



HELPING HEART FAMILY RWANDA .

2024 - 2025 REPORT



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Helping Heart Family Rwanda (HHFR) continues to stand at the forefront of efforts to empower vulnerable communities across Rwanda, with a strong focus on promoting and protecting the rights of children, women, and families facing adversity. Through an integrated approach combining education, healthcare, legal support, skills development, GBV prevention, and community awareness, HHFR has made significant strides in fostering positive change and building sustainable livelihoods.

This Annual Report highlights HHFR's unwavering dedication to its mission, as reflected in the broad range of impactful activities carried out during the 2024–2025 period. Key among these are the innovative projects designed to directly support and uplift vulnerable children and families, including:

- Tumurere Yige (Let's Raise Them to Learn): An education-focused initiative ensuring access to quality education for vulnerable children.
- Ubutabera Butangirira mu Muryango (Justice Begins at Home): A legal empowerment and community sensitization program aimed at promoting family justice and preventing violence.
- Fighting Drug Abuse Among Young People: Targeted interventions aimed at preventing drug abuse, raising awareness, and promoting healthier futures for youth.

Through these programs and others, HHFR has positively impacted the lives of countless individuals, contributing to their empowerment, protection, and development.

Crucially, HHFR's success is rooted in strong collaboration with local authorities, partner organizations, and community members. These partnerships have played an instrumental role in amplifying the reach, sustainability, and effectiveness of HHFR's initiatives.

As HHFR looks to the future, it remains steadfast in its commitment to expand its programs, deepen partnerships, and respond to emerging challenges facing vulnerable groups. With a clear focus on empowerment, inclusivity, and sustainable development, HHFR is well-positioned to continue making a lasting difference in the lives of those it serves.

FOREWORD



RWIKAZA Gentil

Executive director of Helping Heart
Family Rwanda

It is with great pride and immense gratitude that we present the Annual Report of Helping Heart Family Rwanda (HHFR) for the year 2024-2025. This report not only chronicles our organization's remarkable achievements but also serves as a testament to the unwavering commitment, dedication, and resilience of our team, partners, and the communities we serve.

First and foremost, we express our profound gratitude to God Almighty, whose divine guidance and blessings have been the foundation upon which our mission stands. It is through His grace that we have been able to navigate the challenges and seize opportunities to make a lasting impact on the lives of the vulnerable populations within our communities.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to Helping Heart Family Belgium for their steadfast support and partnership. Their unwavering belief in our cause and their generous contributions have been instrumental in propelling our initiatives forward, enabling us to reach new heights and touch countless lives.

Our deepest gratitude goes to the Districts of Huye and Gasabo, whose unwavering support and collaboration have been pivotal in our efforts. Their trust and commitment to our shared vision have paved the way for effective implementation of our programs, ensuring that our initiatives resonate with the needs and aspirations of the local communities.

Moreover, we are indebted to Never Again Rwanda, Certa Foundation, Unicefrwanda for their invaluable partnership and commitment to empowering vulnerable communities. Their provision of facilities, mentorship opportunities, and unwavering support has been a driving force behind the success of our initiatives, enabling us to create lasting positive change.

As we reflect on the achievements outlined in this report, we are filled with a profound sense of humility and gratitude for the incredible journey we have embarked upon. It is through the collective efforts of our dedicated team, partners, donors, and the resilience of the communities we serve that we have been able to make a tangible difference in the lives of countless individuals.

We invite you to join us on this transformative journey, as we continue to forge ahead, driven by our shared commitment to empowering vulnerable communities, fostering sustainable livelihoods, and creating a brighter future for all.

Activity 1: A Visit Kinyinya Teen mothers

Report on Visit to Teen Mothers in Kinyinya Sector

Date of Visit: July 24

Location: Kagugu Cell, Kinyinya Sector, Gasabo District

Introduction

On July 24, we visited ten teen mothers in Kinyinya Sector to motivate them as the new school year approaches. Our goal was to encourage their educational aspirations and identify those committed to continuing their education, whether through traditional schooling or vocational training.

Key Findings

During our visit, we assessed the mothers' readiness to return to school:

-School Readiness: Five expressed interest in traditional schooling, but ultimately only three committed to starting this year.

-Interest in TVET Courses: The remaining mothers preferred Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), believing it would provide practical skills and better job prospects.

Motivational Insights

The discussions revealed several key motivations:

1. Practical Skills Development: TVET offers immediate skills that enhance employability.
2. Flexibility: Many mothers value the adaptable learning schedules of TVET programs.
3. Supportive Environment: They seek educational settings that acknowledge their unique challenges as young parents.

Expected Outcomes

By supporting these teen mothers in their educational journeys, we aim to achieve:

- Enhanced Educational Attainment: Access to both traditional and vocational education to empower them for better job opportunities.
- Increased Self-Sufficiency: Education as a pathway to financial independence, enabling them to support their families.
- Community Empowerment: Educated mothers can uplift their communities by serving as positive role models.

Conclusion

Our visit underscored the need for educational pathways tailored to the circumstances of these young mothers. While not all opted for traditional schooling, their interest in TVET presents an opportunity for targeted support. We are committed to helping them navigate their educational journeys and create brighter futures.

Recommendations

- Facilitate Access to TVET Programs: Partner with local vocational training centers to provide relevant options.
- Ongoing Support and Counseling: Establish a mentorship program for guidance and encouragement.
- Community Awareness Programs: Organize campaigns to promote the importance of education for teen mothers.

