



Annual Report  
2017

**Making A Difference  
Empowering Citizens**

*never*  
again

— Rwanda —





# About Never Again Rwanda

Never Again Rwanda, is a peacebuilding and social justice organisation that was established in response to the 1994 genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis. Guided by a vision of a nation where citizens are agents of positive change, working together towards sustainable peace and development.

## Never Again Rwanda's Five Year Strategic Plan

In response to the need for a holistic approach to ensuring peace and stability, NAR's five year (2017–2020) strategic plan charts the organization's course for transitioning from a project approach to a programme approach based on the five programming pillars of; peacebuilding, governance and rights, research and advocacy, education and sustainable livelihoods.

**Vision** A society that enjoys sustainable peace and development driven by creative, active and critical-thinking youth and citizens

**Mission** To enhance citizens' capacity to analyse the root causes of conflict, facilitate dialogue and appreciate diversity among citizens in order to generate ideas and activities that work towards sustainable peace and socioeconomic development.

**Core Values** NAR believes in the values of Respect for Diversity, Integrity, Passion, Innovation, Teamwork, and Excellence.

- By Respect for Diversity we mean– We are all equal human beings worthy of dignity and therefore we should respect our differences and embrace diversity
- By Integrity we mean. We will be truthful and honest in everything that we do and in working with stakeholders
- By Passion we mean. We are committed to the work that we do
- By Innovation we mean. We are inspired to find new approaches to empower youth and citizens
- By Teamwork we mean. Unity of purpose in the organization
- By Excellence we mean. We strive to deliver quality services and products to all of our stakeholders

- Goals**
- To promote societal healing, build trust and empower citizens with non-violent means of resolving conflict.
  - To empower citizens to be active in decision making at local and national levels.
  - To increase the capacity of youth to advocate for their rights and those of the vulnerable populations in their communities
  - To promote the use of evidence-based research in decision making for policy, programs and project design at all levels.
  - To promote sustainable livelihoods to improve citizens' socioeconomic well-being, decreasing vulnerability to violence precipitated by income insecurity and disputes over scarce resources.
  - To improve the critical thinking skills of youth and parental participation towards increasing educational quality and decreasing citizens vulnerability to manipulation to commit violent acts.



## Making a Difference Empowering Citizens

This report illustrates the many ways in which Never Again Rwanda (NAR) has continued to work to empower communities of Rwandan youth and citizens in collaboration with key state institutions of the government of Rwanda, international donors, local and regional partners and civil society actors.

Citizens, young and old are expressing a preference to better collaborate with local and national government to attain more participatory decision-making and at least ensure their voices are heard. Throughout 2017, Never Again Rwanda has worked closely with communities to try and enable, indispensable safe spaces of peace and forums for citizen building, which has facilitated citizens of both genders to remain active and engaged in the process of building sustainable peace and development in Rwanda.

The Societal Healing and Participatory Governance program (SHPG) implemented by NAR together with Interpeace has involved hundreds of Rwandans working together to ensure the strengthening of safe spaces for healing and civic rights awareness of participation in governance. The SHPG program's comprehensive mid-term external evaluation in early 2017, left NAR in little doubt that the program has contributed greatly to the national healing process.

A strategic meeting with all the actors involved in the healing and reconciliation process was undertaken in November, 2017. This included the active participation of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC), the Mental Health Department of the Rwanda's Ministry of Health, in a bid to build meaningful partnerships with all relevant actors in stimulating more community-focused approaches for healing and forward-looking frameworks of continued collaboration.

NAR has become more active in 2017, in the Education and Sustainable Livelihoods pillars of development. Linking with other actors in implementing the Soma Umenye "read to know" initiative-where NAR is proudly positioning itself as a contributor to the progress of Rwandan Education with a longer term vision of promoting the values of critical thinking and peace from an early grade of childhood. Alongside, working to establish highly important rights to quality Education for all as a key attribute to additional life skills and opportunities. Similarly, NAR joined the Huguka Dukore program, to provide employable vocational skills to Rwandan youth. NAR envision a growth in the pillars of Education and Sustainable Livelihoods, complementing other program initiatives that NAR has been implementing over the last 16 years.

NAR Research in 2017, has been affiliated with two major projects, the Citizen's participation in Imihigo, assessing the low citizen participation and challenges of a bottom-up development approach. And secondly, the role of civil society organizations in enhancing citizen participation, which focuses on the challenges and opportunities. Both research projects will conclude in 2018.

NAR has joined peacebuilders, human rights and social justice actors worldwide in marking international events of peacebuilding and human rights. In November 2017, NAR held an open dialogue session on the challenges of peacebuilding in the Rwanda's parliament with over 500 young men and women, parliamentarians, cabinet ministers and other key decision makers celebrating the international day of peace. In December 2017, NAR hosted the conference on International Human Rights Day to reflect on the issues of the day, together with youth activists, development partners, the national human rights commission, and government officials.

We are forever thankful to our partners who have contributed to Never Again Rwanda's many achievements. Of which our continued progress would not have been possible without the indefatigable support of the Embassy of Sweden in Rwanda, The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Hopitaux Universitaire de Geneve (HUG), the German Development Agency (GIZ) through the Civil Peace Service (ZFD) and the International Peacebuilding Alliance, Interpeace.

NAR acknowledges the positive collaboration with government institutions including the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC), the National Commission for the fight against Genocide (CNLG), the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC), the Ministry of Health and, the Mental Health Department, including the District and sector officials. Also thanks goes to our committed board members who have greatly contributed to maintaining the organization's strategic growth and provided oversight of all programme implementation and staff developments. All of which would not have been possible, without the dedicated and tireless work of Never Again Rwanda staff both in Kigali and working in far reaching sectors and districts.

**Dr. Joseph Ryarasa Nkurunziza**  
Executive Director



# IN THIS REPORT

About Never Again Rwanda

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Empowering citizens	3
<b>PEACEBUILDING:</b> Community exchange are very important for healing	5
International Day of Youth	6
International Day of Peace	8
Visit by Swedish Ambassador to Humura	9
STORIES: Spaces for Peace	10
PEACEBUILDING INSTITUTE: A Platform To Inform The Next Generation	12
Great Lakes Regional Peacebuilding: Shaping Cross-Border Peace through Dialogue, Advocacy and Participatory Action Research (PAR)	15
Cross Border Residents Attend International Day of Peace in Rubavu District	19
Civic Participation: Empowering Youth Through Public Speaking And Dialogue	20
<b>GOVERNANCE AND RIGHTS</b> CITIZEN FORUMS: Raising Awareness of Citizen	
Participation In Local Government Processes	21
STORIES: Citizen Forums	22
PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE: Responding To Community Needs	24
Conference on International Human Rights Day	29
INZIZA NZIRA: The Right Path	30
AFRICAN DEMOCRACY FORUM	33
<b>EDUCATION:</b> Andika 'Write' Rwanda	34
<b>SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS:</b> Huguka Dukore 'Readiness for Work'	35
<b>RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY</b>	36
Imigiho 'To Deliver'	38
The Rwenzori Consortium for Civic Competence (RWECO)	40
EU Human Rights Discussion	41
African Commission on Human & Peoples' Rights	42
Engagement with the Horn of Africa Civil Society Forum	43
MAPPING: Districts of Intervention	44
2017 CONSOLIDATION FINANCIAL STATEMENT	45
LOOKING FORWARD TO 2018: A Year of Sustainability and Growth	46



# PEACEBUILDING

## Community Exchanges are very important for Healing

Never Again Rwanda in partnership with Interpeace and the Swedish Embassy in Rwanda initiated the Societal Healing and Participatory Governance for Sustainable Peace in Rwanda program to promote healing, transformation and collaboration.

The program supports spaces for dialogue, providing opportunities for and highlighting instances of profound healing and reconciliation between community members of diverse background

"Exchanges increase awareness of Never Again Rwanda's Societal Healing Program, reflect on the process of healing among members of 'Spaces for Peace', and provide a platform for members to share life experiences", Florence Batoni, Peacebuilding Program Coordinator, Never Again

healing. This is important because it is one way that NAR's work will contribute to local leadership becoming better informed about 'trauma, and slowly lead to a process of healing and future reconciliation.

**The Objectives of NAR's platform on Healing** are; to reflect on the process of healing amongst members of spaces for peace, and provide a platform for them to share their traumatic life experiences. Crucial to this process is to create strong synergy with local civil society organizations involved in peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives and who are involved in areas such as mental health and business development.



We discussed forgiveness in the space and it has become part of my life. I realized that everyone is able to forgive even after tragic events such as genocide. This group supported me to start a process of healing and coming together with others and this has relieved my heart. I wonder if I would be alive if I didn't join this group. The group enabled me to feel a sense of life again. Now I am able to deal with what happened to me,

*female participant Duhozanye*

Rwanda.

**Community exchange** is one of **NAR's platforms** where members of spaces for peace who are undergoing trauma healing meet with community members and opinion leaders as well as local leadership to share their experiences in the process of healing.

The recent community exchange organized in Nduba sector brought together members from Nduba: youth from the World Mission to share their experiences through personal testimonies. These experiences were shared in the presence of religious leaders and community mediators. One of the benefits from this exchange was the recommendation from the executive Secretary of Nduba who asked NAR to organize a three day training of local leaders on trauma

It is also used as a platform to advocate for particular issues raised by members of our spaces, create awareness and ownership of the healing program. The exchanges are also aimed at gathering feedback from stakeholders on NAR's psychosocial support, which will inform future interventions with regards to specific healing approaches.

**Training for Peacebuilding staff and Clinical Supervision** was undertaken to equip them with knowledge on therapeutic factors that support in facilitating groups and provide mentorship to peace agents. Clinical supervision was also organized, as part of the training to provide safe and effective care for staff working with the healing of wounded groups. Clinical supervision helps to identify solutions to problems, improve practice and increase understanding of





professional issues. It can also contribute to a reduction of significant exhaustion among peacebuilding staff.

**Monthly spaces for peace.** In 2017, 15 spaces for peace (5 schooling, 5 non schooling and 5 community members) were supported on a monthly basis. These spaces were established to enable diverse groups of community members and youth, to openly discuss sensitive past, current and emerging issues and, to try to settle differences through dialogue. Some of the key topics discussed included psycho-education on wounds, wounding events, family planning, conflict management, grief and mourning and the Phase out and Sustainability strategy. 450 Participants attended monthly spaces for peace.

### Forgiveness, Coping Mechanisms: The Benefits of Psychosocial Support

We discussed forgiveness in the space and it has become part of my life. I realized that everyone is able to forgive even after tragic events such as genocide. This group supported me to start a process of healing and coming together with others and this has relieved my heart. I wonder if I would be alive if I didn't join this group. The group enabled me to feel a sense of life again. Now I am able to deal with what happened to me, *female participant Muhanga*

#### Overcoming fear and shame

"I was never at peace despite confessing to my crimes with my inner self, deep down I still felt guilty and ashamed of what I did. This group (Urumuri) enabled me to talk about my wounds, I have started feeling relief. It is a slow process and each session makes me stronger. Honestly, I feel that I have made progress as a result of my participation in this group and this has made me realize the need to reach out to families I wronged to ask for forgiveness. It wasn't easy, but they forgave me", *Karongi, male participant.*

### The Commemoration conference

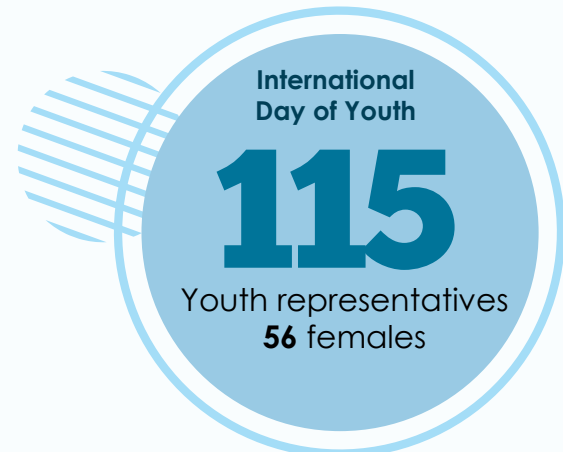
On April 4, 2017 NAR organised its 6th conference on the commemoration of the 1994 Genocide perpetrated against Tutsi was on the theme of, **"The importance of memorization in healing and fighting against genocide ideology."** The conference served as a platform for youth to understand the history of the Genocide and, its impact and how to deal with its ideology. The conference brought together approximately 150 participants comprised of youth, Civil Society representatives, International agencies, and government institutions, experts in the field of healing, memory and youth representatives from diverse backgrounds from various districts across Rwanda.

