

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



fondazione
Marcegaglia
ONLUS

The logo for Fondazione Marcegaglia ONLUS, featuring a stylized red hand with five fingers pointing upwards.



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FOREWORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear reader,

It is with immense pride and gratitude that we present to you our annual report for the year 2023. This document serves not only as a comprehensive overview of our organization's outstanding achievements and financial performance, but also as a testament to the unwavering dedication and passion of our local team.

In the face of the numerous global challenges which continue to impact communities worldwide, our organization has remained steadfast in its commitment to improving the lives of Rwandan families residing in the Bugesera District. Throughout 2023, we have witnessed the power of collaboration and innovation - crucial tools that enabled us to fulfill the commitments outlined in our 5-Year Strategic Plan.

This report provides a detailed account of our impact across various programs and initiatives, highlighting the tangible outcomes achieved through our collective efforts. From youth empowerment to fighting malnutrition and helping reduce food and housing insecurity, every project and activity documented herein represents a milestone in our journey towards a more equitable and sustainable world.

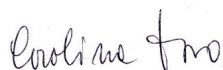
However, we recognise that our work is far from complete. As we celebrate our successes, we also acknowledge the work that lies ahead of us. By embracing transparency and accountability, we strive to learn from our experiences and continually evolve to better serve our mission and stakeholders.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to each and every individual, organization and institution that has contributed to our cause, whether through financial support or through their time and expertise. With your continued support, we are confident that we can continue making a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

Thank you for joining us on this journey.

Sincerely,

Carolina Toso



MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTRY DIRECTOR

In January 2022, Fondazione Marcegaglia Onlus embarked on a new five year journey of implementing its transformative and comprehensive 5-year strategic plan developed in collaboration with the Government of Rwanda. The strategic plan aimed at consolidating the existing organization achievements in previous years in Rwanda with the vision of the organization which is building a world in which social disparities are increasingly reduced and the role of women valued.

In consolidation of what Fondazione Marcegaglia Onlus has achieved in Rwanda, in Early Childhood Development, Basic Education for all, Basic health care, Clean water & Sanitation.

Over the past 8 years, there have been significant strides in dropout prevention and control within basic education in Rwanda. During this time, numerous young men and women have successfully completed various levels of high school, demonstrating a persistent desire for support in acquiring diverse employable skills.

The program primarily targets vulnerable youth, including those with disabilities, teen mothers, out-of-school youth, usual beneficiaries of other FMO education support like Sexual Reproductive health trainees, entrepreneurship trainees, microcredit program beneficiaries as well as School feeding program in 12 years basic education.

A after training follow up component was included in the program, revolving around providing trained youth with toolkits and market linkages for a smooth transition. The offered six-month training is both outreach- based to facilitate beneficiaries who can not easily travel to MVTC campus in Rilima to attend two other training centers opened in the village Nyarugenge and Musenyi sectors in collaboration with Miracle Corner Center.

The successful execution of our strategic plan relied heavily on the collaboration of various stakeholders, FMO signed 9 Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), including 2 with development partners and 3 with implementing partners, while maintaining existing partnerships with the Ministry of Local Government in Rwanda.

While 2023 brought successes and lessons, the FMO team exhibited resilience and adaptability, enhancing their capabilities through capacity development in different areas. This year's productivity was a collective achievement, made possible by the invaluable contributions of stakeholders, our team's unwavering commitment, FMO Headquarters support, Board member's guidance and our network's support.

Fondazione Marcegaglia Onlus, Rwanda Country Office is poised for an even brighter future, building on the foundations laid in 2023 and remaining dedicated to the fulfillment of our mission.

Thank you for support.



Luca D'Amico

INTRODUCTION

In collaboration with the Government of Rwanda, through its Social Protection Unity in the Ministry of Local Government, Fondazione Marcegaglia Onlus has realized tremendous achievements in 2023 to contribute to the speedy livelihood improvement of Rwandan Society.

Fondazione Marcegaglia Onlus, through its Rwanda office, we are happy to share the achievements in the direct improvement of 1249 Children, 1170 youths, and 4079 households in the Eastern province of Rwanda.

From January 2023, Fondazione Marcegaglia Onlus through its country office in Kigali, took on a load of 30 activities grouped into 12 projects and two main programs to protect children, prevent drop-out of 12 years of basic education, improve the livelihood of poor families, build capacity for a skilled workforce, and agriculture-livestock support for food production.

In the 2023 action plan, FMO-Rwanda Country Office has realized the planned activities at a rate of 134.5%, whereas 31/29 planned activities were successfully implemented and reached their targeted beneficiaries and produced expected results, and 1 activity is still ongoing, while 2 unplanned projects have been deemed necessary and implemented along the year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The details are in the table below;

No	Planned Activities	Realized activities
1	Provision of monthly nutritive food package support to malnourished kids from Zamuka families and other vulnerable families.	440 kids have been supported through this program, 296 among them graduated from malnutrition and stunting conditions.
2	Support Community ECDs established by trained local interneers in their respective villages with books, community ECD caregivers transport, blackboard, mats.	ECD Kabahaya from Rilima sector initiated by local trained caregivers has been empowered with didactic materials, parents committee training and advocacy to be considered as a recognized community ECDs by local administration. 71 kids benefitted from the activity.
3	Musenyi ECD construction.	1 ECD hangar was constructed and equipped with mattress in Musenyi sector, it can host 170 kids but is currently serving 130 kids.
4	Construction of ECD Kalilisi Top Classroom and provision of material support for parents.	1 classroom was constructed and equipped to complete the standard of an ECD center of having at least 3 classrooms as the other two were constructed with our previous annual budget. Additionally, a proper kids' toilet was constructed, a plastic water tank for rainwater harvesting was installed and didactic materials were provided.

