

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

BUILDING PEACE DURING THE
COVID-19 PANDEMIC



– Rwanda –

Engaging Society. Making a Difference.



01 WE ARE NEVER AGAIN RWANDA



Never Again Rwanda (NAR) is a peacebuilding and social justice organization founded in response to the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. Guided by a vision of a nation where citizens are agents of positive change and work together towards sustainable peace and development, NAR aims to empower Rwandans with opportunities to become active citizens through peacebuilding and development. NAR places a particular emphasis on youth as the future of a peaceful society. NAR is one of the leading national peacebuilding organizations with nearly 19 years of experience building a cornerstone for peace.

VISION

A society that enjoys sustainable peace, development and social justice

MISSION

To engage society to embrace sustainable peace and social justice

VALUE STATEMENT

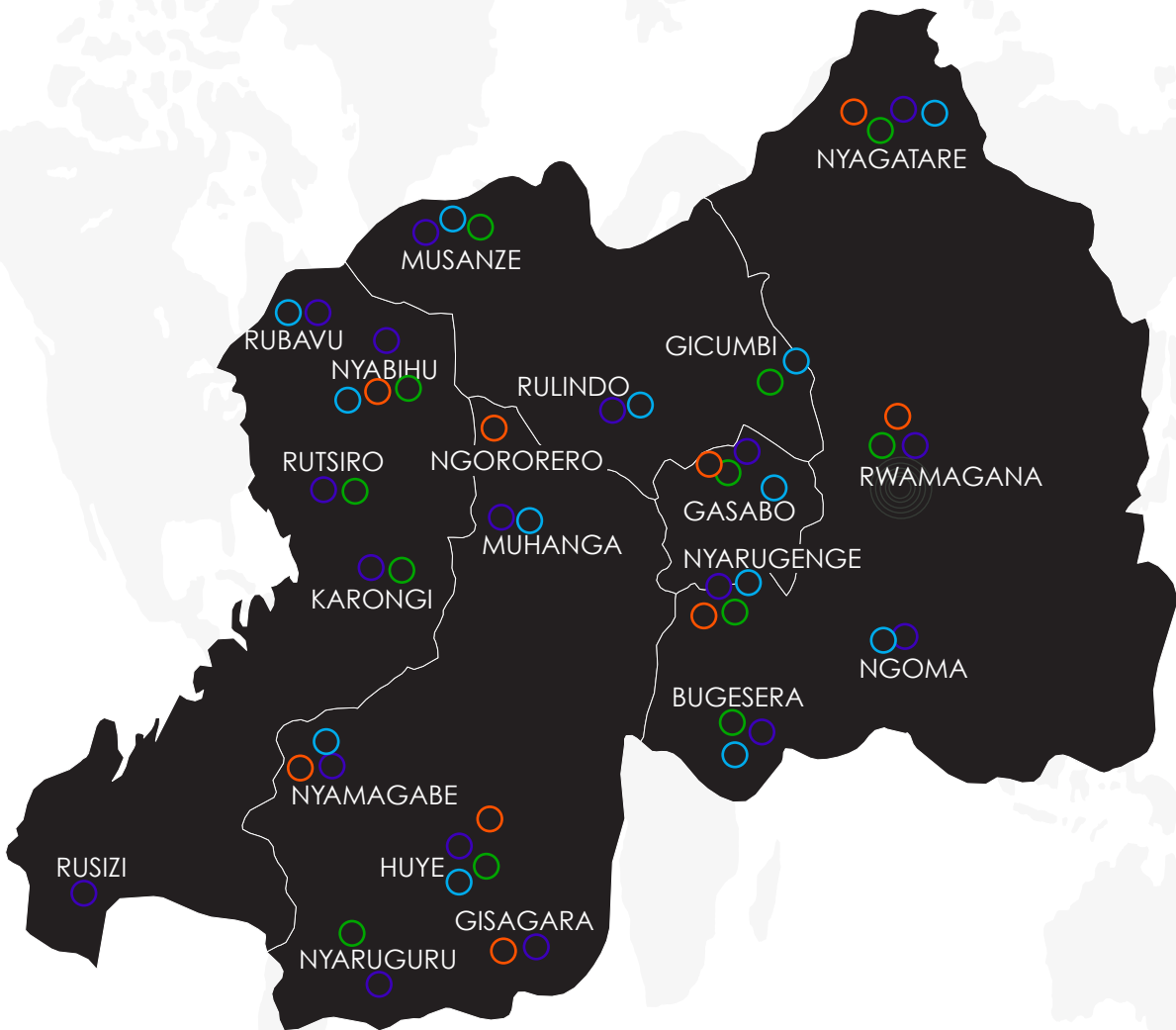
Engaging Society, Making a Difference.