### International Day of Youth

NAR celebrated International Day of Youth for the second time on August 12, 2017 under the theme: **"The Role of Youth in promoting Peace values in their communities."** The theme reflects on the role of youth in building peace, starting in their homes and neighbourhoods. The event brought together 115 participants inclusive of youth representatives, media and NAR staff, of which 56 were female attendees.

"Every good leader continues to lead because there is a problem that does not allow them to sleep at night. As long as there is a problem that still lets you sleep at night, you will never take a step. There are many people who look at problems and think that they will get solved by others, which is not the case. Young people are hot-blooded and energetic, skipping from one thing to another. If we take that energy and tune it into

doing something constructive to help others in our communities, it will change the world. It's not really about money. It's also about passion, it's about legacy. What kind of legacy do you want to leave? For girls, do you want to wear nice clothes and nice shoes and die? Boys, do you want to wear nice suits and nice shoes and die? It's about legacy", *Domique Uwase Alonga, Founder of Imagine We Rwanda*



# International Day of Youth







## International Day of Peace

Never Again Rwanda in collaboration with the commission for National unity and Reconciliation (NURC) and, other peace actors organized a youth-parliamentary exchange at the national parliament to mark the celebration of the International Day of Peace on September 21<sup>st</sup>.

The national theme was **“Together for Peace: promoting the values of respect and dignity through peaceful families. Twese Hamwe duharanire amahoro twimakaza indangagaciro z’ubwubahane n’agaciro ka muntu mu muryango.”** Thereafter, a peace actor’s reflective meeting was organized on September 21<sup>st</sup>, after the parliamentary exchange. The objective of the meeting was to discuss in-depth with experts, key issues/ recommendations that arose from the youth-parliamentary exchange.

## Peace Actors Strategic Advocacy Meeting: Integrating Psychosocial Approaches

The strategic meeting was organized on November 30<sup>th</sup> 2017 and brought together 42 individuals, 14 of which were female. These included NAR staff, the media and representatives from various healing, reconciliation and peacebuilding organizations.

The aim of the meeting was to engage peace actors and other relevant institutions in healing to explore possibilities on how they can integrate psychosocial approaches into other existing policies, programs and interventions to supplement on government efforts to promote healing among the broader community members.

The strategic meeting brought together government institutions such as; National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, the Mental health department in Ministry of Health, commission National de Lutte Contre le Genocide (CNLG) and, Civil society organisations to raise awareness on healing issues and share experience, best practices, identify gaps, challenges and to propose appropriate measures and strategies.

One of the key recommendations from the meeting, was to convene a three day meeting bringing together religious leaders and policy makers to further discuss their approaches and collaboration in the integration of different approaches that promote healing and resilience.







**The Swedish Ambassador to Rwanda’s Visit to the Humura Group**

On 7th June 2017, the Swedish Ambassador to Rwanda, Jenny Ohlsson with NAR staff visited Nduba space for peace (Humura) comprised of men and women who are genocide survivors.

The main objective of this visit was to join the group, to listen to their testimonies in the space for peace and how the space supported them during commemoration activities in memory of their family and relatives who died during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

During the discussions, group members shared their experiences of how the space has supported them in recovering from unimaginable trauma.

Amongst the common shared experiences by members was a sense of belonging, coming out from isolation and

overcoming the fear of coming face to face with ex-perpetrators who killed their family members.

The Swedish Ambassador, applauded the solidarity demonstrated by the group. She went on to add how she was impressed by the resilience gained and thanked the participants for maintaining solidarity, that will provide the basis for their shared continuity.

The Vice Mayor in charge of Social Affairs at Gasabo district, Languide Nyirabahire assured the victims of the genocide, of the government’s continued support in social protection programs especially through the Survivors Fund. The Vice Mayor requested the group members to approach their local leaders, especially social affairs at sector level to continue requesting support from them in addressing socially related challenges.



Visit to Spaces for Peace, Nduba by the Swedish Ambassador to Rwanda, Jenny Ohlsson WITH Interpeace and Never Again Rwanda





## STORIES FROM YOUTH PEACE DIALOGUE & SPACES FOR PEACE

### Gender: Female Age: 21

I used to hear the words Hutu and Tutsi, and I thought we were different. But when I came to this space, I found that we are the same. I did not know what a 'wound' is before, but now I am aware of what a psychological wound is like. It was very hard for me to talk about my psychological wounds within a group of people, but with this space I have got strength to talk about my past. I have parents from different ethnic background: my dad was a Tutsi, and my mum was a Hutu. In the genocide, seven of my siblings died, and six of us survived. This left deep wounds for my mum, so that every time one of us fails to do something, my mum would say 'if one of my children had survived it wouldn't be like this!' I thought Hutus are very bad and violent people. I was living in loneliness and would spend some time crying. Through the dialogue we had on how you can help someone who has experienced wounds – especially the testimony of Driver Innocent (a member of the space) – I became aware that there are others who have deeper wounds than mine, and it helped me to open up. Before, I thought Twa people cannot greet me - but now we can talk. I mistrusted people. I thought that if I share my story, people would tell others what I have said. But now we trust each other, so I do not fear to share my story. In brief, I have learnt a lot in this space and I know how I can behave as a result of what we gain from this space.

### Gender: Male Age: 53

I am very happy because of this space. Before it came, I had hoped for something which works like this space, but I did not know how to find it. My father was a Tutsi my mother was a Hutu, so, you understand, during the genocide I was also among the targeted people. But after the genocide, I have moved from my birthplace and I came to this village – but really, I belonged nowhere. I wished for something that could eradicate ethnic differences because they achieve nothing. By luck, I heard that this space had come to our village. My wish was answered at that time. In the space, we introduced ourselves and I found that we are from diverse backgrounds within our village. This was something unusual for me, and after that introduction we were still mistrusting of each other. This changed bit by bit, until we started to open up. We changed ourselves: our wounds are now healed and we have started to go beyond our space to help other Rwandans.

For me, feeling that I belong was the biggest challenge, as well as a discussion we had on our relationships with people from different backgrounds. This changed me. [For example,] Mbonyesa [one member of the space] gave us his testimony on how he went to the police barracks to sleep the night there, because he had no family here. He talked about how he was refused by a policeman who was a Tutsi like him, but was helped by a Hutu who was a Guard at the Gas station nearby. This example moved me, as he showed that ethnicity means nothing. I hope that this change will continue to happen because we are starting to change others.







**Gender: Female Age: 24**

Before joining this group, I was not open to other people and I couldn't let anyone know what I am going through. I did not want anyone to know that I am happy or sad because there were a lot of things I was different from other people in. Secondly, before coming to this space, I did not know that I have psychological wounds though I had a lot of frustrations in my life. Sometimes I could feel loneliness or depression, but I was not able to explain the reason why.

When I joined the club, in the real sense my objective was not healing – my target was to meet young peers because they have a lot of my favourite activities like theatre. My wish was to belong to any club in our sector, but after some time, the healing program came in our club. That is when I started to know of the existence of psychological wounds. I then came to know what a wound is, and – related this – understanding what I was experiencing in my own life, which had not been clear to me. I started to understand some of the psychological wounds I have.

As my colleague Deborah said, in the process of sharing wounds in our group, I was initially too shy to open up and share my wounds because I had no trust to anyone. I could not understand the importance of sharing my wounds with someone else. I thought that he or she would laugh at me or treat me differently. It was a long journey, but as I went on to understand the role of sharing your wound and the importance of finding someone who listens to you, I started to open up. Though others say that testimony of our colleagues helped them, for me it was the opposite: because for me listening to those painful stories, I kept wondering why this happened. It was a long process for me, but continuing to listen to others helped me until I reached a point where I thought that it will be helpful for me to share my story. It was not something easy to tell my colleagues in the group about my past because I did not know them and I was not sure if they will keep the secret of what I tell them.

I remember we were in a dialogue, discussing the healing of psychological wounds – and after that, I became aware of my psychological wounds. I started to open up, but more specifically it was in a session where we learnt about "Identity". If I could tell you briefly, I did not know my identity, and this was destroying me. I learnt that your identity can have two sides – a best side and a bad one. We learnt that the bad side of your identity should not destroy you, but you should learn how to cope with it. And that the good side of your identity should comfort you. Then after, I started to have empathy toward my colleagues; the big thing that the club helped, was for me to love my fellows. I started valuing listening to others because I realized that it helped us to open up. That was the main change from this club.

I cannot say that I have overcome my wound but I have learnt how to live with it. I remember the past but this doesn't take me back: remembering helps me to learn from good things that happened in my past, and throw back the bad side of my history. This was what I have gained in this group. I believe that if we continue this process of sharing our past sensitive stories this changes will continue to happen.





2017 Regional PBI

**21** | 11 Male  
10 Female  
University students & young  
professionals from 8  
countries

# PEACEBUILDING INSTITUTE

## A platform to better inform the next generation

The Peacebuilding Institute was founded as a platform that brings together Rwandan, regional and international university students and young professionals to examine and discuss how post genocide society has dealt with legacies left by the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. It is a forum where the challenges and strategies used by Rwanda to extricate itself from the consequences of the genocide and reshape the present and future are discussed. The main goal of the institute is to provide young people with skills to facilitate dialogue between those that have lived through conflict and those who want to learn from them how to build a global network of responsible leaders.

### 2017 Regional PBI

This year's regional PBI was conducted from 13-26 February, 2017 with the support from Civil Peace Service of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The PBI brought together 21 university students of which 10 were female and young professionals from eight countries, Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, Tanzania, DRC, Kenya, South Sudan and Sudan. Within a period of two weeks participants learnt about topics based within three themes: Understanding Genocide History and Prevention; Dealing with the Past-Transitional Justice and, Governance Practices in Post- Genocide and Post-Conflict societies.

Under the theme, "**Understanding stages of Genocide, History and Prevention,**" participants were introduced to trauma briefing in preparation for the Visit to the Kigali Genocide and Murambi Memorial sites. They also discussed causes of genocide, stages and prevention mechanisms, stereotypes, identity manipulation as well as critical thinking. Key reflections centred on participant's thoughts regarding effects and consequences of genocide amongst the population at large. These included identity, child headed households; youth born of rape and poverty were some of the wounds mentioned. Additional activities undertaken were peace circle to reflect on both memorial experiences and a visit to CNLG.

In the Transitional justice theme, participants studied and analysed the operations of the Gacaca jurisdictions in Rwanda: the successes and challenges and reasons why the Gacaca jurisdictions were preferred in Rwanda in comparison to other justice systems. Integrating Peacebuilding in all Projects, looking at Challenges, Opportunities and Lessons Learnt; and, governance strategies to promote unity and reconciliation. To conclude, participants visited the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission where they learned more about Rwanda's reconciliation processes and gained a deeper understanding of Rwanda's culture through the visit to the King's Palace Museum (Rukali) in the Southern province.





The **Governance aspects in post-conflict and post-genocide societies theme** offered participants an opportunity to learn how Good Governance as a principle has contributed to development in Rwanda. Under this theme, participants explored topics on governance, development, governance successes and challenges from a regional perspective, governance strategies to promote unity and reconciliation in the region, threats to human rights, peace and security in Africa and citizen participation in Africa.



*It was a confirmation of what happened 23 years ago, I feel that the generation to come need to be exposed to what happened so that when they think of committing violent acts they can redirect their thinking. I did not leave Murambi the same way I went",*

**Alexander Kyokwijuka male participant from Uganda.**



*"It was my first time to go to Murambi yet I'm Rwandan, I acknowledge that despite that majority of the society were involved during the 1994 genocide against the Tutsis, a good number were rescuers. I will ensure that whenever I encounter conflict I will do something about it", Ange Dusabe, female participant from Rwanda*

*"I lost my elder brother and some of my relatives in 2013 during the war in South Sudan; some of my classmates were killed while others revenged the death of their families. If I did the same I would not be at peace with myself, if Rwanda managed to reconcile why not us", male participant from South Sudan.*

*"I learned the importance of guarding the little peace we have, as youth we have a role to play in conflict prevention, but we can only do this by not siding with wrong doers and using social media platforms to raise awareness", Maureen Guma, female participant from Uganda.*

*"I was able to reflect on the current situation in my country since every week something bad happens. This made me think about the meaning of critical thinking in the sense that we should not wait for people to die in order to take action", female participant from Kenya.*

## 2017 Summer PBI

The 2017 Summer PBI was conducted from June 5th-17th, and it brought together 17 university students and young professionals, including eight young men from Rwanda, Stockton and Weber state universities. These youth were accompanied by three university professors. The nationalities of participants, facilitators and professors nationalities were a mix of Rwandans, Americans and Mexican-Americans.