5	ECD Kimaranzara Upkeep and in Phase out plan.	93 children enrolled for this year in ECD Kimaranzara have been supported to get all ECD services. 34 who have completed 3 years at the center have graduated and been promoted to primary level.
6	Installation of Karera ECD and provision of 200 Chairs and 5 tables to the ECD.	Ceiling were installed and the students' equipment was provided to add the ones provided within the previous year as the number of students increased thanks to the new nice classrooms built by FMO
7	In school dropout control, the support to School feeding program was planned for 431 High school students from vulnerable families.	431 students have been supported to have day meals at school and kept in schools.
8	School materials support 66 students from Zamuka and other dropout students from vulnerable families.	66 kids from vulnerable families, mainly Zamuka families, have been supported with school materials made of books, pens, and school uniforms.
9	Provision of Trimestrial package of sanitary pads, soaps, and hygienic materials to 16 high schools.	Long-lasting sanitary pads have been distributed to 285 young girls from vulnerable families mainly school feeding beneficiaries and our MVTC students.
10	Holiday camps for 475 School feeding beneficiaries.	The ICT holiday camp was conducted for 120 M-VTC beneficiaries as the schedule of the training coincided with School feeding beneficiaries at the end of trimester examinations.
11	Provision of Health insurance for 500 families, both Zamuka families and other vulnerable community members.	456 individuals from 125 families have received assistance in obtaining health insurance coverage.
12	Provision of psycho-social support to 10 Zamuka benefiting families.	22 individuals from 12 Zamuka program households were trained about family planning.
13	Provision of 21 Goats to 7 Zamuka benefiting families.	7 Zamuka families have received 3 goats each while 1 family received a pig.
14	Provision of 5 cows to 5 zamuka benefiting families.	4 cows have been distributed and 4 cowsheds constructed for Zamuka.
15	Provision of 10,000 Fruit trees Seedlings to farmers.	15,000 Fruit Trees have been distributed in Nyarugenge , Shyara and Rilima.
16	Support 20 Farmers with seeds ,farming tools and fertilizers.	12 bicycles have been provided to zamuka families.
17	Construction of 4 houses for zamuka beneficiaries.	1 two-in-one house and other 2 houses for 4 families have been constructed.
18	Rehabilitation of 6 houses for Zamuka beneficiaries.	1 house has been rehabilitated.
19	Urgent community support.	34 families received urgent support and 7 social event intervention were supported.

20	Train 50 welding trainees , 50 Hairdressing trainees , 50 Masonry trainees and 100 Tailoring trainees in in two cohorts.	29/30 welding trainees, 24/30 hairdressing trainees ,27/30 masonry trainees and 50/50 tailoring trainees completed their trainings among enrolled while 122 trainees are being trained currently.
21	Welding workshop and offices electrical installation.	Welding workshop and offices electrical installation was made.
22	Construction of VTC kitchen.	Kitchen was constructed.
23	Construction of masonry workshop.	Masonry Workshop was built.
24	Construction of tailoring workshop.	Tailoring Workshop was built.
25	Rehabilitation and Equipment of Computer lab and a library.	Computer lab has been rehabilitated and equipped with Laptops, but not yet equipped with books.
26	Provision of extra curricular trainings to 250 trainees and assistance in internships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - April Holiday camp (ICT trainin). - Make up training. - Industrial sewing machine training. - Google workspace training.
27	Sponsorship of 79 scholars in nursing and other technical schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Totally 44 scholarship were supported, among them 26 in nursing: 5 newly joined, 16 ongoing and 5 graduated and currently serving in different hospitals. - 3 scholars are being supported at African Leadership University (ALU) where we had two girls who were joined by one more this year. - One excellent student from the FMO masonry cohort was awarded a scholarship to continue his studies at INES-Ruhengeri University in civil engineering. - 14 scholars at the University of Tourism and Business (UTB) were supported this year, 9 graduated and 5 still have pending examinations but fully sponsored by FMO to graduation. - 2 culinary arts,1 Barista, and 1 heavy machine short-course training scholarship were given to young individuals from Rilima to lean courses not available in MVTC.
28	Provision of subsidized toolkits to 140 technical graduates	49 tailoring trainees and 10 welding trainees in 2 groups have received toolkits.
29	Microcredit	232 individuals from 14 VSLAs have received Loans including trainees 3 groups of MVTC Graduates.
30	Partnership with MCR (unplanned)	60 trainees are being trained in Tailoring in Musenyi and Nyarugenge Sectors in Partnership with Miracle Corners Rwanda.
31	Auto-Engine technology trade (unplanned)	Auto engine technology hangar/workshop is being constructed, 40 trainees selected and lessons prepared. Training is expected in January 2024.



SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAM

As per National policy, Social Protection is designed to be inclusive and is tasked with integrating various vulnerabilities. It is built upon four key pillars: Social Security, Social Care Services, Short-Term Social Assistance, and Livelihoods Enhancement. These pillars are firmly rooted in four guiding principles: Protection, Promotion, Prevention, and Transformation.

This approach has enriched the policy's conceptual framework, endowing it with attributes that support poverty reduction, societal resilience, social cohesion, human capital development, and economic progress. Consequently, the policy is positioned to contribute significantly to social transformation and the development of a modern nation-state that upholds the constitutional rights of its citizens.

FMO contributes to social protection with the core objective of reducing poverty through different projects including; the Household strengthening program called "Zamuka"; and the provision of proper basic education and health care.



1.1. BASIC EDUCATION & HEALTH CARE

To ensure access to basic education and health care, which are core services for well-being and prominent families' development, FMO, in its 5-year strategic plan (2023-2027), is committed to investing in basic education and health care to guarantee that all children, in the locality, under five years old have access to ECD services. It plays a role in protecting them from malnutrition and developmental challenges. Children over five years old are also enrolled in basic education and all household members are given access to basic health care.

In 2023, FMO has implemented different activities to fulfill the objective as follows;

PERFORMED ACTIVITIES

1.1.1. Provision of monthly Nutritive food package support to malnourished kids from Zamuka families and from other vulnerable families

In collaboration with Health centers and Community Health workers, every month a growth monitoring measurement was taken and identified malnourished kids have been supported with nutritive food packages made of milk, porridge and eggs. A total of 440 malnourished kids were supported among them 296 completely recovered and gained normal growth rhythm. Among the supported there were 25 kids with special health problems like lost mothers, breast cancered mothers, twins etc whose family conditions would have dragged them in growth stunting, thus they have included for prevention measures through this project.