Investing in their education can transform their lives and inspire others in the community.



Activity 2: 80 citizens from Ngoma sector in Huye district received medical insurance



In this photo: The Vice Mayor in charge of Social Affairs for Huye District, together with the Executive Secretary of Ngoma Sector, receiving medical insurance (Mutuelle de Santé) for 80 vulnerable citizens from the Executive Director of Helping Heart Family Rwanda.

On September 24, 2024, Helping Heart Family Rwanda carried out an impactful support initiative in Huye District, Ngoma Sector. The activity focused on strengthening the well-being of vulnerable families by improving access to health services and education key pillars for sustainable development and social integration.

Through this initiative, we provided community-based health insurance (Mutuelle de Santé) to 80 vulnerable citizens, including families of over 40 children currently supported by Helping Heart Family Rwanda. These families face economic hardships that limit their ability to access essential services, making this intervention a critical step toward safeguarding their health and stability.

In addition to health insurance, the children supported in Huye District have previously received school materials and educational support, ensuring they can pursue primary and secondary education without interruption. By removing barriers to education, we aim to empower these young individuals to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to reach their full potential.

This activity was attended by the Vice Mayor in charge of Social Affairs for Huye District and the Executive Secretary of Ngoma Sector, whose presence reflects the strong partnership between Helping Heart Family Rwanda and local authorities in promoting child protection, health, and education.

We believe that access to health care is fundamental to building resilient families, and that health must always be a top priority, especially for vulnerable children. Our efforts contribute to the holistic development of these young people, enabling them to thrive in society and break cycles of poverty.

Helping Heart Family Rwanda remains committed to advancing the rights and well-being of vulnerable children through integrated support in health, education, and family empowerment, ensuring that no child is left behind.

Activity 3: Former street children under Tumurere Yize Program recieved school materials as new school year approaches of 2024-2025



Report on Visit to Huye Tumurere Yize Program

Date of Visit: September 7

Location: Huye, Tumurere Yize Program

Introduction

On September 7, we visited the Huye Tumurere Yize Program, which supports former street children by providing civic education, computer skills, religion, and other essential courses every Saturday. The goal is to help these children reintegrate into society and become valuable community members.

Activities and Donations

During our visit, we engaged with the children and facilitated the following:

- Sanitary Materials: Each child received essential hygiene products.
- School Supplies: Notebooks, pens, and other materials were distributed to enhance their learning.
- Clothing and Footwear: New clothes and shoes were provided to ensure the children are appropriately dressed for school.

Impact

These donations significantly impact the children by:

- Enhancing Learning: School supplies create a better learning environment.
- Promoting Health: Sanitary materials support hygiene and well-being.
- Boosting Confidence: New clothing fosters a sense of dignity and belonging.

Conclusion

The visit underscored the importance of community support in transforming the lives of former street children. We encourage ongoing engagement with the "Tumurere Yize" Program and greater community involvement to further support these children's educational journeys.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this visit impactful!



Activity 4: Awareness Campaign on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) for Local Leaders in Gasabo District, Kinyinya Sector.



Group photo after the campaign in Kinyinya Sector/ Gasabo District. In group photo the leaders in from are Rwikaza Gentil, POD district assistant, Director General in certa foundation, Kinyinya sector Executive Secretary, Law expert from certa and participant behind and around them.
Campaign Report: November 25, 2024

On November 25, 2024, Helping Heart Family Rwanda proudly partnered with Certa Foundation and Gasabo District to host a significant event focused on raising awareness about the prevention of gender-based violence, particularly against children. The event took place at the Kinyinya Main Hall and was attended by nearly 500 individuals, including community members, local leaders, and security officials.

The campaign aimed to educate attendees on the various forms of gender-based violence, prevention strategies, and the mechanisms for reporting such incidents. Through engaging presentations and discussions, participants gained valuable insights into recognizing and addressing these critical issues within their communities.

The collaboration with Certa Foundation and the support from Gasabo District were instrumental in the success of this event. Together, we fostered a spirit of community engagement and commitment to safeguarding the well-being of our children.

We are grateful to all who participated and contributed to the success of this important campaign, reinforcing our shared mission to create a safer environment for everyone.



Activity 5: 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence.



Helping Heart Family Rwanda's Executive Director explaining Gender-Based Violence to the students of GS Kagarama during the 16 Days of Activism campaign.

As part of the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, Helping Heart Family Rwanda launched an awareness campaign on November 26, 2024, at GS Kagarama, located in Kagugu Cell, Kinyinya Sector, Gasabo District. This initiative aimed to educate and empower young people and educators with critical knowledge on Gender-Based Violence (GBV), its impact, and the necessary steps for prevention and response.

During this session, we engaged with over 1,000 students and their teachers, fostering meaningful discussions on the definition, forms, and consequences of GBV. The training also emphasized the importance of preserving evidence in cases of GBV, ensuring that survivors and witnesses understand the legal and procedural aspects of reporting incidents. By providing clear, practical guidance, we aimed to strengthen the role of schools as safe spaces where students and staff can actively participate in combating GBV.

Through interactive discussions, real-life case studies, and participatory activities, students were encouraged to challenge harmful gender norms, speak out against GBV, and advocate for a safer learning environment. Teachers were also equipped with knowledge on how to identify GBV cases, support survivors, and contribute to creating a protective school environment.

