

BÈKSKE EMPOWERMENT REPORT

2025



Strong coffee | Strong women

Bèkske

Rwandan Empowerment Coffee

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INTRODUCTION

1 NO POVERTY



We want to amplify voices long silenced.

With the 31st commemoration of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, the *Bèkske Empowerment Program* stands as a beacon of resilience and progress for 73 women survivors of genocidal sexual violence in Rwanda. This number is lower from last year due to the passing of Donatha Niyomubyeyi and Peruth Nyirahabiyambere. Launched in 2019, *Bèkske: Rwandan Empowerment Coffee* is a social enterprise beyond coffee: We are passionate about transforming lives and rewriting narratives.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



4 QUALITY EDUCATION



This is our third annual report. Since our first inaugural assessment in 2023, we continue to observe notable progress and identify opportunities for further growth and development.

5 GENDER EQUALITY



Our program is a sustainable empowerment journey. On top of employment and training, these women are equipped with skills in coffee production and business management, promoting economic independence while fostering entrepreneurship. As a UN recognized social impact enterprise, Bèkske champions empowerment of marginalized women.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



We empower women to be agents of change for their communities.

Bèkske coffee is not just *profitable*—it's *purposeful*. With direct and indirect investment into them and their communities, women farmers earn *four times more* than average coffee producers, enhancing their economic standing, self-worth and societal integration.

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



As we remain committed to *transparency* and *accountability*, key data collected through our partner foundation, Solace Ministries, ensures full integrity. An improved understanding of demographics, economic resources, education, and community impact helps us quantify change.

We invite you to explore the stories and successes of these remarkable women, and to witness the transformative and rewarding power of coffee, community, and empowerment. – *Bèkske Team (2025)*

STRONG WOMEN SAY

"The coffee project partially funds in the education of my children and husband."



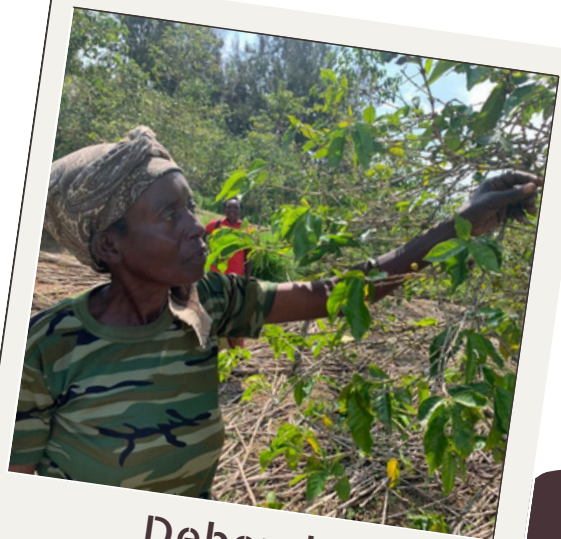
Alvera Mukashabizi

"Growing coffee, along with fellow survivors, brings me much joy! I am delighted to know that the coffee is sold in the Netherlands. That strengthens me in my work."



Lea Mukarwego

"The cultivation of this coffee brings us together away from loneliness."



Deborah Nyirabagenzi

DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSEHOLDS

We currently employ 63 women survivors – as well as 10 male family members who have taken over from women who can no longer work. With details on their home life, we gain insight not only into who they are responsible for, but what their families look like. Total number of children has been increasing since 2023 from new births and children moving households.

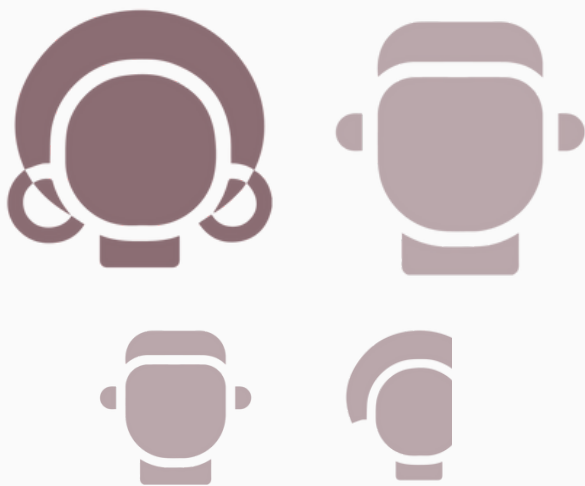
COMMUNITIES

The women live in the southern part of Rwanda in the communities of:

