

**PROJECT PROPOSAL TO REDEEM AND EMPOWER HISTORICALLY
MARGINALIZED PEOPLE (“BATWA”) IN MUSANZE DISTRICT OF RWANDA**

INTRODUCTION

Transformational Ministries Inc. (TM), is a Non-Governmental Organization registered in Rwanda since 2011. We seek to reach out to the most vulnerable members of our society, the so-called “Historically Marginalized People” (hereafter HMP), namely Twa children, men and women in order to empower their families and communities. It works in 4 selected sectors of Musanze District in the Northern Province of Rwanda with hope to expand its activities into other Districts of Rwanda.

Our work focuses on education, agriculture, cow and evangelism programs. **Our vision is to make a difference and raise up the Twa to become full of hope with good values and to gain the ability to become self-sustaining people.**

BACKGROUND

The HMP are the oldest recorded inhabitants of the Great Lakes Region in Central Africa. They underscore that they have no origins elsewhere, but are indigenous to this region. Today they are found in the territories of Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and the Eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The estimated number of HMP living in Rwanda lies **between 33,000 and 35,000 people**, i.e. around 0.4% of Rwanda’s population.

Discrimination, extreme poverty and low levels of education have led to a sharp and rapid decrease of the HMP’s numbers.

The HMP have a distinct culture and traditionally have existed mainly by hunting and gathering. (This is like indigenous people around the world.) However, as a result of the creation of national parks and economic development (sometimes called [Eco-Terrorism](#)) they were displaced from the forest, thereby rendering them the poorest and most marginalized people of Rwandan society.

Many HMP turned to making and selling pottery to sustain themselves, leading to a new lifestyle and culture. However this is today threatened again because of land policies and decreased demand for pottery products, which cause many of them to turn to begging for survival.

The main problems HMP are facing include:

- lack of land for farming (and consequent hunger);
- lack of education;
- and inability to adjust to wider societal ways, and their ongoing inability to preserve their traditional habits and culture of hunting, especially in forests that are now national parks, such as for the protection of gorillas.

These make it difficult for them to find alternative ways to live. It is not possible to build a sustainable culture in such an environment where a group of people is left behind in their development.

A. AGRICULTURE

Politically, land is used as a tool for securing and exercising political patronage; economically, wealth generated from the land and land-based resources confer on the person who controls that land the ability to secure unchallenged control over other resources; and socially, the controllers of land and natural resources head Rwandan family and social structures and take a lead in decision-making.

Discrimination against the HMP is manifested in:

- Negative stereotyping : they are seen as backward, beggars, dirty, ignorant and immoral;
- Segregation: They are often not permitted to eat or drink with other people, sit on the same bench or draw water from wells at the same time. These attitudes are beginning to change but are widespread in rural areas.

Statement of the Key Problem and Goal of Transformational Ministries

Throughout the years, Transformational Ministries has sought to make a lasting impact on an impoverished group of people in the Northern Province of Rwanda and elsewhere in the country. With no land or legal status, they are living in absolute poverty.

In summary, they exist at the fringes of Rwandan society.

Several Key Problems

Key problems faced by this target group are:

- Lack of advocacy and leadership skills required to live and reduce levels of poverty;
- High levels of poverty;
- Limited access to basic needs and services are some of the consequences encountered among this group of Rwandans;
- Poor education about the benefits of political participation has led them not to own land. As a result, they are faced with no access to land for agricultural activities, including growing crops for their own consumption.

The HMP women and girls suffer multiple or multi-level forms of disadvantages and discrimination caused by lack of access to education, poverty, early marriage, lack of soap and good hygiene, lack of food and other things; all contributing to a self-administered violence of a different kind because of low self-esteem and unemployment.

Specific objectives

- To increase income and job opportunities for HMP families in selected areas by improving productivity and quality products.
- To improve the livelihoods of HMP families.
- To change the culture of begging among HMP families.

Transformational Ministries Inc. has started a project of agriculture to support HMP families in acquiring land; and has organized them to work together to cultivate crops, thereby generating income and contributing to the welfare of their families.

