



A NOTE FROM OUR CEO, GILES DULEY

We set up Legacy of War Foundation because we wanted to do things differently, to challenge the traditional neo-colonial concepts in the aid sector, and design a model that was beneficiary-led and localised. Our mission statement is simple –to help individuals and communities rebuild their own lives after the trauma of war. Whether physical, psychological or economic we help facilitate the goals and ambitions of those we work with. We do not see ourselves as a charity; rather, a partner organisation that provides the tools, training, education and other support that enables people to shape their own futures.



Nowhere is that more evident than in Land for Women, our innovative land transfer and sustainable cooperative farming project. Since 2020, Land for Women has been lifting families out of poverty by returning land and power to female genocide survivors

Earlier this year, I was fortunate enough to visit Rwanda and meet Donatha and the new Imboni Gikomero Cooperative, seeing firsthand the difference this project is already making to the lives of the 25 women involved. At the Icyizere Ruhanga Cooperative, a borehole installed late last year has enabled the women to plant the usually dry Season C, increasing their output and productivity. Our extensive training program, supported by our partners Random Acts, has also begun with sessions on climate change and our ‘training the trainers’ approach, and the women of Imboni have already been recognised with an award for their climate-smart farming. I am particularly pleased to note that both cooperatives have also been able to begin distributing surplus produce to support vulnerable members of their communities, reducing food insecurity in the local area.

Throughout this time, we have been grateful for the support of RGB, Gasabo District officials, MIGEPROF, the Rwandan Land Management and Use Authority, the local community and our overseas funding partners. Most of all though, we will always be grateful to the women of the Icyizere Ruhanga Cooperative, who inspired us and worked with us to build Land for Women. I look forward to 2022-23 when we will be focusing our energies on identifying partners and land for two new Land for Women farms; continuing our training program with an emphasis on food security and nutrition; and working with all our cooperatives to further develop the Land for Women program.

Giles Duley, founder & CEO



INTRODUCTION TO LAND FOR WOMEN

Land for Women (LFW) is an innovative agricultural program operating in Rwanda to raise society's most destitute women to landowning status. We partner with groups of women for a 5-year duration, helping them to establish profitable, climate-smart agricultural cooperatives with a donation of land, a start-up loan for tools and agricultural inputs, accompanied by 65 days of training and a psychosocial support system. Our climate-smart farming model adapts uniquely to each landscape and works in harmony with nature to mitigate the impacts of climate change and increase agricultural resilience, with the goal of ensuring long-term food security.

LFW farms yield healthy produce for commercial markets and, above all, a nutritious diet for the women and their dependents. Each cooperative becomes a community hub, offering friendship and inspiration to others in the wider community as well as workshops in nutrition and climate-smart agriculture to local farmers whose access to skills training is limited. We are supporting two farms in Rwanda, the Icyizere Ruhanga Cooperative (33 women) & the Imboni Gikomero Cooperative (25 women) and the results from these farms demonstrate that our methods are effective.



LAND FOR WOMEN OBJECTIVES

This report covers the first year of LFW's implementation status from July 2021 to June 2022, and progress towards realising the 5-year land for women program objectives as elaborated in the Land for Women Action Plan submitted to RGB in July 2021:

Objective 1: Land Ownership for Agricultural Investment and Income Generation

Objective 2: Poverty Reduction

Objective 3: Increased Agricultural Productivity

Objective 4: Food Security

Objective 5: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Objective 6: Environmental Conservation and Sustainable Land Use

Annual Major Accomplishments

- The Imboni Gikomero Cooperative signed the 5-year LFW Memorandum of Understanding and enrolled into LWF program
- LFW located and purchased land for Imboni Gikomero cooperative
- Women from Icyizere & Imboni Cooperative (58 women) accessed extension services and good quality agricultural inputs such as high yielding seed varieties, fertilizers, pesticides and fungicides
- 20 women were enrolled into the LFW agricultural 'training of trainers' course

- LFW farmers studied and practised training modules on climate change and how to mitigate its effects through climate smart farming
- Icyizere Ruhanga Cooperative and Imboni Gikomero Cooperative conducted agribusiness through successfully farming agricultural seasons A, B and C throughout July 2021 – June 2022
- Both cooperatives sold produce in bulk as a large group for better negotiating power and higher prices
- A borehole was installed at Icyizere Ruhanga cooperative for water access and we have established a water harvesting system at Imboni Gikomero cooperative
- Fruit trees and agroforestry trees were planted on the borders of the land at the Icyizere Ruhanga farm
- Women managed the cooperatives independently through open forum discussion and participatory planning, discussing crops plans, crop quantities, market partners and market prices
- Men in the community were engaged as allies and co-beneficiaries in the LFW program



Achievements per objective

1: Land ownership for agricultural investment and income generation

Execution of this activity was achieved at (66.6%) because only 2 cooperatives have been given land but the 3rd group has not been identified yet and therefore the 3rd farm has not been allocated and purchased.

