa contributes to the business loan fund. SURF has worked with micro finance institutions in Rwanda to provide small loans to youth with good business plans using a loan guarantee fund.



- In 2023, 15 entrepreneurs were supported with a loan from the program.
- *Nadine Uwinyange is 33 years old married women with two children. She has been unemployed for over 5 years, and she could not get basic needs easily. She received the entrepreneurship and job creation training support and start-up capital of \$500, she started a boutique. “I am very glad to have this business, before starting this business it was not easy to get the basic needs my husband was unemployed too, and sometimes*

*we used to go without basic needs like food due to lack of money. But now, things have*

*changed we able get the basic needs for our children. I get a net profit per month of about \$ 80 on average and the value of my business is about \$1,200.*

## **Housing Renovations**

Having accommodation or a decent place to stay means dignity and stability. Homes provided in the immediate aftermath of the Genocide are now in disrepair with many survivors unable to afford renovations.

- 2 families benefitted from renovations to their homes in 2023

## **Solar Lights**

Solar lights are powered by solar panels and are provided to households with students or elderly people in areas that do not have electricity to help them save money they would use to buy Kerosine and other sources light. Solar lights also help to ensure students have sufficient light to do their school assignments. Solar lights come with a radio and USB telephone charging accessory.



- 60 families received solar light in 2023
- *“I want to express my happiness after receiving this solar light. I am among the other people living in the remote area where accessing electricity is not easy, and there is no plan near future to get it. We used to sleep very early in the evening as we don’t have something to help us lighting our house, children could not do their homework evening hours, but this solar light will change our lives, we*

*used to pay a lot of money for mobile phone charging, buying petrol for lighting the house, but all the money we used to pay I will save them and buy something else, and in the future to start small businesses generating income.”*

## **Livestock**

- Livestock provides families with a modest income to pay for food, medicine and everyday items. It also provides them with companionship and a purpose. In addition, beneficiaries contribute a percentage of their profits from the livestock to a micro-credit loan program that others in their communities can access.
- 25 families in the community of Kabagali with 20 pigs and 15 goats. The offspring from these animals will provide these families with a modest income for basic needs.



## **Volunteer Trip to Rwanda**

- INSPIRE!africa was able to offer a volunteer trip in 2023. Typically, INSPIRE!africa provides an opportunity for volunteers to visit Rwanda every 2 years but, due to the pandemic, this was the first volunteer trip since 2018.
- Five volunteers visited Rwanda in May for 2 weeks and were able to visit many of the projects that are supported by INSPIRE!africa, they met many beneficiaries of solar lights and livestock, they helped a group of Rwandans improve their English as well they visited memorials to understand the impact of the Genocide. They also had the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of Rwanda, the many green hills, as well as seeing the infamous Gorillas. Like other volunteers who have had the opportunity to visit Rwanda, this group was moved and inspired by the unbelievable resilience, optimism and capacity for forgiveness shown by the survivors.
- This message was sent by our partner, Solace ministries, after the volunteer group distributed goats and pigs to a community *“I am writing to express my deepest gratitude for the generous livestock donation made by you and your team from INSPIRE!africa. Your kindness and support has brought immeasurable joy and hope to those who need it the most. Furthermore, I would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to you and your team for the visit. It was a delightful and memorable occasion to reconnect and witness firsthand the incredible work your team is doing to uplift communities in need. The dedication and commitment you exhibit is truly inspiring, and we feel fortunate to have partners like you.”*

## **Fundraising Activities**

**17th Annual Fundraiser** – a Rwandan Tea and Coffee House, our first in person fundraiser since 2019, was held on November 18, 2023 at the Scarborough Community Centre. Approximately 60 friends and supporters attended. Two volunteers from the trip to Rwanda provided insights into their experiences in Rwanda and Sam Munderere, Chief Executive of SURF, provided updates on the Helpline and the Entrepreneurship programs that INSPIRE!africa funds via video. Tim Fraser provided music, Christine Karebwayire provided her famous Rwandan tea, Rwandan coffee was served and we hosted an African market with crafts purchased from the Tujumbere Women’s cooperative during our trip.

We were so pleased to raise \$51,000.00

## **Board Updates**

- The Board continues to receive regular updates from our partner SURF about the projects INSPIRE!africa is supporting. With input from SURF, we continue to adjust the areas for our support recognizing that the needs and issues of survivors change as economic and health needs change.
- The visit to Rwanda allowed us to revise and update our funding contracts with both SURF and Solace.

- INSPIRE!africa was the recipient of a \$\$\$ bequeath from a supporter who passed away. Through consultation with our partner, Survivors Fund, it was decided that this donation would be spread out over the next 3 years.
- The Board continues to review the ways donors can contribute to ensure we are up to date with available donation platforms, and are taking advantage of matching funds and new ways to donate.
- In a year where resources were tight for so many people, we are very grateful for our loyal and new supporters who enabled INSPIRE!africa to achieve these results.

**2023: Link to financial report**