This activity marked an important step in promoting gender equality, reinforcing child protection mechanisms, and empowering youth to take action against GBV within their schools and communities. Helping Heart Family Rwanda remains committed to continuing these efforts, ensuring that young people have the knowledge and confidence to stand up against gender-based violence.



Activity 6: Empowering Communities to Combat GBV: Launch of 16 Days of Activism in Nyarutarama.



Photo: Community members participating in the GBV awareness session during the 16 Days of Activism in Nyarutarama, November 26, 2024..

As part of our ongoing efforts to combat Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and promote community awareness, Helping Heart Family Rwanda officially launched the 16 Days of Activism campaign on November 26, 2024. The campaign commenced with a GBV Awareness session held at Inteko y'Abaturage in Nyarutarama Cell, Remera Sector, bringing together over 100 community members, including local leaders, youth, and parents.

The session aimed to educate participants on the fundamental concepts of Gender-Based Violence, its different forms, root causes, and the profound impact it has on individuals and communities. Special emphasis was placed on the importance of evidence preservation, a crucial aspect in ensuring that GBV cases are properly documented and that survivors can access justice. Participants were guided through practical steps on how to recognize, report, and support survivors while safeguarding critical evidence that can be used in legal proceedings.

Through an interactive and participatory approach, the session encouraged open dialogue, allowing community members to share their experiences, ask questions, and deepen their understanding of GBV-related issues. The engagement demonstrated a strong commitment from the community to be active agents in the fight against GBV and to support efforts aimed at creating a safer environment for all.

This activity marks the beginning of a series of impactful initiatives planned throughout the 16 Days of Activism, reinforcing our mission to advocate for gender equality, justice, and the protection of human rights in Rwanda.



Activity 7: GBV Awareness Campaign at G.S Kagugu: Empowering Students and Teachers to Take Action.



Photo: Students of G.S Kagugu participating in the GBV awareness session during the 16 Days of Activism, November 27, 2024.

On November 27, 2024, as part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, Helping Heart Family Rwanda conducted an awareness campaign at G.S Kagugu in Kinyinya Sector, Gasabo District, educating over 2,000 students and their teachers on Gender-Based Violence (GBV), its forms, consequences, and prevention measures. The session included interactive discussions, real-life case studies, and participatory activities that encouraged students to challenge harmful gender norms, speak out against GBV, and advocate for safer school environments. Teachers were also equipped with knowledge on identifying GBV cases, supporting survivors, and fostering a protective learning space. Emphasizing the importance of preserving evidence and understanding reporting procedures, the training strengthened the role of schools in combating GBV. Helping Heart Family Rwanda remains committed to promoting gender equality, child protection, and empowering youth to take action against GBV in their communities.



Activity 8: Empowering Youth to End Gender-Based Violence: Awareness Session at SOS Rwanda Kagugu.



Photo: Students of SOS Rwanda Kagugu participating in the GBV awareness session during the 16 Days of Activism, December 2, 2024.4.

On December 2, 2024, continuing the fight against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) during the 16 Days of Activism, Helping Heart Family Rwanda conducted an awareness session at SOS Rwanda Kagugu. Our Executive Director, Rwikaza Gentil, engaged 450 students in discussions on GBV, its reporting mechanisms, and prevention strategies. The session emphasized the critical role of youth in ending violence, equipping them with the knowledge and confidence to challenge harmful norms, support survivors, and advocate for safer communities. Helping Heart Family Rwanda remains committed to promoting gender equality and empowering young people as key agents of change in the fight against GBV.



Activity 9: Honoring Our Efforts: Gasabo District Recognizes Helping Heart Family Rwanda's Fight Against GBV



Photo: ED Rwikaza Gentil receiving a certificate of recognition from the Deputy District Executive Secretary of Gasabo District for Helping Heart Family Rwanda's efforts during the 16 Days of Activism Against GBV, December 10, 2024.

On December 10th, Helping Heart Family Rwanda was honored to be recognized by Gasabo District for our impactful contributions during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. The certificate awarded to us serves as a testament to our unwavering dedication to educating communities, empowering youth, and advocating for effective GBV prevention and reporting mechanisms. This recognition reinforces our commitment to fostering safer environments, supporting survivors, and working collectively to build families and communities free from violence. We remain steadfast in our mission to promote gender equality and protect the rights of vulnerable individuals.



Activity 10: Bringing Joy and Hope: Christmas Celebration with Tumurere Yize Children



Photo: Children from the Tumurere Yize program enjoying the Christmas celebration organized by Helping Heart Family Rwanda at Never Again Huye, December 21, 2024.

On December 21, 2024, Helping Heart Family Rwanda (HHF Rwanda) hosted a heartwarming Christmas celebration for children under the Tumurere Yize program at Never Again Huye. The day was filled with laughter, joy, and togetherness as we engaged in fun games, shared meals, and gifted over 80 children, reminding them that they are valued, loved, and cherished.

The smiles on their faces and the warmth in their hearts truly reflected the spirit of the season. We extend our deepest gratitude to Huye District and Never Again Rwanda for their unwavering support and partnership in making this celebration and many others possible. Their collaboration plays a vital role in ensuring that these children receive the care, opportunities, and love they deserve, especially during the holiday season.

Helping Heart Family Rwanda remains committed to nurturing and empowering vulnerable children, ensuring that no child is forgotten, and every child experiences the joy of belonging and hope for a brighter future.



