2014 WOMEN’S DAY IN RWANDA
TOOLKIT FOR ACTION

Building on Achievements

Renewing our Commitment

Inspiring Change

Building on Achievements

Renewing our Commitment

Inspiring Change
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Introduction

Purpose of this Toolkit

This toolkit acts as a guide to provide a school or community with the materials needed to *Inspire Change* while leading a dynamic International Women’s Day Event in their community. The toolkit will be used by trained mobilizers that have attended a training of trainers conducted by Peace Corps Volunteers and Global Communities (GC). It engages boy and girls, men and women in a healthy and interactive discussion of why we celebrate IWD, how boys and girls women and men can support one another, and how people across Rwanda can inspire change and renew their commitment to gender equality for the future’s future.

Structure of the Toolkit

This document is organized into four sections:

- **Introduction** – gives information about this document.

- **Background** – gives information about the origins of Women’s Day.

- **Organizing for International Women’s Day** – gives ideas and instructions for activities that are linked to the theme of: “Building on Achievements and Renewing Commitment”. The activities under ‘Building on achievements’ (pages 3-7) and ‘Renewing the Commitment’ (pages 7-12) are meant to be completed before the Women’s Day celebration. While the activities under ‘Inspiring Change’ (pages 12-15) give tips on organizing a local event.

- **Definitions** – includes a simple overview of key terms related to gender, sex, and equity.

- **Sharing Your Feedback and Achievements** – gives contact information where you can send reports and photos about your events for International Women’s Day.
Background

History of International Women’s Day

International Women's Day has been observed since the early 1900's. The earliest celebrations were held in the United States between 1908 and 1910. The celebrations included marches in 1908, with over 15,000 women advocating for shorter hours in the workplace, equal pay with men, and for the right to vote.

In August 1910, the first Women’s Conference was held in Denmark to establish an International Women’s Day (IWD) and bridge the gap in gender equality. The conference had over 100 women participants from 17 countries. A woman named Clara Zetkin proposed the idea of IWD, suggesting that every year in every country there should be a celebration on the same day to advocate for women. With the approval of her proposal, IWD was born.

The first official celebrations for IWD took place in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland on March 19, 1911. More than one million women and men attended the IWD event. In 1913, IWD was officially moved to March 8th and this day has remained the global date for International Women's Day ever since.

IWD has become a global day of recognition and celebration across developed and developing countries. For many years the United Nations has held an annual IWD conference to coordinate international efforts for women's rights and participation in social, political and economic processes. In addition, civil society organisations and governments around the world recognize IWD on 8 March by organizing events that honour women's advancement while continuing to advocate for women’s equality in all aspects of life. At the community and family-level, IWD sees men honouring their mothers, partners, colleagues with appreciation and small gifts. This day is an important time to recognize the gains that women have achieved and the opportunities for further advances.

March 8th: Women’s Day

Each year on March 8th, thousands of events are held throughout the world to inspire women and celebrate achievements. This toolkit is designed to support local initiatives for IWD in Rwanda.
Why We Celebrate IWD in Rwanda

IWD is a day created to honor women in several ways, from general respect and appreciation of the role of women to a specific celebration of their participation in social, political, and economic activities. Today we have women presidents, women in parliament, girls going to university, and women making real choices for themselves, but that was not always the case in Rwanda and worldwide. International Women’s Day is a reminder of where women came from, where they are now, and what they can strive for in their futures. Women do have a choice in how they live their lives and they have a significant impact on their families and communities when they choose to stand up for themselves and the women around them. In Rwanda MIGEPROF begins a month long celebration of women and girls beginning with International Women’s Day on March 8. This day is to remember the role of women in the past and their ever evolving role in Rwandan society in the future.