Number of kids benefited from monthly nutritive food package in 2023													
Months	Jan	Feb	March	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Malnourished	27	28	27	22	23	31	29	29	28	26	26	86	382
Special case	12	6	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	58
Total	39	34	31	26	27	35	33	33	32	30	30	90	440



Beneficiary Testimony

My name is **Nikuze Valentine**, I am 23 years old and from Bugesera, Rilima. On October 9th, 2019, I gave birth to my daughter KAMIKAZI Noella Florentine. A week after her natural birth, she started having breathing problems and a terrible cough. I decided to take her to the health center, but they were not able to help her, so she was transferred to Nyamata Hospital. At the Nyamata hospital, they put her on oxygen and other various medications, which helped for a little while, but her critical condition required us to travel back and forth for treatments. Three months after this original trip, she was taken to Kanombe Hospital in Kigali and diagnosed with both heart and lung problems. Her malnutrition started due to latching issues that I noticed at 6 months when she only weighed 3.6 kg. When Noella turned one and a half years old, she weighed only 6.6kgs and looked physically malnourished, appearing to be only three or four months old.

Fondazione Marcegaglia Onlus (FMO) became aware of my daughter's malnutrition issues through the health center here in Rilima. They connected me with FMO in 2020 due to Noella's condition, providing porridge, milk, and eggs for my daughter every month through the malnutrition package. FMO was providing help for my daughter for six months until her condition greatly improved, so they stopped giving support. Noella required a specific medication that she needed to take to have an appetite, which I wasn't able to afford any longer. Due to this, when she was three years and two months old, I had to reach out to FMO for help again and they provided me with the malnutrition package again (eggs, porridge, and milk).

At three years and ten months old, she was feeling much better again and was taken off the malnutrition program, weighing 11kgs, and started looking her age. She is now four and feels much better thanks to FMO. I'm very grateful to FMO for everything they have done to help me as a single mother in my situation. My daughter and I are in a much better place as a result of their efforts. I greatly appreciate FMO's malnutrition program because without their support my daughter would not be as happy and healthy as she is today. My recommendation for the FMO malnutrition program is to continue providing support to single mothers who are in the same situation that I was in four years ago. I think that this is a really incredible program that could be expanded into other villages to help single mothers living outside of Rilima. Thank you!



My name is **NIRERE Jacqueline**, I am a mother of seven and receiver of FMO's services in Rilima. I and my children were living in the worst conditions and I could not find appropriate food for

my youngest baby. At a year old, she weighed just over a kilogram. I brought my child to FMO's health center where they diagnosed her with malnourishment. FMO provided a carton of milk and 8 kilograms of porridge to my family every week for two months. The food cured my daughter of malnourishment and helped the rest of my struggling children.

FMO saved my child's life because the health center was able to diagnose her with malnourishment and step in with the appropriate resources to help her. My other children also benefited from the resources and were taken care of. I no longer receive food from FMO because my family is healthier. My family was selected by FMO's health advisors to take care of. I hope in the future, FMO's health center can make house visits to check on living conditions and find more families in need of help.

1.1.2. Support Community ECDs established by trained local interneers in their respective villages

In addressing the evident infrastructure challenge at RUGANDO Home-Based Early Childhood Development (ECD) in Musenyi Sector, where 130 village children were accommodated in a small house by a volunteer parent, a steel structure hangar was erected. This structure supports the parents' initiative, providing a more suitable space. Moreover, the area was furnished with mats, and the children were supplied with milk.



ECD Kabahaya in Rilima, the FMO ECD interneers initiative has been supported with kids chairs and milk as we are still working with different community partners to support such a good initiative.



1.1.3. Construction of ECD Kalilisi

To enhance the facilities and educational environment, FMO has contributed to building and equipping a new classroom at G.S KALILISI. This addition ensures that the Early Childhood Development

(ECD) center now meets the standard of having at least three classrooms, complementing the two classrooms previously built with our prior annual budget. In furtherance of providing a comprehensive infrastructure, a dedicated kids' toilet facility was constructed, contributing to a more hygienic and child-friendly environment.

Moreover, in consideration of sustainable practices, a plastic water tank was installed for rainwater harvesting, promoting water conservation and self-sufficiency. This initiative aligns with environmental responsibility, ensuring that the ECD center has access to a reliable water source.



Furthermore, recognizing the importance of quality education, didactic materials were provided to enhance the learning experience for the young learners. This encompasses a commitment to not only the physical infrastructure but also the educational resources necessary for a holistic and enriching early childhood education. These combined efforts reflect a dedication to creating a conducive and well-equipped learning environment for the children attending the ECD center.

Parent and School Testimony



The School Deputy in charge of studies highlighted, “At the beginning of the school, we used to collect all the kids in the tiny room beside the Catholic church. The church built two rooms which received 182 kids, and teaching three grades in two classes posed challenges. Prior to this, FMO rehabilitated the two existing classrooms. Furthermore, FMO stepped in to assist us in acquiring a third classroom, allowing us to maintain the standard of three grades in our nursery education. This additional space also serves as a play area for the children. Since the introduction of the new classrooms, there has been a noticeable improvement in the children’s learning, and the enrollment in Early Childhood Development (ECD), numbers have risen to 196 kids. We are grateful for FMO’s valuable contribution to our children’s education.”



A foster parent at **ECD Kalirisi** shared, “We used to witness children facing difficulties in the same class due to their diverse levels of understanding. The teacher struggled to address each child’s needs, and it was evident that insufficient knowledge hindered their progress, compounded by disturbances and sanitation issues. It’s worth noting that the previous toilets were similar to those found in churches, as this was shared with church attendees. However, with the construction of new classrooms and the addition of improved sanitation facilities like new toilets, we, as parents, were satisfied. We could observe an increase in the children’s education, and it was apparent that teachers could now closely monitor each child. This positive change has motivated me to persist in supporting the child for a better education.”

1.1.4. ECD Kimaranzara Upkeep and Phase-out Plan

As we embark on a transitional journey towards ECD Kimaranzara school financial auto-sufficiency, a top-up to parents’ contribution was made. 93 kids have benefited from this ECD services including (mal)nutrition-related services. 34 kids have graduated and been promoted to primary level.



Additionally, infrastructure development was made to make the center efficient including a kitchen sink which solved a hygiene problem because enough space for washing and drying dishes was gained, and a firewood steel structure side kitchen with a stove.