CORE VALUES

Respect for diversity, Integrity, Passion, Partnering, Excellence, Innovation.



02 WHERE WE WORK



-
- PEACEBUILDING
 - GOVERNANCE
 - RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY
 - YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
-

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04 APPRECIATION

We acknowledge the Board of Trustees, NAR's management team and the entire staff, whose zeal and commitment have been the hinge of the organization's perseverance in 2020.

We would like to thank our key donors and partners

Donors



Embassy of Sweden
Kigali



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Partners



05 2020 AT A GLANCE



In 2020, we implemented 13 projects and despite the challenges and restrictions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to continue delivering towards a peaceful society through adaptive strategies.

We designed projects and interventions that would respond to the needs and priorities of the people during the pandemic.

- We prioritized the use of media channels (Radio and TV) and social media to implement activities. Some conferences and dialogues were hosted through media on community and national radios and virtual webinars.
- District based psychotherapists and peace agents organized monthly therapeutic sessions with small groups of 12 to 13 people
- District Governance Advisors organized monthly citizen forum meetings with small groups of 12 to 15 people.
- Psychotherapists provided individual therapy sessions to traumatized group members either through phone calls or home visits
- Psychotherapeutic digital messages (SMS, voice records, audio-visual, etc.) were shared via WhatsApp.

Through the support and collaboration of our funders and partners respectively, we directly engaged 10,669 people through research, training, workshops, advocacy and thousands during virtual conferences and other events. 51% were female and 49% male.



10,669
People directly engaged



20
Districts of operation



13
Nationalities



08
Funders and partners



20
TV and Radio dialogues



120
Individual therapy sessions



20
Trainings and workshops



120
Dialogue meetings

06 MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dr. Nkurunziza Joseph Ryarasa

Learning from the past, looking forward to the future

As we eagerly welcomed 2020 with activities, resolutions and annual plans, no one thought about a virus that would literally shut down the world and leave unprecedented damage and consequences. It was a year shaped by disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic that brought everyday life to an abrupt halt for the majority of the global population. Physical gatherings were halted, social distancing was introduced, and people were forced to retreat in their homes while infodemic especially on social media platforms drove many into depression and despair. Our activities paused and the context changed as we faced a daunting challenge to adapt and innovate strategies to continue supporting our beneficiaries and delivering to our promise of empowering communities for peace and social justice.

Just like there were challenges; there were also unexpected benefits and opportunities. As many organizations were wondering how to continue with

their programming activities, convene meetings and set up dialogues at a time when restrictions on physical connection were growing, a new energy to accelerate digital transformation and create digital initiatives was born. We enabled our staff to keep working remotely and we took our dialogues to mass media and online platforms. We were able to reach thousands through social media, radio and TV outlets. NAR continued to monitor the situation and measures against the spread of COVID-19 while making minimal adjustments to the implementation strategies.

We launched new projects, to meaningfully and effectively engage youth, to build synergies and coalition among CSOs towards effective policy changes and to address mental health issues posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. We realized that the demand for mental health and psychosocial support as well the need for solidarity to promote peace and address social justice challenges remained strong.