The theme for the 2014 Women’s Day in Rwanda is: “BUILDING ON ACHIEVEMENTS AND RENEWING COMMITMENT”

The Benefits of a Local Event for IWD

This year, the IWD will be celebrated globally under the theme: “Inspiring change”. It encourages advocacy for women’s advancement everywhere in every way and calls for challenging the status quo for women's advancement and vigilance for inspiring positive change. In Rwanda, the adopted theme for International Women’s Day 2014 is: “Building on achievements and renewing commitment”. The IWD comes at a time when Rwanda is celebrating 20 years of Liberation, 20 years of commemoration of 1994 Genocide against Tutsi and 10 years anniversary for the establishment of Rwanda National Women’s Council.

“Think globally, act locally.” While this day is celebrated around the world it is important to celebrate at the most local level possible. It is at the local level that behavior change is possible. To celebrate IWD in a school or community means engaging boys and girls at the most basic level, from the bottom up not the top down. Beginning with a local event allows a community or school to take personal responsibility for creating and sustaining change.
Organizing for International Women’s Day

Activities to BUILDING ON ACHIEVEMENTS

You can carry out these activities during a regular group or club meeting as a way to reflect on the important things that both boys/men and girls/women. We recommend that you do these activities leading up to Women’s Day, but you can do them anytime you want to promote reflection and learning about gender.

Here are three activities to get started:

1 Celebrating the People in Our Lives

| Objective | To encourage awareness about the important people in our lives – especially women and girls. |
| Key Message | Let us recognize the important role and work of women and girls in our families, schools, and country. |

2 Songs, Poems, & Cheers

| Objective | To have fun celebrating the people in our lives. |
| Key Message: | Let us celebrate the things that women have already done, and the things that they can do, with our encouragement. |

3 In the Past, Present & Future

| Objective | To encourage the participants to think about the ways that they can support complimentarity. |
| Key Message: | Family and community life continues to change from one generation to the next. We can behave in ways that bring families closer and help everyone to reach their full potential. |
1 – Celebrating the People in Our Lives

Objective  To encourage awareness about the important people in our lives – especially women and girls.

Materials Needed  Flipchart (or scrap paper), Markers (or Chalkboard & Chalk)

Time  1 hour

1. Explain: this activity will give us a chance to talk about the people in our lives – especially our sisters, brothers, friends, mothers, fathers, grandparents and spouses (if applicable).

2. Working in pairs or in groups, ask the participants to:
   a. Talk about the people in your life and the things that you appreciate about them. Boys/Men should focus on sisters, mothers, grandmothers. Girls should focus on brothers, fathers, grandfathers. Depending on the age of the participants, they can also discuss their husbands/wives or friends.

3. Allow 10 minutes for discussion. While the groups are talking, prepare separate sheets of flipchart paper/chalkboard, write:
   a. The things we appreciate about sisters & brothers…
   b. The things we appreciate about friends (or spouses)…
   c. The things we appreciate about mothers & fathers…
   d. The things we appreciate about grandparents…

4. Invite the group to sit together in a circle and invite each person to share something that they appreciate about one of the groups and record the responses on the flipchart. Note: depending on the size of your group, you may want to go around the circle 2 or 3 times in order to have enough entries listed on each sheet of paper.

5. Discuss:
   a. How do you feel when you think about all of these special people?
     Possible responses:
     - I feel happy.
     - I feel loved.
     - I feel safe.
     - I feel like I belong.

   b. What kinds of things could you do to tell them how much you appreciate them in your life?
     Possible responses:
     - Say thank-you for what they have done.
     - Cook for them.
     - Spend time with them.
6. **Explain:** March 8th is Women’s Day in Rwanda. Provide background information to the members.

**Possible responses:**
- Women’s Day is a:
  - National and Internationally recognized celebration.
  - Day of thanks for women and girls held on/around March 8th.
  - Chance to promote, inspire, and encourage women.
- In Rwanda, the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) coordinates the national celebrations for Women’s Day.
- Since 1974, the Government of Rwanda and its Development Partners have been organizing special activities around Women’s Day.
- The theme for 2014 Women’s Day is: Inspire Change – Learn from the Past and Renew the Commitment.