Parents Testimonies

My name is Ndagijimana Jean de Dieu, I am a leader of the parents committee at FMO-ECD Kimaranzara and I am incredibly grateful for the help FMO has given me and my family over the past few years. In 2019, my family received a cow and three goats as part of FMO’s One Cow Project. I was eligible to receive the animals because, at the time, my family was in one of the lowest economic categories as determined by the local government. I was able to use the animals to give milk to my nine children and use their products to make a profit, eventually lifting my family from economic struggle.

With the money, I have also been able to build a second small home next to our house for my family to live more comfortably.



FMO relies on the local government to identify who's more in need of help as determined by the economic categories. Three goats and a cow are granted to families that have been chosen. Once the cows and goats reproduce, their offspring are donated to another family in need, continuing the cycle. My family was chosen due to our low economic status and large family.

My family and I can pay the contribution for national health care. Three of my children are out of the house and married, but because I was able to make a profit from the cow and goats, I was able to afford to send the rest of my six children to school. Three of my children went to FMO and the other three are at higher levels at Rilima Catholic. I believe the level of education at FMO is superior to other local schools because of the teachers and environment. My children who went to FMO help my other children who go to Rilima Catholic with their homework so they pass their exams.

Since the program started in 2019, I have seen FMO grow and evolve to reach families in need who do not attend FMO's school. I am grateful for FMO's after-school program that takes the pressure off parents during the day and I hope in the future, FMO expands its classes to include older students and not just stop at Top Class. Thank you.

1.1.5. Installation of Karera ECD ceiling

As reported in the previous year, FMO managed to construct from scratch the model ECD Center with 3 classrooms at Karera Primary School in partnership with Karera Primary School, AEBR "the church owning the school", Rilima sector, and parents. Due to a shortage of budget, some activities were shifted to this year.

This year, the installation of the ceiling and branding at ECD Karera was conducted. In March this year, an inauguration event of the ECD occurred from which parents, School staff, and local administration authorities were thankful for the establishment of the infrastructure. However, the constructed 3 classrooms will not satisfy the need as they will only host 120 kids, the school has committed to finding primary rooms to be temporarily used awaiting for more ECD Standardized rooms to be built to satisfy the need. 302 kids benefitted from the project.



Parents' Testimony

In a recent interview, a staff member from KARERA Primary School shared, “We had about 400 children, and we didn’t have rooms to put them in, so we were teaching them in the temple. It was difficult to teach the children. FMO constructed around three rooms for us and gave us kids’ toys and equipment for ECD students. Even our children’s instructors received training from them, which elevated the teaching standard to a high level of education. As a result of these positive outcomes, there are now 456 children in the ECD program, and they are learning well. The guardians can monitor the children easily. We are looking for ways to increase the number of classrooms and continue to train teachers to monitor children.”



One of the parents at Karera ECD told us “Previously, there was little hope of providing proper attention and care to the children as they were in disorder, primarily because there were too many kids crowded into one large church.

However, with the positive changes brought about by the construction of beautiful classrooms, it’s evident that there has been a transformation, and the children are now joyfully attending school. As a parent responsible for the well-being of the child, I am committed to continuing my support to ensure that the child does not lag and will consistently encourage their attendance at school.”

1.1.6. School feeding

Basic education in Rwanda comprises six years of primary education and six years of secondary education (high school). Both levels of education are compulsory and fee-free in public and government-subsidized schools despite the challenges that have so far undermined its 100% implementation. Entry into secondary school is dependent on examination. Unfortunately, primary school students do not continue to secondary school.

For primary and secondary school, parents are not required to pay school fees, but they have to pay day school feeding fees and scholastic materials to enroll their children. However, most families can’t afford to pay as some families might have many children. It is not easy for parents to provide all the materials children might need. In some families, parents select a given number to go to school, especially boys, and decide to keep others at home (mainly girls). In other families, no children go to school. There are cases where students drop out of school due to different reasons but the root cause is the poverty in their families.

This year, FMO supported 431 students out of 415 planned from 20 public schools with school feeding fees.

Number of School feeding beneficiaries in the academic year 2023-2024			
Sector	No	Schools	Number of students
Rilima	1	Gs Kabeza	17
	2	Gs Kalilisi	17
	3	Gs Nyabagendwa	31
	4	GS Rilima Catholic	66
Nyarugenge	5	Gs Bushonyi	17
	6	Gs Kamabare	53

	7	Gs Rugando	14
Shyara	8	Gs Gihinga	65
Musenyi	9	Gs Musenyi	10
	10	Gs Nyagihunika	4
	11	Gs Rulindo	5
Nyamata	12	Gs Nyamata Catholic (Soeurs Hosp ste Marthe NDC Nyamata)	7
Juru	13	Gs Katarara	13
	14	Gs Rushubi	1
	15	Gs Rwinume	1
Mayange	16	Gs Kamabuye	10
Rukumberi	17	Gs Gituza	23
Sake	18	TVET SAKE	75
Others	19	Gs Nyagasambu	1
	20	Gs Nyagasambu	1
TOTAL			431



1.1.7. School Materials Provision

For school reintegration purposes, FMO has provided school materials to pre-primary, primary, and secondary school students from poor families who had dropped out. 66 students from poor families (mainly from Household Strengthening Program-Zamuka) have been supported with school materials including notebooks, pens, and uniforms.



1.1.8. Inclusive Education (SRHR, Girls education)

Lack of sanitary materials for girls on their periods is one of the reasons for dropout. During this action plan, FMO supported 285 girls from vulnerable families, mainly the school feeding beneficiaries at puberty and girls of M-VTC with a new type of long-lasting sanitary pads called Kosmo Pads sanitary pads. Each beneficiary has received a package made of 5 pads that will be used for 2 years.



1.1.9. Holiday camp

ICT Holiday camp for 120 Marcegaglia vocational training center students including graduates and prespective students.

As part of the special package for its students to tailor competent graduates ready to find themselves on the job market, students after completion of their respective trades, FMO organizes a holiday camp in which they get intensive training in computer literacy, entrepreneurship, and other skills needed to promote their careers. This year they have been trained in computer literacy with the help of Virginia Tech University from America.