During the Summer PBI the thematic areas discussed were; Genocide and mass atrocities; dealing with the past-transitional justice; Women peace and security and, Governance aspects in post- genocide and post-conflict societies.

Key highlights under the theme **Genocide and mass atrocities**, was the presentation on responsibility to protect, which focused on how to prevent genocide and crimes against humanity. The presentation and discussion on the role of education and culture in fighting against Genocide ideology. The student presentation by Michel Ballif from Weber State University focused on "how memorials provide justice in the Rwandan context". The presentation was based on an ongoing book project that will entail documenting through interviews, stories beyond memorials through investigating when, how and who was involved in exterminating some of the individuals buried in various memorial sites and cemeteries. It will document 265 Genocide memorials and genocide cemeteries across Rwanda.

Under the theme of **Transitional Justice**, participants were introduced to the evolution of transitional justice and Rwanda's approach to transitional Justice with an emphasis on the operational framework of the Gacaca courts. Students also participated in discussions on the role of faith based organizations in reconciliation and recovery, Social cohesion and Reconciliation in Post Genocide Rwanda. These sessions were accompanied by a cultural site visit to the King's palace museum in the Southern province and to Murambi Memorial site to visualize the aftermath of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi specifically in the Southern province. The visit at the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission aimed to learn more about Rwanda's unity and reconciliation process. They also watched documentaries on reconciliation. The key activity was the discussion on the role of media today drawing examples from Rwanda and the US. During this discussion participants reiterated the importance of regulating media and the freedom of expression.

The theme **Women peace and security**, was a relatively new theme. Here, participants were tasked to engage in small discussion groups to tackle questions; on how women are affected by conflict, why women should be involved in conflict resolution, what 1325 resolution tells us about conflict and how this resolution can be implemented in the African context alongside the main challenges dealing with conflict in Africa.

The theme Governance in Post Conflict and Genocide societies, focused on exploring governance and development in various African contexts, leadership styles, human security and a discussion on conflict analysis. In order for participants to get first hand information of Rwanda's post genocide journey, a female survivor, a male ex-perpetrator and a male rescuer each shared their individual journey with participants. Each of the 3 testimonies gave participants an overview of events that led to the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi and the long term consequences. Through group discussions participants outlined their roles as leaders and some of the youth leadership forums available in their respective countries and recommendations of how these platforms can be improved. They also highlighted causes of transitional crimes such as poverty, war and conflict, lack of education/information, lack of opportunities, bad leadership, cultural norms, security and proposed mitigation measures such as strengthening borders and security, international cooperation's, education, raising awareness and social support.

# Quotes / *participants comments*

“I learned that Peacebuilding is not all about genocide prevention but rebuilding our society as well”,

**female participant, Rwanda**

“I got inspired to become an active citizen in my community. I plan to teach my colleagues what I have learned and develop an initiative to coach primary school students the importance of Peacebuilding”,

**male participant, Rwanda**

“I've learned about the perspective of genocide in the eyes of Rwandans. Reading and learning about the 1994 genocide against the Tutsis is quite different in America. When you get to see first-hand how it impacted and continues to impact Rwandans, you develop an understanding of after effects of the unity and reconciliation process”,

**female participant, USA**

“It has been very difficult for me to see how families were torn apart, because we love our families, it's in our families where we gain identity and particular values,

**Dr. Elisa von Joeden-Forgey, USA**

“Peace education should not only be taught to students, youth and teachers but to influential leaders as well since they have the ability to influence policies”,

**Amanda Solomon, USA**



**PBI Summer**

**17** **11** Male  
**08** Female

University students & young professionals from Rwanda, Stockton and Weber state universities





## Great Lakes Regional Peacebuilding Programme

### Great Lakes Peacebuilding Programme: Shaping Cross-Border Peace through Dialogue, Advocacy and Participatory Action Research

The regional programme known as “Trans-border dialogue for peace in the Great Lakes Region” is piloted by Interpeace in partnership with six local organisations based in Rwanda (Never Again Rwanda), Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The programme operates with three boundary partners including community members (youth, men and women), decision-makers and regional institutions through four major strategies. These include participatory-action research, dialogue and advocacy and collaboration with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to expand the engagement of actors. After the completion of phase I from 2013 to 2017, the programme embarked on Phase II, operational from January 2017 to 2020.

For the year 2017, the major activities of the programme consisted of ordinary dialogue sessions with Cross-border dialogue spaces (GDPs), community forums organised around issues that emerged from GDP sessions, advocacy meetings with decision-makers around the same issues, research on resilience for reconciliation.

**Concerning the cross-border dialogue spaces**, 14 dialogue and research sessions were held within 4 Cross border dialogue spaces that are co-facilitated by NAR. A total of 313 people including 172 men and 141 women attended the sessions. They include Rubavu-Goma, Kamembe-Bukavu, Bugarama-Kamanyola-Cibitoke and Bugesera-Kirundo. The initial sessions aimed to draw up annual plans for cross border dialogue, while others consisted of implementation of these plans. Thanks to those sessions, some community forums and advocacy meetings with decision-makers were successfully undertaken.

During 2017, GDPs with the support of partner organisations organized community forums to engage community members involved in cross-border activities with regular border-users from local communities in discussions on major challenges faced from a cross-border perspective and proposed solutions. To this end, 5 community forums were carried out, 2 of which in Goma, 1 in Rubavu, 1 in Rusizi and 1 in Bugesera.

**The community forums focus group discussions (FGDs)** were organized in Rubavu and Rusizi on 14th and 28th June respectively, which aimed at identifying and analysing major issues faced by people involved in cross-border trade and movement via Rusizi II & III and Poids Lourds border posts, respectively.

Cross Border Dialogue

**313**

172 men

141 women attended the sessions

Community Forums

**05**

2 Goma, 1 Rubavu  
1 Rusizi and 1  
Bugesera





**On the former border post, the focus group discussion (FGD)** brought together 27 people including 12 male and 15 female. Issues highlighted by participants included: multiple taxes paid on the Congolese side and without any receipts; the presence of several unidentified Congolese officials (neither name nor uniform) who collect taxes without any receipts; and, “human tax”, worth 500 Congolese francs per person, equivalent to the visa fee, while this fee is imposed nowhere else on Rwando-Congolese border.

In addition, as a result of an issue raised and discussed within Bugesera-Kirundo GDP, another community forum was organized on 22nd September 2017, in Rweru Sector (a sector neighbouring with Burundi), Bugesera District. This aimed at identifying and analysing issues faced by Rweru residents as a result of the political and security crisis in Burundi. Participants were 27 community members including 16 men and 11 women. Issues raised and discussed include among others: cases of cows theft by young people from Burundi; cross-border trade (mainly of fruits) that was completely frozen, which impact negatively the livelihoods of those involved in cross-border trade, especially women; freeze of cross-border movement, especially Rwandans who cannot safely travel to Burundi; tensions related to allegations, that since the crisis outbreak, some Burundian citizens invaded Mazane Island on the Rwandan side.

**The Focus group discussions in Rubavu**, brought together 8 people including 3 male and 5 female. Some issues identified and analysed including: long queues on the Rwandan side while some border-users carry heavy loads/goods, while other goods are often carried by porters, with the risk of losing them eventually; high taxation of some products by the Rwandan customs; multiple taxes paid on the Congolese side and without any receipts; presence of several but unidentified Congolese officials (neither name nor uniform) who collect taxes without any receipts; and absence of approved taxation tariffs of products/goods, which makes the whole taxation system subjective and corrupt.

To address the issues identified, participants proposed solutions that were later on shared with decision-makers and officials in some advocacy meetings organized in the same year.

**Overall, 4 advocacy meetings were conducted:** 2 in Goma (DRC), 1 in Rubavu and 1 in Rusizi. The first was held in Goma on 9 September and brought

Advocacy Meetings

# 04

2 Goma (RDC)  
1 Rubavu  
1 Rusizi







together provincial decision-makers (Government, Parliament, Police, Justice, Agence Nationale de Renseignement, City of Goma), telecommunication Companies, and GDP members with the support of Pole Institute and NAR, to discuss the problem of children kidnapping in Goma.

After the screening of the video earlier produced following a round of interviews with families of kidnapping victims, fruitful discussions were undertaken among 25 participants including 16 men and 9 women. Participating decision-makers and representatives of telecommunication companies committed to work together to curb this problem. Moreover, a follow-up committee was established to reach out to relevant national authorities to involve them in addressing this issue. After a couple of days, the impact of the advocacy meeting started yielding fruit as a couple of suspects were prosecuted, unlike the period before whereby suspects would be immediately released.

The second advocacy meeting in Goma was convened on 9 November, and brought together provincial decision-makers (Government, Parliament, Police, Agence Nationale de Renseignement, City of Goma), a representative of Rwanda Revenue Authority from Rubavu (Rwanda), representative of selected CSOs involved in cross-border trade and GDP members with the support of Pole Institute and NAR, to discuss challenges and problems affecting people involved in cross-border activities (Poids Lourds Border Post).

Both were GDPs initiatives supported by the regional programme. Core tools of the meeting included a film produced by the regional programme and a summary of issues that emerged from a previous related community forum. Major issues raised are those that had also emerged from a FGD with selected Poids Lourds Border-users (see above).

Following the discussions, decision-makers, especially the President of the North-Kivu Provincial Assembly, committed to work with relevant authorities to ensure that clear laws and regulations are put in place and enforced to regulate taxation system and order at the border between Rubavu and Goma.

**The advocacy meeting in Rubavu** was organized around the celebration of the International Day of Peace. NAR organized the event in collaboration with Pole Institute (Goma), Vision Jeunesse Nouvelle and ADEPE (Rubavu). Participants included decision-makers from Rubavu District and the City of Goma, CEPGL, representatives of selected CSOs operating in cross-border trade in both cities. It aimed at providing community members, decision-makers and CSOs with a space to discuss on major obstacles to peace and peaceful cohabitation in the sub-region.

**A reflective meeting was organized with decision-makers in Rusizi District**, on June 30th. It brought together 69 decision-makers and officials at both district and sector level among whom 51 men and 18 women. The meeting focused on introducing and discussing NAR programmes, approaches and achievements to participants, as well as the issues that emerged from the FGD which had been conducted with citizens (Rwandans and Congolese) involved in cross-border activities. District authorities and officials, not only requested NAR to contribute in building their capacities in participatory approaches for them to become more participative in planning, implementation and evaluation processes, but also to facilitate them in setting up citizen forums in the district. As regards the issues relating to the cross-border activities, given that most of them concern the Congolese side, the district authorities not only called the border-users to abide by the laws and regulations to avoid penalties, but also promised to advocate for them.





## Study on Resilience for Reconciliation: Researchers meet to design the methodology

**In relation to the Research Strategy**, the programme embarked on a new research project focusing on resilience for reconciliation. It stemmed from recommendations from prior research on Land, Population Movement and Conflict in the Great Lakes Region, completed and validated in 2015. Three workshops conducted 1 in Bukavu in August (40 participants including 31 men and 9 women) and 2 in Rubavu in April and October (**59 participants including 40 men and 19 women**) brought together members of the Technical Support Group, researchers from partner organisations and Interpeace staff as well as 2 research experts from Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, to get immersed with the research concepts, elaborate the methodology and data collection tools. By the end of the year (2017), core conceptual and methodological aspects were available, while the first draft questionnaire was elaborated and reviewed.

Researchers from partner organisations shared with participants the findings from case studies they conducted in their respective zones on reconciliation processes from a resilience perspective.

In addition to the above, a refresher training was conducted as part of the workshop, on participatory action research methodology on the one hand, and qualitative and quantitative approaches on the other hand. This exercise paved the way to the discussions about the methodology and research questions for the said research. It was resolved that the research will be both qualitative and quantitative.

Furthermore, the workshop included a session on facilitation tips of focus group discussions and interviews. This was mainly intended for researchers who have recently joined the programme but also served as refresher exercise for researchers with longer experience within the same programme.