7. **Discuss:**

a. Is there something special that we could do for the girls/women in our lives? If so, what would that be? Brainstorm a list of responses.

**Possible responses:**
- Organize a ceremony with testimonies, speeches, arts.
- Give an award or gift.
- Say thank-you for their work/contribution.
- Recognize women who have achieved great things.
- Invite motivational speakers to encourage women and girls.
- Bring attention to positive examples of men and boys in the community who support, and encourage women.

8. **Close the exercise by explaining** that the activities in the toolkit will help the group to be aware of and gain knowledge to organize local initiatives around the 2014 theme for International Women’s Day.

**Key message:** Let us recognize the important role and work of women and girls in our families, schools, and country.
2 – Songs, Poems, & Cheers

**Objective**
To have fun celebrating the people in our lives.

**Materials Needed**
None

**Time**
1 hour

1. Explain: this activity will give us a chance to celebrate the people in our lives – especially girls and women during the Women’s Day celebrations.

2. Invite members to remember the key points from the last activity – appreciating the people in our lives.

   - The people in our lives make us happy, and help us to feel loved, appreciated, and safe.
   - We should recognize, appreciate & thank the people in our lives – especially women and girls on Women’s Day.

3. Explain we are going to have a small competition: working in pairs or small groups, we will prepare songs, poems, or cheers to celebrate the people in our lives. The best poem, song, and cheer will be performed during the Women’s Day celebrations. Encourage dancing and clapping to make the presentation entertaining and fun.

4. Invite each pair/group to perform.

5. After each performance, try to highlight the positive messages and any actions that the poem, song, or cheer is asking us to take.

   **Possible actions might include:**
   - Appreciate the hard work that women and girls do.
   - Listen to and promote the ideas of women and girls.
   - Encourage women and girls to set goals and to achieve them.

6. As a group, choose for the best based on the loudest applause.

7. Invite the pair or group to teach the entire group the song or cheer so that the whole group can perform together during the Women’s Day celebration.

8. Close the activity by encouraging all members to use their songs, poems, and cheers both during and after Women’s Day as a way of showing their appreciation to others.

**Key message:** Let us celebrate the things that women have already done, and the things that they can do with our encouragement.
3 – In the Past, Present & Future

Objective
To encourage the participants to think about the ways that they can support complimentarity.

Materials Needed

Time 1 and 30 minutes.

1. Explain: this activity will give us a chance to think about how men and women, or girls and boys are complimenting each others’ efforts. We are going to talk about how we have done in the past, what we are doing now, and what we could do in the future.

2. Discuss:
   a. What do we mean by ‘complimentarity’?

   Possible responses:
   - Filling a gap for the well-being of the group or family.
   - Being aware of the challenges that others face.
   - Working together.
   - Sharing.
   - Appreciating the other person.
   - Make things easier for someone.

   b. How would you benefit from greater complimentarity?

   Possible responses:
   - The workload is shared.
   - The contributions of each person are valued.
   - Members build on each other’s strengths.
   - Relationships can grow stronger as people are more aware of each other.
   - Development is faster because of each person’s contribution.
   - There is less conflict as people work together.

3. Exercise: We are going to break into two groups, and discuss two questions.
   a. What can men/boys do to promote complimentarity? Women will answer this one.
   b. What kinds of things can women/girls do to promote complimentarity? Men will answer this one.

4. Divide the boys/men and girls/women into two different groups and allow time for discussion.

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1 This is a special term in Kinyarwanda that does not easily translated into English: Ubwuzuzanye.
5. Bring the group together and invite a member from each group to share highlights from their discussion.

**Possible responses:**
- Have the courage to challenge norms that limit development.
- Do not be afraid to be a role model to other men and other families.
- Have open communication and make plans and decisions together.
- Play an active role in the family’s well-being.

6. As a group, discuss:

   a. What kinds of things will promote greater complimentarity?

   b. If you feel comfortable, share one thing that you will do to support greater complimentarity. (Note, it could be actions at home, in the school, or community.