1.2. PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT

The psycho-social support was designed for Zamuka families to empower the whole family members with necessary skills be it financial skills, conflict resolution, adult literacy, proper parenting, and family planning among others. This year 22 individuals were trained in family planning.



12 families benefiting from the Zamuka program underwent training, involving 22 participants, including both husbands and wives. The training on family planning was conducted by health center nurses. Emphasis was placed on the significance of hygiene, particularly personal hygiene. The session included an explanation of five contraceptive methods, with attendees disclosing their current usage. Among the 13 women present, 8 were already employing contraceptive methods, while five expressed immediate interest and enrolled in an artificial family planning program.

Trainers addressed misconceptions and myths surrounding contraceptive methods. The training concluded with participants requesting monthly sessions on family planning. The training staff at health centers ensures strong collaboration in family planning education.

1.3. WEALTH CREATING INTERVENTION

FMO wealth-creating intervention involves implementing strategic measures and policies to stimulate economic growth, job creation, and income generation. These interventions aim to enhance financial well-being at both individual and societal levels by fostering entrepreneurial activities, promoting investment, and improving overall economic conditions, ultimately leading to increased wealth and prosperity. Even though all activities implemented reflect wealth creation, activities particular to the Zamuka program are highlighted in this project.

PERFORMED ACTIVITIES

1.3.1. Provision of cows

The livestock sector in addition to generating income exerts a substantial influence on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), whether through direct or indirect means. It specifically plays a vital role in advancing SDGs 1 (no poverty), 2 (zero hunger), 3 (good health and well-being), 5 (gender equality), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 10 (reduced inequalities), 13 (climate action), and 15 (life on land) and it complies with Rwanda's national social protection policy.

“Girinka,” or the initiative of providing one milky cow per poor family, stands as a leading program in Rwanda. It addresses issues such as malnutrition leading to stunting in children under five years old and responds to the lack of industrial fertilizers by utilizing cow manure. The program aims to reduce poverty through dairy cattle farming, enhance livelihoods through increased milk consumption, and generate additional income.

FMO in its 5-year strategic plan is committed to providing cows to poor families after fulfilling the complete readiness checklist through the household strengthening program- Zamuka. Beneficiaries receive cows that are either pregnant or inseminated before being provided, and they are housed in well-constructed shelters. These shelters are equipped with compost facilities to manage cow dung effectively. Additionally, farming materials such as wheelbarrows and spades are provided to prepare organic manure, contributing to the sustainability of the program.

This year, 4 cows have been provided to poor families along with 4 cowsheds.



1.3.2. Small livestock provision

To address challenges related to high population density and limited cultivable land, goat rearing has emerged as a lucrative livestock alternative to cow farming.

This year, 21 Goats and 1 pig have been distributed to 7 families and 1 family respectively. Each family received 3 goats.



1.3.3. Provision of fruit trees seedlings to farmers

Cultivating fruit trees, if done properly, emerges as a sustainable strategy to combat malnutrition and promote a green environment. Through the grafting process, improved varieties of fruits can be obtained, resulting in trees with rapid growth, resistance to diseases, and larger size, among other benefits.

Bugesera has set an ambitious goal of cultivating 210,000 healthy trees from 2018 to 2024. To achieve this objective, various stakeholders have joined forces to work in harmony.

In 2023, Fondazione Marcegaglia Onlus (FMO) planned to distribute 10,000 fruit trees to families, encouraging planting in homes situated in Nyarugenge, Shyara, and Rilima Sectors. The collaboration involves local volunteers and leaders, with a total of 15,000 fruit trees, including mangoes, avocados, papayas, and oranges, distributed by the end of November. This concerted effort reflects a commitment to fostering sustainable practices and addressing malnutrition in the region.

Table for fruit trees distributed per sector

Seedling type	Shyara	Rilima	Nyarugenge	Total Seedlings
Mango	1400	2200	1400	5000
Papaya	1000	1800	1200	4000
Orange	1200	1400	1400	4000
Avocado	0	1200	800	2000
Total	3600	6600	4800	15000



1.3.4. Support Farmers

Farmers in Bugesera district used to facing different challenges like drought, lack of enough agricultural plots, lack of selected seeds, and lack of transport means of the harvest as well as its conservation. FMO has been supporting farmers to address issues like provision of water pumps, provision of nursery fruit trees, provision of animals for manures among other interventions.

This year, 12 farmers (Zamuka families) have been given bicycles to facilitate the transport of materials to and from the farms, fetching water, etc.



1.3.5. Construction and rehabilitation of houses

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established by the United Nations serve as a universal call to action for all countries, irrespective of their economic status, to advance prosperity while safeguarding the environment by 2030. Housing plays a pivotal role in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and serves as a crucial catalyst for achieving numerous SDGs.

Improving housing conditions often acts as a means for families to climb out of poverty. This sentiment is specifically articulated in SDG 11.1, emphasizing the importance of safe and affordable housing.

FMO is dedicated to aiding the most vulnerable families in the communities it serves through a household strengthening program in its 5 years strategic plan, including those who are homeless. In this year 4 houses were built from scratch and 1 were rehabilitated and all of them were equipped.



Beneficiary Testimonies



My name is **Daniel AHORUSHAKIYE**, I am married and a father of 4 children. Daily I cultivate for others for a living. I got married without having the means to support my family, and I was unable to construct a home where I could live with them. We had to move from borrowed to rented houses. Finding school supplies for the children was a challenge, we had food shortages, and payment of health insurance was a burden. After the recommendation of sector officials, I got support from FMO. They helped us own a lovely better house, supported us with household supplies and equipment, and helped

pay for some of my children's education. I thank them; they gave us life in a way that was not what we expected for we have a home to stay. With my other Zamuka program beneficiaries, we started a savings group, and we worked very hard to fight poverty. Nowadays, I have the goal of building my family capacity as self-reliance for visible success for at least a year, through doing a small business of selling goods more than I used to. We are ready to protect or preserve our accomplishments so that advancement can go on and increase wealth. I am very grateful for this.