2020 also marked a milestone for Never Again Rwanda to learn from its past and chart a new direction for the next five years from 2021 to 2025. As we closed some chapters and opened others, we were filled with a deep sense of gratitude and acknowledgment to our funders, partners, different government agencies, grassroots administrative offices, national and international NGOs, our board of directors and beneficiaries for supporting our mission.

Although we remain in the midst of an unfolding tragedy of COVID-19, we look forward to a future where communities will fight this pandemic and other global challenges as a united front. At Never Again Rwanda, we are committed to continue inspiring peacebuilders and engaging the society to make a difference.

07 OUR PILLARS

In 2020, we continued to implement projects and initiatives in line with our strategy (2016–2020), which was hinged on four pillars.



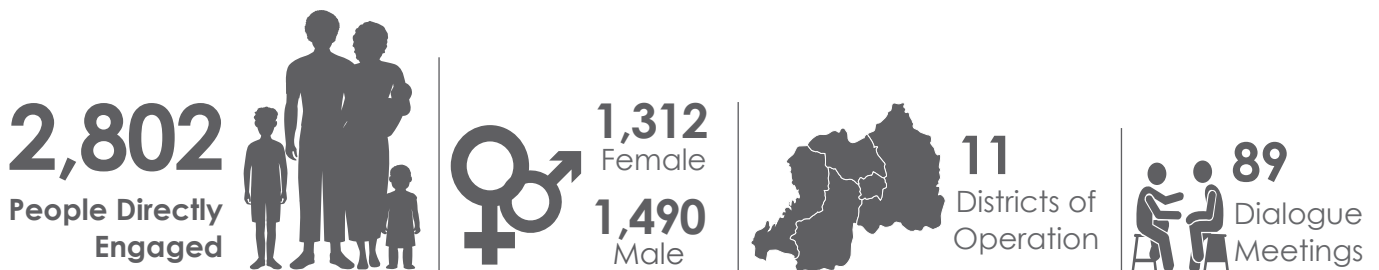
PEACEBUILDING

To Promote Societal Healing, Build Trust and Empower Citizens with Non-Violent Means of Resolving Conflict



The goal of this pillar is to promote societal healing, build trust and empower citizens with non-violent means of resolving conflict. Through varied projects and activities, youth and community members were trained in facilitation skills in a bid to increase trust and tolerance, so as to nurture a healed and empowered society that uses non-violent approaches to solve conflicts and prevent genocide.

In 2020, through the peacebuilding pillar, NAR organized dialogue meetings, convened healing sessions through group and individual therapy and conducted trainings and workshops through four different interventions that include Societal Healing axis, Promotion of Civic Participation and Peacebuilding, Addressing Mental Health Challenges posed by COVID-19 Pandemic and Great Lakes Peacebuilding projects.





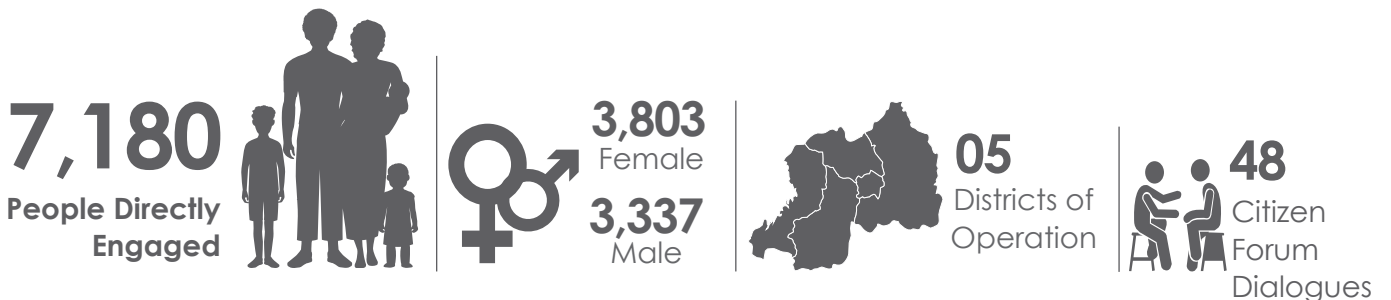
GOVERNANCE & RIGHTS PILLAR

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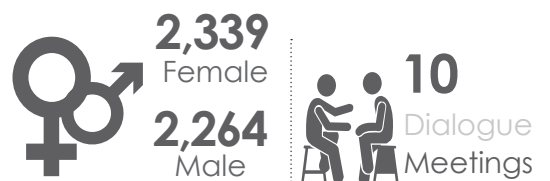
YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PILLAR

