



# NETWORK FOR AFRICA

## IMPACT REPORT 2024

*Enabling conflict survivors to rebuild  
their lives and strengthen their  
communities with dignity and resilience*

Image © Simone Fior



## OUR MISSION AND IMPACT

Network for Africa (N4A) addresses the invisible wounds of war and genocide that persist long after international attention has moved elsewhere. Working with trusted local partners, we transform lives in post-conflict sub-Saharan African communities by delivering evidence-based mental health interventions and sustainable livelihood programmes.

This approach enables survivors to rebuild their lives with dignity whilst strengthening entire communities for long-term resilience.

Operating across four countries — Burundi, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Uganda — we bridge critical gaps in mental health provision through locally-led and culturally sensitive programmes that deliver measurable, lasting change.



## 2024 Impact at a Glance

**Direct Beneficiaries Supported:** **3,564** people with mental illness/epilepsy and their carer-givers.

**Livelihoods Training Provided:** **1,077** individuals equipped with business skills.

**Community Reach:** Over **13,957** community leaders and others educated about mental health and epilepsy.

**Family Impact:** An estimated **25,000** additional family members benefited indirectly.

## THE CHALLENGE WE ADDRESS

In post-conflict sub-Saharan Africa, millions of survivors carry the invisible burden of trauma. One in five people in these regions live with untreated mental health conditions including anxiety, depression, PTSD or psychosis. Yet mental health care remains virtually non-existent in many communities, with few trained professionals, deep-rooted stigma, and no support systems.

Research shows that conflict-affected regions are caught in cycles of poverty that compound mental health challenges. Without intervention, these conditions strip individuals of their ability to work, care for families or participate in community life, perpetuating isolation and destitution.

This cycle is entirely preventable with the right intervention.





## OUR PROVEN MODEL

**N4A delivers a proven, integrated model that addresses both psychological recovery and economic empowerment.**

Our approach includes:

- **Local Partnership Strategy** — We collaborate with established local non-government organisations to design and deliver mental health services that are affordable, culturally appropriate and trusted within their communities.
- **Community Capacity Building** — We train local leaders, community members and health workers to recognise mental health symptoms, provide psychological support, make appropriate referrals, and combat stigma.
- **Integrated Recovery Pathway** — Participants receive practical business skills and support to develop income-generating activities, creating sustainable pathways out of poverty and towards personal independence and dignity.

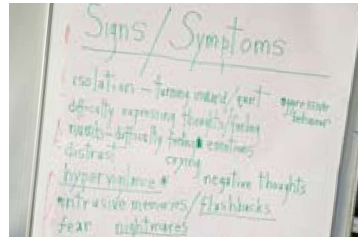
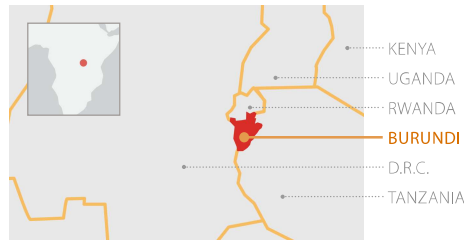
## WHY OUR MODEL WORKS:

- **Locally-driven** — Deep cultural understanding ensures interventions are relevant and accepted.
- **Sustainable** — We build lasting capacity within communities for ongoing care.
- **Integrated** — By addressing psychological and economic recovery simultaneously, we break cycles of mental illness and poverty.
- **Evidence-informed** — Sixteen years of programme refinement based on rigorous evidence and community feedback.





# PROGRAMME IMPACT BY COUNTRY BURUNDI



## 2024 IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS:

- 20 professionals trained in trauma counselling skills through our five-day intensive programme in Bujumbura.

**Context:** Operating in one of the world's poorest countries (187<sup>th</sup> out of 193 on UNDP's Human Development Index), our Burundian partner provides vital psychological support in communities where mental health resources are virtually non-existent.

Despite ongoing discoveries of mass graves and continued enforced disappearances, our training programme successfully equipped participants from diverse professional backgrounds including journalists, teachers, medical professionals and counsellors with essential trauma counselling skills.