7. Close the activity by saying that our grandparents had a different family and school life than what we find today. Things have changed and can continue to change for the better – especially if we all make the commitment. Congratulate everyone for being so open minded and for identifying actions that they can take for better complimentarity.

**Key message:** Family and community life continues to change from one generation to the next. We can behave in ways that bring families closer and help everyone to reach their full potential.
Activities to RENEWING THE COMMITMENT

You can carry out these activities during a regular group or club meeting as a way to encourage individual and group actions for women and girls. We recommend that you do these activities leading up to Women’s Day, but you can do them anytime you want to organize local initiatives related to gender equity.

Here are three activities to get started:

1 Taking Down the Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>To promote awareness on the benefits of encouraging girls/women and boys/men to follow non-traditional career paths.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Message:</strong></td>
<td>Let us all look at ways that we can be more supportive to the people in our lives – especially when it means taking on non-traditional roles and jobs.</td>
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</table>

2 Dignified Rwandese

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>To promote self-awareness and self-development among girls/women and boys/men.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Message:</strong></td>
<td>We can inspire and encourage others to live with dignity.</td>
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3 Growing the Tree of Possibilities

<table>
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<th>Objective</th>
<th>To promote individual actions to appreciate, and support girls/women.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Key Message:</strong></td>
<td>Make a commitment to help others, especially girls and women to live with dignity.</td>
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1 – Taking-down the Barriers

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Materials Needed</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>2 hours.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Explain: in this session, we are going to look at different photos and you will have a chance to tell the story about what might be happening in this person’s life. Say:
   a. “I am going to hold up the photo of mason who is just starting their career. This mason graduated from the top of their class. It is a young person who is the head of a child-headed household. This person works full-time and earns a good monthly salary which is used to care for the younger brothers and sisters.”

2. Hold up the image on the next page, and ask the members:
   a. Are you surprised to see a picture of a girl? Why?

   Possible responses:
   - Yes because women:
     - Do not usually perform the work of a mason.
     - Are not usually responsible for caring for the entire family.

3. As a group discuss:
   a. What would happen if people refused to hire her as a mason?

   Possible responses:
   - Her brothers and sisters would not get an education.
   - The family would not have enough to eat and would likely not have enough food to eat.
   - Her talents would be not utilized, and people may have to hire masons who are not as skilled as her.

   b. Would it be fair if people to refuse to hire her?

   Possible responses:
   - No because:
     - She has shown that she is skilled at doing this work – she graduated at the top of her class.
     - She has a family that relies on her for support.
c. How would Rwanda as a country develop if we limit the jobs that girls/women perform?

Possible responses:
- Development would be slow if we rely only on one group.
- The country would miss out on half of the contributions of its citizens since half of the population is women.
- We would not fully benefit from the talents and skills of women.

d. What about limiting the jobs of boys/men?

Possible responses:
- We would place so much pressure on boys/men.
- Development would be slow if we only rely on one group.
- The country would miss out on half of the contributions of its citizens since half of the population is women.
- Some sectors would miss out on the talents and skills from men.

4. Explain:

a. In order for the country to develop, we need to remove the traditional limits that might have been there in the past and recognize that education, opportunity and hard work make any career path available to both boys/men and girls/women.

5. Explain: we are going to break into small groups to talk more about the way that men/boys and women/girls have been limited in the past, and to see how we might benefit from changing this. In our groups, we will discuss:

- What does the community expect from us?
- Do you think that these expectations are fair? Why or Why not?
- What can we do to challenge these norms?

6. Separate the men and women into different groups and ask them to respond to each question from their perspective. Allow 20-30 minutes for discussion.

7. Bring the groups together and invite each group to share highlights from the discussion.

Possible responses:
**What does the community expect from us?**
- Men: take care of all of the family’s financial needs; be a leader\(^2\); be strong; to not show emotion.
- Women: to be the helper\(^3\) in the home; be elegant; to be trustworthy and dependable.