Activity 11: Strengthening Families Through Legal Education on the New Persons and Family Law



Photo: Helping Heart Family Rwanda's team engaging with women in Kinyinya Sector, listening to their challenges, and providing legal guidance on the Persons and Family Law, February 18, 2025.

On February 18, 2025, Helping Heart Family Rwanda, through Inteko Zabaturange, conducted a legal awareness session in Gasabo District, Kinyinya Sector, Murama Cell, Ngaruyinka Village. The session focused on educating the community about the newly enacted law governing Persons and Families, ensuring that individuals understand their legal rights and responsibilities.

By providing this knowledge, we aim to empower families to make informed decisions that promote stability, protect children's rights, and prevent legal disputes. During the session, we not only explained key provisions of the law but also actively listened to women facing legal and family-related challenges, offering them guidance and support in resolving their issues.

This initiative aligns with our broader mission to strengthen families, promote access to justice, and foster a legally aware society. We remain committed to supporting communities through legal education and advocacy, ensuring that every individual—especially vulnerable women—has the knowledge and assistance needed to navigate legal matters effectively.



Activity 12: Shaping Ambassadors for Change: Tumurere Yize Program, Students in Action.



Photo: ED Rwikaza Gentil with the Helping Heart Family team and Riviera High School students at the Rusororo Youth Centre, February 22, 2025.

On 22nd February 2025, at the Rusororo Youth Centre in Gasabo District, Rusororo Sector, Helping Heart Family Rwanda had the honor of welcoming students from Riviera High School as part of the Tumurere Yize program. This program empowers students to become ambassadors in their communities, promoting positive change and raising awareness on critical issues. The visit was a powerful moment of learning and engagement, centered on the dangers of drug abuse and the rights of all children to education.

As part of our commitment to empowering young people, we believe that awareness and prevention are essential in addressing drug abuse and ensuring every child has the opportunity to thrive. We are deeply grateful to the students for their generosity in donating clothes, sanitation essentials (such as soap, body oils, shoes, and more) to support children in need. Their kindness and dedication to making a difference inspire us all.



Activity 13: Strengthening Youth-Led NGOs: Two-Day Training on the New NGO Law through Youth Advocate Network



On March 20-21, 2025, Helping Heart Family Rwanda, through the Youth Advocate Network (YAN) and with the support of UNICEF Rwanda, organised a two-day training at UNICEF Rwanda Headquarters. The training brought together young advocates and representatives from 15 Youth-Led NGOs, focusing on equipping them with essential knowledge of the newly enacted Law n° 058/2024 of 20/06/2024 governing non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The purpose of this training was to empower youth-led initiatives with a clear understanding of the legal requirements, responsibilities, and procedures necessary to operate in full compliance with the new legislation. By promoting legal literacy among young advocates, we aim to ensure that youth-led NGOs are well-positioned to drive sustainable, impactful change within their communities.

Throughout the two days, participants explored the key provisions of the new law, learned practical steps for strengthening their organisations' governance and accountability, and engaged in interactive discussions to address challenges and questions related to legal compliance.





This initiative is aligned with our mission to promote youth-led advocacy, build responsible civil society actors, and foster a legal aware generation of young leaders. Helping Heart Family Rwanda, together with the Youth Advocate Network, remain committed to supporting young organisations to comply with national laws, amplify their voices, and contribute meaningfully to Rwanda's development.



Activity 14: Empowering Families Through Legal Awareness in Gasabo District.



Photo: Community members attending Inteko Zabaturage during the legal awareness session conducted by Helping Heart Family Rwanda in Gasabo District, Kinyinya Sector, Gasharu Cell, Gatara Village on May 5, 2025.

On 05/5, 2025, Helping Heart Family Rwanda, through Inteko Zabaturange, conducted a legal awareness session in Gasabo District, Kinyinya Sector, Gasharu Cell, Gatara Village. The session aimed to educate the community on the newly enacted law governing Persons and Families, ensuring they understand their legal rights and responsibilities.

The session covered key topics, including:

- Children's Civil Registration – Emphasizing the right to legal identity for access to essential services.
- Marriage – Informing couples about legal requirements, rights, and responsibilities.
- Donations & Succession – Clarifying inheritance rights to prevent disputes.
- Family Law & GBV Prevention – Highlighting protections against domestic violence.

We also engaged with women facing legal challenges, offering guidance and support. This initiative aligns with our mission to promote legal awareness, strengthen families, and ensure access to justice for all, especially vulnerable women.



Activity 15: The Launch of Pathways to Resilience: Beyond Rehab

March 8, 2025.



Photo: ED Rwikaza Gentil explaining the initiative of 'Pathways to Resilience: Beyond Rehab'.

On March 8, 2025, Helping Heart Family Rwanda was honored to launch the Pathways to Resilience: Beyond Rehab project. This initiative aims to support young people reintegrating into society after completing rehabilitation programs. The project was established in response to concerning statistics indicating that 60% of individuals who leave rehabilitation centers relapse into drug use within one year, and 10% return to rehabilitation. Recognizing this critical issue, we are committed to continuous follow-up, psychosocial support, and employment assistance to help these youths build sustainable and drug-free lives.

The project commenced in Gasabo District, particularly in Kinyinya Sector, which has a significant number of youths in rehabilitation centers. In partnership with Kinyinya Sector authorities, we welcomed 160 youths from Iwawa Rehabilitation Center and Nyamagabe Rehabilitation Center to take part in the initiative. This marks a crucial step in addressing the challenges faced by rehabilitated individuals as they transition back into their communities.