As a way forward, detailed research protocol and data collection tools are going to be developed to be able to seek relevant reviews and approvals before embarking on field work







## Cross-border residents attend International Day of Peace at the regional level in Rubavu district hosted by Never Again Rwanda and partners

The forum was part of two days' of activities held to celebrate International Day of Peace, with the main aim of providing the cross border population with a platform to discuss and identify the main challenges to peaceful coexistence in the sub-region. The main objective of this event was to establish synergy between peace actors for advocacy on challenges and facilitate the exchange of experiences, approaches tools amongst peace actors among the region.

The following statements from participating officials highlight the feedback on the issues raised by community members.

“ I commend our collaboration with Rwanda and DRC on the one border-post project implemented through Buffet Foundation. The two States are considering harmonising procedures... the best is yet to come. I believe that this will offer opportunities for the issues raised by border post -users to be sorted out. », Representative of CEPGL.”



“ Since the launch of this regional programme, we have been observing a progressive decrease of those problems. In the past, we have seen many residents from Rubavu persecuted on the other side of the border; now that has significantly slowed down, though our wish is that this issue stops completely. We wish this dialogue went on, with hope that those issues identified by our respective populations be thoroughly examined in this meeting so that appropriate and practical solutions are found together for sustainable peace between Rwanda and DRC through the cities of Goma and Rubavu”., Vice-Mayor, Social Affairs, Rubavu District.”

“ In our office, the staff wear uniform with names for their identification. In order to minimize those harassments at the border-post, I urge all victims to identify their names and report them to us. Our offices are open from 6:00 am to 6:00pm. We will definitely address this issue. I also urge all services based at the border-post to ensure that their staffs wear uniforms with names to identify them. I trust this will effectively help”  
Head of Hygiene Services at Poids Lourds Border-Post, Goma Side.”







# Civic Participation

## Empowering Youth through Public Speaking and Dialogue

On 22-23rd April, Never Again Rwanda in Partnership with GIZ organized a two day event that marked the start of the local public speaking and exchange forum amongst the youth in schools. The event brought together youth from 13 different schools in the southern province.

Eric Mahoro, the Head of Programs at Never Again Rwanda, in his opening remarks noted that it is important for the youth to take part in peace building through dialogue "Everyone in society is encouraged to take part in decision making processes so as to foster a just and democratic society," Mahoro said at the event that took place in Huye District, Southern Province.

The event ran under the theme "**Peace starts with me: The issues hindering peace in our schools and communities.** What can I contribute? **The forum attracted over 50 students in 13 teams** that comprised of 4 members each. The youth not only prepared their speeches on the 22nd April but also came up with **creative elements like drama, songs, poetry and art** that they presented on the second day of the event. Local Public and Exchange forum aims to empower the youth to be agents of peace through dialogue and critical thinking and to provide youngsters with skills and approaches to peace building in schools and their communities.

A panel of Mentors after deliberation announced 2 teams as the winners namely; ABATERAMAHORO (Peace givers) and ABARINZI B'AMAHORO (Peace guards), two students from these 2 teams will be selected to represent the country at the regional level. The forum commenced in June in Rubavu District, Western Province, attracting students from Kigali, Western and Southern provinces, and at the regional countries like The Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and Burundi.

By the end of the program, participants will have gained knowledge and skills in genocide, conflict prevention and pledged to improve existing projects in their communities, and to develop initiatives to address conflicts in their respective societies as global peace ambassadors. ▽







# GOVERNANCE & RIGHTS

## **Citizen Forums: Raising Awareness of Citizen Participation in local government processes.**

NAR's work bridges the gap between decision-makers and citizens through encouraging government accountability, responsiveness, transparency and supporting citizen participation in the governing processes. This latter part is supported by NAR Citizen Forums.

Citizen forums were introduced to build the capacity of citizens in order for them to better assess their needs and priorities, strengthening their link with policy makers, and minimizing the vertical space between the beneficiaries of public policies and decision-makers, thus strengthening the accountability of local authorities.

NAR currently has 13 citizens forums established in ten different districts selected from the four provinces including city of Kigali, covering both rural and urban areas. The ten districts include; Karongi, Nyabihu, Gicumbi, Musanze, Rwamagana, Bugesera, Huye, Nyaruguru, Nyarugenge and Gasabo.

Jenny Ohlsson, Ambassador of the Swedish Embassy to Rwanda, Dr Joseph Nkurunziza, NAR and, Interpeace officials visited a citizen forum in Mukamira sector in Nyabihu district on 18th May 2017.

The basis of this visit was to assess how much progress citizen forums have recorded and how they have influenced change in their communities.

Citizen Forum members outlined some of the issues that arose in previous discussions where they were able to identify and advocate for the reduction of property tax rates (from 30 Rwf per square meter to 10Rwf), as well as increase the confidence in citizens' abilities to understand governance issues and decision-making processes.





# Stories from Citizen forums

## District Citizens' Forum

Gender: Female

Age: 43

Before joining the Citizen Forum, I was a greedy and morally corrupt woman who lived only for herself. I would go to the hospital and bypass others on the spot because I was familiar to the receptionists.

Ever since I joined NAR, I became selfless and started standing up for others. Sometimes leaders can ignore people but when I stand for them, they are helped.

**Example 1:** People would get sick and decide to go to traditional healers instead of the health centre due to the bad service at the health centre. NAR organized a meeting with leaders where we raised this problem, and now services are delivered effectively and efficiently at Kibuye Hospital.

**Example 2:** There were people who had no compost, they used to deposit waste in bushes and slums; this could cause bad smells and ants. I stood up and approached the Village Chairman to tell him about that issue, and he also took it to the cell level so that they can provide us with a public wastes ground and now that ground is available.

**Example 3:** I also helped people who had a problem of paying land taxes yet their land was used in Ubudehe road construction. I approached the person in charge of land at the sector and told him about that issue and he told me to inform those people that they have to bring their land certificates to the sector so that the sector can re-measure their remaining land, which is the only one they will be paying for. This problem has not yet been solved because some people have not yet taken their certificates back, but those who brought their certificates were helped. The improvement is still going on because what we do has become our life and it works for others, as well as within our families and homes.

## District Citizens' Forum

Gender: Male

Age: 30

Leadership was not clear for me but ever since I joined the citizen forum, I understand what is in the leadership and health services.

In our Citizen Forum, we share ideas about health services and leadership services. People are now up to date about their rights. There was a sector council meeting with the NAR team. They realized the role of the Citizen Forum in our sector. The Citizen Forum pushed me to become a member of youth representatives due to the skills and confidence I got from it. The citizen forum made me someone else, because before I could not attend any meeting (even Umuganda) but now I have realized that as youth I can contribute to the development of the country more than my elders. Now I am a peer educator of my fellows as well as my community.

Speaking about the facts of our realities with confidence has made me a link between leaders and the population, because people take me as someone who can stand for them.





## District Citizens' Forum

Gender: Male

Age: 39

Since we joined the citizen forum, we kept on discussing about different problems which were present in our society by sharing ideas and opinions on what to do and how to do it. We have so far made a representative team that stands for us to advocate recommendations which emerged within the citizen forum and deliver what we have covered to leaders. I was happy to be a member of that team because I am able to sit with leaders while discussing about issues that can help people of Bwishura sector. I really developed a lot of confidence in speaking with and advising others.

**Example 1:** I am among the people who started the suggestion box at our sector where people drop their written suggestions. That box has to be opened every morning so that someone in charge of those can take a look at those opinion and problems. This box was well received by people because it is accessible to everyone and is confidential. In Munga cell, the service delivery was not at all efficient or effective, but through the suggestion box, the people in charge of security have since requested the Executive Secretary of Nunga cell to tell the Village's Chairman to improve the services delivery system. This problem has since been resolved.

**Example 2:** Umugoroba w' ababyeyi was a program designed for illiterate or unemployed people, and this was a big problem because Uumugoroba w' ababyeyi was not effective. NAR group members discussed this issue and the best way to handle it. We decided to report this problem to leaders where they started sensitizing people at all levels to attend this program, and now people actively participate.

This was big a pleasure for the citizen forum group members because from then onwards, leaders considered them to be great peer educators that can help them. The improvement in umugoroba w' ababye is obviously changing people's minds, especially about knowing their rights as well as about their contribution in the development of the country. NAR gave me confidence and I now feel strong and courageous in whatever I do.





## PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE

### Responding to Community Needs



In 2017, the Participatory Governance Axis supported citizen participation in local and national decision making, by strengthening the capacity of the citizen forum members to stand up for their rights and the rights of others to decision makers. The Governance and Rights Program facilitated citizen participation through the development, implementation and evaluation of public policies and programs, and to ensure linkages between citizens and policy-makers.

One of the key issues discussed during the citizen forum focused on land taxes and tax exceptions, where citizen forum members emphasized the importance of explaining procedures and spreading awareness among the community about their rights.

Another widely discussed topic was citizen participation in the planning, implementation and evaluation of Imihigo (Performance Contracts). It has been accepted for some time, that there is a need for better communication and follow up between Citizens and Local Leaders to enable a positive and effective performance in Imihigo. Members among the different citizen forums focus on service delivery, the Ubudehe categorization in their respective communities and issues concerning the Mutuelle de Santé (health insurance).

The Umuganda (Community outreach) activities organized by citizen forums are as a result of discussions continuously sustaining the link between citizens and the local leaders. This impacted and focused on the construction and provision of sanitation needs, toilets, building houses and anti-erosion terraces. Members of the citizen forums have strengthened their resilience to address governance issues in collaboration with local leaders and have begun to move from discussion to real actions.

Overall, citizen forums provide a platform for citizens to discuss their rights, the increased need to contribute to decision-making of governance programs and policies and, the increased possibility for citizens to influence local leaders in a variety of decision-making processes. The concept of participation has been strengthened by the existence and functional aspects of the citizen forums. This is based on the relevancy of the topics discussed, and recommendations and actions initiated by the advocacy sub-committees when reporting to decision makers.

*"This group has made me change, because now I can talk with people and advise them with confidence. Nowadays people are calling me a leader, due to the way they succeed, whenever they use my advice. I helped six people get out of their difficulties and they were very happy."*

*"The greatest change that I gained from this team is that I developed self-confidence in myself", Usabyimbabazi Marie Louise, CF-Member Karongi District*





## Commemoration; Linking Governance to Healing and the impact of the film on stages of genocide screened during the Citizen Forums

During the 2017 commemoration period of the Genocide against the Tutsi, the Citizen Forum Members discussed the 'Healing of psychological wounds and reconciliation' based on the film documentary entitled "The stages of the Genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda". This film was produced by Never Again Rwanda's Audio visual (AV) team to help Citizens' Forum Members during their discussions in the month of April 2017, it was screened in Gikomero, Mageragere, Bwishyura, Fumbwe, Nyaruguru, Rusatira, Rutare, Muhoza, Nyange, Bigogwe and Mukamira Sectors.

The Citizens' Forum Members shared their views after watching the film drawing lessons on the causes, effects, and the contribution of each towards healing. Forum members reflected on the existing types of psychological wounds and the role of the community members to contribute to the healing of both the genocide survivors and those who were involved in the genocide.

## COMMUNITY DIALOGUE IN MAYANGE, BUGESERA DISTRICT

On May 25, 2017, Never Again Rwanda (NAR) in partnership with the Panos Institute of the Great Lakes and the Rwanda Community Radios Network organized a community dialogue in the Mayange sector of Bugesera District. The main objective was to help both the citizens and decision-makers better understand their roles and responsibilities in the promotion of participatory governance through the election process.

During this dialogue, NAR together with Radio Izuba 100 MHz and other media stakeholders brought together district and sector officials, and citizen forum members, approximately over 200 men, women and youth from the local communities of Mayange sector, to discuss a wide range of citizen roles and responsibilities in the upcoming presidential elections.

Community members were able to openly discuss and point out their concerns within their community. This dialogue enabled citizens to understand how and why their participation matters during elections, and allowed them to respond proactively and constructively to the electoral priorities raised.

“...through the election process, citizens are able to decide their future and the country's future by voting for leaders of their choice which is why they need to understand their responsibilities in this process”.

