

“We are no longer starving!”

Kasebuturanyi village sits on a hilltop in southern Rwandan, and is home to a very special group of women, who are changing the nature of their money-poor community. They are ordinary women – mothers, grandmothers, widows, farmers – who have been taught how to create and run their own community investment bank.

This group of 60 women call themselves “Kundubuzima” (love life), and is one of 6 such Self-Help Group (SHGs) in the region. Kasebuturanyi is a remote village, without access to formal banks or loans. These groups provide women a chance to save money together. Each woman contributes a small amount, 100 – 200 Rwandan Francs per week, and each gets the opportunity to use the pooled money over the coming weeks and months, for herself and for her family. They buy livestock, invest in agricultural tools, and start small businesses. They keep each other accountable and are earning the respect of their husbands and neighbours. They become empowered.

Chantal, Sophie and Seraphine, say that before they joined the group, they were underestimated, living in solitude at home, neglected and despondent. Since joining the group, they have become empowered, self-confident, capable women, valued and respected by their community.

“I am able to cater for my family’s basic needs,” says Madeline, another group member. “I manage to feed my children, clothe them, and pay for their health requirements. I rear pigs and chickens. I get manure and am increasing my agricultural production.”

She laughs, *“We are no longer starving!”*

With the help of African Enterprise and The Foxglove Project, these women are transforming their communities.

Thank you for supporting AE projects for women.