- Kabagali
- Rusatira
- Ntongwe
- Nyanza
- Muyira
- Mugina

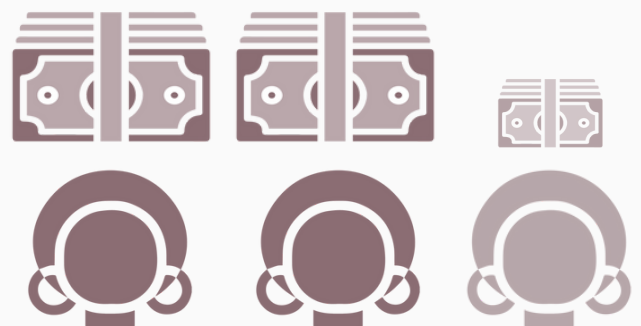


The average age of women is 63



On average, each household has 2 adults and approximately 2 children

2/3 women are their household's breadwinner*

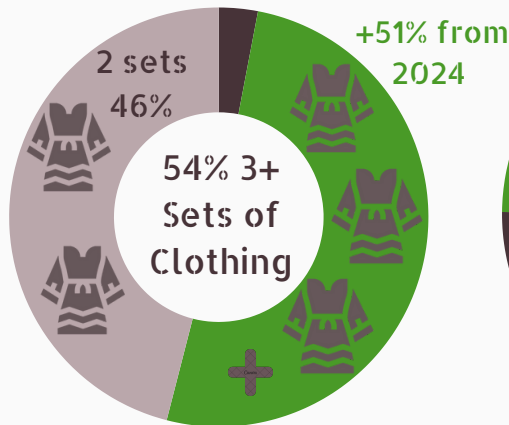


*Most families are farmers by profession, Other crops are often grown for sustenance – and thus do not always generate income

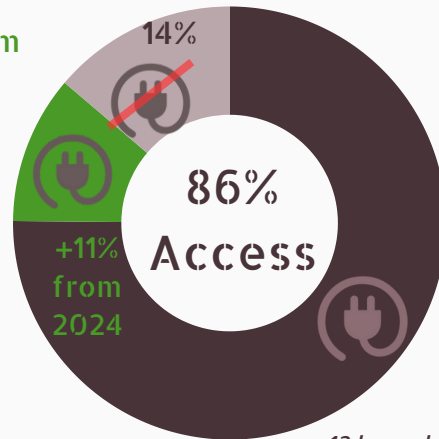
BASIC NEEDS

Resources necessary for physical health, community engagement, and overall well-being, are the bedrock for empowerment. These can include goods like clothing, access to electricity, and owning a mobile phone.

CLOTHING

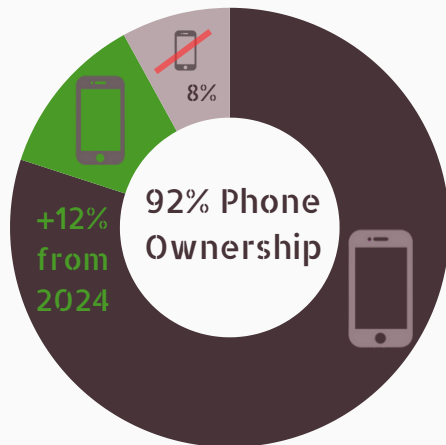


ELECTRICITY

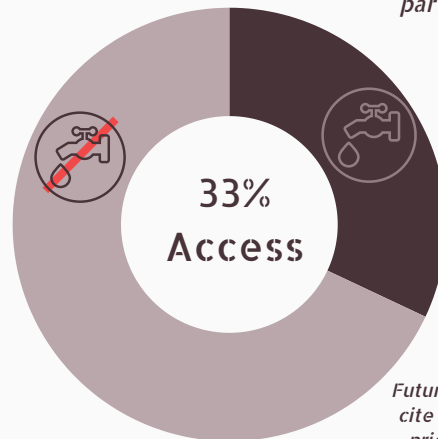


12 households have gained electricity through Bèkske's partnerships!