The Head of Programs at Never Again Rwanda,  
Mr Eric Mahoro



This dialogue was aired on four community radios namely; Radio Izuba, Ishingiro, Isangano and Huguka. Community dialogue is one of the best approaches to bridging the gap between citizens and decision-makers due to the avenues provided by the media. This community dialogue included the participation of the Mayor of Bugesera District, Mr Emmanuel Nsanzumuhire, the Provincial representative of National Electoral Commission Mr Frank Rwigamba, representatives of faith-based organizations, civil society organizations and other local leaders.

By facilitating the community dialogue between the media, citizens and decision-makers, the participatory governance program aims to enable decision-makers to adopt a culture of citizen consultation in policy formulation so as to respond adequately to citizen needs.

***“The community dialogue is very important since it reminds the leaders of the need to resolve on time citizen concerns around the elections. We will put all our efforts together to make sure citizens are satisfied and are easily able to access the services that assist in helping them to enjoy their rights during the elections”,***  
the Bugesera District Mayor, Mr Emmanuel Nsanzumuhire



# COMMUNITY DIALOGUE IN MUHOZA, MUSANZE DISTRICT

## Citizen Participation in planning, implementation and evaluation of Imihigo processes

On September 19th 2017, NAR along with the Muhoza Citizen Forum organized a community dialogue in Musanze town focusing on the theme of "Citizen Participation in planning, implementation and evaluation of Imihigo processes".

The Dialogue was attended by citizen forum members from the Muhoza and Nyange Sectors, members of NAR's spaces for peace that are located in Musanze. Members of NAR's youth clubs, civil society organization operating in Musanze and Decision-Makers from the sector and district.

The community dialogue was intended to identify challenges affecting citizens' meaningful participation in the planning, implementation and evaluation of imihigo in Musanze district

While shedding light on the process of imihigo formulation, the vice President of the Advisory Council in Musanze District, Twizerimana Innocent said: "All Imihigo now come from Village level (Umudugudu) and goes all the way up to district level."

During the dialogue, the authorities urged the citizen to participate in community activities including Umuganda in order to contribute to community development

"Who doesn't know, that Umuganda is conducted on the 30th of every month? Who comes to Umuganda without a gardening tool? We cannot perform well in Imihigo without doing our part",

Mr Manzi Jean Pierre, Muhoza's Sector Executive Secretary







# Community Dialogue







## COMMUNITY DIALOGUE IN RUTARE SECTOR, GICUMBI DISTRICT

### Community Dialogue in Rutare Sector, Gicumbi District: An open space for addressing Community Problems

Never Again Rwanda (NAR) in partnership with Panos Institute of Great Lakes organized a community dialogue on 23rd February 2017 in Rutare, Gicumbi District in order to help both citizens and Decision-Makers to better understand their roles and responsibilities in the promotion of Participatory Governance. During the dialogue,

The community dialogue was conducted in partnership with media, which brought together about 400 men, women and youth and Decision- Makers from Cell to District level including members of the advisory council for a discussion on how the performance contracts (Imihigo) process can be improved to better serve and stir up the development of Rwanda.

Gicumbi Vice-Mayor in charge of social affairs, Ms Benihirwe Charlotte commended the dialogue and said *the District is committed to addressing issues raised by citizens to make sure that Imihigo keeps fast-tracking the national development''*

### Empowering Journalists to Conduct Participatory Reporting

Since 2016, Never Again Rwanda has embarked on empowering a selected group of journalists to conduct participatory reporting with major focus on exposing the challenges around equal participation of men and women

Jean Claude Habimana is a journalist at Radio Salus and one of the 25 journalists who attended the first series of training on governance reporting and dialogue facilitation in 2017. Through NAR's training on Gender and women empowerment, Jean Claude Habimana earned skills that led him to be awarded by Action Aid Rwanda as the best journalist of the year in women empowerment and gender sector in 2017.



*Along my journey as a journalist, my reporting used to focus mostly on agriculture and environment. However, after attending Never Again Rwanda's' training on Governance reporting and dialogue facilitation. I started to reflect on how I can look at gender related topics. Then I researched on the issues of overloaded works on rural women, then wrote an article which was published, and as a result I recently received the award from Action Aid Rwanda as the best journalist of the year who reported on gender in 2017."*

Jean Claude Habimana, Journalist, Radio Salus







## Conference for International *Human Rights day*

On 11th December 2017, NAR joined the rest of the world in commemorating International Human Rights Day, in Kigali. International Human Rights Day is commemorated every year on 10th December, the day on which, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

The **Conference brought together 60 participants** including; Government Institutions, NAR affiliated youth clubs and associations' members, national and international human rights, peace-building and civil society organizations, media, academia and development partners.

The theme for 2017 Human Rights Day was **“Stand up for equality, justice and human dignity,”** With the International theme focused on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights commenced a year-long campaign to mark the upcoming 70th anniversary. The Conference theme included aspects of Equality, justice and human dignity as salient human rights principles.

The Objectives for the Conference on International Human Rights Day included, an increased awareness of the importance and relevance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights instruments in society; the promotion of the participation of Civil Society Organisations and citizens in the promotion and monitoring of human rights in Rwanda; discussions on the need to increase participation regarding actions and interventions to protect rights, whilst being aware of the challenges in the promotion of human rights; and, to encourage youth and citizens, to stand up for human rights and fight against human rights violations.



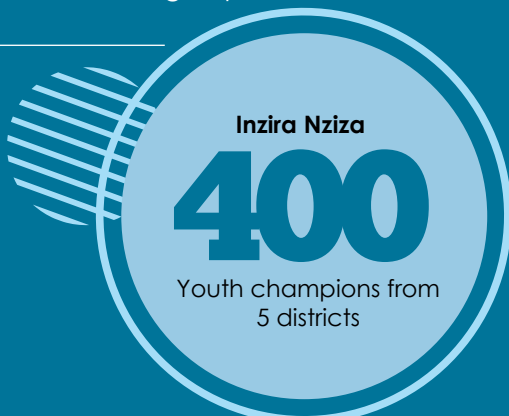




# Inzira Nziza 'The Right Path'

Inzira Nziza is a three year project (2017 - 2020) funded by USAID Rwanda, implemented by Never Again Rwanda in 5 Districts of Rwanda namely Huye, Nyamagabe, Gisagara, Ngororero and Nyabihu.

The overarching project goal is to contribute to the promotion of peaceful dialogue and democratic values through human rights based approaches that influence young people's understanding on the rights of the most vulnerable groups in Rwanda.



Young people attended week long trainings that created an awareness of how youth could be better empowered by understanding how to engage in critical analysis, through dialogue as well as being taught about their democratic rights and values as responsible citizens. The activities indirectly also built the capacity of local leaders and improved their understanding on youth participation in key decision making processes as part of the learning of democracy and respect for human rights in Rwanda.

**400 youth champions from five districts of Huye, Nyamagabe, Gisagara, Ngororero and Nyabihu were trained on human rights, democracy, critical thinking and youth participation in July, August, September and October, 2017.**

Never Again Rwanda involved various categories of young people especially those representing special interest groups such as former female sex workers, historical marginalized people (Batwa), taxi moto drivers and bicycle taxi riders from the semi-urban sectors.

Trainings increased young people's understanding of issues and their confidence in tackling the root causes of low youth participation in politics as well as developing sustainable and joint mechanisms to expand spaces and opportunities for dialogue on human rights principles and democratic issues.

As a result of the improved level of confidence attained amongst the trained youth to engage with local leaders, a number of them have started to independently organize community level activities aimed at improving livelihoods and rights of the most vulnerable community members. Activities include community level awareness raising meetings, community dialogue sessions on rights and democracy and youth participation. Using Umuganda to mobilize the local leaders and communities on the requirements for working to increase youth participation in governance.





**“It’s a blessing for me to attend this training for the first time as I have started gaining new skills related to Human Rights and democracy. I’m committed to promote human rights values in my family and my village,”**  
 said Nzirorera from Rusatira, Huye District.

**100 local leaders trained on inclusive democracy, rights-based planning and participatory decision-making in October 2017**

The trainings reached local leaders, sector officers in charge of social affairs, officers in charge of education, representatives of National women’s councils, representatives of National youth councils and the president of advisory councils (Sector Njyanama). At the district level, the trainings engaged the district National youth council coordinators, district officers in charge of youth, sports and culture, directors of social protection, directors of good governance and the district officers in charge of National Itorero commission.

As a result, local leaders expressed a shift in attitudes where youth opinions were often undermined. Leaders expressed resolve to increase collaboration with youth at all levels and begin to give more value to their inputs in all decision-making stages, with a commitment to increasingly recognize youth’s views during key stages of decision and policy making instead of viewing young people as passive participants and followers.

**In April, 2017, over 250 Youth and local leaders were engaged in round table discussions on youth participation in policy planning, implementation and evaluation.**

During the discussions conducted in five districts, youth and local leaders noticed a low level of engagement of youth resulting in decision making at local level that did not respond to youth concerns. Young men and women demonstrated that they have a fear of joining politics, while acknowledging that their role is vital in building a sustainable developed Rwanda.

When they are invited to local community meetings, they do not show up or choose to keep silent at the meetings. **“When you manage to lead a disciplined life, others follow you and can potentially make you their leader”,** said Mutoni Grace and emphasized on the need for youngsters to have more opportunities to increase their leadership skills if they’re to be entrusted with leadership roles.

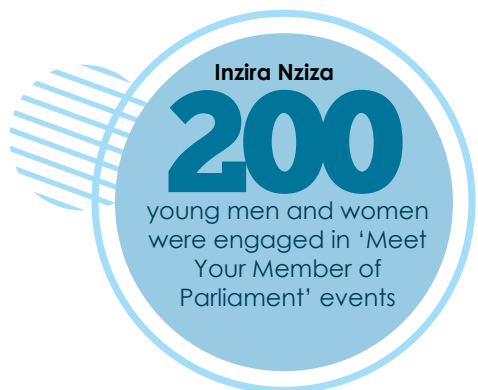
Umugwaneza Christine from Nyamagabe District points out the issue of lack of critical thinking among many youngsters is a huge challenge when considering undertaking leadership roles. Youth need to actively participate in available government participatory frameworks and challenge those who doubt their capabilities. It is the right time for youth to benefit from positive discrimination by trying to gain at least 40 % seats in every decision-making body, because of the experience of discrimination or mistreatment by authorities that are faced by many youth.

**200 young men and women were engaged in ‘Meet Your Member of Parliament’ events in Nyamagabe on 15th June 2017 and in Gisagara on October, 28th, 2017**

Members of Parliament were mobilized to meet with youth and participate in open discussions with them around the issues affecting their participation in politics and governance. Through these discussions, youth expressed their views and concerns. ‘Meet Your Member of Parliament’, increased young people’s level of confidence to better interact with their representatives and raise matters of national interests with open recommendations.

**“Laws and policies promoting youth participation have been put in place but not in practice. There is so, so much work that needs to be done. I’m hopeful that Inzira Nziza’ activities will dismantle the unfair systems that keep young people from thriving”,** Mutimukeye Josephine founding member of Pillars Youth Association in Huye.

Inzira Nziza aims to nurture young men and women to become local leaders engaged in advocacy. Where young people learn about ‘own’ community issues, and carrying out some form of advocacy in collaboration with local leaders to better address community issues and hold leaders accountable.





In Rwanda, there are many opportunities for youth participation provided in legal and policy instruments such as the 2003 Constitution as amended in 2015, National Strategy for Transformation NST1 (2017-2024), Youth policy, EDPRS 2, National strategy for community development and local economic development (2013-2018). However, gaps exist for young people to make relevant contributions from local to national levels of engagement.

With the internet revolution, with better access to on-line social media commenting, there is a paradigm shift of youth participation in politics from 'traditional political parties' to participation through social movements through social networks.







**The African Democracy Forum (ADF) Secretariat** has been hosted by NAR since 2017 but was established in Abuja, Nigeria in 2000 as a regional network of civil society organizations concerned with democracy, human rights and governance.

The Management Committee (MC) of the ADF who serves as its board comprises of men and women from across Africa with Rwanda, Mali, Nigeria, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, DR Congo and Somalia being represented. On the 5th and 6th of May 2017 the MC met to discuss how the ADF would be revived from its dormant state. As such the Management Committee committed to employing the Secretariat who would contribute to reviving the membership of the organization.

By August of 2017 the Secretariat was up and running and have been involved in membership drives that would enable the organization to be a civil society platform able to build the capacity of human rights and good governance actors on the African continent.