- 1.4 hectares of land was located and purchased at Village: Muzorewa, Cell: Munini, Sector: Gikomero, Gasabo district
- The women of the Imboni Gikomero cooperative played a central role in helping to locate and choose the land for their farm. Having assessed several pieces of land, the women chose a plot located close to where they live. Soil samples demonstrated that the soil is of good quality for farming, with two buildings on the land which can be used for storage and post harvest processing.
- LFW worked with a surveyor from the Rwanda Land Use Management authorities to assert the borders of the land, as well as the authenticity of the land title deeds and to clarify that there is no conflict of interest regarding the land. We worked closely with our Rwandan lawyer to liaise with the families who were selling the land for a smooth and transparent land purchase process.
- A Memorandum of understanding between LOWF and Imboni Gikomero was signed with the purpose that LOWF will legally own and hold the land as a custodian for a period of five years. At the end of the five-year period, dependent on whether the Imboni Gikomero Cooperative has fulfilled the commitments outlined in the LFW objectives, ownership of the Land will be transferred to the Imboni Gikomero Cooperative and they will become the legal owners of the land.
- Imboni Gikomero cooperative has been conducting agribusiness on their new farmland since September 2021 and has therefore been able to deliver season A, B and C of the agricultural year 2021-2022.
- The Rwanda Land Use and Management Authority supported implementation of our program by granting LFW unique permission to buy and own land in Rwanda for the 5-year partnership duration. Previously NGOs have not been permitted to own land in Rwanda.



2: Poverty Reduction

Execution of this activity was achieved at (390%) and the target was 200% increase in livelihood income per women

- Through farming Season A and Season B, cooperative members average earnings increased from 30,000 Rwf per season to 117,000 Rwf
- The women undertook training in market access
- Our organic approach to farming ensures that LFW produce is of superior quality and therefore during the first year of project implementation LFW produce achieved elevated prices at market
- The women sold market designated produce to local hotel, catering, and food supply businesses as well as export companies
- As a result of their improved financial position, many women were able to sign up for health insurance.
- Post harvest processing enabled the women to produce potato seeds which are stored and then sold for a higher price out of season.
- Through climate smart farming techniques the women were equipped to farm season C which is the driest and most risky agricultural season of the year. Availability of produce at this time of year is scarce because few farmers are able to grow crops during season C, therefore LFW farmers had a competitive advantage to help them achieve the highest prices at market.



3: Increased Agricultural Productivity

Execution of this activity was achieved at (70%) due to the effects of climate change and Imboni cooperative has not yet received farm tools.

- Prior to the start of the LFW program in July 2021 the Imboni Gikomero Cooperative was farming on a small piece of swamp land and producing meagre quantities of produce for local markets. Icyizere Ruhanga Cooperative was practising subsistence farming on a small section of their land. During this agricultural year, both cooperatives maximised the potential of their own farmland and achieved higher rates of agricultural production for commercial markets.
- In season A 2021, the Icyizere Ruhanga cooperative was equipped with farm tools including: iron fork hoes, crocodile steel hoe heads, soes, sickles, spades, head pans, watering cans, rakes and sprayers. Both Icyizere Ruhanga and Imboni Gikomero cooperative were supported with improved seeds for season A, B and C which are heat and drought tolerant. Seeds include: tomatoes, french beans, bell pepper, onions, carrots, cabbages, eggplants, beans and Irish potatoes. In order to increase production, both cooperatives received fertilizers across the 3 seasons including organic compost, NPK 17-17-17, DAP and UREA.
- Agricultural productivity is dependent on the women acquiring skills to help them deliver agribusiness effectively. During the pandemic when it was not possible to gather in large groups, we conducted Training of Trainers (ToTs) courses targeting 12 women from Icyizere Ruhanga Cooperative and 8 women from Imboni Gikomero Cooperative. The women were trained to establish demonstrations on climate-smart agriculture, including farmer field schools to help educate the rest of the cooperative members. These women delivered the training to further cooperative members through demonstrations in small groups at the farms. In this way skills training and therefore agricultural productivity of our LFW program was not hindered by the pandemic. ToT students and LFW farmers were trained on the following topics:
 - Planning an agriculture season
 - Climate Smart Farming
 - Farm Preparation
 - Planting & Growing
 - Harvest and post harvest handling
 - Market linkage/ Access
- Environmental shocks are an obstacle to agricultural productivity. During the drought of October/November 2021 crops were destroyed at many farms across Rwanda. However, at LFW farms, the diversity of produce grown at any time, ensures that each crop variety responds differently to shocks and some crops prove more resilient than others. Due to climate smart farming techniques, 70% of LFW produce survived the droughts of 2021. A consistent level of agricultural productivity was maintained which could be considered impressive under the circumstances, as well as a reliable income for the women and their families, at a time when farm produce elsewhere across the country was being completely wiped out.