To Improve the Critical Thinking Skills of Youth and decrease their Vulnerability to manipulation to commit violent acts, as well as improve their socioeconomic wellbeing



The goal of this pillar is to improve the critical thinking skills of youth and decrease their vulnerability to manipulation to commit violent acts, as well as improve their socioeconomic wellbeing. NAR covered youth to share experiences and ideas at webinars to observe International Youth Day, International Democracy Day, International Day of Peace and the Televised Commemoration Conference among many other platforms aimed to nurture an empowered, conscious and creative youth active in their communities.

Through deliberate youth engagement activities, we empowered youth with peace values, critical thinking, tolerance of diversity, entrepreneurial skills, social justice, respect of human rights and democratic values. Also, NAR worked with schooling and non-schooling communities through the NAR-affiliated youth clubs and associations countrywide. We implemented three projects that include; Inzira Nziza, Youth Engage "Ijwi Ry'ubaka" and Youth Lab.





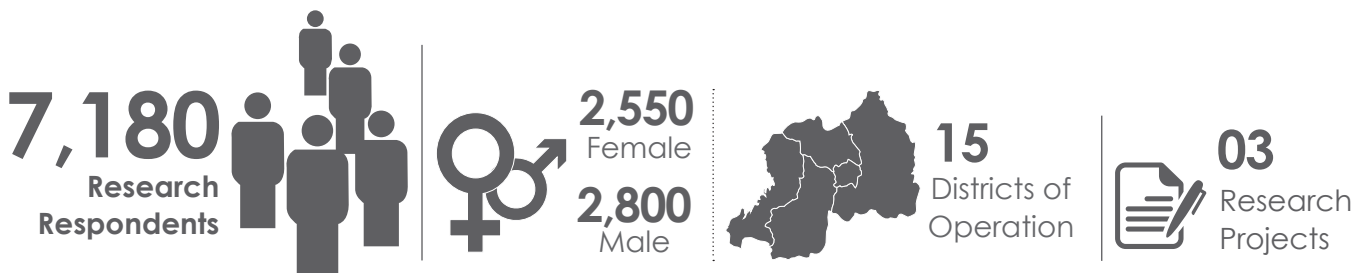
RESEARCH & ADVOCACY PILLAR

To Narrow the gap between Citizens' needs and Priorities identified in Evidence-based Research & Government and CSO policies and programs.



The goal of this pillar is to narrow the gap between citizens' needs and priorities identified in evidence-based research and government and CSO policies and programs. NAR conducted participatory action research and disseminated evidence from the research initiatives. One of the impacts from the pillar was increased awareness of key challenges faced by citizens, to ensure that government and CSO policies and practices reflect citizens' needs and priorities. In 2020, we conducted three research projects that include;

Understanding the Implication of Historical Wounds on Interfamily Conflicts in Post Genocide Rwanda, Restitution and Dissemination of Findings of a research on Assessing Local Leaders Capacity Needs in Participatory Governance and an assessment to Examine the Effective Implementation of the Government of Rwanda's Social Protection Response and Recovery Plan of the COVID-19 pandemic



08 OUR PROJECTS AND MAIN ACTIVITIES

In 2020, we implemented 13 projects and conducted over 150 activities in synergy with various partners. Among the 13 projects, here are highlights of a few.