Objectives of the Project

1. Post-Rehabilitation Follow-Up: Ensuring continuous support to prevent relapse.
2. Psychosocial Support: Providing counseling and mentorship to facilitate emotional and mental well-being.
3. Employment Facilitation: Assisting youth in securing meaningful employment opportunities to promote economic independence.
4. Community Reintegration: Encouraging social acceptance and active participation in community development.





Next Steps

- Strengthen partnerships with local authorities, organizations, and employers to create sustainable support networks.
- Develop structured mentorship programs involving trained professionals and community leaders.
- Organize vocational training and skills development workshops tailored to the needs of rehabilitated youth.
- Conduct periodic evaluations to assess the impact of the program and improve service delivery.

The launch of Pathways to Resilience: Beyond Rehab marks a significant milestone in Helping Heart Family Rwanda's commitment to supporting vulnerable youth and fostering long-term recovery. With continuous collaboration and dedicated efforts, we aim to break the cycle of relapse and empower these young individuals to lead productive and fulfilling lives.



Activity 16: Empowering Families to Protect Children: HHFR's Legal Awareness Session in Kinyinya



Photo: ED Rwikaza Gentil teaching community members of Kinyinya Sector about family laws and child protection during Helping Heart Family Rwanda's legal awareness session, April 1, 2025.

On April 1st, 2025, Helping Heart Family Rwanda (HHFR) reaffirmed its commitment to promoting children's rights by educating families and communities about the laws that govern family life and child protection. Through an engaging legal awareness session held during Inteko z'Abaturage in Binunga Village, Kinyinya Sector of Gasabo District, HHFR empowered residents with knowledge that directly contributes to creating safer, more respectful households where children can thrive.

The session focused on building community understanding of legal principles that uphold peace, harmony, and protection within families. Participants were guided through the key provisions of the new law governing persons and families, with special emphasis on how the law protects vulnerable members of society, particularly children who are at risk of abuse, neglect, and gender-based violence.





HHFR facilitators highlighted the crucial role of parents, guardians, and community members in safeguarding children's rights. They explained how the legal framework promotes not only peaceful coexistence among family members but also enforces the duty to prevent and report violence, ensuring every child grows up in a safe, supportive environment.

To foster open dialogue and deeper understanding, HHFR provided space for participants to ask questions. The interactive session allowed the community to raise real-life concerns, which were addressed with practical, rights-based guidance by the HHFR team.

This initiative significantly contributed to improving legal literacy at the community level, reinforcing the message that protecting children starts within the family. By promoting awareness of legal responsibilities and the rights of every child, HHFR continues to advocate for a society where all children are protected, valued, and given the opportunity to reach their full potential.



Activity 17: HHFR Strengthening Families to Protect Children's Rights, Community Awareness in Gasabo.



On April 29, 2025, Helping Heart Family Rwanda (HHFR) joined the residents of Rusenyi Village, Murama Cell, Kinyinya Sector, Gasabo District during a special session of Inteko y'Abaturage, to stand together for stronger families and safer communities for children.

During this impactful community gathering, HHFR led an open, engaging discussion focused on promoting the rights of children by addressing the root causes of family instability, especially the effects of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). The team explained how violence within families threatens the well-being and development of children, leaving them vulnerable to abuse, neglect, and discrimination.

HHFR emphasized the importance of peaceful coexistence within families, highlighting how strong, stable, and legally recognized families play a crucial role in protecting children's rights. The organization provided essential information on:

- The laws governing persons and families in Rwanda, with a special focus on the rights of women and children.
- The impact of gender-based violence on families, especially on the most vulnerable members children.
- The importance of legal marriage, explaining that only marriages registered through civil authorities are recognized under Rwandan law.





When marriages are not legally registered, children from those unions often face challenges related to inheritance, identity, social protection, and access to basic rights. Informal or illegal marriages increase the risk of family conflict, legal uncertainty, and often expose children to neglect or abuse.

Empowering the Community to Act

HHFR encouraged all couples to legalize their marriages to create stable, lawful families where children can thrive. The session equipped participants with:

- ✓ Practical steps to prevent and respond to GBV.
- ✓ Legal knowledge to promote family harmony and protection for children.
- ✓ Motivation to build families where every child is valued, protected, and given the opportunity to reach their full potential.

By the end of the session, community members felt more informed, empowered, and motivated to take action not only to protect women but to ensure every child grows up in a safe, lawful, and loving environment.

Activity 18: Promoting Children's Rights Through Peaceful Families HHFR in Action.



On May 20, 2025, Helping Heart Family Rwanda (HHFR) took an active role in protecting children's rights by participating in Inteko y'Abaturage, a vital community gathering held in Rusenyi Village, Kagugu Cell, Kinyinya Sector, Gasabo District.

At HHFR, we believe that every child deserves to grow up in a peaceful, stable, and loving family. That's why during this gathering, our team emphasized the urgent need to resolve family conflicts peacefully before they escalate to separation or divorce.

We reminded the community that while divorce is a legal option, it often leaves deep emotional and psychological scars on children. Many young lives are disrupted when parents part ways without first exploring peaceful alternatives. The trauma from family breakdowns can limit a child's potential and violate their fundamental right to grow up in a safe and supportive environment.





To prevent this, HHFR encouraged families to embrace:

- ✓ Dialogue and open communication
- ✓ Community-based mediation
- ✓ Access to counseling and legal guidance

By promoting Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), we aim to reduce avoidable divorces and safeguard children's wellbeing. Our message was clear, protecting children's rights begins at home, by ensuring parents have the tools to solve disagreements constructively.