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\(^2\) In the past, men were expected to be the head of the family and guide all of the decisions in the home – in Kinyarwanda he is referred to as ‘umutware’.

\(^3\) In the past, women were expected to be the heart of the home, keeping everything in order, taking care of the husband and children, and keeping all of the family’s secrets; – in Kinyarwanda she is referred to as ‘umufasha’.

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Possible responses:

Are the expectations fair?
- No because these norms:
  - Limit the family’s development.
  - Limit people’s development.

What can we do to challenge these norms?
- Have the courage to challenge norms that limit development.
- Do not be afraid to be a role model to other men and other families.
- Have open communication and make plans and decisions together.
- Play an active role in the family’s well-being.

8. Explain that we can, through our commitments and actions help men and women to take on new types of roles and jobs to develop our country. As a way of showing how change is possible, we will do a few role plays.

9. Role play:

   a. Ask the members to imagine that someone in the community was discouraging this girl during her studies in mechanics, saying that girls/women cannot do this kind of job. What would you say to defend this girl?

   b. Imagine that a husband or son is going to help his sisters to do some of the cooking, or washing dishes, and a visitor says that men/boys should not perform this kind of work. What would you say in defense of the husband or son?

10. Allow 2-3 minutes for each role play, and then invite the rest of the group to provide more suggestions for dealing with these types of situations.

11. Explain that each of us can be supportive to girls/women and even boys/men from making a bigger contribution in their families, schools, and communities.

12. Close the exercise by encouraging everyone to look at ways that they could be more supportive to the people in their lives – even if it means taking on non-traditional roles and jobs.

Key message: Let us all look at ways that we can be more supportive to the people in our lives – especially when it means taking on non-traditional roles and jobs.
2 – Dignified Rwandese

**Objective**  
To promote self-awareness and self-development among girls/women and boys/men.

**Materials Needed**  
Flipchart paper, markers, string, or white papers.

**Time**  
1 hour.

1. Explain: in this session, we are going to look at ourselves and what it would mean to be ‘a dignified Rwandese’. Keep in mind that being ‘dignified’ should also relate to the way that we appreciate and help the people who are important to us.

2. Brainstorm: Whether you are a boy/man or a girl/woman, what does it mean to live with dignity?

   Possible responses:
   - Have self-respect
   - To have pride in yourself
   - Aware of your importance
   - Confident

3. Discuss: Should we help Rwandans to live with dignity? Why or why no?

   Possible responses:
   - Yes because:
     - The Government of Rwanda is calling on all citizens to live with dignity.
     - When people believe in themselves, they will have hope for the future and their capacity to change things.
     - If each person lives with dignity, they can use their talents to develop themselves, their families, and the country.

4. Explain: in this exercise we are each going to design a traditional clothing with words or pictures on the fabric to show what it means to ‘live with dignity’. See the picture on the following page for an example.
Learning from the Past
Renewing our Commitment
Inspiring Change
5. Distribute one sheet of flipchart paper and markers to each person, and ask them to draw a piece of clothing so that if they hold the paper in front of them, it looks like they are ‘wearing’ the clothes. They can draw or write any words or pictures that have meaning for them.

6. Allow 15-20 minutes for this arts & crafts activity. (While the members are preparing their traditional clothing, stretch a long piece of string across the room.) As each person finishes their drawing, invite them to hang their ‘clothing’ on the clothes line.

7. Invite everyone to stand along the ‘clothesline’ and to admire the clothing of their dignified peers. Invite some of the members to explain their ‘designs’.

8. Ask the group to choose 2 or 3 of the best designs to showcase during the local celebration of women’s day.

9. Close the session by encouraging everyone to be more aware of their actions and to take steps each day to be a more dignified Rwandan – both for their own development, but for the development of their peers and the country as well.