I am **NTAWERA Marie Chantal**, a mother of 8 children. After my divorce from my husband, I lived at a benefactor-borrowed house while working as a casual laborer in the meat roasting business to earn a living, I am very appreciative of FMO for creating the project of the Zamuka program. It seems that they saved our lives, as we had a difficult life despite renting a house for 20,000 Rwf while raising a family of nine children, and not having beds or other tangibles. Money, I used to pay for rent I use it by implementing small business which helps me to buy the basics we need in our family. Because I have a passion for working for myself if I get a loan, I would expand my business so that it does not go back. In sum support, FMO gave us, makes me progress because I am confident I will pay for my children's school fees, and health insurance in the coming year. I thank FMO very much.



I am **NYINAWABAGESERA Valeria**, a mother of 9 children, I cultivate in neighbors' fields for money to upkeep my family. I had no hope of life after my husband died, in 2017, I felt helpless because he left me with many children and the house we lived in was old and it was difficult for me to maintain family stability I could not help my family on my own in general. After the recommendation of Sector officials, FMO came into our lives and started with major house rehabilitation as they almost demolished the whole house and rebuilt it, equipped the house, and gave us food support, a water tank, and a bicycle for crop transport. After I received support from FMO I came out of loneliness and I felt like "I can do it!!" contrary to back then. Today, I can pay for health insurance, and buy food and I feel that I should work hard to build houses for rent in the neighboring space and put more effort into agriculture and other productive areas to better fight poverty." Forever thankful to our Government and Fondazione Marcegaglia Onlus.

1.3.6. Urgent Community Support

There are instances when the community reaches out with urgent needs, including medical, food, and social event support organized by local authorities. In anticipation of such situations, FMO had planned for contingencies this year. This includes urgent medical support provided to 2 individuals, food assistance provided to 34 families, 456 individuals from 125 families were assisted with health insurances to cover basic health care and contribution to 7 social events organized by youth, women, school students or local administration in line with FMO's mission in Rwanda.





WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The government of Rwanda, like governments in many other countries in the developing world, has in the previous years, paid particular attention to increasing access and improving the quality of basic education and access to capital.

These efforts have resulted in large increases in enrollment rates and progressive improvements in the quality of education available to the countries' youngest pupils. In its five-year strategic planning, FMO is looking forward to participating in community empowerment in terms of equipping youth with technical skills and easing access to capital.



1.4. TVET CENTER

According to the Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) policy in Rwanda, education plays a crucial role in the economic and social development of the country. The policy emphasizes the importance of having a well-trained, motivated, and adaptable workforce. Vocational training, as part of this system, aims to equip individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills to pursue a profession and integrate into the labor force. The Rwanda TVET board places significant emphasis on vocational training as a means to supply the Rwandan community with a substantial number of skilled technical employees.

To address the educational needs of individuals facing challenges such as family responsibilities (orphans or heads of families), single mothers with young babies, and dropout students who are unable to leave their respective areas for learning, FMO has established a local TVET CENTER. Additionally, a comparative survey was conducted to assess the cost-effectiveness of sending a student to study a particular trade away versus enrolling them in a locally established VTC center. The findings revealed that the latter is more cost-effective, enabling us to enroll more students. The establishment of local VTC centers has proven beneficial, particularly in accommodating a diverse range of applicants.” Currently, 4 technical trades are running in the center and FMO is looking forward to adding other options in the coming year.

PERFORMED ACTIVITIES

In 2023 the following activities were carried out:

1.4.1. PROVISION OF MATERIALS AND TRAINING

At the beginning of the year, the center continued running the 2nd cohort of Tailoring and Hairdressing from 2022 and the 1st 2023 cohort of Welding and Masonry. All these cohorts successfully graduated in July. The commencement of the second cohort for all trades followed the regular academic schedule in September. The delay in this schedule was attributed to the necessary wait for school accreditation from the Rwanda TVET Board.





During the training, consumables were acquired for the production of final products in constructing Zamuka houses and creating uniforms for children in vulnerable households, among other uses. This procurement of materials supports the practical application of skills learned, contributing to meaningful and tangible outcomes in the construction and provision of essential items.



Below are some of the MVTC completed products:

MVTC all trainees' uniforms (Tailoring)



Public Dustbins donated to Bugesera District (Welding)



Zamuka program houses (Masonry and Welding)



The conclusion of the year marked the completion of the initial semester for the September intake group. During this time, top achievers received appreciation, while the rest were motivated and advised in anticipation of the upcoming internship after the second and final term. Request letters for internships were distributed to all trainees to facilitate their search.



1.5. M-VTC INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

In response to the growing number of technical trades and an increased intake of trainees at the center, along with the imperative to meet accreditation eligibility criteria, FMO undertook an investment in VTC infrastructure. This included the construction of tailoring and masonry workshops, the rehabilitation of existing toilets, the establishment of a kitchen, revision of compound electrical installation, and the installation of a water harvesting system.

1.5.1. Masonry Workshop Construction

The construction of this workshop was carried out by masonry and welding trainees concurrently with their course curriculum, spanning six months. The structure is composed of steel tubes and steel angles, featuring a coarse-surfaced concrete floor and a roof covered with 28 BG roofing metal sheets assembled with bolts and nuts. This project served as a valuable hands-on learning experience for the trainees.



1.5.2. Tailoring Workshop Construction

The workshop was also constructed simultaneously with the masonry workshop by trainees, utilizing the same materials. However, in this case, the walls were built using roofing sheets and plywood. To enhance ventilation, a whirlybird and side fan combo were incorporated into the design.



1.5.3. Kitchen Construction and Equipment

To address the challenge of a long distance between MVTC and ECD-Kiamranzara for lunch breaks, a kitchen hangar was established just before the commencement of the second cohort. This initiative aimed to optimize the time trainees spent in training by minimizing travel distances during lunch breaks. After being built, it was equipped with cooking 3 stove kits and other kitchen accessories.

A provisional kitchen was built by FMO students awaiting budget availability to establish a design kitchen. It is currently serving 121 TVET students enrolled with two meals per day.



1.5.4. Revision of compound electrical installation

Due to the high risk associated with the existing electrical installations that posed potential hazards, a new electrical installation was implemented within the compound.



1.5.5. Toilets rehabilitation

The existing toilets, made of 4 units, underwent rehabilitation to ensure cleanliness and hygiene, addressing concerns about the potential spread of diseases. We anticipate further expansions as the number of trainees has increased.