The impact was powerful. Participants shared how the session opened their eyes to new solutions and restored hope for their families. Many left feeling legally informed, emotionally strengthened, and committed to building healthier family relationships — all key pillars in upholding children's rights.

This initiative is at the heart of HHFR's mission:

- 💡 Empower families with knowledge
- 💡 Protect children from harm caused by family conflicts
- 💡 Build a future where every child feels safe, supported, and heard



Activity 19: Legal Awareness and Family Rights Education Session Report



On 27th May 2025, Helping Heart Family Rwanda, in collaboration with local authorities, conducted a legal awareness session during the General Community Assembly (Inteko Rusange y'Abaturage) held in Giheka Village, Kagugu Cell, Kinyinya Sector, Gasabo District. The event was attended by over 500 community members, demonstrating a strong interest in understanding their legal rights and family-related responsibilities.

The session focused on educating participants about the recently enacted Law Governing Persons and the Family (Law N° 71/2024 of 26/06/2024). Its primary aim was to empower families to build stable and legally compliant households, protect children's rights, and reduce conflicts caused by misunderstandings of the law.

Community members received detailed explanations of key legal provisions, including those governing marriage, birth registration, and the prevention of gender-based violence (GBV). The session included an interactive Q&A segment where participants raised concerns about family law, and women facing legal challenges were offered guidance on peaceful dispute resolution and access to justice.





Emphasis was placed on the importance of birth registration to ensure every child's legal identity and access to rights. Participants were also informed about the risks associated with informal unions and unregistered children, encouraging adherence to the law to protect family assets and social harmony.

Local leaders, including the Cell Leader of Kagugu, took part in the session and acknowledged Helping Heart Family Rwanda's valuable role in promoting legal literacy and community empowerment.

This initiative reflects Helping Heart Family Rwanda's ongoing commitment to fostering legal awareness, child protection, and family stability through education and advocacy. We will continue working with local authorities and partners to support communities in understanding and exercising their legal rights.



Activity 21: KWIBUKA 31 COMMEMORATION REPORT



Ntarama, Bugesera District | 07th June 2025

On 07th June 2025, Helping Heart Family Rwanda, in collaboration with the Youth Advocate Network (YAN), organized a meaningful KWIBUKA 31 commemoration activity, under the valuable support of UNICEF Rwanda. This initiative served as a platform for young people to honor the memory of the victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, to reflect, and to promote unity, resilience, and peacebuilding among Rwandan youth.

Key Activities

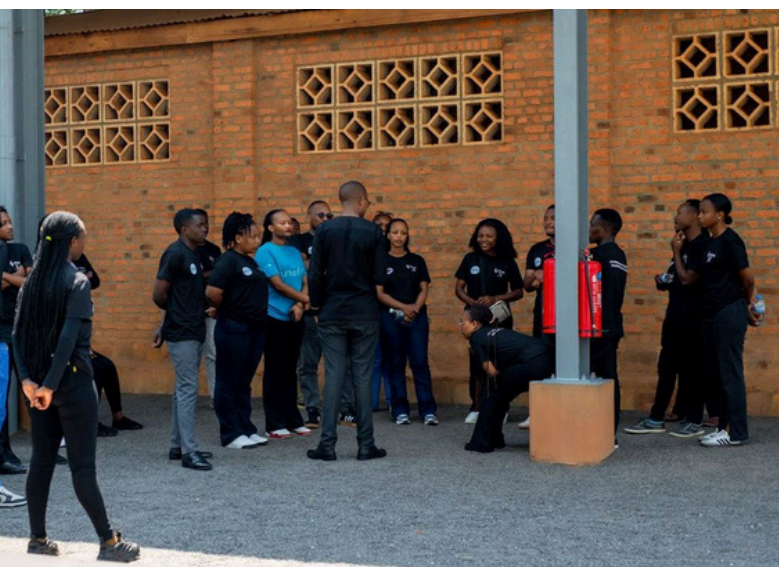
Visit to Ntarama Genocide Memorial - Bugesera District

The day began with a guided visit to the Ntarama Genocide Memorial, a site that holds the remains and memories of thousands of innocent lives lost during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. This solemn visit offered participants, especially the youth, an opportunity for deep reflection and learning about Rwanda's painful history.

The activity was conducted under the theme:

"Learning Our History, Shaping Our Future"

We believe that for Rwanda to continue building a peaceful and resilient nation, young people must understand the truth of our past. Through remembrance, we can uphold unity, prevent future atrocities, and honor the legacy of those we lost.





Kuremera (Solidarity Support) for a Genocide Survivor

In alignment with the values of compassion and social responsibility, participants visited and supported a Genocide survivor residing in Ntarama. This gesture reflects our unwavering commitment to standing in solidarity with survivors, contributing to the rebuilding of lives, and acknowledging the courage and strength of those who continue to inspire us.

The Kwibuka 31 activity at Ntarama was more than just a remembrance event. It was a moment to reinforce our collective responsibility as young Rwandans to:

- ✓ Learn from our tragic past
- ✓ Honor the memory of the victims and resilience of survivors
- ✓ Strengthen unity and peace among communities
- ✓ Commit ourselves to shaping a better, inclusive future

Together, we are shaping a brighter future.
May God bless the work of your hands.



