



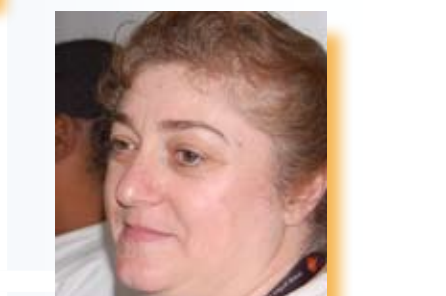
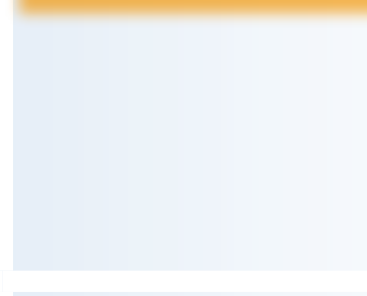
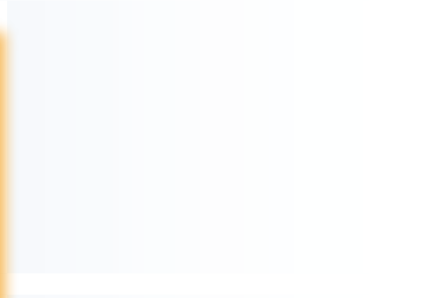
United Nations  
**RWANDA**  
Unity in Diversity



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# International Women's Day.

Celebrating 100 years of Women's achievement  
8 March 2011



**It's time to unleash the full potential of women**

# Message of Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin UNFPA Executive Director

## It's time to unleash the full potential of women

Today, we celebrate International Women's Day and once again declare our faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, and in the equal rights of men and women. As the world approaches a population of seven billion, it's high time to unleash the full potential of half the world's population.

When girls enjoy equal access to education, and women, men and young people can claim their right to sexual and reproductive health, we come closer to equality. When women and couples can plan their families, and balance work and family life as they desire, we expand equal opportunity. When a pregnant woman no longer fears losing her job, and maternity no longer continues to be a source of discrimination in employment, we advance equal rights between men and women.

When girls are educated and healthy, and can avoid early marriage, unwanted pregnancy and HIV, they can contribute fully to society. UNFPA will continue to move forward guided by the belief that progress for women is progress for all.

Today and every day, my colleagues and I in UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, will continue to champion reproductive health and reproductive rights. We renew our commitment to work with governments and civil society to achieve universal access to education and reproductive health by 2015.

We join partners worldwide, including the newly established UN Women, to advance gender equality and dignity for all.

Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin  
UNFPA Executive Director

On 8th of March 2011, the world celebrates the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day. This is a celebration of a century of progress, a century of women and men using their collective voice to advocate for the gender equality, women empowerment, peace and development for all.

This year, UNFPA—United Nations Population Fund, celebrated the day together with staff who shares the same building with the Agency in Kigali. These are: European Union, Deloitte and Touche, GVTC and Sweden Embassy.

It was time to celebrate, to reflect on progress made, to exchange knowledge on gender, to call for change and to celebrate acts of courage and determination by ordinary women who have played an extraordinary role in the history of women's rights.





**“For the last 100 years, much has been achieved. When the first International Women’s Day took place, women could vote only in two countries. Today, that right is virtually universal and women have now been elected to lead Governments in every continent”.**



Equal access to education, training and science and technology: Pathway to decent work for women.

What is the theme for this year's International Women's Day? Is there anyone who might know it?

*Que vous êtes génies!!....you just got it right. You deserve the rewards... Truly Investing in women and girls has positive multiplier effects on the wellbeing of their families, their communities and nations.*



# Women's empowerment not charity but an economic imperative!



**Nyaruguru - March 8, 2011:** Rwanda celebrated this year's International Women's Day by putting the spotlights on ordinary rural women who learnt and are applying new technology methods and techniques in their daily lives for the improvement of their families' and communities' living conditions. This year's celebration marked also the 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day.

The United Nations family in Rwanda, under the Delivering as One approach, joined the Government in the national celebration which took place in the remote mountainous area of Nyaruguru, five hours drive from the capital Kigali. The celebrations were marked with songs, poems, speeches and dances by students, women, men and media practitioners, all affirming that educating women and girls is a prerequisite to long-lasting and sustainable development.

"This year's theme 'Equal access to education, training and science and technology: Pathway to decent work for women', is in line with our country's focus in terms of promoting education, science and technology. There are sensitization activities aimed at promoting girls' education going on

countrywide," said The Minister of Gender and Family Promotion, Dr. Jeanne d'Arc Mujawamariya.

Women who spearheaded developmental activities in their communities were celebrated and thirteen among them were awarded certificates for having successfully completed a short course in the use of Word, Excel, Power Point and Internet applications in their day-to-day activities. "Currently, I use the internet to look for a market for my business products", said Mukakarama, one of the awarded women. "Though we still need to borrow computers, we are grateful for the knowledge that we have acquired" she added. The best performing girl students, both at primary and secondary level, were also celebrated and they received a cheque of US\$100 each. "Investing in women and girls has positive multiplier effects on the wellbeing of their families, their communities and nations", said Ms. Diana Ofwona, UNWOMEN Regional Programme Director who represented the United Nations family during the celebration.





**Above:** As part of International Women's Day, the United Nations Staff members have joined the citizens of Nyaruguru in the work of building decent shelters for rural poor women.

**Left:** Hilde Deman. The UNFPA gender specialist encouraging a girl student of Nyaruguru. If we are to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, we must do even better in tapping into women's strength, women's capacity, and women's wisdom.

**Below:** People of Nyaruguru thanked the UN family for its leading role to empower women. On the picture, a mother of Nyaruguru is giving a gift to Ms. Diana Ofwona, the UNWOMEN Regional Programme Director who represented the UN in the function.



# Celebrating the International Women's Day Global Centenary!

International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future. The first IWD event was run in 1911.





**Let's make everyday International Women's Day. We should ensure that the future for girls is bright, equal, safe and rewarding.**





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