Key message: We can inspire and encourage others to live with dignity.
3 – Growing the Tree of Possibilities

**Objective**  
To promote individual actions to appreciate, and support girls/ women.

**Materials Needed**  
Scrap papers, markers, scissors, and scotch tape or string.

**Time**  
1 hour.

1. Tape together several sheets of paper to create a giant tree trunk – the tree trunk can be set out on the floor or pasted onto a wall.

2. Explain: in this final session, we are going to focus our individual commitments toward our sisters, mothers, and grandmothers, and friends/wives (where age appropriate) in our lives. In this activity, we will grow a ‘Tree of Possibilities’ – see example below.
3. Invite everyone to gather around ‘the tree’.

4. Explain that our actions can help this tree to grow tall and strong, and through our efforts, we will also benefit from its shade, fruits, clean air and good soil.

5. Show some of the leaf designs on the following page.

6. Explain that we will create and attach leaves to this tree to explain our commitments and actions to help the girls/women in our lives to be strong and to reach their full potential. These can be things that we are already doing, or things that we plan to do.

7. Distribute papers, markers and explain that we can record only one action/leaf. Encourage people to be creative by coloring or adding interesting details to their leaves. (People can put their names on the leaf if they wish.)

8. Allow 20-30 minutes for arts and crafts.

9. Invite everyone to attach their ‘leaves’ to the tree and then gather everyone around to read through the commitments.

10. Congratulate everyone for their commitments, and explain that the members will attach their ‘leaves’ to a giant ‘tree’ that will be part of the Women’s Day celebrations.

11. Close the activity by encouraging members to assist each other to stay true to their commitments – not only to benefit girls/women but for their benefit as well.

Key message: Make a commitment to help others, especially girls and women to live with dignity.
Learning from the Past
Renewing our Commitment
Inspiring Change
“Inspiring Change” is the 2014 International theme for Women’s Day. You can carry out an event on Women’s Day: March 8th, or whatever day you choose to celebrate Women’s Day in your group. The event can include a large gathering at a school or community, or a smaller activity within a group or even in household.

1 Holding a Local Celebration for Women’s Day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>To appreciate, promote, and support girls/women in the community.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key Message:</td>
<td>By recognizing and celebrating the unlimited potential of women and girls, we help them to live with dignity and make an even better contribution to the development of our families, communities, and country.</td>
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Sample Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Program</th>
<th>Proposed Duration</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening Speeches and Prayer</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivational Speaker (Female Representative)</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song &amp; Dance to Honor Women &amp; Girls</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of the Tree of Possibilities &amp; Brief Speech</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Testimonies</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fashion Show</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivational Speaker : (Male Representative)</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing Remarks</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 – Hold a Local Celebration for Women’s Day

Community or School Event

With the agenda on the previous page, you have an entertaining program with a variety of entertainment and information that will make for an interesting 2.5 hour celebration for Women’s Day. The notes below provide more details about each of the proposed activities to assist you to be successful.

Opening Speeches (30 minutes)

The Opening Speeches should explain the following:

- The theme for the 2014 Women’s Day in Rwanda: Inspire Change: Learn from the Past and Renew the Commitment.

- The benefit of celebrating this event and making a commitment to help girls and women to reach their full potential:
  1. We need the effort of every Rwandan to help our families and countries to prosper.
  2. We all have mothers, aunties, sisters, grandmothers, friends who have helped us.
  3. Let us appreciate their efforts and do our part to encourage and support them during Women’s Day and even beyond.

Motivational Talks (30 minutes each)

The motivational speakers play an important role in inspiring and uplifting all the participants at the event. We recommend that you choose a male and female motivational speaker in order to find positive role models for all of the participants. Below are additional notes with criteria to help you identify speakers, orient them, and talking points to guide them.

Use the following criteria when choosing motivational speakers:

(1) Respected member of the group/school/community

(2) Someone who can be a role model to others – they do the things that you wish to promote, i.e. appreciate, support, and empower girls and women.