- During July 2021 – June 2022 the LFW program helped to close Rwanda’s gender gap in agricultural productivity by giving women access to land, tools, agricultural inputs and training, on equal terms to their male counterparts.



4: Food Security

Execution of this activity was achieved at (30%) because many children of our LFW farmers are still in the ‘at risk’ nutritional categories. We have not yet run trainings on food security.

- Through produce grown at the household gardens on the farms, cooperative members were provided with a wide range of nutrient rich vegetables. The boost in nutrition and food security had a significant impact on children’s health within the families of LFW farmers. Using the government’s Nutritional Status formula (MUAC) as a measure, 2 children moved from red to yellow and 7 moved from yellow to green at Imboni Gikomero Cooperative, 7 children moved from red to yellow and 4 from yellow to green at Icyizere Ruhanga Cooperative.

Nutritional status (using MUAC) of 52 children of cooperative members aged between 6-59 months old as measured through nutrition indicators at local health centres

Green - the patient is not malnourished

Yellow - the patient may be at risk of malnutrition

Red - patient is severely malnourished and at risk of death

Names of cooperative	2020-21			Total	2021 – 2022 (first year of LFW program)			Total
	Green	Yellow	Red		Green	Yellow	Red	
Icyizere Ruhanga Cooperative	5	8	23	36	9	11	16	36
Imboni Gikomero Cooperative	7	7	2	16	14	2	0	16
Total	12	15	25	52	23	13	16	52

- Food reserves in the home are an important strategy to help maintain food security throughout the lean season in Rwanda. During the first year of LFW implementation, cooperative members built up food reserves in their own homes by storing produce from the household gardens (long lasting produce includes onions, potatoes, maize, beans) combined with surplus produce from commercial crops at the farms.

	Total amount of food taken home per each woman in Kg		
	Season A	Season B	Crop Varieties
Icyizere Ruhanga Cooperative	83.5	113	Irish Potatoes, Beans, carrots, onions, Tomatoes, French beans, Maize, cabbages and bell pepper
Imboni Gikomero Cooperative	81	151	Irish Potatoes, Maize, beans, onions, tomatoes, french beans

- Building on the success of the Girinka program (one cow per poor family for poverty reduction and reducing malnutrition), the Imboni Gikomero Cooperative received 1 cow which was already living on their newly acquired farmland. The women have been using the cow milk to supplement the diet of family members and for sale at the local market. The cow dung is being used for organic compost on the farm. In year 2 of the LFW program we will expand numbers of livestock on the farms. Icyizere Ruhanga cooperative will receive 2 cows and Imboni Gikomero will receive a second cow.
- During the pandemic vulnerable families in the community were supported with food supplies from LFW farms.
- The boost in nutrition has helped to achieve better health for 6 LFW cooperative members who are HIV positive.



5: Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment

Execution of this activity was achieved at (50%) because some indicators are longer-term goals which will be pursued throughout the forthcoming years of the LFW program

- Members of all cooperatives had joined VSLAs (Village Savings and Loans Associations) putting them in a position to save and borrow money. Ubudehe category A and B is typically characterised by individuals who do not have any savings. As of June 2022, the average total saving of each woman is now 30,000 Rwf.
- From April 2022 onwards, each Imboni cooperative member started to save 1500 Rwf monthly through the long-term savings scheme "EJOHEZA" while only 5 members of Icyizere Ruhanga cooperative started saving 1000 Rwf monthly through the scheme.
- After 20 women participated in training on market access, market research and market negotiation, the women established working relationships with hotels, local wholesale suppliers, 3 export companies (SOUK, RW-AGRI GROUP, GASHORA FARMS) and 2 local companies (Zucchini Basket, RW-AGRI GROUP). As landowners the women's self confidence has increased and they are able to bargain for competitive market prices and make financial decisions such as who is the best client to work with.
- Members of both cooperatives have been awarded leadership positions in the wider community, Head of Sector, Head of the Village & membership of CNF Rwanda - the National Women's Council, including roles liaising with government on matters concerning women's health, representation for women farmers in Rusoro sector and in the whole of Gasabo District.