Activity 21: Tumurere Yize Awareness Session on Preventing School Dropout.



On June 10, 2025, Helping Heart Family Rwanda, through the Tumurere Yize Program, organized an advocacy and legal awareness session in Gasabo District, Kinyinya Sector, Kagugu Cell, at Saint Dominique School. The session brought together Local Leaders from different villages of Kinyinya Sector, along with school principals and education stakeholders.

The focus of this initiative was to remind local authorities of their critical role in preventing school dropout, particularly among children from vulnerable families. We emphasized that ensuring every child stays in school is not only a community responsibility but a legal and moral obligation aimed at safeguarding children's rights.

During the session, students of Saint Dominique School were also engaged and encouraged to take part in protecting their peers by reporting any cases of school dropout they witness. This reflects the core message of our Tumurere Yize Program, which promotes community involvement to ensure that every child, regardless of background, has access to education.



In addition to this community discussion, Helping Heart Family Rwanda held a private session with local leaders to raise awareness about existing laws that protect children and families. We urged them to read and familiarize themselves with these legal provisions to better advocate for and protect the rights of children within their respective communities.



This activity is part of our broader mission to strengthen child protection systems, promote education, and empower communities through legal knowledge. We remain committed to working closely with leaders, schools, and families to advance the rights of children, prevent school dropout, and create a society where every child can thrive.



Activity 22: Restoring Hope and Economic Empowerment for Teenage Mothers – IJABO Group Support Activity.



This photo shows members of IJABO Group smiling with joy after receiving pigs as part of Helping Heart Family Rwanda's support to empower young mothers. Their happy faces reflect hope for a better future for themselves and their children.

On May 21, 2025, Helping Heart Family Rwanda, with the generous support of Rise and Live Organization, conducted an economic empowerment activity in Huye District, Ngoma Sector, Kaburemera Cell, focusing on supporting vulnerable teenage mothers.

The initiative targeted IJABO Group, composed of 18 young girls who became mothers at an early age. The activity aimed to restore their self-confidence, strengthen their ability to care for their children, and promote economic self-reliance within their families. As part of this effort, Helping Heart Family Rwanda provided 10 pigs to the group, purchased with financial support exceeding 500,000 Rwandan Francs, donated by Ms. Akaliza Laurette Annely, a published author and a passionate advocate for women's empowerment, especially young mothers.

By offering these resources, we aim to empower young mothers to build sustainable livelihoods, protect their children's welfare, and reduce the socio-economic challenges associated with teenage pregnancy. Additionally, these girls have been supported to open SACCO bank accounts, and through group savings, they have collectively saved over 160,000 Rwandan Francs, demonstrating their commitment to improving their economic situation.





This initiative aligns with our broader mission to promote children's rights, support vulnerable families, and foster self-reliant communities. Helping Heart Family Rwanda remains committed to working with partners to provide teenage mothers with the tools, knowledge, and resources they need to overcome obstacles and create brighter futures for themselves and their children.



PHOTO OF MS. AKALIZA LAURETTE ANNELY



Activity 23: REPORT ON FAMILY CONFLICT RESOLUTION SESSION UNDER THE INITIATIVE “JUSTICE BEGINS IN THE FAMILY”



This photo shows some of the families who attended our 'Justice Begins in the Family' session in Kinyinya Sector, Gasabo District. Through this program, Helping Heart Family Rwanda is committed to supporting parents in solving conflicts peacefully, because when families are stable, children grow up safe, happy, and free from violence.

Date: 18th June 2025

Location: Kinyinya Sector, Gasabo District

Organized by: Helping Heart Family Rwanda (HHFR) in collaboration with Kinyinya Sector Leadership

At Helping Heart Family Rwanda (HHFR), we believe that a peaceful home is the foundation for a child's safety, education, and well-being. When parents live in harmony, children grow up in an environment free from violence, fear, and emotional harm. That is why, through our unique program “Justice Begins in the Family”, we focus on resolving family conflicts as a direct strategy to protect children's rights.

In line with this mission, on 18th June 2025, HHFR, in partnership with Kinyinya Sector leadership, organized a targeted family conflict resolution session in Kinyinya Sector, Gasabo District. The session aimed to provide legal guidance, psychosocial support, and peaceful dialogue spaces for families facing conflict.





Key Components of the Session

- ✓ **One-on-One Counseling and Mediation:** Each of the 10 families participated in confidential sessions where both partners shared their concerns, listened to one another, and explored practical ways to rebuild trust and resolve conflicts peacefully.
- ✓ **Legal Education:** Families received simplified explanations of family-related laws, helping them understand their rights, obligations, and how to prevent disputes from escalating into violence or legal battles.
- ✓ **Child Protection Emphasis:** The session reinforced that preventing violence and strengthening relationships within families directly contributes to children's safety, mental health, and academic success. We reminded parents that their home environment shapes their child's future.





The session produced encouraging results. Many families acknowledged their past mistakes, expressed a desire to improve their relationships, and committed to building peaceful, supportive homes for their children.

Couples shared that the session opened their eyes to the root causes of their conflicts, which often stem from misunderstandings or lack of communication. By having this safe space to talk, reflect, and receive guidance, they regained hope for restoring love and peace in their homes.

Leaders from Kinyinya Sector expressed their gratitude to Helping Heart Family Rwanda for this valuable initiative, noting that addressing family conflicts through dialogue, rather than through the courts, strengthens communities, protects children, and reduces social tension.

