

# HIGH FIVE CLUB

changing lives in Africa, £5 at a time



## Life After Prostitution, Burundi

**Burundi was officially declared the world's 'hungeriest nation' by the International Food Policy Research Institute in 2013, and is consistently reported as one of the five poorest countries, a poverty triggered by years of civil war and inter-tribal genocide.**

Many young women and girl children living in Burundi, and across the developing world, are forced into prostitution by their parents or guardians to provide income for their families. Others are lured into prostitution due to the extreme poverty they endure.

Bravo Ministries was established in 2011 to provide a sustainable income-generating opportunity for women and girls coming out of prostitution in Bujumbura the capital of Burundi. The idea for a Burundi Sewing Workshop came from young women incarcerated in prison for prostitution.

A pilot project was started to help rehabilitate these young women and give them a safe way to support themselves and their children. Since then many young women, both those released from prison and others rescued from forced prostitution, have learned to sew - a viable way to make a living in Burundi. In this country, anyone who has the skill of needlecraft can realistically set up a sewing



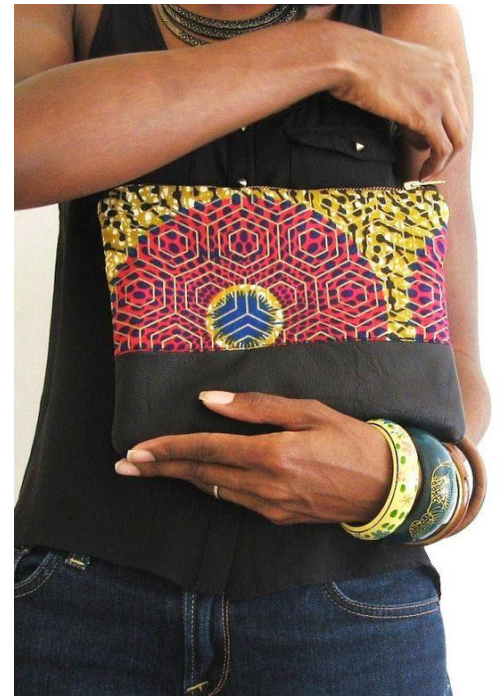
# HIGH FIVE CLUB

changing lives in Africa, £5 at a time

machine by the side of the road and earn a living wage making and repairing clothes.

In the Burundi Sewing Workshop the women and girls hand-make a diverse range of products made out of material bought in the market in Bujumbura. Products include everything from clothes to curtains, table napkins and stuffed toys, and these are then marketed and sold to locals, tourists, international agencies, embassies and even overseas customers. Bravo Ministries divide the takings between the girls (60%) and reinvestment in the project. Around 10 women are involved in the workshop at any one time, and along with being supported after the ordeal of forced prostitution they learn sewing skills. Currently Bravo Ministries is working with 8 former girl prostitutes and 3 former child soldiers.

Approximately half the women have children and the workshop income provides them with a regular income to get back on their feet. Once they are confident of being independent, they move on, usually to establish their own sewing micro enterprise. Once they are on their feet, women who have been helped themselves often reach out to others and refer their friends in need.



## Bravo Personal Story:

xx grew up with the proverbial wicked stepmother in a Muslim family. For economic reasons she ended up with a relative in the capital who had offered to take care of her, but after a short time she



# HIGH FIVE CLUB

changing lives in Africa, £5 at a time

told her young niece that it was time she earned her keep, and brought the first man to her. After 2 pregnancies she struggled to provide for her two children and eventually escaped and found her way to Bravo and learned to sew, during which time she tragically lost one of her children to a fire. She is now self-sufficient and helps others in the same position she was.

## High Five Club Support:



Working hand in hand with the Burundian NGO **Great Lakes Outreach**, High Five Club has supported Bravo Ministries with the purchase of a portable Honda generator for their sewing workshop. The erratic national electricity supply in this troubled country means that the production of the women's products is frequently disrupted. The new generator means that the women can produce more goods for sale, helping increase their income and enabling them to become self-sufficient and forge a new life for themselves. Our £1,000 donation for the generator is allowing young women and girls to be freed from prostitution now and into the future.

In order to provide a long-term sustainable solution to alleviating poverty, this exciting micro project brings economic growth, dignity and hope to these vulnerable women and girls. As High Five Club this is greatly in tune with our 'hand up', not a 'hand out' approach.

**For further information about this project contact Dr Cheryl Mvula at [cheryl@highfiveclub.co.uk](mailto:cheryl@highfiveclub.co.uk)**