**PEACEBUILDING
PILLAR PROJECTS AND
ACTIVITIES**

i- SOCIETAL HEALING



Societal healing is part of a two axes program: “Societal Healing and Participatory Governance for Peace” (SHPG) implemented in partnership with Interpeace through the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. In 2020, it was implemented as an extension of the program that started in 2015. The aim is to contribute to the consolidation of a peaceful and inclusive Rwandan society, enabled to overcome the wounds of the past and to peacefully manage conflicts and diversity.

Implemented in Huye, Musanze, Rutsiro, Nyagatare and Gasabo districts, the project engaged men, women and youth from diverse backgrounds to openly and peacefully discuss sensitive issues, current or stemming from historical events, to address tensions and settle differences. Dialogues within new and existing spaces were facilitated to initiate a healing process. We highlight 2 main activities of the over 20 that were conducted under this axis in 2020.

SOCIETAL HEALING ACTIVITIES

A) PEACEBUILDING INSTITUTE WORKSHOP



In 2020, NAR hosted two cohorts of the Peace Building Institute (PBI). The first was hosted between 23rd February and 7th March 2020 while another was hosted between 7th and 18th December. Both cohorts convened 39 university students and young professionals from different African countries, namely; Benin, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Burundi, Tanzania, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ghana, Gambia, Malawi, Cameroon and Rwanda.

During the two weeks of the cohorts, participants explored four major themes: genocide and mass atrocities; women, peace and security; transitional justice; and governance and development in post-conflict societies. The PBI used mixed and participatory approaches to engage youth in different discussions on various topics. Different experts and practitioners in peacebuilding, governance and transitional justice used presentations, group exercises, and field visits to engage youth on different themes. For example, youth in groups conducted conflict analysis on the

Cameroon Anglophone crisis, something that encouraged youth to do research and debates on different contextual elements. As result of the PBI, participants demonstrated increased skills and understanding of conflicts and violence prevention, leadership, reconciliation, forgiveness, critical thinking and governance.



African countries

Benin, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Burundi, Tanzania, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ghana, Gambia, Malawi, Cameroon and Rwanda.



Cohorts

Hosted between **23rd Feb -7th Mar 2020** and **7th-18th Dec 2020** respectively.



Testimonies from PBI participants



“I learnt that while truth, justice and reconciliation are involuntary actions for a postconflict society, the most important ingredient to reconciliation and a powerful tool for conflict prevention is forgiveness. Forgiveness is strength and it is humanity’s best hope for peace.”

Male participant, Kenya (PBI February workshop)

“One thing I learnt is that, we should not wait for someone out there to bring the change that we want, it should start from us as young people. First we need to change ourselves including our mindset, and then we will be able to change our communities.”

Female Participant, Malawi (PBI December workshop)

“Rwandans taught us that peace cannot be achieved through violence; it can only be attained through understanding. Once I return to my country, I will organize programs to share the knowledge and experience gained from the Peace-Building Institute and I will launch an initiative where youth and women’s voices can be amplified to promote security and contribute towards the peacebuilding process.”

Male participant, Somaliland (PBI February workshop)



Four major themes

Genocide and Mass Atrocities; Women, Peace and Security; Transitional Justice; and Governance and Development in Post-Conflict Societies.



Participants Demonstrated **Increased Skills and Understanding** of Conflicts and Violence Prevention, Leadership, Reconciliation, Forgiveness, Critical Thinking and Governance.

SOCIETAL HEALING ACTIVITIES

B) SPACES FOR PEACE



The groups followed the psychosocial support approach and each had two peace agents. Guided by professional psychotherapists, confidentiality was key among the dialogue sessions. Every meeting, participants shared their different traumatic experiences in order to begin their healing journey, which proved to be a powerful aspect in group therapy.