### Future Plans:

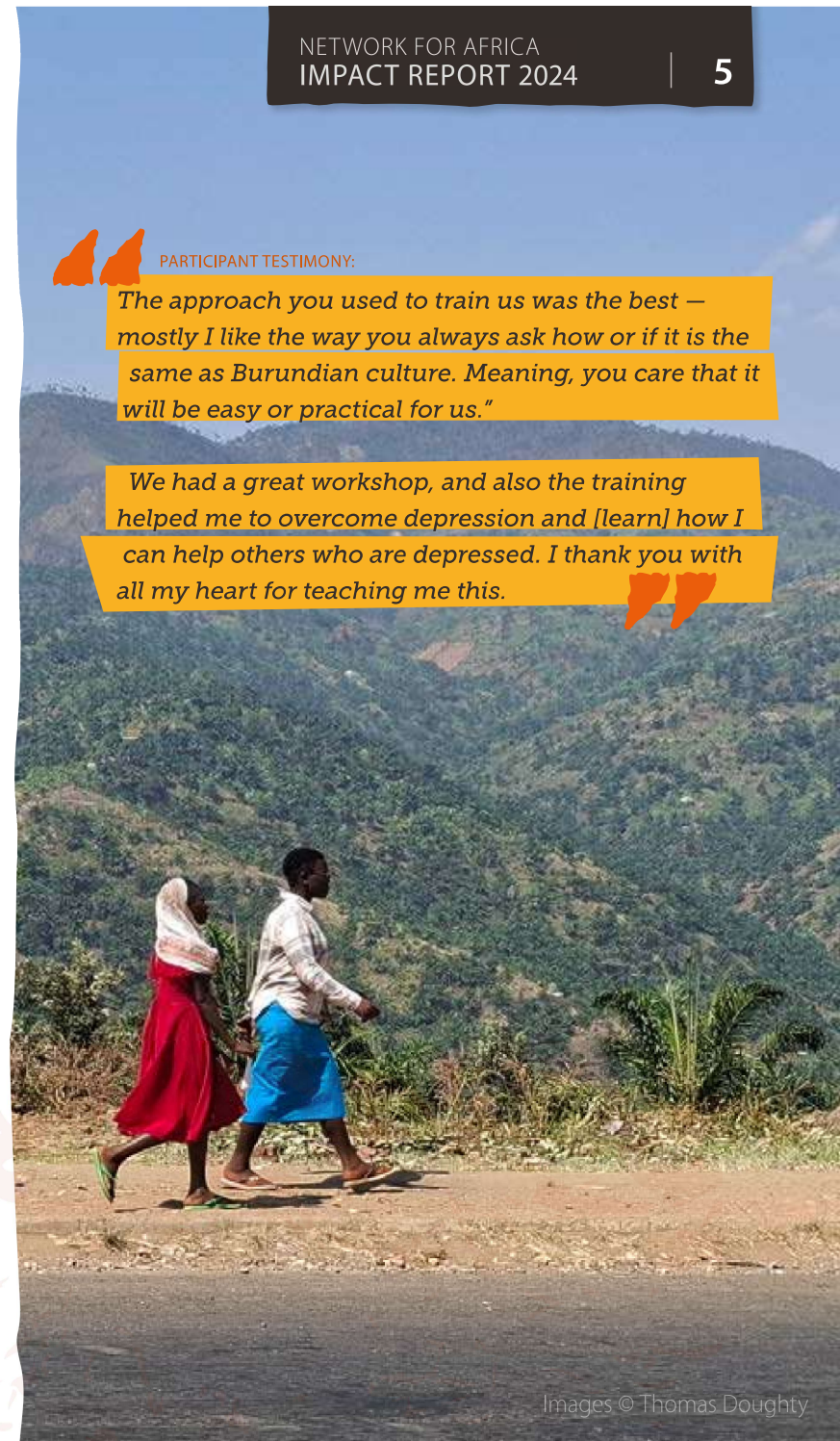
Expanding our reach with a new cohort of 20 trainees whilst providing refresher training for 2024's participants, responding to strong local demand.



#### PARTICIPANT TESTIMONY:

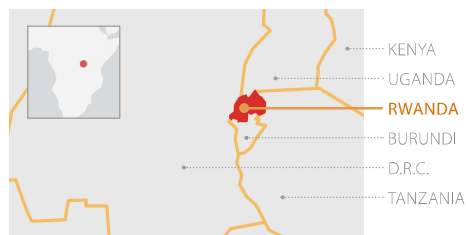
*The approach you used to train us was the best — mostly I like the way you always ask how or if it is the same as Burundian culture. Meaning, you care that it will be easy or practical for us."*

*We had a great workshop, and also the training helped me to overcome depression and [learn] how I can help others who are depressed. I thank you with all my heart for teaching me this."*





# PROGRAMME IMPACT BY COUNTRY RWANDA



## 2024 IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS:

- 300 genocide survivors joined 12 peer-support groups with 264 counselling sessions.
- 110 survivors received one-to-one counselling.
- 322 home visits conducted to support families.
- 1,900+ people received mental health education.
- 424 survivors received business skills training; 51 started businesses; 44 secured employment.
- Dramatic improvement in mental health outcomes: participants feeling limited by trauma dropped from 72% to 8%.
- 50 charitable projects carried out by participants, strengthening community bonds.

