



KOMERA *Self Confidence, One Girl at a Time.*

MISSION: In Rwanda, *Komera*, means be strong and courageous. Komera builds self confident young women through education, community and sport.

VISION: We believe if Komera fulfills its mission, young women in Rwanda will have the confidence to lead positive social change in their community, experience the joy of self discovery, and realize their own personal potential.

HISTORY: In 2007, Komera founder, former primary school teacher and former professional runner, Margaret Butler spent a year living in a remote village in Rwanda. She explored the countryside during her daily runs, and she often found herself surrounded by groups of boys but rarely girls.



At the same time, she was learning about the local education system and how more often than not, girls were being left behind in secondary school education. These few brave girls who started running with Margaret inspired her to host a girls-only “fun run” to promote the rights and education of Rwandan girls. As the intrepid girls took off, shouts of “Komera!”, which means “be strong and courageous” in the local dialect, could be heard from the crowd. In partnership with Partners In Health, the local government and local schools, 10 girls were selected to be the first set of Komera scholars to attend secondary school.

OUR IMPACT: The research has been done. We know that investing in girls has a positive impact not only on their own livelihood but also on their community. We know that when a girl in the developing world receives seven or more years of education, she marries four years later and has 2.2 fewer children. It has been proven that an extra year of primary school boosts girls’ eventual wages by 10 to 20 percent, and an extra year of secondary school by 15 to 25 percent. What’s more, research in developing countries has shown a consistent relationship between better infant and child health and higher levels of schooling among mothers.



To date we have worked with 88 young women impacting over 500 family members. With the average annual per capita income of \$560, families in Rwanda would not have the ability to cover the annual school fees of \$500. The Komera scholars are attending boarding schools, which alleviates the cost of home care (food, clothing, healthcare). On average, the grades of the Komera scholars have improved by 10% to date, but this is only part of the story. Many of the students have been taken out of abject poverty and have never had the opportunity to attend school on a consistent basis. Through interviews with the Komera scholars, they show a consistent increase in happiness and hope for the future.

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Learn More! www.komera.org