DISTRICT	SECTOR	GROUP	NAME
GASABO	Bumbogo sector	Community group	Twubakane
	Rutungu sector	Community group	Twiyubake
	Nduba sector	Non-schooling youth group	Open minded
RUTSIRO	Boneza sector	Community group	Igihango
	Mushubati sector	Non-schooling youth group	Ejo heza
	Gihango sector	Community group	Twunganirane
HUYE	Kinazi sector	Community group	Twiyubake
	Rusatira sector	Community group	Abishyizehamwe
	Ngoma sector	Non-schooling youth group	Peace makers
MUSANZE	Kinigi sector	Community group	Duhumurizanye
	Busogo sector	Community group	Ihumure
	Muhoza sector	Community group	Imbutu z'amahoro
NYAGATARE	Rukomo sector	Non-schooling youth group	Umucyo
	Rwimiyaga sector	Non-schooling youth group	Icyizere cy'ubuzima
	Karangazi sector	Community group	Umuhuza

The group approach enabled NAR to reach out to a greater number of participants who later on build relationships and continue to come together through various acts of solidarity even after healing spaces have phased out. At the end of the year, the space members attested to have regained confidence, reduced levels of trauma, increased trust, tolerance and forgiveness, reduced suicide tendencies, and harmonious living and some jointly established income generating activities. The spaces for peace not only positively transformed the lives of its members, but also had a direct positive impact on those surrounding them in their families and communities.

The spaces for peace provided group members with the capacity to deal with issues affecting their families, including the recurring trauma and depression due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its stringent preventive measures.

The members provided support to their fellow residents during the commemoration period and also took a lead in sensitizing others about the need to respect the COVID-19 regulations. Some of the groups pledged to continue the culture of meeting even after the phase out, to talk about their challenges and work on their joint income generating activities.



“A safe space goes beyond the physical place. It's about the behaviors and interactions that create an open and accepting environment, where everyone feels respected and valued.”

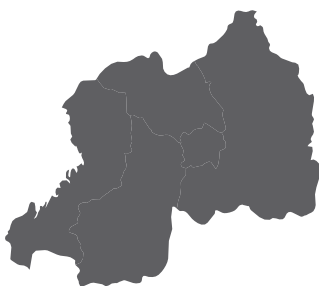
NAR Psychotherapist

“Being healed through this space for peace is the reason why I have committed to support my family, community and the country as I can in the healing and reconciliation process.”

Female participant in Musanze District

“I pledge to support group members to share their experiences from the space for peace with other community members and support their community-based initiatives to maximize their potentials.”

Local leader in Kinazi Sector



15
Spaces for
Peace in
Five (05)
Districts



25
members,
from one
community.



**Psychosocial
support**
2 Peace agents
guided by
Professional
psychotherapists

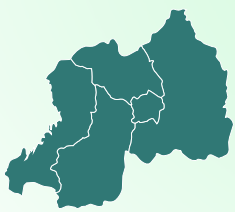
ii- ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES POSED BY COVID-19 PANDEMIC PROJECT



06
Month
project



Year
2020 - 2021



05
Districts of
Rwanda



Just like many countries globally, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Rwanda implemented a total lockdown and other measures such as limiting social gatherings, closing universities and schools, and restricting mass gatherings in places like markets, restaurants and churches. Even though these measures helped to contain the spread of the corona virus, they also came with many drastic psychological changes in people's lives. The impacts of COVID-19 on mental health required intense interventions and measures to mitigate the consequences on individuals, families, and communities.

NAR kicked off a project to help address the mental health challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The overarching goal of the project is to contribute to the mental health wellbeing of the Rwandan population in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic through new and existing media platforms. The 6-month project that started in November 2020 and would extend into 2021 through the fund of the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) was implemented in 15 sectors of 5 Districts namely Gasabo, Nyagatare, Musanze, Huye and Rutsiro. The project intended to improve the

psychosocial wellbeing of diverse categories of the Rwandan population, increase awareness raising on mental health problems among youth and community members, and improve access to mental health services during the pandemic.