As a Civil Society Organization, the ADF's principle aim is to advocate for democracy, the defense and promotion of human rights, good governance and the rule of law. It is representative of Africa as a whole working towards improving the relationship between government and the people and holding state organs accountable to delivering on mandates promised to people during election periods and beyond. As a regional network of civil society the ADF works alongside other likeminded organizations toward the protection and promotion of democracy, human rights activities and continued good governance on the continent.

Currently we have over 400 members across Africa who advocate for an improvement in governance, and awareness creation of the importance of democracy, good governance and elections; peace building and conflict prevention; human rights and human rights defenders; youth and woman participation.

With the support of Never Again Rwanda the ADF hosted an event that attracted Rwandan youth on the International Day of Democracy on September 15th 2017 in commemoration and celebration of the importance of democracy for the world and the strides made in democratizing in Africa. Under the theme: The role of youth in democratization of African political spaces 32 participants ranging from Civil Society actors in governance and democracy; academics and independent researchers, youth leaders and representatives from different institutions came together to analyze, debate and discuss how youth as leaders of tomorrow can impact democratization in Africa and through that advance democratic values amongst African youth.

Some of the comments that came out of the event regarding youth and democratization was that "democratic values and principles are universal only the context is different" which was echoed by civil society actors urging youth to be tolerant and responsible future leaders both in Rwanda and the continent. In addressing her peers youth leader Ubaruta Magi Grace stated that, "youth should not just be involved in dialogue, but rather youth should be active so as to have an impact on the democratic process in Rwanda"



**youth should not just be involved in dialogue, but rather youth should be active so as to have an impact on the democratic process in Rwanda**



**AFRICAN  
DEMOCRACY  
FORUM**



# EDUCATION: 'Write' Andika Rwanda

Education is one of Never Again Rwanda's pillars with an aim to improve Critical thinking skills of youth and parental participation towards increasing educational quality and decreasing citizens' vulnerability to manipulation to commit violent acts.

Andika Rwanda is a nationwide annual story writing competition, which aims to generate stories written by Rwandan pupils and students, which will later be illustrated and published into titles for level 1-3 of primary schools.

In 2017, NAR joined the Rwanda Education Board (REB) and USAID in implementing Andika Rwanda activity in all the 30 districts of Rwanda. The initiative has the following specific objectives, To increase the number, variety and availability of vibrant original stories and poems that are contextually relevant in Kinyarwanda language, and appeal to young children's curiosity. The program aims to increase access to appropriate grade level reading materials, which are available in all primary schools in Rwanda; To promote public consciousness about the extraordinary value and culture of reading and writing in one's mother tongue (Kinyarwanda), and to unleash the collective creative writing power of children and adolescents; Promote the culture of early reading and writing in Rwanda and inform active citizens. The project encourages students to read and write, while improving the culture of reading and writing in Kinyarwanda among Rwandan students.

The Andika Rwanda project targets students from secondary schools and teachers from the Teacher Training College (TTC). The project tends to encourage in equal measure both boys and girls to actively participate in the writing competition. Specifically it encourages students with special needs to participate.

The best selected stories at national level shall be illustrated and published into 24 book titles which will be disseminated to all public, government-aided and private schools, therefore, increasing access and availability of text books in primary schools.

Andika Rwanda is promoting the extraordinary value and culture of reading and writing in Rwanda's mother tongue (Kinyarwanda), and to unleash the collective creative writing power of children and adolescents. Participants, including Head Teachers, Sector and District Education Officers, Vice Mayors in charge of social affairs, who attended the Andika Rwanda district level orientation meetings cited that the government is struggling to groom strong young leaders, but you cannot be a strong and good leader if you can't read. It is hoped that Andika Rwanda will inspire early reading and writing among children, hence shaping our future strong leaders.

Head teachers, local and central leaders have been very impressed by the project objectives. Their active participation and commitment towards supporting Andika Rwanda activities is an indicator of their interest in the project. Andika Rwanda district Facilitators are also reporting receiving free office space at the district level, working alongside the Directors of Education at the District level.

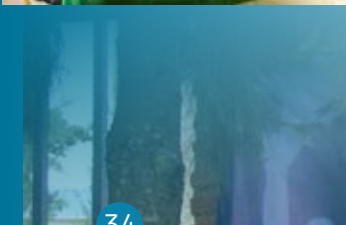
The Government, private and government-aided schools' students (secondary and primary schools) are eligible to participate in Andika Rwanda competition. At the district level, 24 strong stories and poems selected by the district level jury, are expected to compete at national level (REB). The 24 national level winning stories out of 720 collected from districts shall be illustrated and published into titles.

Over a 1000 participants successfully took part in the celebration of the International Literacy day and exhibition stand on the 8th September.

Over 376 people participated in the provincial level orientation meetings which aimed at engaging high level leaders to understand the objectives of the project and their roles and responsibilities are key stakeholders in implementation of Andika Rwanda.

Over 3,288 People participated in the district orientation meetings targeting, Sector and District Education Officers, Vice Mayors in charge of Social Affairs, Head Teachers, TTC Principals and Kinyarwanda teachers in all 30 districts of Rwanda.

30 Andika Rwanda District Facilitators were trained and are working hand in hand with District Advisors with technical support from Province Advisors.







# SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

## Huguka Dukore

### 'Readiness for Work'

Never Again Rwanda's Sustainable livelihood pillar's strategy reads as follows:

'Vocational and technical training skills building, financial management training, entrepreneurship training, development of business management and entrepreneurship tools, mentoring and coaching, job placement, and volunteerism. This will provide a contribution in creating many more job opportunities for youth, empowering women who are highly encourage to participate in all activities'.

Huguka Dukore is a 5-year (2016-2021) USAID funded program which included activities that will be supporting 40,000 vulnerable youth, across 19 out of 30 districts, countrywide.

NAR will work in Kayonza, Huye, and Nyabihu and Gasabo districts reaching 1500 youth who will be trained in two intakes: the first intake will cover 810 youth from the 4 districts and the remaining will be trained in the second intake.

Huguka Dukore will use a series of inclusive innovations, inviting many youth to participate in Rwanda's historic transformation, particularly women, youth with disabilities and other vulnerable youth groups. Recognizing the diversity of youth backgrounds and goals, Huguka Dukore will offer multiple program pathways including, employment preparation, individual and cooperative youth microenterprise start-up, business development for existing microenterprises and, continuation onto additional formal Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) training.

The Huguka Dukore falls under the Sustainable Livelihoods pillar, of Never Again Rwanda (NAR) strategic plan 2017-2021. Sustainable livelihood was considered paramount for improving citizens' socio-economic well-being and decreasing citizen vulnerability to violence precipitated by income insecurity and disputes over scarce resources. NAR is one of 18 implementing partners in the Huguka Dukore program.

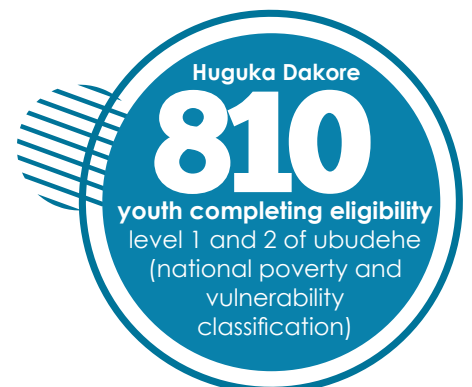
Huguka Dakore has two specific objectives, firstly, to increase and empower youth technical skills and self-employment and, secondly to increase their life skills to self-reliant

As the implementing partner, **NAR selected 810 youth completing eligibility** criteria: level 1 and 2 of ubudehe (national poverty and vulnerability classification), the P6-12YBE education threshold in the age range 16 to 30 years old from four districts, with 240 young people commencing training. The first intake will start training in January 2018 for the first intake and the second intake will take place in training the following February.

Before the Work Readiness trainings commence, Never Again Rwanda will organise a one day orientation meeting with all 28 trainers, for both old and new trainers. The purpose of this meeting is to introduce the trainers to Never Again Rwanda values, ethics and working conditions, and details on Huguka Dukore activities and implementation mechanisms. NAR will be careful to introduce and explain to the trainers, what is expected of them and, what their responsibilities and deliverables should be.



'Vocational and technical training skills building, financial management training, entrepreneurship training, development of business management and entrepreneurship tools, mentoring and coaching, job placement, and volunteerism. This will provide a contribution in creating many more job opportunities for youth, empowering women who are highly encourage to participate in all activities'.





# RESEARCH & Advocacy

## Societal Healing and Participatory Governance Program

### Case study on Spaces for Peace

The Research and advocacy department crafted a research report entitled “Psychosocial support group approach as a path to healing in a post genocide Rwanda: A case study on the Spaces for Peace.”

The study aimed to explore how the psychosocial support group approach has contributed to overcoming wounds of the past amongst community members in post-genocide Rwanda. It explored the process of the psychosocial support group approach in spaces for peace; and documented the contribution of the psychosocial support group approach to overcome the wounds of the past, amongst community members and youth, as well as lessons learnt and challenges.

The study was conducted in four spaces of peace and these include: Twubakane (Ngoma District), Inyange (Gicumbi District), World Mission (Gasabo District) and Turuhurane Group (Muhanga District).

Key findings and recommendation were: The influence of the psychotherapists in the spaces for peace has been reported to be crucial; Psychotherapists not only provide clear added value by navigating the healing process with members in spaces for peace but also act in part as mentors to the facilitators and peace agents, as a means of increasing their understanding of how to facilitate diverse groups and help build their capacity to better engage with the healing needs of communities.

### Research on Civil Society and Citizen Participation in Post – Genocide Rwanda: Achievements, Challenges and Opportunities

A research project was prepared on “Civil Society and Citizen Participation in Post – Genocide Rwanda: Achievements, Challenges and Opportunities”. This was organized as a follow up on the previously concluded research on Governing with and for Citizens: Lessons from Post – Genocide Rwanda.

The study examined stakeholders'; citizens, government, other civil society organisations (CSOs), private sector and donor perspectives and expectations of the relationship between CSOs and citizens. It explored the existing CSO mechanisms that have been in place to engage with citizens in decision-making processes and, analysed how these mechanisms of engagement and the interactions between CSOs and stakeholders influence citizen participation in decision making processes.

**In preparation for research data collection process, the following meetings were conducted:**

#### Meeting with members of working group

Participatory Action Research (PAR) was used in the “Civil Society Organisations Citizen







Participation in Rwanda project" engaging members of a working group composed of 15 and advisors. These advisors were selected for their knowledge and experience on issues pertaining to CSOs, citizen participation and governance in Rwanda.

### **Meeting with the members of "Sub Working Group"**

In line with the Societal Healing and Participatory Governance program, NAR uses Participatory Action Research (PAR) methods to identify, examine, discuss, share key challenges to peace building and, to reinforce and encourage citizen participation as a foundation for effective decision-making and good governance.

Thereafter, technical meeting brought together a group of experts and NAR's research team to discuss and modify the research proposal on civil society participation and citizen participation in Rwanda.

By engaging reputable stakeholders representing government institutions, civil society organizations and academia, NAR's team of researchers aimed to seek guidance on how best to improve the methodology and data collection tools before embarking on field research activities. The role of such experts was instrumental in understanding and clarifying concepts, developing the methodology and research tools before taking off to the field. The research team was tasked to fine-tune the methodology, tools and identify the target organizations based on the input provided during this technical meeting.

### **Meeting with focal persons**

Later a meeting with focal persons was held in Kigali. This provided a forum to exchange criteria regarding the selection of research participants on "CSO & Citizen Participation in Rwanda".

The Research team shared with focal points, the upcoming study on Civil Society and Citizen Participation in Rwanda which was organized as a follow up on the previously concluded research on "Governing with and for Citizens: Lessons from Post – Genocide Rwanda".

NAR & Interpeace believe that meaningful research findings largely depend on the right choice of participants. Better selection of participants minimizes biases and ensures that research objectives are met.

Interviews with citizens, members of community based organizations, members of civil society organizations and key informants were conducted in 8 Districts (Karongi, Rutsiro, Nyanza, Gisagara, Ngoma, Nyagatare, and Burera & Musanze). Further activities including FGDs, data analysis, report writing and validation of findings remain to be undertaken in 2018.