### Context:

Through our long-standing partnership with the Rwanda-run Survivors Fund (SURF), we address the continuing mental health legacy of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, which affects both direct survivors and subsequent generations.

With genocide survivors experiencing PTSD at rates nearly eight times higher than the general population (27.9% vs 3.6%), our peer counselling model provides culturally appropriate group support that harnesses collective strength and promotes social integration.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Participants feeling limited by trauma fell from 72% to 8%.
- Those concealing mental health issues fell from 73% to 35%.
- Participants feeling better able to cope rose from 2% to 65%.
- 78% loan repayment rate among business programme participants.



Image © Andrew Sutton



### PARTICIPANT TESTIMONY:

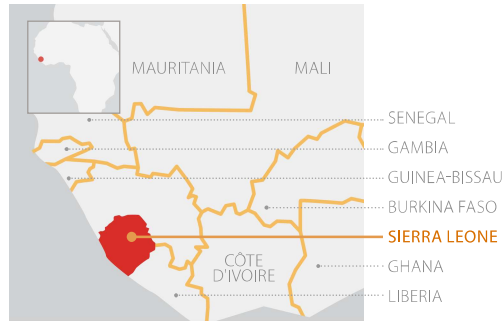
*After the counsellors listened to me and helped me, I felt relieved of the heavy burden I was carrying. For the first time, I was able to talk about my mother's death, which had always haunted me...*

*In the group, I found friends, like siblings, who visit me and support me.*

*I feel like I've gained a wonderful family because we share so much together.*



# PROGRAMME IMPACT BY COUNTRY SIERRA LEONE



## PARTICIPANT TESTIMONY:

*I was diagnosed with depression by Network for Salone at the maternal clinic...They gave me counselling, and I was able to join a self-help group. Both of these helped me a lot and improved my mental state — I felt less alone...I feel lucky that I came across Network for Salone.*



Images clockwise from top left: © Thomas Doughty, Abu G Sesay, Thomas Doughty, Ibrahim Fofanah.

## 2024 IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS:

- 271 clients received epilepsy medication with 80% contributing towards the cost of their medication.
- 899 new clients received counselling (depression affecting 21%, and trauma/PTSD 19%).
- 432 people reached through community education with 79% showing improved understanding of mental illness.
- 1,430 women and 782 male partners attended maternal mental health sessions.
- 6,912 students and 621 teachers participated in school mental health programmes.
- 367 people actively participated in 15 self-help groups with 543% increase in savings for established groups.

## Context:

Operating through Network for Salone in Port Loko in northwest Sierra Leone, we serve communities where 71% live in extreme poverty following the devastating impacts of civil war (1991–2002) and the Ebola epidemic (2014–16).

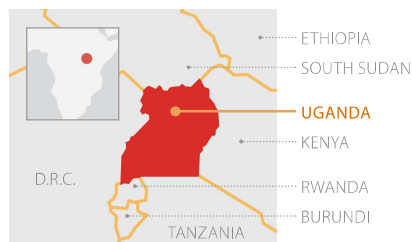
The trauma of civil war and the Ebola epidemic left profound scars: 70,000 war casualties, widespread displacement, and a decimated health system that makes our community-based approach essential.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- 63% of counselling clients showed reduced anxiety symptoms.
- 70% showed reduced depression symptoms.
- 100% of established self-help groups can now meet their basic needs.
- School attendance doubled among children of self-help group members.
- Successful advocacy secured mosquito nets, anti-bullying measures, and road improvements.



# PROGRAMME IMPACT BY COUNTRY UGANDA



## 2024 IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS:

- 1,103 clients treated at mental health clinics.
- 303 new clients received individual counselling with 97% showing significant improvement.
- 669 people supported through home visits.
- 2,242 students participated in mental health clubs.
- 1,685 people engaged in World Mental Health Day celebrations.
- 93% of self-help group participants reported improved ability to meet their basic needs.
- 60% increase in average incomes among livelihood programme participants.