Through the project, NAR is set to establish and operationalize the Online "Self-Reported Trauma Screening Tool", introduce the online Safe Space for healing through "Meet Your Psychotherapist" Model and provide individual and online psychosocial services through face to face meeting, WhatsApp and phone calls in 2021.

iii- PROMOTION OF CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND PEACEBUILDING PROJECT



Year

2020

02
main activities
highlighted

05
Projects
conducted in
2020



In 2020, due to the pandemic, there was a shift in the approach and most dialogues were conducted through media including radio and TV dialogues, community radios etc. We highlight 2 main activities from the 5 that were conducted.



NAR has been implementing the promotion of civic participation and peacebuilding project since 2009 through the support of GIZ Rwanda, supported by volunteers in Universities. The project aims to foster a society where youth participate actively in peace processes by using critical thinking in open and safe spaces for dialogue and appreciate diversity. The project targets youth in secondary schools and youth in clubs and associations from Huye, Gisagara and Nyanza districts in Sothern province. Some of the strategic partners are school administration, secondary school teachers (club patrons), parents and local authorities (especially at national and district level).

The project has engaged thousands of beneficiaries through its annual activities such as the commemoration conference, local and regional public speaking & exchange as well as critical thinking sessions for school and nonschooling youth among so many others.

In 2020, youth were convened in virtual sessions to learn, discuss and together build towards a peaceful society. We highlight 2 main activities from the 5 that were conducted in 2020.

PROMOTION OF CIVIC PARTICIPATION & PEACEBUILDING PROJECT ACTIVITIES

A) INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE



The theme of 2020's International Day of Peace was "Shaping Peace Together". The theme acted as a reminder that actions for peace must extend to all governments, multilateral corporations, civil society organizations, citizens and especially youth.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which was adding yet another layer of tragedy, NAR had to adapt to a virtual setting. In partnership with NURC, alongside other peace actors, we hosted a webinar dialogue with young people. The dialogue provided a platform for youth to discuss their role in promoting peace, challenges, and opportunities as well as their approaches to engage their peers and communities to shape peace together.

Building up to the day, a TV talk show was organized, to discuss how societies can shape peace together. To address root causes of conflicts and promote lasting peace, all participants to the webinar and TV talk show committed to taking bold steps to peace through using non-violent means to resolving conflicts and spreading messages of peaceful cohesion.



"Celebrating the International Day of Peace enables us to reflect on our achievements in building peace, while continuously aiming to form partnerships for peace where no one is left behind. Especially as we seek to comfort those distressed by COVID-19."

NAR management

"As young people, we should be exemplary in confronting obstacles to peace in our communities & seizing existing opportunities to develop our country and shape peace together."

Youth participant

"I look forward to promoting peace through technology and digital platforms. I will make sure to include others by spreading the peace messages I see online to members of my community who do not have access to the internet."

Youth participant

PROMOTION OF CIVIC PARTICIPATION & PEACEBUILDING PROJECT ACTIVITIES

B) 26TH COMMEMORATION OF THE 1994 GENOCIDE AGAINST THE TUTSI



On April 7th 2020, Rwanda commenced the 26th commemoration of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. It was a time when COVID-19 was ravaging and most countries, including Rwanda, opted for lockdown and minimizing physical meetings in order to combat the spread of the virus. Unlike previous years, in 2020, people had to commemorate from their homes and neighborhoods, and only a few national events took place with very few people in attendance.

Due to the lockdown imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 26th commemoration programs were held virtually on various digital/media platforms; labeling it the “digital commemoration”.

NAR held a televised conference with an overarching theme; **Remember, Unite, Renew: Understanding and establishing safe spaces for youth to prevent genocide denial through digital platforms.** The talk show on Rwanda’s national broadcaster RTV convened a diverse panel of experts and youth champions. Throughout the conversation, it was reiterated that it is the responsibility of the older generation to educate young people about the history of the Genocide against the Tutsi and its consequences, in order to enable youth to fight against genocide ideology, especially using the tools of modern technology.



“Young people need to learn about their history, but it shouldn't be at schools alone, youth need to read books, visit genocide memorial sites and attend different discussions, if they are to be fully equipped to counter any misleading stories from genocide deniers.”