1.5.6. Water harvesting and water filtration systems

To address the challenges of water scarcity and compound flooding, water tanks with a total capacity of 33m³ have been installed at the VTC. Furthermore, a water purification system has been implemented to provide safe drinking water for the trainees.



1.5.7. Auto engine repair trade preparation and hangar construction



In anticipation of launching a new auto engine and repair program, the new hangar is in the process of being constructed. The construction is actively carried out by welding and masonry trainees, closely supervised by their experienced trainers. Simultaneously, we selected the trade's trainees and devised comprehensive training plans to impart the necessary skills for car engine repair. The completion of the workshop construction is expected in mid-January, aligning with the scheduled commencement of the new program. This preparation aims to ensure a seamless and well-prepared introduction of the auto engine repair trade, emphasizing both infrastructure development and training initiatives.

1.6. PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER TVET INSTITUTIONS

To extend its reach to a broader audience of young people, FMO identified collaboration with other institutions as a key strategy, particularly in exploring new working areas.

This year, FMO established a partnership with Miracle Corners Rwanda (MCR) to offer tailoring training to youth from Musenyi and Nyarugenge Sectors. For the inaugural training cohorts in Musenyi, FMO took on the responsibility of supplying toolkits and rehabilitating premises for use. Simultaneously, MCR committed to providing consumables, and trainers, and overseeing the training program. This collaborative effort ensures a comprehensive approach to skill development for the youth involved.



Another noteworthy partnership has been established with the Benimpuhwe Organisation. Under this collaboration, Benimpuhwe will contribute to providing the existing training workshops located in Rilima, while FMO will undertake the rehabilitation efforts and conduct training programs.

The primary objectives include alleviating high density in current workshops, creating space for new trades, and planning for the future use of these facilities as

dormitories to accommodate youth from remote areas. This collaboration aims to enhance training opportunities and provide residential facilities for young individuals from more distant regions.

1.7. MARCEGAGLIA CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Advisory on the choice of a career is a crucial part of the viability of any career stage, importantly on profitability and employability, which in turn is encouraged by a startup capital and guidance on the implementation of entrepreneurial activities.

One of the best ways to encourage economic growth in poor areas is to provide affordable small loans to small-business owners or toolkits to technical training center graduates. These programs can inject capital into communities that lack the collateral required by conventional banks, which are referred to as microcredit or micro-loans.

The Country has encouraged this policy through various bodies such as: the National Employment Program (NEP), Business Development Fund, and VUP among others with the aim of job creation.

1.7.1. SPECIALIZED TRAINING & INTERNSHIP

To augment knowledge and broaden employability prospects, Fondazione Marcegaglia provides extracurricular training opportunities for youth referred to as specialized training. These additional programs aim to enrich the skill set of the participants and increase their chances of securing diverse employment opportunities. Moreover, following their technical training, participants are connected to institutions relevant to their fields, allowing them to gain firsthand experience in their respective careers within the real-world context. During this period, they are closely supervised by their trainers, providing a practical bridge between their education and the professional landscape.

PERFORMED ACTIVITIES

In the course of this project, the following activities were undertaken:

1.7.1.1. Make-up training



Apart from the Hairdressing modules, trainees in the field of hairdressing, including some recent graduates, have received instruction in facial makeup techniques from a professional makeup expert. A total of 30 trainees have gained valuable insights from this training and expressed gratitude for the acquired knowledge. This additional aspect of learning complements their skills in hairdressing, making them more versatile professionals capable of providing a broader range of services to clients. The positive response from the trainees underscores the effectiveness of the training program and their appreciation for the new skills they have acquired.

1.7.1.2. Training on the usage of industrial sewing machines

Having secured the necessary material resources for learning industrial sewing machines, 2 M-VTC tailoring trainers have undergone training on industrial sewing machines, specifically Croneries and Broderies. The trainers have successfully completed their training, and they are now prepared to impart their knowledge and skills on these machines to M-VTC trainees in the upcoming cohorts. This initiative ensures that the trainees will receive instruction on the operation and techniques related to Croneries and Broderies, enhancing their proficiency in using these industrial sewing machines for future applications.



1.7.1.3. Entrepreneurship and decision-making

Thirty girls, predominantly graduates of M-VTC, have undergone entrepreneurship and decision-making training. This additional training enhances the technical and vocational skills they acquired at M-VTC, enabling them to effectively manage their businesses. They got to know how to run a business, how to make a business plan, how to monitor a business and make good and profitable decisions. The training took two weeks and is expected to be resumed with more topics to ensure trainees have enough packages necessary for a business doer. Such pieces of training will continuously be delivered to all M-VTC graduates by their respective cohorts.



1.7.1.4. Computer literacy

As a needed addendum to the acquired technical skills at M-VTC one room was rehabilitated and equipped with laptops and internet connection for the trainees to receive instruction in basic computer skills relevant to their future professions. This year, 110 trainees benefitted from the computer lab.



FMO Staff and stakeholders in the neighborhood also have received computer training whereby they have been trained by Virginia Tech University volunteers about the usage of Google Workspace.

1.8. SCHOLARSHIP

The scholarship initiatives by FMO aim to support high school graduates from underprivileged families, providing an opportunity for those who didn't secure government scholarships to pursue higher education and pursue their career aspirations. This not only contributes to personal growth but also enhances the number of professionals in the local community, fostering overall family development in the working area.

In alignment with the national health sector policy, which emphasizes the need for an increased number of nurses, FMO has strategically prioritized nursing scholarships in its five-year strategic plan (2023 - 2027). In 2023, a notable achievement was realized as 8 young individuals were awarded scholarships, with a significant emphasis on nursing scholarships were 5 new nursing scholarships were awarded to meet the demand for healthcare professionals, 2 leadership scholarships and 1 engineering scholarship. In the Annual Plan 2023, FMO supported 44 scholars in different universities, this demonstrates FMO's commitment to addressing critical needs and promoting professional development in the community.