Transformational Ministries managed to purchase three pieces of land in different villages where HMP live to engage them in doing agriculture. We hope to expand the project to other villages, and need partners/supporters to buy more pieces of land, selected seeds and fertilizer.

Summary of Problems to be solved:

In order for sustainable change to take place, it is essential that the following be achieved:

- ✓ Transfer of knowledge: understanding the importance of education.
- ✓ Education about Land ownership as enjoyed by other Rwandans.
- ✓ Impartation of skills to allow self-advocacy and self-reliance to transform their communities.
- ✓ Reduction of poverty and eradication of the culture of begging.
- ✓ Capacity building with the goal of improving the standard of living.
- ✓ Integration leading to greater participation in the Nation's decision-making processes.

Transformational Ministries' Project Proposal aims at providing solutions in the following core areas:

- a) Strengthening systems and processes to ensure adherence to the rule of law.
- b) Improving civil society's role in the development of the HMP.
- c) Empowering HMP citizens to exercise and fulfil their human rights and responsibilities as set forth in Rwandan laws.
- d) Increasing access to education for all HMP children.
- e) Reduce substantial school dropout rates among the youth.
- f) Administering of resources for marginalized communities in the Northern Province.

B. EDUCATION

Background

HMP known as indigenous, ancient hunters, potters or pygmies live in extreme and chronic poverty.

Education is one pillar among others in reducing poverty and improving the wellbeing of the Rwandan population, and is one of the overall goals of the Government of Rwanda. The mission of the Ministry of Education is to transform the Rwandan citizens into skilled human capital for the socio-economic development of the country, by ensuring equitable access to quality education with a focus on combating illiteracy, promoting science and technology, critical thinking, and positive values.

Statement of the Problem

HMP children and other vulnerable children are more affected by this situation though they are exempted from paying primary and secondary school fees. The absence of school materials, uniforms, shoes, school feeding and other incentives makes it difficult for HMP children and other vulnerable children to attend school.

Statistic from 2004 clearly illustrate that:

- 77% of HMP peoples were not able to read, write or count.
- Less than 1% had completed secondary education and none had completed higher education.

This is because up to now most of their families have not understood why children must attend school regularly and thereby strive for a brighter future. As a result of the creation of national parks and economic development they were displaced from the forest without compensation, making them the poorest in Rwandan society and mostly owning no land.

Proposed General Objective

Ensure that HMP children have access and are encouraged to complete appropriate basic education, thereby aspiring to a brighter future, lifting them out of poverty and building a sustainable livelihood.

Specific Objectives

- To assist the children in gaining a good education in order to integrate them into the rest of our society and make them self-supporting and aware of their innate dignity.
- To promote the wellbeing of the children through outreach programs in order to deeply understand and respond to their concerns.
- To change the culture of begging among HMP families.
- To feed these children at school and remove stigmatizing attitudes against them.

Rationale

- Most HMP's families in Musanze District and elsewhere live with poverty that is passed on from one generation to another due in part to their mindset towards development programs, namely education and other opportunities that would take them out of that poverty.

- Providing all necessities for education to HMP children will help them study hard and compete with other children for a better life. This will help them overcome the burden of poverty which has affected their parents. They will manage to afford the cost of education and other needs for their children. HMP children who have completed their education will be able to educate their relatives and neighbors on participation in different economic activities that can improve their wellbeing.
- This project will help HMP children and parents to understand that education is the only way to help them get out of these problems and improve their economic status. The project will help them consider themselves to be on an equal standing with those who were previously employing them or their parents. This motivation will allow them to feel fully integrated into the developing Rwandan society, and to realize their capacity to fully participate as citizens in their society.
- The project will aid them to understand that, through education, they will be able to help others instead of waiting to be helped. The project will also help them assert their own dignity and confidence as people who will contribute to the achievement of Rwanda Vision 2020 and 2050.
- HMPs will feel united and reconciled with the rest of Rwandan society when they are at the same level in education, and have the same opportunity for employment and participation in the wider productivity of the country.

In light of the assessment done by Transformational Ministries, 556 children alone were identified in the Musanze District as HMP. We are so far managing to support 186 children. We provide uniforms, plastic containers, strong shoes, school materials and school bags, all contributing to the avoidance of stigma and promotion of the wellbeing of these children.