## **ADVOCACY**

### **Women's Participation in Local Governance in Rwanda**

Never Again Rwanda & Interpeace organized a one day reflective meeting that was attended by organizations working on Gender and Governance, research institutions, and stakeholders working in areas of women's empowerment to discuss "Women's participation in local Governance: A reflective meeting on persisting Hindrances and mitigation strategies". Reflecting on other studies including NAR's "The Governing with and for Citizens' report (2016)", which highlighted low women's participation in local government. The meeting reflected on why women tend to participate less than men despite the existence of relevant participation channels.

Challenges discussed during the meeting include inadequate formal and informal education and, the reduction in the number of girls attending secondary schooling. Reasons behind this alluded to parents and girls' mind set, as parents do not to encourage their daughters to complete high levels of education. Also some girls drop out of schools due to unwanted pregnancies.

Key recommendations emphasized included Building the capacity of women, to facilitate womens' participation in general but with specific emphasis on women aspiring to leadership roles who are wanting to be more effective and influential. This may inspire an increased participation of women and therefore contribute to Rwanda's National Development. Mr Yves Bernard Ningabire, the Director General of Local Government, Planning, and Monitoring & Evaluation at the Ministry of Local government reiterated that the ministry will incorporate 'gender' in the budget to address the challenges affecting womens' participation.

### **Meeting with research institutions and practitioners in citizen participation in Rwanda**

Never Again Rwanda organized and facilitated a meeting that brought together eleven research and practitioner organisations (TRI, CLADHO, LAF, IRDP, CCOIB, IPAR, RWN, RALGA, GIZ, NPA, and Urugaga Imbaraga) to engage on a discussion on Citizen Participation in Rwanda.

The meeting provided an opportunity for the research and practitioner institutions to discuss persisting issues pertaining to citizen participation in Rwanda and participants in the meeting identified key advocacy issues arising from research and practice as well as looking at advocacy strategies.

Some common themes emerged across presentations such as inadequate coordination and communication between national and local government; a lack of consultation and feedback from councils and local leaders to citizens; low citizen engagement in planning and design of programs; lack of skills among local leaders on how citizens should be engaged.



**Participants in the meeting agreed on the following recommendations.**

A Joint advocacy strategy, using evidence collected by different organizations whereby inviting government officials to reflect on persisting challenges and best practices in citizen participation in Rwanda.

Clarification and a common understanding of "citizen participation" as a concept. The regulatory framework and the context have to be considered for a better understanding,

Capacity building for local leaders, and the adoption of participatory approaches by the Rwandan Management & Local Government Institute to increase and improve on knowledge, understanding, skills, attitude, and approaches used by local leaders.

CSO to have a permanent forum where stakeholders of citizen participation would meet to share experiences and evidence from different case studies conducted. This could help document best practices in citizen participation.

Official documents like Imihigo should be translated into Kinyarwanda, the local Rwandan language. There is a need to carry out policy awareness campaigns. A Citizen Participation monitoring tool should be developed (checklist to map differences in citizen participation in different districts); A committee composed of NAR, LAF & IPAR was suggested by participants to draft a joint advocacy strategy based on reflections and key recommendation from the meeting.



## 'To deliver' Assessment of Citizen Participation in Local Imihigo processes

In early May 2017, Never Again Rwanda (NAR), commenced "Assessment of Citizen Participation in Local Imihigo", with funding from Ikiraro cy'Iterambere and embarked on a research project taking an exclusively qualitative design approach. The research sought among factors, to identify and examine the contributing factors of persisting 'low citizen participation in local Imihigo processes and to recommend alternative policy solutions to address existing gaps'.

Originally the project was designed to cover five Districts of Huye, Kayonza, Musanze, Karongi and Gasabo, its geographical scope was later expanded to 15 Districts of Huye, Nyamagabe, Nyaruguru, Gasabo, Musanze, Gicumbi, Burera, Gakenke, Karongi, Nyabihu, Ngororero, Rutsiro, Kayonza, Gatsibo and Nyagatare.





This move was taken to ensure a countrywide overview of prospective findings, a requirement that NAR needed to comply with in order to secure a preliminary research mandate from the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB). As per RGB's recommendation, NAR secured a research visa from the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) in early August, 2017. The expansion of the original geographical scope of the research impacted on costs, timeframe and resource implications. In this context, AJPRODHO and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) through the Public Policy Information Monitoring and Advocacy (PPIMA) coalition, registered, in early July of the same year, showed their interest to partner with NAR and Palladium managed Ikiraro cy'Iterambere program on the implementation of this research project. As a result of this partnership, AJPRODHO and NPA came on board as co-implementers and funders respectively, leading to the review of original research roadmap.

Following the implementation of the previously stated partnership, a research inception report was validated during a multi-stakeholder workshop which took place on the 22nd September, 2017. Nearly **30 participants from government institutions and civil society organizations** attended the workshop and contributed their invaluable inputs in improving the research design, methodology and data collection tools.

The validation of the inception report marked the beginning of the field research work which was preceded by a debriefing on 9th October 2017, of **15 field focal points recruited across the study Districts** alongside to pilot field work which took place on 13th October, 2017 in the sectors of Gikomero in Gasabo District. Observations from the pilot field work provided a basis for the improvement of data collection tools and sampling procedures prior to commencement of real field work. The process of primary data collection at local level went in accordance with the field deployment plan initially agreed upon with donors and it was successfully completed without any incident as local authorities were relatively cooperative. This process **saw primary data collected, through 57 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and 50 Key Informant Interviews (KIs) from roughly 470 people ranging from ordinary citizens and opinion leaders.** Data collection at national level commenced on 19th December, 2017 at it was yet to be concluded as the calendar year came to its end. To date, 4 FGDs were held with diverse national stakeholders predominantly ranging from civil society organizations and special interest groups such as youth and people with disability had taken place. Planned key informant interviews (KIs) with representatives of specific interest groups, special needs groups and the historically disadvantaged at national level as well as some purposely selected senior Central Government officials were also planned to take place. **In total, about a 100 people were targeted with data collection at national level.** It is worth highlighting that, in the interest of time, data collection went hand in hand with data transcribing in preparation for software-supported data analysis.

According to the research roadmap agreed upon with donors, data collection, including at national level, is scheduled to be completed by end of January, 2018 with data analysis and findings reporting scheduled to be completed by mid-February and end March respectively. If all goes by the plan, findings validation and dissemination are scheduled to occur before end April 2018.





# The Rwenzori Consortium for Civic Competence (RWECO)



The Rwenzori Consortium for Civic Competence (RWECO) and HIVOS are implementing a project on “Community action to prevent and manage conflicts and human rights violation in the Rwenzori region in Uganda”. The project is supported by the European Union delegation to Uganda and is based in the Western region covering the districts of Kasese, Ntoroko, Bundibugyo and Kamwenge.

This team of religious and cultural institutions organized a learning visit to Never Again Rwanda, aimed at enabling the representatives to learn about civil society's role in rebuilding Rwanda after the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. After a visit to the Kigali Genocide Memorial Museum and to the National Unity & Reconciliation Commission, the RWECO team were welcomed by the Executive Director of Never Again Rwanda. Dr Joseph Nkurunziza led a discussion on how Never Again Rwanda's work has positively influenced Rwanda's journey to rebuild the country.

The RWECO team watched a short video profiling Never Again Rwanda in order to get a general overview of NAR's work. Following the video, members of the RWECO team asked questions relating to the various programs under Never Again Rwanda's five pillars of intervention, specifically about NAR's growth from a university platform of discussion to a regional force in peacebuilding.

The Executive Director noted that NAR's inception was one dedicated towards providing a platform for citizens to discuss their past in order to build a better future. He added that thanks to the support of partners, NAR has been able to grow from a local peacebuilding organization to a global peacebuilding influence, impacting 'peace ambassadors' all over the globe.

The RWECO team left with a clearer understanding on Rwanda's recovery process, and how community actions can act to prevent and manage conflict and human rights violations.

**The Rwenzori Consortium for Civic Competence (RWECO)  
and HIVOS are implementing a project on**

“Community action to prevent and manage conflicts and human rights violation in the Rwenzori region in Uganda.”





## EU Human Rights *discussion*

Dr Joseph Ryarasa Nkurunziza, the Executive Director of Never Again Rwanda, participated as a panellist in a session on Human Rights in Rwanda, focusing on achievements, challenges and opportunities for cooperation during the Dialogue on human rights priorities in Rwanda organized by the European Union delegation to Rwanda.

This dialogue brought together various stakeholders namely; civil society representatives, government institutions, Diplomats and International development partners working in Rwanda.

The event aimed at launching a platform that fosters discussions on the main points and priorities of human rights in Rwanda and, strategic documents from both the EU and Rwanda to enable and exchange of views and contributions on what needs to be undertaken to record further progress and achievements.

During the discussion, Dr Joseph Nkurunziza noted that civil society organizations should be viewed as partners and called for continued partnership with existing institutions to ensure that citizens are well informed about human rights conventions and stressed that 'human rights has no boundaries'.

He also mentioned that Rwanda's human rights action plan should be translated into action where citizens are able to understand their rights so that they are able to promote their peers rights. Other topics discussed included freedom of expression, the role of civil society, Human rights priorities in Rwanda, achievements, challenges and opportunities for cooperation amongst various stake holders.

Civil society organizations were said to have key responsibilities of transparency, accountability, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and social research.

His Honour, Johnston Busingye, Minister of justice noted that at least 90% of their work is fed by social research from civil society organizations. He acknowledged the progress done towards the promotion and protection of Human rights in Rwanda and thanked various stake holders who have supported the ministry in achieving their current state of progress. He however pointed out the existing challenges and called upon the various stake holders to work with the government to solve these challenges.





# African Commission on Human & Peoples' Rights

**Established by the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights** celebrated its 30th anniversary. Since its inception in 1987, the body has been mandated to promote and protect human and peoples' rights in Africa, as well as to interpret the provisions of the Charter. In addition to its objectives to promote the respect of the rights contained in the Charter, such as promotional and fact-finding missions to member states, the African Commission also has a protective mandate and acts as a quasi-judicial mechanism to hear and decide on complaints submitted to it.

It is in this framework that Never Again Rwanda (NAR) was invited to participate in the 61st Ordinary session of the African Commission and to the 30th Anniversary of the Operationalization of the Commission which took place from 1 to 15 November 2017 in Banjul, Gambia.

Preceding the 61st Ordinary session, NAR participated in two other activities, the training course on regional human rights mechanisms and the NGO Forum.

**Training course on regional human rights mechanisms.** This was a 3 day training organized by the African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies in partnership with the United Nations Commissions for Human Rights and CIVICUS. It was attended by 20 Human Rights advocates from across the continent, working in different areas. The training covered mechanisms that Human Rights advocates can use in order to promote and protect Human Rights on the continent. There were presentations by various activists, from the UN and African Commission officials. A big part of the training was dedicated to experience sharing in order for participants to learn from each other.

**The NGO Forum.** NAR also participated in the NGO Forum which preceded the sessions and took part from 28th to 30th October 2017 in Gambia. The Forum on the Participation of NGOs (more commonly known as the NGO Forum), was first held in 1990. As one of the main avenues to facilitate civil society actors' access to the African Commission, the NGO Forum has been organized by the African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies since 2000. The NGO Forum exists to foster closer collaboration and cooperation among CSOs – and with the African Commission – for the promotion and protection of human rights in Africa; to provide a discussion platform for organizations working on democracy and human rights issues in the continent; and to promote networking between organizations and across regions.

**The Forum was attended by over 100 organizations** and discussion panels were held around different themes such as women's rights, access to information, and freedom of expression.

## **The 61st Ordinary session of the African Commission and the 30th Anniversary of the Operationalization of the Commission**

In this session, Rwanda presented their State Report to the Commission and NAR provided an alternative report pointing out some gaps in the State report and offering some recommendations. NAR was also able to attend the opening and a further two day session, where NAR participated in different events organized by various organizations and interact with some of the commissioners.

### **Way forward**

NAR used the different platforms provided to talk about its work in Rwanda and also to look at potential regional or international partners. In order to enable NAR's profile to expand and increase its voice on the African continent, NAR will start the process to gain observer status at the African Commission, in order to be able to interact with the Commission directly, as an authority on Human Rights.

### **Some of the issues discussed were:**

- The political situation in Burundi
- The situation in South Sudan
- LGBTI rights across the continent
- Women's rights across the continent
- Freedom of expression, more specifically the danger faced by journalists in certain countries
- The shrinking of civil society space in East African countries
- Human Rights violations faced by migrants and refugees across the continent.