MOBILE PHONE

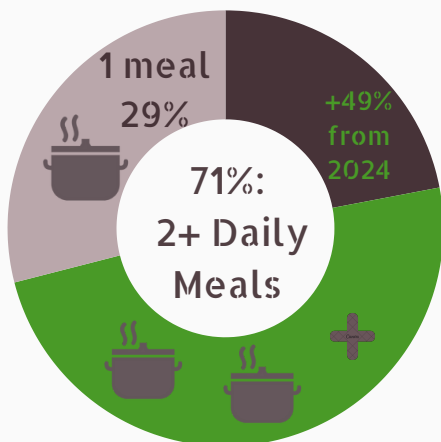


RUNNING WATER

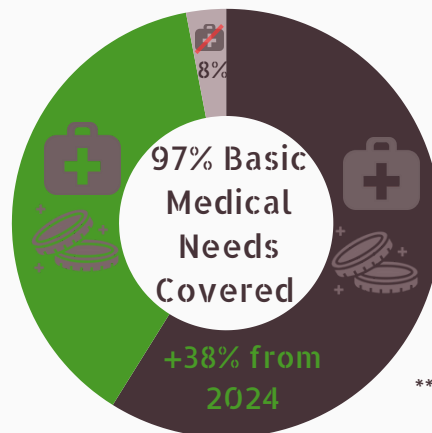


Future empowerment: many cite clean water as highest priority for community's development.

FOOD



HEALTH



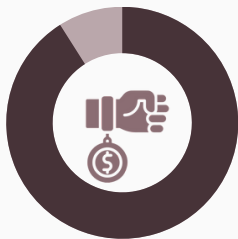
**95% are now medically insured,

Future empowerment focus: many women gave medical costs as one of their largest expenses.

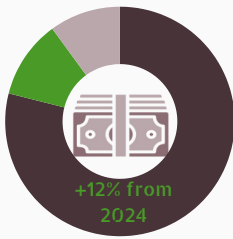
ECONOMIC RESOURCES

Economic resources are necessary for a sustainable living and opportunities for building savings and investment. Is the income generated from the coffee production sufficient to cover the women's expenses?

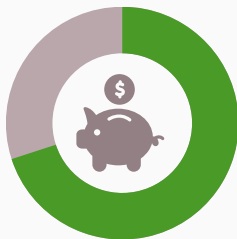
MONEY



91% of the women are debtless.

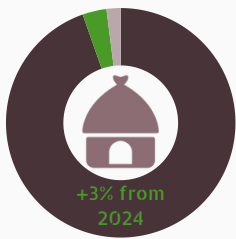


90% have a bank account or digital money

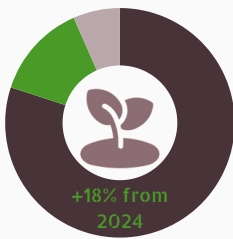


70% grew their savings substantially from last year

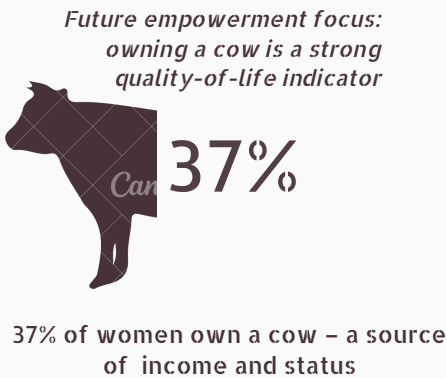
POSSESSIONS



98% of the women own a house.

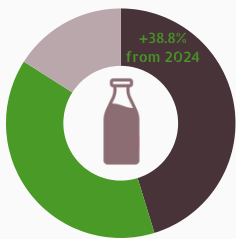


98% of the women own land.

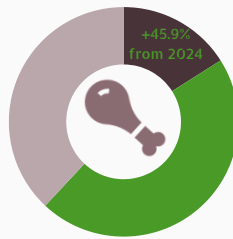


NUTRITION

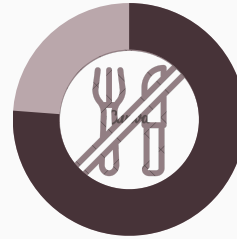
Milk and meat have an important economic, social, and cultural value. Compared to 2024, many more women can afford these products.



84% of the women can afford to drink milk.



62% of the women can afford to eat meat.

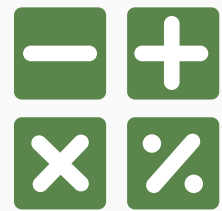


4 out of 5 had no unexpected food shortages

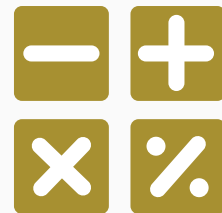
EDUCATION & CORE SKILLS: *LITERACY, WRITING, & NUMERACY*

Education is vital for empowerment. Many of our farmers have never received formal education, or have only completed primary school as the genocide made opportunities scarce before, during and after the tragedy. Just in the past year, four more have begun an educational program. However, through our partnership with Solace Ministries, we hope to slowly improve their core skills and entrepreneurial savvy.

