

Mawazo & the WPE Team: Kinama Camp, Burundi

International Rescue Committee (IRC) community mobilizers in Muyinga used creative, supportive and holistic case management to build trust with women with disabilities.

Mawazo's Story

Mawazo lives on her own and moves differently than others, crawling rather than walking.

"I live alone, I always have, I try to be very independent and I do many things by myself, I can clean, cook and wash my clothing, and I spend time trying to help my neighbors by taking care of their children.

"I have home visits regularly; the people from IRC are like my family. They come to check on me almost everyday. When I

have a problem, they know about it very quickly and they come to see that I am okay. I feel so much happier, I feel like I have someone to talk to. I love sharing stories and it makes me feel good when someone asks me how I am feeling.

"My name, in my language, means both problems and ideas. I have a lot to talk about and a lot to share with others. I am a very open person; I think this is why the children like me so much. I am open to them, I smile with them, and I share stories. There is a lot that I can teach them, I have seen and learned many things in my life. I can teach them about their culture, I can teach them respect and I always teach them to share. If someone brings me porridge, for example, even if it is a small amount, I do not drink it all myself, if there are children here, we all share it together. Even if I am very hungry, I know that this is a chance for me to teach something, to help someone, just like others are helping me.

"If I could tell the IRC team one thing, it would be to keep remembering the people who are at home, who can't easily come to programs. We have needs too and we have dreams as well. I am getting older now, I think it is important though to focus on the young people, those with disabilities, to make sure that they are included from a young age, so that people can stop discrimination and see us all as equal."