“Justice Begins in the Family” is more than just a program it is a practical solution to prevent violence, promote children's rights, and empower families to live in peace. By supporting 10 families in Kinyinya Sector, Gasabo District, Helping Heart Family Rwanda has taken another step toward building safer communities where children can grow up with hope and security.

We extend our sincere thanks to the local leadership of Kinyinya Sector for their partnership and commitment to child protection and family well-being.

At Helping Heart Family Rwanda, we believe that when parents solve their problems, children live without violence, fear, or neglect and every child deserves that chance.

The session ran from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Together, we continue building peaceful families for a brighter future for Rwanda's children.



Activity 24: Ubutabera Buhera mu Muryango: Helping Heart Family Rwanda Advocates for Family Justice and Child Protection at the Gasabo District Exhibition.



Photo of the Executive Director of Helping Heart Family Rwanda receiving a Certificate of Appreciation from the Chairperson of JADF Gasabo.

On June 23–25, 2025, Helping Heart Family Rwanda participated in the Partners' Exhibition organized by Gasabo District in collaboration with JADF. The event, held at the Gasabo District headquarters, brought together different organizations and development partners working to promote community welfare in Gasabo.

Throughout the three days, Helping Heart Family Rwanda showcased its core programs and services that focus on protecting children's rights, empowering vulnerable families, and promoting access to justice. We temporarily relocated our services to the exhibition site, ensuring that residents visiting the event could directly access legal counseling, information, and support.





Photo: The Executive Director of Helping Heart Family Rwanda explaining various HHFR projects to Executive Administrator (DEA) of Gasabo District and other local leaders.

Importantly, the exhibition provided a unique opportunity for our team to explain in detail the concept of “Ubutabera Buhera mu Muryango” (Justice Begins Within the Family), a key initiative of Helping Heart Family Rwanda. We engaged with community members, local leaders, and other visitors, highlighting how justice, legal awareness, and conflict resolution at the family level are essential foundations for building stronger, more resilient communities.

We also shared information about other initiatives such as Tumurere Yize, which focuses on preventing school dropout among vulnerable children by promoting education and protection at both family and community levels.

Over the course of the exhibition, we interacted with many residents, listened to their challenges, and connected them to available legal support and services. Our stand served as a learning point for individuals to understand the importance of family-centered justice, child protection, and community responsibility.

In recognition of our impactful work and collaboration, Helping Heart Family Rwanda received a Certificate of Appreciation from Gasabo District. This recognition reflects the district’s appreciation for our ongoing contribution to promoting justice, child protection, and strengthening families within Gasabo.



This activity aligns with our broader mission to empower communities, enhance access to justice, and ensure every child and family has the opportunity to live in a safe, informed, and supportive environment. Helping Heart Family Rwanda remains committed to working closely with Gasabo District and all partners to build a more just, inclusive, and child-friendly society.

During the Gasabo District Partners' Exhibition, held from June 23 to 25, 2025, Helping Heart Family Rwanda (HHFR) had the opportunity to present its different programs and initiatives to local leaders, stakeholders, and the wider community. Special attention was given to the "Ubutabera Buhera mu Muryango" initiative, which promotes justice, legal awareness, and conflict prevention within families as a foundation for protecting children's rights and strengthening communities.

Following our presentation and community engagement during the exhibition, Helping Heart Family Rwanda was honored to be selected to share more about this initiative with the broader public through Radio Uwezo, a community radio station that reaches residents across Gasabo District and beyond.

Through this platform, HHFR will raise awareness on how families can serve as the first line of justice and protection for children, encouraging peaceful conflict resolution, respect for rights, and access to legal information. This opportunity aligns with our commitment to promote family-centered justice, child protection, and community empowerment across Rwanda.



As we reflect on the remarkable achievements captured within this annual report, we are filled with deep gratitude and an even stronger commitment to our mission. The journey has not been without challenges, yet it has also been marked by extraordinary triumphs and meaningful, lasting impact.

The success stories highlighted in these pages from the reintegration of street children into schools, to the empowerment of teen mothers, to the promotion of legal awareness and access to justice—are powerful reminders of the resilience that lives within our communities, and of the profound change that is possible when we act together with purpose and unity.

Every initiative launched, every partnership forged, and every life uplifted speaks to the incredible potential that emerges when communities come together under a shared vision. These achievements reaffirm our belief that collective action is not only powerful but essential in building a more just, inclusive, and hopeful society.

Looking ahead, we are emboldened by the knowledge that the work we have undertaken has laid the foundation for sustainable, long-term change. The seeds planted through our programs and advocacy will continue to bear fruit improving lives, strengthening families, and empowering future generations. It is our responsibility and privilege to nurture this progress, to invest in our communities with unwavering dedication, and to watch as hope, resilience, and opportunity flourish.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who have walked alongside us—our partners, donors, volunteers, and the resilient communities we serve. Your unwavering belief in our mission, your collaboration, and your generosity have been the driving force behind our progress. We are humbled by your trust, and inspired by your shared commitment to building brighter futures.

As we turn the page to the next chapter, we do so with renewed determination, steadfast resolve, and an unshakable belief in the potential of every individual to thrive. Together, we will continue to break down barriers, empower the marginalized, and create a world where opportunity, dignity, and justice are within reach for all.

In the words of Nelson Mandela: “It always seems impossible until it’s done.” Let us carry this spirit forward—and together, let us transform the impossible into reality, one life, one community, one step at a time.