



## PHOTO & CAPTION

### Empowering women through skill building



Photo: USAID/Burundi

When Yvonne Karenzo lost her husband in 2003, she was forced to engage in unsafe sex for money even though she knew she was already HIV positive. Ostracized from her community, a jobless Karenzo was without the necessary resources to support or educate her two children.

Today, Karenzo has enough money for her family's subsistence and even plans to save for a house as a result of USAID/Burundi funding for an association of people living with HIV/AIDS.

"Before this project, I couldn't even afford a soap bar. Today, I am able to live a decent life, send my children to school well dressed and with all the necessary equipment and save for the future. My plan is to save enough to build a house," Karenzo said.

Association members agreed to use some of the USAID assistance to purchase sewing machines for six low-income female members. After one year, the group was able to buy a new sewing machine from income earned by the others with sewing machines.

This income was also divided among members and soon Karenzo had enough money to live on and save for her family's future.

USAID Burundi helps women living with HIV and AIDS become more self reliant by developing skills so that they can earn their own livelihoods.

Karenzo's children are now back in school. She is back at work and is getting closer to actually building a house, having already purchased some land. She now serves as an example for her community, and many who had previously feared getting tested for HIV are now willing to take that important step.

#### Telling Our Story

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