Transformational Ministries commits to provide scholastic materials in order to directly impact and transform the attitudes of HMP about education, poverty alleviation and integration into the job market. To generally guide the HMP towards self-governance in Rwandan society means that there is a challenge of school feeding programs. HMP children need to have support to eat

healthily at school, and to not be chronically hungry. When this is done we hope that the children will be motivated to attend school, take their lunch there, and prosper.

The cost of a child for a year to cover educational needs is 25,000 Rwandan Francs, which is equal to 37 Canadian Dollars. For the feeding program the cost of a child per month is 17,000 Rwandan Franc or 25 Canadian Dollars.

C. COW PROGRAM

Rwandans love cows! You may think they love them for the milk or meat but no! Cows mean a lot to Rwandans. The Rwandan cows are characterized by long horns and a dignified appearance but their historical and cultural importance is even more impressive. Ownership of cows used to be a symbol of wealth and a family that owned many herds would be respected in society. Because of the position the cows had in society, whoever owned them had to make sure they were bred in the best way possible. Owners of the best breeds would have their cows paraded before the king and they would be rewarded for their work – in most cases they would be rewarded by receiving more cows! Herds of cows would be traded in exchange for a bride and a cow was the most respected gift given to a friend. It was the symbol of friendship between families.

Some policies in Rwanda have built on this and introduced a program locally known as “Girinka”, translated as “own a cow” or the one-cow-per-family program. This program targets very poor families in need of support. The cows have changed the lives of these families in many ways. They sell some of the milk and get income to cater to their needs; the nutrition demands of the kids are met; and they also get manure to fertilize the fields.

The objectives of the program

- Reducing poverty through dairy cattle farming and improving livelihoods through increased milk production.
- Improving agricultural productivity through the use of manure as fertilizer which would lead to improving soil quality and reducing erosion through planting of grasses.

The importance of this program

- a. Food security and the manure produced by cows increase soil fertility.

- b. Health improvement: The cow program has certainly played a part in reducing the level of malnutrition especially among the children under five years.
- c. Reconciliation and unity: the cow program has passed on a component whereby a recipient gives the first-born calf to a neighbor, thus helps to build social relationships between families.

Proposed Solution and Technical Approach

INTERVENTION STRATEGY: Our intervention strategy is comprised of three core programs within the educational, cow and agricultural sectors. Ongoing programs enable marginalized communities to find their own voices, to be more responsive and accountable. We do this through a three-pronged approach:

1. Building technical and organizational capacities of targeted communities.
2. Supporting struggling communities due to poor living conditions.
3. Contributing to sustainable development by creating a space for positive change.

TARGETING: The program is targeted at making an impact on both adults and children. Our strong relationships built through our current presence on the ground have allowed us to see avenues for positive changes. Selection criteria of the program participants are based on groups with severe living conditions. Other selected groups of marginalized communities we work with are they with no land to grow self-sustaining food.

The Northern Province of Rwanda will remain as our geographical focal point to start with. Transformational Ministries started the cow program for families of HMC, and so far fifteen families have benefited, and four cows have given birth.

The cost of a shed and a cow is 500 USD. We have many more families that could benefit from this program.

CAPACITY BUILDING: Our core programs methodology revolves around capacity building activities. Giving the communities educational tools required to lead and implement solutions is our systematic approach. Transformational Ministries will provide high-level support, technical assistance, advocacy, NGO management, financial reporting, project management, monitoring and evaluation, etc. We will provide tailored training programs for target communities in social and economic development. Further in-house and external trainings are set to develop leadership skills of our partners. Our partners' task will be to design and deploy improved community advocacy schemes as a result of this.

SUSTAINABILITY: This program was designed in consultation with beneficiaries and responds to the current and distinct needs of each community. This approach is more impactful than a standardized approach delivered to diverse groups. It gets more buy-in, less resistance and assures long-lasting positive impact. It showcases urgent needs and grievances of minority communities, and necessary improvement measures are our priority.

