



This is the fourth newsletter of the *Mukomeze* Foundation. 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 two to three times 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*.



Photo from the photo-exhibition “The Men Who Killed Me”: Marie Louise with her four children in their home.

Dutch translation “The Men Who Killed Me”

Good news! The English version of the book *The Men Who Killed Me*, with testimonials of survivors of the Rwandan genocide, will be translated to Dutch and published by Wolf Legal Publisher. The Dutch version will be released around april - june 2010.



The English version of the book (€20) is of course still available via *Mukomeze* (info@mukomeze.nl). The authors’ royalties of the book will go to *Mukomeze*. The revenues till date already provide support to the survivors whose testimonials are included in the book.

For more information, see: www.menwhokilledme.com.

Singing monument against sexual violence

In light of the annual Holocaust Day, violence against women was commemorated through a singing monument on January 26, 2010. The event took place in Theaters Tilburg. The Gregorian Schola Karolus Magnus from Nijmegen sang old Gregorian songs, alternated with contemporary stories of abuse of women. Testimonials from Rwandan survivors of sexual violence were used in the lyrics. The book *The Men Who Killed Me* was used as a source for the songs.

Sale Christmas cards and peace baskets

The sale of Christmas cards and peace baskets went well and we were able to sell a vast amount of them. Because of the sales we can help Rwandan women like Marie Louise (see photo above). The sales of cards and peace baskets will of course continue. Check out the website for more information: www.mukomeze.nl.

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. Due to the high level of interest, the exhibition can still be seen in other places in the Netherlands.

From 25 November 2009 to 10 February 2010, the exhibition was on display at Cordaid in The Hague. The exhibition was opened on 26 November with a lunch meeting at Cordaid. *Mukomeze* delivered a presentation about the impact testifying has had on the survivors’ lives (whose testimonials are included in the book *The Men Who Killed Me*). In addition, the testimonial of Pascasie (included in the abovementioned book) was read out loud.

The exhibition is currently on display at the International Criminal Court (ICC), probably until the end of April. The exhibition’s next stops are yet to be decided. If you are interested in hosting the exhibition, or if you know someone who would be interested, we would be pleased to hear from you.

The photos from the exhibition can also be purchased. On the Mukomeze website you can find several of them. 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.

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

Or become a sponsor!

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

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter send an email to info@mukomeze.nl



Projects: education and agriculture

Through the *Mukomeze* Foundation five Rwandan women will have the opportunity to study at an university. This is made financially possible by the Westeinde Foundation. All five women are victims of sexual violence; either they experienced it themselves, or their mothers died due to the consequences of sexual violence, often because of AIDS. The sponsorship provides, besides enrollment in university, in the basic conditions needed (accommodation, food and travel costs). Furthermore, E.ON agreed, after first setting up a fruit yard in Nyanza (south Rwanda), to extend and enlarge this project. This help will benefit four communities in Nyanza; a total of 3,500 fruit trees will be planted (see photo below).

Vacancy general board member Fundraising

The *Mukomeze* Foundation is looking for a general board member with expertise/interest in fundraising. In case of interest, please contact us: info@mukomeze.nl.

How you can help

During the 15th commemoration of the Rwandan genocide, on 7 April 2009, testimonials of survivors were read aloud in different places around the world. 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 take care of themselves and 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/eng) 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 a sign that someone 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.

Contactdetails Mukomeze Foundation (secretariat):

Kolenbranderstraat 31 • 4813 CM • Breda • The Netherlands
info@mukomeze.nl • www.mukomeze.nl/eng
 Bank account number: 1435.58.927
 IBAN/SEPA code: NL95 RABO 0143558927/SWIFT code: RABONL2U.



Sewing and knitting machines for women

The *Derde Wereld Werkplaats* (Third World Workplace) revised 15 sewing machines and 5 knitting machines. They also supplied fabrics, buttons, zippers and spare parts. These were all sent to our partner organization in Rwanda. With these machines the women can make clothes and earn a living with it to provide for themselves and their families. Working together furthermore gives these women the opportunity to support each other in dealing with their trauma. Thus, the supply of the knitting and sewing machines gives them and their children hope for the future.

Meeting UvT and KVG Dongen

On 5 November 2009 a meeting was held at Tilburg University, which reflected on the current situation of women and men who survived rape during the Rwandan genocide. Some personal stories of Rwandan survivors of the genocide from the book *The Men Who Killed Me* were discussed. After the meeting everybody could drum along with djembe band Djembasa from Breda.

On Wednesday 18 November 2009 *Mukomeze* delivered a lecture at the Katholieke Vrouwen Gilde (Catholic Women Guild). Attention was paid to the period leading up to the genocide in Rwanda and to the work of *Mukomeze*. Handicrafts were sold after the lecture.

Invite us...

We are happy to give a presentation 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!

16th Commemoration of the Rwandan genocide

On 8 April 2010, the Rwandan genocide will be commemorated in the Zwijsegebouw of Tilburg University. For more information, see <http://www.tilburguniversity.nl/services/dsz/csv/rwanda2010>. *Mukomeze* will be there with a stand selling cards, baskets and providing information about the work we do.

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