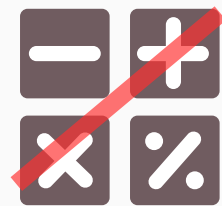
~35% Full
Core Skills
+2% from 2024!



~30% Partial
Core Skills



~35% No Core
Skills



Future empowerment will take place through the next generation. 86% of their children are (being) educated. However, we hope to give them greater present control of finances, crop management, and every other facet of life. Since 2023, there has been a steady, substantial increase in their ability to read, write, and handle numbers.



COMMUNITY

The past three sections have shown a strong feeling of connectedness among the women in their communities. Being part of “Solace Ministries” and Bèkske bonds them.

‘There are people in my community that I can rely on emotionally’



More than half mentioned *neighbors* as a source of emotional reliance

‘There are people in my community that I can rely on financially’



90% mentioned *Solace Ministries Saving Group* as a source of financial reliance



‘I am equal to other members in my community’



‘Solace Ministries training has contributed to my development as a businesswoman’



MINDSET

This section showed that despite the many challenges causing coffee farmers extreme distress, most of them see opportunities for a better future with Bèkske.

'I feel proud of being a coffee farmer'



Almost all felt intense pride in their occupation as a coffee farmer

Strongly Agree

95%

Somewhat Agree

4%

'Have you recently experienced extreme distress?'



Strongly Agree

85%

Somewhat Agree

6%

16%



Loss of Crops

23%



Sickness

26%



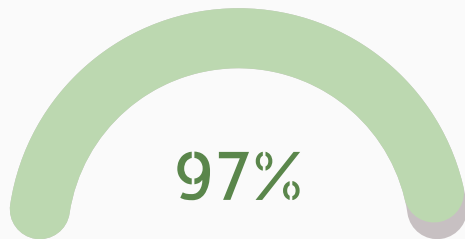
PTSD
(genocide related)

Frequently mentioned reasons...

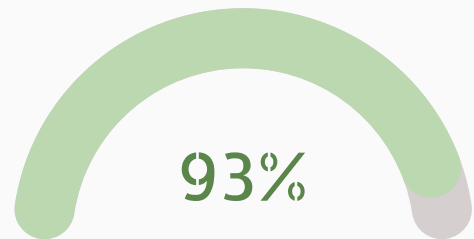
MINDSET

How do the women feel about the entire process? Are they optimistic for a better future since they started with Bèkske?

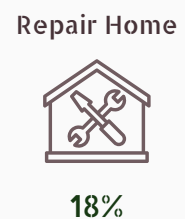
‘My life has been improving the past years’



‘My life will improve in the coming years’



“With additional money I would like to...”



Start a Business



EMPOWERMENT MEASURED

The strides made in empowering our 73 coffee entrepreneurs in Rwanda are unmistakable. The *Bèkske Empowerment Program's* primary goal of fostering these women's financial and personal independence continues to show promising results. Compared to previous assessments, we observe tremendous improvements in economic stability through drastically improved capacity to afford extra clothing, meals, land, and most importantly, their medical needs. Previous years' challenges in this regard have almost completely dissipated.

The other side of transparency is acknowledging stagnation. External factors such as harvest issues (heavy rainfall due to climate change) caused emotional distress and reduced savings. Progress in literacy and education also remains incremental. We believe, however, the women's community integration and mindset is the best indicator of them all. Although many struggle with illnesses in the family and PTSD, they are optimistic, forward-facing, and community-minded.

As we reach saturation for many empowerment markers, though, we need new ways to measure empowerment for these women

Looking ahead to 2026, *Bèkske* aims to build upon successes and address persistent challenges. We hope to further enhance financial independence by increasing our sales and driving continued training for farmers. We strive to empower these women to meet more daily needs independently. We hope to empower and assist women towards meeting common needs we have identified together— housing repair, cattle, and better sanitation.

Despite enduring challenges stemming from historical trauma, these women's resilient spirit and determination, coupled with ongoing support from *Bèkske*, give confidence that they will continue to grow as entrepreneurs.



IN LOVING MEMORY

1952-2024

BÉATA MUKARUBUGA
MAMA LAMBERT



IN LOVING MEMORY

Peruth
Nyirahabiyambere



Illness

Donatha
Niyomubyeyi



Accident