



This is the *Mukomeze* Foundation's third newsletter. The *Mukomeze* Foundation aims to improve the standard of life of women and girls who survived rape and other forms of sexual violence during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The newsletter will be published at least twice a year.

About *Mukomeze*...

Mukomeze is a word from the language spoken in Rwanda (Eastern Africa). It means 'empower her'. During the 100 days of genocide in Rwanda, approximately 250,000 to 500,000 girls and women (especially Tutsi) were brutally raped and/or suffered from other forms of sexual violence. The survivors are still living with the repercussions. Traumatized and stigmatized in their environment, and often experiencing weakened health, they lead an existence without much hope. About 70% of the survivors are infected with HIV. It is, however, not too late to bring hope in the lives of these courageous women and girls.

This is why the *Mukomeze* Foundation was created. This foundation has a positive impact on the lives of the women by providing them with physical, psychological, material and spiritual support, and in this way contributing to their empowerment. This work is conducted in collaboration with the partner organization in Rwanda called *Solace Ministries*.



On this picture you see women at work in the fruit yard in Nyanza. This fruit yard has been made possible with the support of E.ON.

5 November 2009: Listening to survivors

On 5 November 2009, a meeting will be held at Tilburg University, which will reflect on the current situation of women and men who survived rape during the Rwandan genocide.

Anne-Marie de Brouwer (co-editor of the book "The Men Who Killed Me" - see below - and chair of *Mukomeze*) and Rianne Letschert (research director at Intervict) travelled to Rwanda in July 2009. During the meeting, they will speak about their conversations with survivors whose testimonies are included in the book. Etienne Ruvebana (PhD researcher on international law at the University of Groningen and lecturer at Kigali Independent University, Rwanda) will speak about the situation in Rwanda (before, during and after the genocide).

In addition, a number of photos from the photo exhibition (see next column) will be on display (these can be viewed at the meeting venue from October 27th onwards). After the meeting, everyone will have a chance to drum along with the Breda djembé band Djembasa. You are cordially invited!

Where? Zwijsen building, Tilburg University (Warandelaan 2, Tilburg).
What time? 4 p.m. - 6 p.m. (reception by Djembasa at 3:45 p.m.) *Language?* English.

You can already read a report of the conversations held with the survivors in July 2009 in Rwanda on the website www.menwhokilledme.com

Book "The Men Who Killed Me"



The book (€20) is available on 5 November 2009 (see above) or through *Mukomeze* (info@mukomeze.nl). The authors' royalties of the book will go to *Mukomeze*. **The revenues to date will already provide at least one year's support to the survivors whose testimonies are included in the book.**

For more information, see: www.menwhokilledme.com

Did you know...

...that your gifts to *Mukomeze* are tax deductible if you pay taxes in the Netherlands? For more information visit the Dutch Revenue Authority site.

Photo exhibition "The Men Who Killed Me"

From 7 April till 4 July 2009, the photo exhibition "The Men Who Killed Me" - consisting of 20 black and white photographs on cotton by photographer Samer Muscati - travelled around the Netherlands. Thanks to the high level of interest, the exhibition will be extended for an additional year.

From 25 November 2009 to 25 January 2010, the exhibition will be on display at Cordaid, on the Lutherse Burgwal 10 in The Hague, during working hours. The exhibition's next stops are yet to be decided. If you are interested in hosting the exhibition, we would be pleased to hear from you.

The photos from the exhibition can also be purchased. The proceeds will go to the Mukomeze Foundation. The prices are €45 (20x30 cm), €80 (40x60 cm) or €135 (60x90 cm). You can order the photos (on cotton) by sending an e-mail to info@mukomeze.nl.

Christmas cards made by Rwandan women

You can now order Christmas and new year's cards at *Mukomeze*. The cards are made by Rwandan women survivors of the genocide, who support themselves by producing them. The cards contain illustrations made of banana leaves. One set of 5 cards costs €10.

Help the Rwandan women
by buying the book, a photo or cards!

Questions or comments? Email us at info@mukomeze.nl

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter send an email to the same address



Projects in Nyanza and Runda

Around 3000 fruit trees have now been planted in the agricultural project in Nyanza, south-Rwanda (sponsored by E.ON; see photo on p. 1). The trees planted include mango, papaya, lime and orange. They will now need time to mature. The agricultural project in Runda (sponsored by Rabobank Hilvarenbeek-Oisterwijk and Duncan Management BV) has, amongst others, seen the purchase of rabbits and the construction of a barn for rabbits, chickens and goats. These animals are being bred. Both projects generate work and income for survivors of the genocide.