PERFORMED ACTIVITIES

The following activities have been done:

1.8.1. Selection of Candidates

A public call for applications for nursing scholarships was released for applicants from 15 sectors of Bugesera District, a total of 64 applied, among which 8 scholarships were awarded based on their performance in high school examination results which were added to other 36 ongoing scholars to make a total of 44 scholars. The selection process went through interviews and home visitation by FMO staff. Additionally, one M-VTC graduate was given a scholarship to pursue a bachelor's of civil engineering, and 2 brilliant girls have been supported to join business and entrepreneurship studies at African Leadership University

1.8.2. Scholarships Follow-up and graduation

● In this year a total of 26 nurses were supported:

- 5 nursing scholars have been selected and enrolled to join the other
- 21 prospective scholars supported to pursue 3 years degree in Nursing studies at Ruli Higher Institute of Health, among them 5 graduated along the year and are now serving in different hospitals in Rwanda.

● 3 Africa Leadership University scholars have been supported to pursue business and entrepreneurship studies for 3 years:

- 2 brilliant girls have been enrolled this year
- One was prospective and she is studying well

● 1 INES-Ruhengeri University scholar was supported:

- A scholar who graduated in Masonry at MVTC has been supported to pursue his bachelor's in Civil Engineering. He is studying well.

● 14 University of Tourism and Business scholars were supported:

- 9 scholars have graduated from UTB
- 5 are finalizing the academic requirements to be on the next graduation list.



Table of ongoing scholarships details (Prospective scholars)

No.	University	New scholars in 2023	Number of scholars supported since 2022	Number of prospective scholars	Number of graduated scholars in 2023	Total number of scholars supported in 2023
1	Ruli Higher Institute of Health	5	16	21	5	26
2	African Leadership University	1	2	3	0	3
3	UTB	0	14	5	9	14
4	INES Ruhengeri	1	0	1	0	1
	Total					44

Given the pending list of applicants and the need from the community, FMO will continue to sponsor tertiary education to ensure the availability of professionals, especially in the health area.

1.8.3. Special training

During this 2023 action plan, FMO has provided sponsorship to 4 young individuals to be trained on special short courses that are not yet being trained at M-VTC. As per the following:

No.	Training center	Option	Number of beneficiaries	Gender	Location
1	Action College	Culinary arts	2	F	Gasabo-Kigali
2	Integrated barista training center	Barista skills	1	F	Gasabo-Kigali
3	Forever TVET	Heavy machinery	1	M	Gasabo-Kigali
	Total		4		



1.9. MICROCREDIT

One effective strategy for promoting economic growth in impoverished areas involves providing affordable small loans, commonly known as microcredit or micro-loans, to farmers, small-business owners, and aspiring young entrepreneurs in need of start-up capital. These initiatives inject much-needed funds into communities lacking the collateral typically demanded by conventional banks. The country has embraced this approach through entities such as the National Employment Program (NEP), Business Development Fund, and VUP, all aimed at fostering job creation.

Since 2016, FMO has been actively supporting micro-businesses through the FMO-Terimbere fund. This fund is managed by local integral representatives appointed by sector authorities in collaboration with FMO staff, and it involves providing toolkits to young individuals launching small enterprises. Recognizing challenges in loan recovery, a new model was introduced, this year involving the provision of micro-loans to local groups, known as Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLAs).

In 2023, a total of 14 VSLAs were funded, empowering 232 people working in various sectors. Notably, three groups of young entrepreneurs received subsidized toolkits, facilitating their entry into the business world. This innovative approach to microfinance not only supports economic development but also empowers local communities by creating sustainable businesses and livelihoods.

PERFORMED ACTIVITIES

The performed activities in this project include:

1.9.1. Loan Provision and Recovery

To conduct an operational study of VSLAs and explore a new microloan model for community implementation, FMO Volunteers conducted a survey. The findings allowed FMO Staff to develop tools for the entire loan lifecycle. As a pilot, 232 individuals have already benefited from microcredit through 14 VSLAs. Currently, a close follow-up is taking place to ensure proper use of the loan.

No.	Sector	VSLAs	Benefiting individuals
1	Nyarugenge	5	108
2	Rilima	5	92
3	Shyara	4	32
Total		14	232



In the existing microcredit model, which involves providing loans to individuals, an intensive loan recovery session was conducted. Various approaches were employed for debtors, including extending the payment duration and acknowledging challenges faced in their projects. This flexible approach aims to support borrowers experiencing difficulties and foster successful repayment. Unfortunately, some individuals keep misusing the opportunity and have been warned of being sued by local mediators.

As of mid-November, 40% of the debt balance at the start of the year has been recovered.



1.9.2. Toolkits Provision

To help the trainees start a business after they graduate, FMO helps them to get subsidized toolkits whereby they pay gradually 50 % of the cost of the toolkit received.

This year 59 young individuals have received toolkits.

No	Technical area	Beneficiaries	Toolkits received
1	Welding	10 trainees in 2 groups	4 sets of arc welding machines and 2 extension cables
2	Tailoring	49 trainees	49 Sewing machines and accessories



Beneficiary Testimony



My name is **NIYOMWUNGERI SIFA**, I have been an MVTC graduate since July 2023, I dropped out of secondary school because I kept repeating in a single grade. My parents managed to pay for tailoring lessons to the local tailor, but I dropped out because of a family money shortage. I felt disoriented and jobless. I rushed to MVTC after hearing about technical skills provision free of charge along with other opportunities including toolkits. After completing the training, I

received the toolkits and I joined the same local tailor in her shop, now I work with her, and though I make small, I save to expand my business. I have some savings and money, and though I do not have many clients or enough capital, I am confident that the knowledge I have acquired will help me reach my development goals and ability to support my family.

My name is **UWAJENEZA Marie**, I have been an MVTC graduate since July 2023. After graduating from secondary school, I heard about the opportunity of technical vocational training at MVTC, I chose tailoring because I expected it would bring money quickly as it requires the minimum. As we were concluding our training we made a saving group with my classmate from which we saved some amount to receive subsidized toolkits as well as starting capital. Upon



graduation, my savings were around 50,000 Rwf which helped me to buy sewing textures, and basic materials and pay for renting business premises shared with 3 of my classmates. Upon receiving the toolkit I collaborated with my training comrades. Despite the challenges of low capital, a shortage of customers, and limited instruments, we continue to operate. Today, I can save 3000 Rwf monthly after my expenses. As you can see, things have changed from earlier. I am appreciative of FMO support, it was beneficial to us, and I hope to put the knowledge accumulated to work to raise our business capital.





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