

Six Rwandan Women Receive Market Research Society Accreditation

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On June 17, six young Rwandan women will become Market Research Society (MRS) certified qualitative researchers – the first in the country. They will receive their accreditation from MRS, the world’s leading research association and provider of market and social research qualifications. Together, the women make up the Girl Research Unit (GRU): an initiative born out of Girl Hub Rwanda – part of a network of Girl Hubs that includes London, Ethiopia and Nigeria. Girl Hub is a strategic collaboration between the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID) and the Nike Foundation that aims to bring “the girl effect” to scale and stop poverty before it starts. The GRU is facilitated by Girl Hub Rwanda together with research agency 2CV.

The bespoke qualification is accredited by MRS, and was developed and delivered in Rwanda by 2CV. The young women are certified to set up and design qualitative research, as well to conduct fieldwork and analysis of findings with an emphasis on working in a developing country cultural context.

Phyllis Macfarlane, immediate past chair of MRS, presented the researchers with their qualifications and explains: “This new qualification was created adapting existing approaches to Market Research Society qualifications, and is designed to provide the young researchers with the knowledge and skills required to prepare and fulfil a qualitative brief.”

Conducting social research is the core focus for the GRU female researchers, and is where the biggest opportunity lies. Currently, insufficient age and sex disaggregated data impedes detailed analysis for planning and measuring impact of investment in girls and women in Rwanda. The work done by GRU has significant potential to address this particular issue, and contribute to national efforts to invest better in women and girls.

The GRU training not only builds the capacity of young women, but equips them with the tools to share their knowledge and be active participants and leaders in their communities.

Now that the women are qualified qualitative researchers, they will continue to conduct research for Girl Hub Rwanda over the next six months, providing a voice for Rwandan adolescent girls to reach their potential. In the future, the researchers hope to work with the government, NGOs and other civil society organisations to address gender issues and social trends in Rwanda.

Emily Julian, senior research executive at 2CV, has worked directly with the GRU to train and support them and said: “It has been a pleasure to work with Girl Hub Rwanda and MRS on such an empowering project. Research and insight is critical to breaking the cycle of poverty. The qualification will open doors for this group of researchers, and will be an inspiration for the next generation of the Girl Research Unit. We hope that the GRU will be a lasting legacy in Rwanda.”

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