Mukomeze in the Flair

Mukomeze is the Flair Fund project for October. The €1000 which *Mukomeze* will receive from the Flair Fund (and which will be doubled by Cordaid) will be spent on a project assisting women in rural areas with selling agricultural produce to women in cities. Since women in the cities lack merchandise and women in rural areas lack a market to sell to, fruitful cooperation should be the result. In the week of 26 October 2009, Flair will carry an article on the *Mukomeze* Foundation.

How you can help

During the 15th commemoration of the Rwandan genocide, on 7 April 2009, testimonials of survivors were read aloud. During the genocide, many women were raped, often by different perpetrators, and they are now HIV positive. Despite all their suffering they did not give up hope and they have dreams and plans for the future.

Mukomeze is in search of sponsors to support these women so that they can care of themselves and of their children. The sponsorship is organized through the partner organization *Solace Ministries*, which knows the situation and needs of the women. **By donating €1 a day, so €30 a month, you can help women to make their dreams come true. In this case, you sponsor one woman. Of course, you can also make a smaller monthly donation. Your donation will then, together with other donations, make up for a sponsorship.** Go to our website www.mukomeze.nl (under 'donations') to see how you can make a donation.

Why an individual sponsorship? For *Mukomeze*, these sponsorships are an important instrument to help as many Rwandan women as possible. You will then structurally support one of these women who badly need help. For the woman, such a sponsorship is also a sign that someone (outside Rwanda) cares about them.

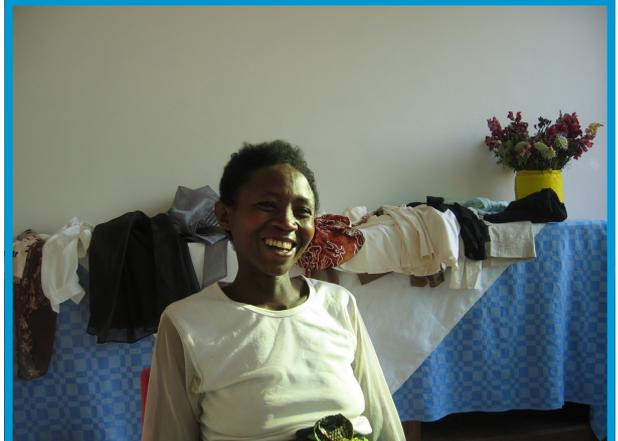
If you become a sponsor, you will receive a picture of the woman you sponsor, information about her background and current situation, and maximally twice a year an overview of the progress made. This overview is written by *Solace Ministries*. If you wish to contact the woman concerned you could, for example, exchange letters with her.

Other possibilities to help are:

- A single or a monthly donation of your choice;
- Support for a specific project, such as building houses or cultivating the land (in particular of interest to companies);
- Buying handmade products, such as Christmas cards with illustrations made from banana leaves, fruit baskets and peace baskets made by the survivors of sexual violence;
- Asking relatives and friends to donate money to the *Mukomeze* Foundation instead of asking people to buy presents for your anniversaries or other special occasions.

Contact details Foundation *Mukomeze* (secretariat):

Kolenbranderstraat 31 • 4813 CM • Breda • info@mukomeze.nl
www.mukomeze.nl • bank account number 1435.58.927



Marie Louise smiling!

Marie Louise is a survivor of sexual violence. She is infected with HIV and has four children in her care. She is also the face of *Mukomeze* (see picture on top left). A year ago, she was able to do little more than cry. Now, a year later, with the aid of two sponsors, she's able to smile again (see picture above). She now has a kitchen, is able to buy clothes again and has tools to work the land. She is taking good care of herself and her children again. Thanks to the sponsorship Marie Louise has a future again!

Agenda 2009

For the remainder of 2009, the following activities are planned:

- *6 October*: Presentation at the Rotary Club Eindhoven Noord;
- *5 November*: Meeting in Tilburg on survivors of the Rwandan genocide;
- *18 November*: Presentation at the Vrouwengilde (women's guild) in Dongen;
- *25 November 2009 - 25 January 2010*: Photo exhibition "The Men Who Killed Me" at Cordaid in The Hague, including lunchtime lecture on November 26th.

For more detailed information about these activities and meetings, see the *Mukomeze* website.

Invite us...

We are happy to give presentations about the work we do to help Rwandan survivors of sexual violence. Send us an e-mail at info@mukomeze.nl in case you want to know more!

**Make a difference:
Support a Rwandan woman!!**

Questions or comments? Email us at info@mukomeze.nl

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter send an email to the same address