

Survivors Fund (SURF) - Impact Overview 2025

Rebuilding Lives. Restoring Dignity. Empowering Survivors.



Introduction

Founded in 1997, Survivors Fund (SURF) is the principal international NGO dedicated to supporting survivors of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. Working through survivor-led organisations such as [AVEGA](#) and [IBUKA](#), SURF provides counselling, livelihoods support, education, healthcare and advocacy to help survivors rebuild their lives with dignity.

In 2025, SURF’s programmes delivered transformational impact across areas including mental health, economic empowerment, education and community resilience.

Contents

1. Transformational Mental Health Support.....	2
2. Youth Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment	3
3. Practical Support and Community Projects	4
4. Education and Opportunity for Second-Generation Survivors	5
5. Building Sustainable Survivor-Led Systems	6
Overall Impact in 2025	6
Acknowledgement of Partners	7
Testimonials	7

1. Transformational Mental Health Support



SURF expanded nationwide counselling services while strengthening Rwanda's public health system to recognise and respond to survivor trauma.

Key Results from 2025

- 10,337 counselling helpline calls supporting 8,438 individuals
- 419 Community Health Officers trained
- 1,576 survivors supported through counselling groups with 264 group sessions

Measured Outcomes

- Depression fell from 89% to 7%
- Anxiety from 98% to 10%
- Suicidal ideation from 55% to 3%

Impact: Survivors regained daily functioning, reduced trauma symptoms, and re-engaged with family and community life.

Funders included Clifford Chance, Network for Africa, Foundation Rwanda and INSPIRE!africa



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2. Youth Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment



SURF and partners supported young genocide survivors to build livelihoods through entrepreneurship training, savings groups and loan-guarantee schemes.

Key Results from 2021 to date

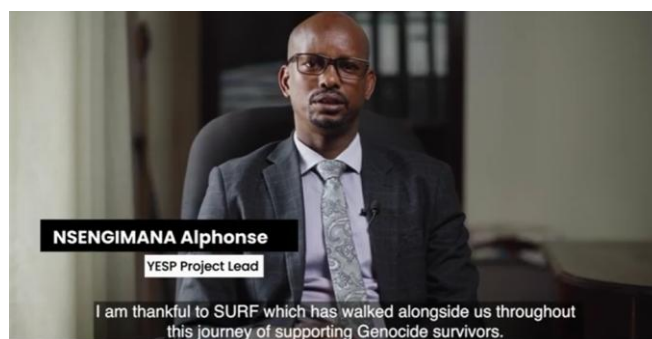
- 7,239 young survivors supported through entrepreneurship programmes
- 4,116 received entrepreneurship training
- Over 1,000 new small businesses launched
- Loans totalling over 170 million Rwandan francs (c. £90,000) disbursed

Measured Outcomes

- 92% repayment rate of loans to date
- 83 million Rwandan francs (c. £40,000) accrued in group savings accounts
- 450 internships facilitated and 90 new jobs secured

Impact: Young survivors gained income, independence and confidence, strengthening families and local economies.

Funders included Clifford Chance, Network for Africa, Foundation Rwanda and INSPIRE!africa



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3. Practical Support and Community Projects



Through Good Gifts and partner programmes, SURF delivered practical assistance improving daily living conditions.

Examples in 2025

- 478 survivor-headed households received livestock
- 136 survivors received solar lights
- 52 survivors received improved cooking stoves
- 895 students received school materials

Other initiatives supported clean water access, farming projects and income-generating agriculture.

Impact: Improved safety, education, nutrition and dignity for vulnerable survivors and their families.

Funders included Charities Advisory Trust and INSPIRE!africa



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4. Education and Opportunity for Second-Generation Survivors



SURF supports educational enrichment for children of survivor families through a new community learning centre, Philly's Place, which includes a purpose-built basketball court.

Key Results since 2024

- Free after-school and holiday learning programmes delivered to children of survivor families
- Library access provided with thousands of donated books and learning materials
- Creative arts, sports and life-skills workshops delivered, including a new basketball court

Measured Outcomes

- Improved school attendance and engagement among participating children
- Increased confidence, English-language ability and practical skills
- Stronger peer networks and community support for children of survivor families

Impact

Philly's Place, which moved into a new purpose-bult centre in 2024, helps children of survivor families stay in school, build confidence and develop the skills and hope needed for brighter futures.

Funders included Sandhurst School and Reaching Rwanda supporters



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5. Building Sustainable Survivor-Led Systems



SURF strengthened Rwanda's mental health and survivor support infrastructure.

- Training programmes embedded survivor-specific mental health awareness into the public health system
- Counsellor training expanded Rwanda's mental health workforce
- Survivor organisations strengthened their capacity nationwide

Impact: Sustainable, locally led support systems that continue beyond individual projects.

Overall Impact in 2025

Through counselling, education, entrepreneurship and practical support, Survivors Fund helped thousands of survivors and their families:

- Heal from trauma
- Build sustainable livelihoods
- Educate the next generation
- Reconnect with their communities

SURF's work shows that recovery from genocide is possible when survivors receive sustained, compassionate and practical support.

Acknowledgement of Partners

Network for Africa • Clifford Chance • Foundation Rwanda • Charities Advisory Trust • INSPIRE!africa
• J Van Mars Foundation • Allan & Nesta Charitable Trust • This Day Foundation

Testimonials



“I attended the training to learn how to run my business - nothing else. During the training, a loan officer came and explained to us how Goshen provides loans. That discussion convinced me to take out a loan, expand my business, and move to a better location where I could attract more customers. Before, rent was a big worry because it was so expensive. I applied for a loan of 1,500,000 RWF (c. £790), which allowed me to buy new materials and pay

for a better shop space. In training, we learned that business positioning is critical. Today, I’m very happy with my progress. My business now has clear direction. I can pay my rent on time, cover personal expenses, and even managed to buy a piece of land outside Kigali worth 4,000,000 RWF (c. £2,100). My business today is valued at over 10,000,000 RWF (c. £5,200).”

Ntibaziyaremye Cyriaque, 32

Participant in SURF’s Youth Entrepreneurship Programme

“A friend of mine learned of the helpline, and the number to call, through an advert on radio. She wrote it down and came to me asking if we can call and check if it is true. Personally, I could not make any call, but she helped and call the number. A counsellor responded and we talked every day for at least 10 sessions. I started feeling something is changing into my life, even though I did not know the person who is helping me. The only knowledge I had is she was working under AVEGA, which I know is for genocide widows. After several calls with the counsellor, I started developing some positive attitudes, and now I have started taking to others and thinking about my life. I believe that this is progress and I will continue to try think that way, more positively, about my future. I am very grateful for the helpline, and my counsellor, for the support I have received.”



Josephine Ngabo, 57

Caller to the Survivors Fund (SURF) / AVEGA Counselling Helpline