

Francine LeFrak Expands Women's Economic Opportunity in Rwanda Through Indego Africa Partnership

700 Women Artisans in Rwanda Gain Business Training, Market Access, and Financial Independence Through Same Sky Foundation and Indego Africa

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, July 14, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Francine LeFrak](#), founder of

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Francine LeFrak, founder of the Francine A. LeFrak Foundation

the [Francine A. LeFrak Foundation](#) and Same Sky Foundation, today announced the continued expansion and success of a women's empowerment initiative in Rwanda that is helping more than 700 women artisans build businesses, access global markets, and achieve greater financial independence through a partnership with [Indego Africa](#).

The Same Sky Foundation x Indego Africa Artisan Small Business Incubator provides women entrepreneurs with vocational training, business development resources, design education, quality control systems, and access to both local and international markets. The program reflects

Francine LeFrak's long-standing commitment to creating economic opportunity for women through entrepreneurship.

Today, products created by women artisans in Rwanda are reaching customers around the world through leading retailers and brands, including Frances Valentine, Nordstrom.com, Bloomingdale's, and Smithsonian Museum Shops. Growing demand from major retailers and designers has generated strong interest in securing production for Spring and Summer 2027 collections, creating new opportunities for women entrepreneurs across Rwanda.

Women's Empowerment in Rwanda Through Entrepreneurship

The Francine A. LeFrak Foundation's partnership with Same Sky Foundation and Indego Africa demonstrates how entrepreneurship, workforce development, market access, and business training can create lasting economic opportunity for women.

The Artisan Small Business Incubator currently supports approximately 700 women artisans across 17 cooperatives in four provinces of Rwanda, creating one of the country's most comprehensive women's entrepreneurship and artisan business development programs. Since August 2025, more than 3,800 handcrafted products have been distributed through the program, generating meaningful income and supporting women-led economic development across Rwanda.

Since January, the program has strengthened quality control systems, expanded design and business development training, enhanced merchandising and customer engagement skills, and introduced a new market access catalog that helps participating cooperatives connect with buyers throughout Rwanda.



Women's empowerment begins with knowledge. Every lesson learned is a step toward financial independence, stronger businesses, and brighter futures. Through education, mentorship, and entrepreneurship, women are gaining the tools to lead their communities

Building Financial Independence for Women in Rwanda

The Artisan Small Business Incubator combines on-the-ground business support with access to local and international sales channels that help women entrepreneurs build sustainable businesses. Indego Africa's Rwanda-based team works directly with participating cooperatives to provide quality assurance, design guidance, business development, and export support while helping artisans meet international retail standards. In addition to global sales, products are sold through the Kigali Genocide Memorial Gift Shop and the City of Kigali's Agaseke Center, expanding local market opportunities and strengthening long-term economic resilience for women-owned businesses.

"Women's empowerment is not simply about opportunity. It is about power," said Francine LeFrak. "When women have access to education, entrepreneurship, financial resources, and global markets, they gain the ability to shape their own futures. Through the Francine A. LeFrak Foundation, Same Sky Foundation, and our partnership with Indego Africa, we are helping women in Rwanda build businesses, access business training, create financial independence, and become leaders in their communities."

“Our selling point is quality because of the support we receive from Indego Africa,” said Judith, a Same Sky Cooperative member. “This builds our resilience, and we are using our own means.”

Impact Highlights

- * 700 women artisans supported across Rwanda
- * 17 artisan cooperatives participating
- * 99% women-led membership
- * Four provinces served across Rwanda
- * More than 3,800 handcrafted products distributed
- * Approximately \$38,000 in artisan income generated
- * Products sold through Nordstrom, Bloomingdale’s, Frances Valentine, and Smithsonian Museum Shops
- * Growing demand from global retailers and designers for future collections

The Francine A. LeFrak Foundation’s 2025 Impact Report identifies the Same Sky Foundation x Indego Africa Artisan Small Business Incubator as a leading example of how strategic investment in women’s entrepreneurship and market access can create sustainable economic opportunity for women and families.

“Among all the challenges facing the world today, these women continue to demonstrate extraordinary creativity, resilience, and entrepreneurial spirit,” added Francine LeFrak. “Their success is proof that when women are given access to opportunity, education, and markets, they do not simply participate in economic growth. They drive it.”

About Francine LeFrak

Francine LeFrak is a philanthropist, advocate for women’s empowerment, and founder of the Francine A. LeFrak Foundation and Same Sky Foundation. Through her philanthropic work, she supports initiatives focused on women’s economic empowerment, financial well-being, entrepreneurship, education, workforce development, and leadership worldwide.

About the Francine A. LeFrak Foundation

The Francine A. LeFrak Foundation advances women’s empowerment through initiatives focused on financial, physical, and mental well-being. The Foundation develops scalable, human-centered models that support entrepreneurship, education, workforce development, and leadership while helping women achieve financial independence and strengthen communities.

About Same Sky Foundation

Same Sky Foundation, founded by Francine LeFrak, creates opportunities for women and girls through education, entrepreneurship, leadership development, and economic empowerment.

Through scholarship programs, artisan enterprise development, and workforce initiatives, the Foundation helps women build financial independence and sustainable futures.

About Indego Africa

Indego Africa advances the sustainable growth of women-owned artisan businesses across Africa by providing entrepreneurship training, design guidance, and access to global markets. Since 2007, Indego Africa has partnered with artisan communities in Rwanda and refugee camps in Rwanda and Ghana, reinvesting in education and business development that enable women artisans to build thriving enterprises and financially secure households. Indego Africa envisions a world where women artisans are thriving business owners, leading financially secure households and communities.

Same Sky Foundation

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