ADDED VALUE: Key partnerships with local authorities and officials have contributed to the success of our programs so far. Governmental bodies, such as Ministry of Local Administration, Ministry of Education and National Land Commissions have historically partnered with us. Other local governmental agencies in charge of minority issues and land rights are partnerships we are seeking to develop. Collaboration with key national and regional leaders promoting equal values are essential.

FIT WITH ORGANISATIONAL PLANNING: Our mission is to solve problems with best practices. Our core values for educational and planned trainings are based on Rwanda's *Vision 2020*. The vision is to improve the well-being of vulnerable children, the poor and the HMP in Rwanda and potentially around the world.

The following implementation plan is a result of consultation with staff, stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries. This strategic plan is designed to prioritize, promote and accelerate integration of the HMP in Rwandan society.

Period – 3 Years													
	4 Semesters						2 Semesters						
Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Intended Outcome: 1– Group of HMP integrated into farming cooperatives to ensure unified collaboration, productivity and profitability.													
1. Preparation													
Identification and selection of beneficiaries													
2. Execution													
Provision of basic needs, school materials, uniforms, shoes etc....													
Provision of land and formation of cooperatives													
Capacity building programs for Civil Society Organizations (CSO) members focusing on the HMP.													
Reports													
Media campaigns													
Monitoring impact													

Project Organizational Structure

The Joint Management Team will consist of several key functions, positions and responsibilities.

The Table below includes details of each team member’s Job Description.

Position	Responsibilities
Program Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall Project planning and implementation duties. ▪ Networking and coordination with societal and governmental Departments. ▪ Time spent on the project: 100% of project duration.
Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supervise and coordinate project activities. ▪ Ensure all activities are implemented and that all contractual obligations to the donors are met. ▪ Time spent on the project: 100% of the project duration.
Project Officer x 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two Project Officers will oversee implementation of activities in each location. ▪ Time spent on the project: 100% of the project duration.
Finance Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Responsible for overall Project financial Management ▪ Administration of financial regulations and reporting for partners and donors. ▪ Monitoring partner's finances through regular or ad-hoc audits reports request. ▪ Time spent on the project: 100% of project duration.
Program Advisor – Communications and Knowledge Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Responsible for overall project database maintenance, monitoring and evaluation system. ▪ Facilitate review and reflective practices of the project and develop knowledge management systems in line with country office. ▪ Time spent on the project: 50% of project duration.
Administrative Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintains administrative workflow by studying methods; implementing cost reductions; developing reporting procedures. ▪ Maintains rapport with customers, managers, and employees by arranging continuing contacts; researching and developing new services and methods; setting priorities; resolving problem situations. ▪ Maintains continuity of work operations by documenting and communicating needed actions to Management; discovering irregularities; determining continuing needs. ▪ Guides employee actions by researching, developing, writing, and updating administrative policies, procedures,

	methods, and guidelines; communicating developments to management.
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Tangible Expected Results

OVERARCHING PROJECT GOALS:

- To improve social transformation achieved through advocacy and provision of universal education.
- To ensure provision of equal learning opportunities, and to inspire children to strive for a brighter future.
- To encourage children, youth and adults to gain confidence, and to participate in social activities.
- To promote cooperatives' production capacity thus reducing societal and institutional prejudice.

EXPECTED RESULTS / OUTCOMES:

- The project will boost development in the Musanze District.
- The empowered group of HMP will increase capacity and see poverty rates reduced.
- Lower school dropout rates within the target groups.
- Human rights protection and acceleration of economic and social development.

ACTIVITIES / OUTPUTS:

1. Capacity building

1.1. Knowledge transfer among targeted groups will be achieved through formation of farming cooperatives. This will increase productivity and garner greater understanding of unity.

1.2. With economic development comes an opportunity for children to remain in school. Current school dropout rates are caused by lack of means, causing children of this group to stay at home and attend to household chores.

1.3 The three-year project will have an impact on parents' responsibilities to cater to their children's education. Regular outreach programs in rural areas will contribute to poverty reduction efforts undertaken by governmental bodies.

1.4 The success of this program in the Musanze districts will set a foundation for expansion to other districts.