### Context:

Through our partnership with locally-led BNUU in the remote Agago District, in the Northern Region of Uganda we serve communities still recovering from a 21-year civil war that saw tens of thousands of children abducted and forced to become soldiers.

With 35% of Ugandans suffering from mental illness and Uganda having just 26 mental health professionals per million people, our community-based model fills critical service gaps.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- 97% of counselling clients showed significant improvement.
- 98% of home visit clients no longer feel stigmatised.
- 60% average income increase for livelihood participants.
- 346 members benefit from their vegetable gardens, alleviating hunger.
- Successful community advocacy reduced stigma and increased PMIE support.



*I was taken to traditional healers and witch doctors for treatment several times but all were futile. I was heartbroken and had no hope in my life. I was referred to BNUU and was counselled on several occasions because I had severe depression with suicidal thoughts and this helped me to remain strong despite the challenges I had. I sincerely thank BNUU for the great support and for standing with me in a very difficult time when people were running away from me.*

PARTICIPANT STORY





## Our Safeguarding Policies:

- Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding Policy
- Dealing with Safeguarding Reports
- Safeguarding Complaints Policy
- Malpractice Policy
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Fraud & Corruption Policy

## OUR COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING:

N4A maintains the highest safeguarding standards, protecting all individuals regardless of background from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. We operate zero tolerance policies and ensure all staff and partners receive regular safeguarding training.





## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW 2024

**INCOME:** £378,190  
**EXPENDITURE:** £432,342  
**BANK BALANCE:** £103,451  
**TOTAL RESERVES:** £120,300

*of which:*  
£71,131 Are Restricted  
(for ongoing projects)  
£49,169 Are Unrestricted

Strong financial performance was achieved through securing additional grants and efficient project management.

Healthy reserves position ensures programme continuity and strategic development.



# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2025:

## PROGRAMME EXPANSION

- **Burundi:** Scale up trauma counselling training with new cohort and refresher programmes.
- **Rwanda:** Continue peer counselling expansion and increase loan guarantee fund for business development.
- **Uganda:** Support BNUU's journey to independence through capacity building and fundraising support.
- **Sierra Leone:** Assist Network for Salone's growth as an independent NGO with strategic planning and website development.

## ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- **Governance:** Diversify board composition to include greater representation from programme countries.
- **Partnerships:** Develop strategic alliances with organisations like Health Poverty Action for consortium funding.
- **Capacity Building:** Support partners with fundraising, grant writing and organisational strengthening.
- **Strategic Planning:** Implement new three-year strategic plan aligned with evolving development sector.





# LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

- **David Russell (Chair):** Founder and Director of The Social Enterprise; former Director of Survivors Fund.
- **Frida Critien:** Strategic communications professional, former Global Corporate Communications Director at Unilever.
- **Rebecca Tinsley:** N4A Founder, freelance journalist and novelist, former BBC politics reporter.
- **David Gye:** Financial adviser on energy and infrastructure sectors, former Morgan Stanley senior manager.
- **Dr Gemma Hogwood:** Clinical Psychologist with 15 years' experience in Rwanda, currently with Solid Minds.
- **Hannah Walters:** Senior Portfolio Manager at Comic Relief managing international programmes.

## STAFF TEAM:

- **Annabel Harris (CEO):** Overall management, fundraising, strategy and governance.
- **Lesley Eaton (Office Manager, part time):** Operations, donor relations, digital communications, safeguarding.
- **Thomas Doughty (International Programmes and Research Manager):** Project management, monitoring & evaluation, research.
- **Michael Davis (Finance Manager, part-time):** Financial oversight; annual budget; financial reports for board, auditors and funders; monitors and approves international programme budgets.
- **Christa Bennett (Director of N4A USA, volunteer):** who manages all aspects of our branch in the USA. Christa helped start N4A in 2006 and oversaw the successful application for non-profit status for N4A USA.

Our dedicated volunteers provide invaluable expertise: Dr. Barbara Bauer and Dr. Shelly Evans provide trauma counselling training and programme oversight; Liam Dempsey manages website development and maintenance; Carrie Braes designs campaign materials; Robert Woodfield provides financial oversight. Their commitment amplifies our impact across all programmes.







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Network for Africa UK is registered as a company limited by guarantee (no. 06317689) and a registered charity (no. 1120932), adhering to all Charity Commission guidance on public benefit. Network for Africa US is a registered 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit entity.

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