(3) Someone who can motivate others and give an uplifting and entertaining talk.
Orient the speaker in advance by explaining the purpose of the event, the expected audience, and how much time they will have for their talk. When they confirm their availability, give them a copy of the agenda, details about the venue and ask them to come on time.

Talking points for the Male Motivational Speaker:
(1) **Who are the women that you most admire and why?**
(2) **What can we learn from these women?**
(3) **What are boys/men doing to help women like this succeed? What else should they be doing?**

Talking points for the Female Motivational Speaker:
(1) **What is one of your biggest personal accomplishments?**
(2) **What kinds of things did you have to do to succeed?**
(3) **If you were to advise others, what would you say?**

**Song & Dance to Honor Women & Girls (10 minutes)**

The songs and dances include the songs and claps that the members developed during the ‘Learn from the Past’ activities. We recommend that you perform 2 or 3 during this part of the programme.

**Presentation of the Tree of Possibilities (15 minutes)**

The ‘Tree of Possibilities’ was an arts and crafts project from the ‘Renew the Commitment’ activities.

We recommend that you combine the ‘leaves’ from several groups (if you are holding a large event) and attach them with string on a tree outside, or on a giant paper tree trunk. Participants can attach them to the tree as they arrive at the event, or this can be organized by volunteers before the event begins. During this part of the program, invite someone to officially show the tree, and to give a short speech to talk about this ‘tree of possibilities’.
Testimonies (10 minutes)

During one of the ‘Building on achievements’ activities, the participants shared personal stories to acknowledge, appreciate, and celebrate girls and women. During this part of the program, you can invite both boys/men and girls/women to share their personal testimonies. This is an opportunity to recognize the special contribution of Sisters, Mothers, Grandmothers, Aunties, and Wives.

Fashion Show (10 minutes)

During one of the ‘Renewing the Commitment’ activities, the participants designed traditional clothing with words and pictures to show what it means to be a dignified Rwandese. Invite some of the participants to show their ‘traditional clothing’ and explain the kinds of attitudes and behaviors that are important for boys/men and girls/women.

Closing Remarks (15 minutes)

This last piece of the program should include highlights from the earlier speeches, testimonies, and arts and crafts developed for Women’s Day. It should include a note of thanks to the speakers and stakeholders who supported the event, and provide a positive message to inspire the participants of the event.

Small-group Events

Within local community groups, like savings groups, literacy centers, and cooperatives, it is possible to organize a similar Women’s Day event. For these types of smaller events, you could simplify the agenda and try to do small gestures to make the women feel special.
Annex:

Definitions

The following definitions were provided from Rwanda’s Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF). They are placed here to act as a guide for men, women, boys and girls to as background information.

Sex

Identifies the biological differences between men and women, such as women can give birth, and men provide sperm. Sex roles are universal.

Gender

Identifies the social relations between men and women. It refers to the relationship between men and women, boys and girls, and how this is socially constructed. Gender roles are dynamic and change over time.

Gender Equality

The result of the absence of discrimination on the basis of a person’s sex in opportunities and the equal allocation of resources or benefits or in access to services.

Gender Roles

Learned behaviors in a given society/community, or other special group, that condition which activities, tasks and responsibilities are perceived as male and female. Gender roles are affected by age, class, race, ethnicity, religion and by the geographical, economic and political environment. Changes in gender roles often occur in response to changing economic, natural or political circumstances, including development efforts. Both men and women play multiple roles in society.

Sharing Your Feedback and Achievements

We would like to hear from you.

If you organized an event for Women’s Day, please keep a record of how many people you have reached and what were the outcomes from the activities/event. We request that you use a simple attendance sheet⁴ to track the number of people reached and send us photos and details about your event. We also welcome any ideas and suggestions that you have to improve the toolkit. Send your feedback and suggestions to: info@rw.globalcommunities.org.

With thanks from the staff and volunteers at Global Communities/Rwanda and Peace Corps.

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⁴ On your attendance sheet, please record the name, sex (male/female), and sector & district for each person in attendance.