



# The Unbreakable Thread 2020

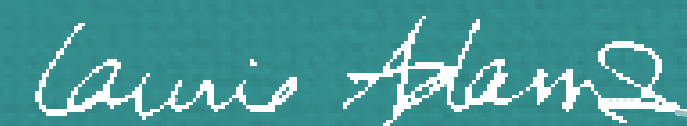




What we do now will determine what happens in a few moments, days, months, years. Of course, we at Women for Women International cannot know how the distant future will change, but through any change, there is a constant thread woven: women. Whatever happens in the coming days, women will always be the thread that binds together the fabric of our organization and our world. Our mission to strengthen this thread will always be here, centering us, pulling us forward.

This year tested our world. Many of you were able to provide resources to ease the burden on women survivors of war and conflict while others weren't able. Ultimately, what safeguarded the unbreakable thread of women and their futures are people like you, far and wide, who support the mission in one way or another. Having you with us in any capacity is all we need to make the thread that women have woven unbreakable.

Thank you for weaving the future with us.

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Laurie Adams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'L' and 'A'.

Laurie Adams  
Chief Executive Officer





## IRAQ | HANYA

Rajaa, Najma, Amal, Hasiba, and Shakiba were five of 300 women in our program in Daratu, Iraq. They each shared a dream for their own business and a chance to use the skills they learned from their training for their community.

Together they turned their shared dream into a plan: They began a tailoring business called Hanya. They created anything from dresses, pants, and shirts to traditional Kurdish and Arabic outfits.

When COVID-19 rattled the world, a strict lockdown froze northern Iraq in fear, but Hanya saw a need to be met.

*“I was sewing traditional Kurdish clothes for my children when they wanted to go and play in a garden near my house. So, I decided to sew them masks.”*

– Hasiba



# AFGHANISTAN | ROYA

Both Roya\* and her husband didn't have the chance to attend school. Their relationship was strained by ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, and her husband did not treat Roya well. Her life without knowledge of her rights was without hope. One day, she found Women for Women International and enrolled in her local program.

*"Because of this program, I know my rights and can defend them. I now give advice to people who try to force their daughters or sisters to drop out of school or those who believe in forcing women and girls into marriage."*

\*Name changed for participant's safety







# DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO | AUDRY

She began her journey with Women for Women International 15 years ago as a trainer. Now, Audry is directing our DRC program.

*"I grew up in a culture where I was always reminded that I was a woman and that I couldn't do this and that.*

*I want to see girls who are more confident. I want to see girls who can choose their own career. I want to see girls who can walk around without fear of rape. I want to see girls who can choose if they want to marry... I don't see myself as a big hero, but it's important for me to make any small change I can."*



# NIGERIA | HASSANA

Before she joined Women for Women International and received her first stipend, Hassana struggled to scrape together money for her children's school fees and supplies. Her access to cash income has opened doors for her that she never imagined.

***“Joining the program has made me see myself differently... I am a more effective parent and I am able to raise my children better.***

***I would also like to tell other participants of the program to make sure they apply every knowledge acquired and use their stipends to change their lives and improve the standard of living of their families.”***

Hassana graduated last month, and her sewing business is booming as it produces life-saving face masks for Hassana's community.







# SOUTH SUDAN | JOSEPHINE

Josephine, a 22-year-old mother of two, lives with her husband in an abandoned home in Yei, South Sudan after being displaced by brutal conflict. When all seemed lost, she joined Women for Women International to make a life for herself and her family.

*“Business skills is my favorite topic; this topic has helped me to start and run my own small business, which has enabled me to support my children in school and other needs.”*

In stability, she has found a future for her children. She knows she has made for them a foundation for a better life.



# RWANDA | PHILIP

*“What we are learning through this program has helped us to pass through this lockdown. Normally in our culture, men don’t stay home with the wife and children... Through this program we learned the benefits of spending time with family members, developing positive masculinity and attitudes, and being a good father. My wife and I are working together, having lunch together, planning together, and taking care of our children together.”*







## STAFF | FROZAN

Between her shifts as the Social Empowerment Manager for our Afghanistan office, Frozan is pursuing a master's degree in management and leadership.

During the pandemic, she has developed a robust network of 150 women and men in the Kabul region to raise awareness about virus prevention through community elders, mullahs, and mosques.

Frozan stands steadfast in her dedication to expand the program to new regions. She believes deeply that strong women make a strong nation.

***"I work to support women for a better future and to provide a better facility for women and men in the community."***

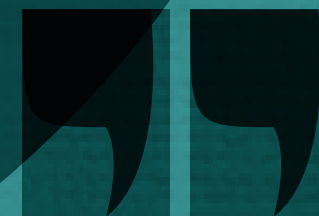


# OUR DONORS



*What I like about [Women for Women International] is that it **empowers women where they are**; it empowers them economically by training them to gain independence. This is such an important thing long-term: Having the women go to school, learning a trade, becoming economically independent is a more sustainable way to help a society.*

–Liliana



*A really powerful element of Women for Women International's model is giving women the skills to succeed. **Becoming the mother of a daughter myself has made me realize how important it is to help the moms out there who are struggling to take care of their families.***

–Kara





As our reach extends further, our momentum builds, and the patchwork of our global community grows, Women for Women International could never thrive without you. It is because of your tireless passion and investment in our work and women survivors of war and conflict everywhere that we can continue to fight for global gender equality.

When we join forces with women who have survived some of the most perilous conflicts in global history, we are unstoppable. Thank you for helping women weave the unbreakable thread through the fabric of our organization and our world.

Please enjoy this collection of stories from this year and join us in celebrating women survivors of conflict across the globe.

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