The 61<sup>st</sup> Ordinary session of the African Commission and the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Operationalization of the Commission







# NAR

## ENGAGEMENT THROUGH THE HORN OF AFRICA CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM 2017

---

The Horn of Africa Civil Society Forum (HoACS Forum) brings together CSOs and individuals from ten countries (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Somaliland, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda) across the greater Horn of Africa.

---

Never Again Rwanda is a human rights organization and pro-democracy actor who joined 'The Horn of Africa Civil Society forum' in 2016, to combat the shrinking space for civil society and to support organizations to fulfil their vital role in society. The Horn of Africa Civil Society Forum (HoACS Forum) brings together CSOs and individuals from ten countries (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Somaliland, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda) across the greater Horn of Africa.

This year, on behalf of Never Again Rwanda, the Governance and Rights Officer, Jean Baptiste Hategekimana attended the Focal Points meeting that convened in Nairobi from December 10 to 12, 2017. This was the forum's second annual meeting since the establishment of the Horn of Africa Civil Society Forum in 2016.

The meeting aimed to assess how voices of civil society leaders can be brought together to address the ongoing conflicts and human rights violations; and to mobilize international support, to demand action to address poverty and, find innovative ways to address conflicts, and increase resilience.

At the meeting, participants shared experiences from their respective countries, with the realization that human rights organizations, pro-democracy activists and civil society movements in many countries within the Horn Africa are facing increased restrictions when trying to carry out their work. Some governments have introduced measures to put in place legal and administrative barriers, making it more difficult for civil society organizations who receive foreign support and funding to operate. In many countries, human rights NGOs are restricted when they attempt to hold public gatherings, express their views or set up new organizations. In addition to this, individual human rights defenders are often subjected to intimidation and harassment.

Never Again Rwanda used this engagement space to present Rwanda's context and outline the civil society working environment and, issues affecting civil society areas for improvement. The experience showed that civil society space in Rwanda seems to be in a 'better condition' in comparison to other countries in the region.

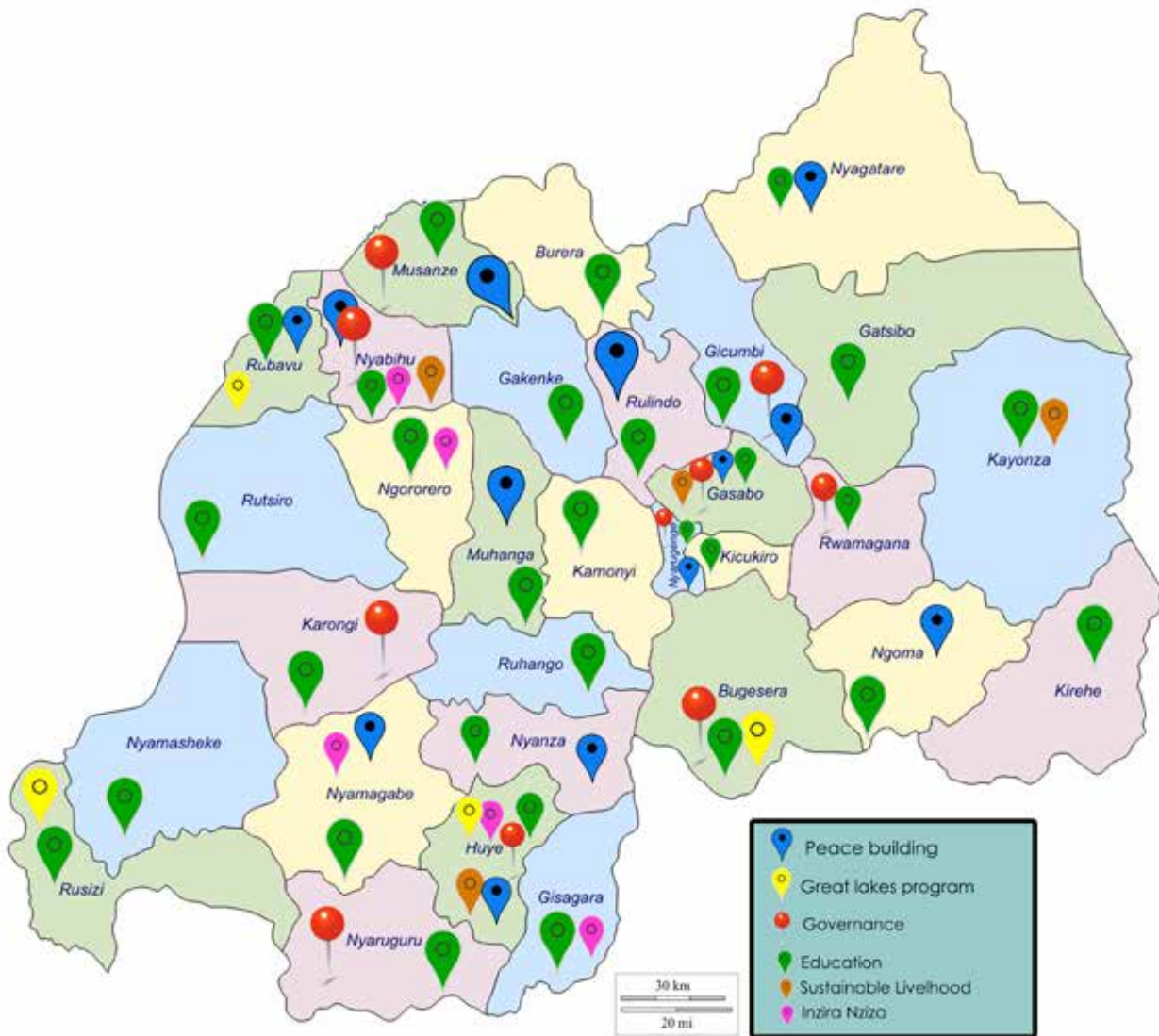
However, there is an apparent low understanding of the civil society space in Rwanda among civil society actors as shown by various external assessments on Rwanda's civic space. Consequently, NAR was recommended to firstly support other civil society actors to better understand their role in protecting civic space as an important human right and secondly identify organizations that can provide assistance to human rights defenders in Rwanda; as well as establishing the framework to monitor and report on human rights violations and other repressive measures that might be contributing to a shrinking of civil society space.



# MAPPING



## NEVER AGAIN RWANDA DISTRICTS OF INTERVENTION





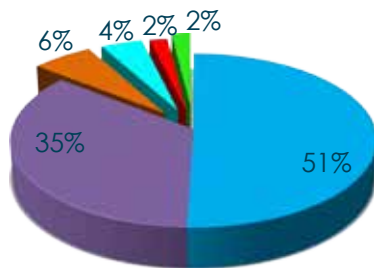


# FINANCIAL Statement

NAR 2017

## CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR FIVE STRATEGIC PILLARS

DESCRIPTION US\$	Peace Building	Governance and Rights	Research and Advocacy	Education	Sustainable Livelihoods	African Democracy Forum	Total Grant Received and Expenses
<b>Income</b>	<b>1,023,520</b>	<b>713,198</b>	<b>1 26,518</b>	<b>86,162</b>	<b>37,472</b>	<b>39,790</b>	<b>2,026,661</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>							
Program Costs	926,747	603,152	63,885	86,162	14,153	25,223	1,719,322
Capital Purchases	-	31,894	2,500	-	-	3,577	37,971
Operating Expenses	86,773	66,773	1,500	-	1,500	-	156,546
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,013,520</b>	<b>701,819</b>	<b>67,885</b>	<b>86,162</b>	<b>15,653</b>	<b>28,800</b>	<b>1,913,839</b>

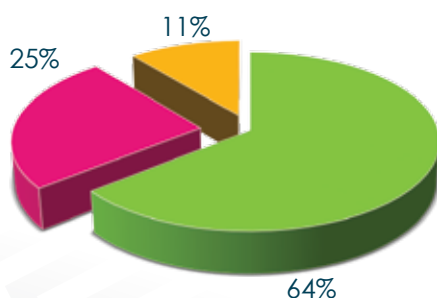


- Peacebuilding
- Governance and Rights
- Research and Advocacy
- Education
- Sustainable Livelihoods
- African Democracy Forum

NAR 2017

## CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

EXPENSES US\$	2017
Program Costs	1,719,322
Capital Purchases	37,971
Operating Expenses	156,546
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,913,839</b>



- Program Costs
- Capital Purchases
- Operating Expenses



# LOOKING FORWARD TO 2018

## A YEAR OF SUSTAINABILITY & GROWTH

Eric Mahoro, Head of Programs

Having retained considerable success with strategic milestones of progress across Never Again Rwanda's main strategic pillars of investment in the past year, 2018 will be a period of sustainability, reflecting on the many areas where we have had an impact and looking at new ways of engagement with key institutional, state, international donors and civil society actors.

Given the strides towards restoring lasting trust amongst the members of the Spaces for Peace, NAR will focus on supporting the capacity of Peace Agents to be more independent in facilitating dialogue sessions. We will empower Spaces for peace to expand to the broader community but not by losing their principle of privacy but by fostering a wider collaboration at the community level. Spaces will be strengthened to be self-initiating and self-sufficient, with a lighter touch of guidance provided by NAR staff.

Psycho-Education will be introduced to enable a wide range of learning and openness while we support more creative expressive techniques amongst youth groups.

For the year ahead, Citizen Forums will fasten their ties with the existing citizen consultation mechanisms in the community. They will continue to engage decision makers both locally and nationally, starting with the already created partnerships. NAR will support on-going advocacy efforts by not only building the capacity of existing facilitators and all members of the forum but also seeking to build a community of practice starting from the district level and spreading lessons learnt nationally as well as feeding the broad research and advocacy agenda.

The cooperation that has been established with national actors both in Societal Healing and Participatory Governance among various sectors will continue to be nurtured leading to a broader community of learning and practice. NAR will continue to work together with the relevant government institutions, donors and civil society organizations to ensure healing needs are continuously taken care of and, support the process of including citizens' needs and priorities to top policy and decision-makers.

The Governance and Rights pillar will continue to build the capacities of youth to engage in policy making. At the same time NAR will continue to work with local leaders to utilize the Rights-based approaches to planning and implementation of government policies and programs while keeping youth informed and fully involved. NAR will continue to educate communities on civic rights and responsibilities especially for less advantaged people.

2018 will see NAR research projects on the role of the Civil Society Organizations in enhancing citizen participation in governance alongside drafting recommendations that will be presented in a national stakeholders' meeting, discussed and inform various stakeholders on how to address the challenges and identify more opportunities for collaboration in enabling a more citizen-led governance practice in Rwanda.

The ongoing research on citizen participation in Imihigo will also be published with accompanying recommendations that will hopefully lead to an improved Imihigo process as one of the key tools for citizen-centred and progressive development.

The Great Lakes Program will continue to facilitate permanent spaces for dialogue in the bordering zones. It will carry out a study to understand the factors behind resilience for the people who have battled violent conflicts and genocide in the Great Lakes region; and to share lessons and, mobilize those societies to uphold the values that are in pursuit of everlasting peace.

In support of qualitative Education, NAR will continue to collaborate with various actors to promote the prerequisite skills through Education, Promotion of critical thinking and contribute to open opportunities for Rwandan children and youth through Education. Complementing the latter, NAR will continue efforts to seek opportunities to improve livelihood opportunities for those youth and elderly people participating in its programs.







We are forever thankful to our partners who have contributed to Never Again Rwanda's many achievements. Of which our continued progress would not have been possible without the indefatigable support of the Embassy of Sweden in Rwanda, The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Hopitaux Universitaire de Geneve (HUG), the German Development Agency (GIZ) through the Civil Peace Service (ZFD) and the International Peacebuilding Alliance, Interpeace.



Everyone in Society is encouraged to take part in decision making processes so as to foster a just and democratic society



Eric Mahoro, Head of Programs



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



german  
cooperation  
DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT



**National Endowment  
for Democracy**  
*Supporting freedom around the world*



EMBASSY OF SWEDEN  
Kigali



HUG  
Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève



**Ziviler Friedensdienst  
Civil Peace Service**  
**We don't turn our backs on conflict.**



Never Again Rwanda  
58 KG 9 Avenue Kigali, Nyarutarama, Kigali-Rwanda  
+250 788 386 688  
[info@neveragainrwanda.org](mailto:info@neveragainrwanda.org) | [www.neveragainrwanda.org](http://www.neveragainrwanda.org)  
f t i NARwanda