- Through attending the 'Training of Trainers' course, 20 women have taken roles as teachers and educators by sharing the LFW curriculum and skills learned with a further 38 women, and capacity to teach new LFW cooperatives and community members in the future.
- Men in the community were engaged as allies and co-beneficiaries in the LFW program, 10 male family members of the Icyizere women, and 5 male family members of the Imboni women supported work at the farms, one in the position as a security guard at the Icyizere farm, and other male family members helped with land preparation, carrying heavy tools, and laboursome tasks such as spraying the crops



6: Environmental Conservation and Sustainable Land Use

Execution of this activity was achieved at (80%)

- All LFW farmers undertook training modules on climate change and how to mitigate its effects through climate smart farming
- Agroforestry work at Icyizere Ruhanga cooperative included planting 145 avocado trees (Hass variety) and 273 Markhamia trees. The avocado trees provide additional income through forthcoming avocado sales and help to promote biodiversity on the farms. Markhamia branches act as a windbreaker to prevent soil erosion and provide shade, Markhamia roots help to retain water in the soil. The tree-planting contributes to the ongoing efforts by the Government of Rwanda to achieve the target of covering 30% of the country with forests to address climate change.

- One of Rwanda's climate change adaptation strategies is the shift from rain fed agriculture to irrigation systems, or a combination of both. The Icyizere farmland proved to be most suited to the installation of a borehole. Technicians worked over a period of 2 months to drill the solar powered bore hole and install the pump. The borehole has the capacity to channel 1.5 cubic meters of water per hour and can pump up to six hours per day. This has enabled the Icyizere Ruhanga cooperative to shift from rain-fed agriculture to modern irrigated farming. Imboni Gikomero cooperative is preparing to have a rainwater harvesting system installed to enable the women to farm all seasons and adapt to unpredicted drought.
- Through climate smart farming techniques the women are now equipped to farm season C which is the driest and most risky agricultural season of the year. Availability of produce at this time of year is scarce because few farmers are able to grow crops during season C, therefore produce from season C achieves the highest prices at market.
- Farms proved resilient during Rwanda's prolonged drought in Oct/Nov 2021, when many farmers' crops were completely destroyed across the country, 75% LFW crops survived.
- Over the past year, soil fertility on the farms has been improved through crop rotation, application of organic compost, and homemade compost from vermiculture.
- Imboni Cooperative won an award for becoming the 3rd cooperative in the country to employ climate smart farming practices, and the first cooperative in Kigali City.



MAJOR CHALLENGES

Major Challenges July 2021 – June 2022				
Challenge	Planned response	Next steps / action to be taken (<i>in the coming year</i>)	Timeline	Responsible
COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and lockdowns affected large gatherings	Conduct Training of Trainers in small groups so the women can train other cooperative members in small groups	Should Rwanda be affected by another wave of the pandemic, systems are already in place to continue running LFW efficiently	Year 2 of implementation	LOWF Staff
Water scarcity in October/November 2021 due to climate change resulted in the loss of up to 30% of farm crops	The bore hole, and water harvesting systems are already in place and operating efficiently	Sensitize cooperative members on climate change, adaptation and mitigation methods within agricultural practise	Year 2 of implementation	LOWF Staff
Diseases and pests	Training of cooperative members on application of pesticide and fungicide	Training of women on soil sterilization and continued training on application of pesticide and fungicide	Year 2 of implementation	LOWF Staff
Long walk distance of Cooperative Icyizere to the farm	We are researching transport options including access to a vehicle for transport, or use of motorcycle taxis	Providing transportation to women who are attending farm activities	Year 2 of implementation	LOWF and Gasabo District
Long delays in land acquisition process due to unclear land borders & renewal of land title deeds	Continue working with LFW field staff and LFW's Rwandan lawyer to keep good communications with families and individuals who are selling the land	Partner with relevant institutions like Rwanda Land use Management Authority to make all steps related to land purchase smooth and faster	Year 2 of implementation	LOWF management