Mental health expert

“The genocide was tragic and many parents are still reluctant to tell young people the truth. Therefore, safe spaces play a crucial role in helping the next generation to understand what they are not being told in their respective families.”

Peacebuilding practitioner

“Genocide deniers take advantage of the laziness of the young people to read and write, on which they prey with misleading and revisionist messages.”

Youth participant



**GOVERNANCE & RIGHTS
PILLAR PROJECTS AND
ACTIVITIES**

iv- PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE

Participatory governance is part of a two axes program: "Societal Healing and Participatory Governance for Peace" (SHPG) implemented in partnership with Interpeace through the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. In 2020, it was implemented as an extension of the program that started in 2015. The aim was to strengthen the link between citizens and policy makers by minimizing the vertical space between the beneficiaries of public policies and decision-makers, therefore strengthening government accountability.

Implemented in Huye, Musanze, Rutsiro, Nyagatare and Gasabo districts, citizen participation was facilitated in the development, implementation, and evaluation of public policies and programs, which serve to increase the link between citizens and policymakers, and ensure that decision making at local and national levels reflects the needs, rights, and priorities of citizens within an accountable system of governance.

Due to the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, smaller groups of citizen forums and dialogue exchanges via media outlets were convened.



PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE ACTIVITIES

A) CITIZEN FORUMS



Citizen forums are established permanent spaces where local populations gather every month to discuss, evaluate, and propose solutions for issues related to governance and to communicate their ideas to decisionmakers. Citizen forums are facilitated by two pre-selected individuals (a man and a woman) and are made up of 30 members (including women and youth representatives).

In 2020, NAR operated 15 citizen forums in 5 different districts within Rwanda Gasabo, Musanze, Rutsiro, Nyagatare and Huye. Due to the restrictions imposed by the Government of Rwanda to reduce the spread of the Corona virus, the citizen forums were convened in smaller groups between 12 to 15 people.

During their dialogues, they discussed about various lingering governance issues that include human trafficking, sale of illicit drinks, illegal deforestation, malnutrition, corruption, homelessness, lack of basic infrastructure, genderbased violence, citizens' contribution to curbing the spread of the virus, children's rights and responsibilities during the lockdowns and education postCOVID. They also worked with local leaders to raise awareness about hygiene measures and staying home, as well as provided support to vulnerable families through identifying families in need and collecting and distributing donations of food and sanitary items. Also, many citizen forum members were included in local taskforces which were designated with enforcing the respect of COVID-19 preventive measures.

The citizen forums have been lauded by both citizens and local leaders for increasing citizen dialogue, confidence, facilitation and participation, and the use of new existing spaces to identify and communicate citizens' needs and priorities.



"I am a citizen forum member representing people with disability. When I joined the citizen forum, I was not sure if I would be comfortable to say anything because of my visual impairment. But the facilitators emphasized the importance of everyone participating and explained how everyone's voice counts. The sessions enriched my knowledge and built my confidence. Today, I identify issues in my community, reach out to our leaders, jointly come up with a solution and talk to my fellow residents about citizen participation in governance. The knowledge I acquired will be very beneficial to our community and to the efforts of enhancing a citizen-led governance"

Male CF member from Gasabo district.

"Before I joined the citizen forum, I had little interest in government programs. I now collaborate with local leaders, starting from the village level, to address urgent issues that affect people in my community. I am a local mediation councilor (UMWUNZI). Thanks to the knowledge I gained, I encourage participatory approaches during the mediation proceedings. I also talk to residents about the importance of citizen participation in governance processes."

Female CF member from Rutsiro district.



V- ENHANCING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PROJECT



The project titled "Enhancing and reinforcing Rwandan citizen participation in existing local government consultations processes and platforms" was implemented in 5 districts of Gasabo, Nyagatare, Rutsiro, Huye and Musanze in collaboration with Interpeace funded by the European Union Commission. Being the last year of implementation, it was built on the accumulated impact and outcomes of the action since 2018 to expand impact.



05

Different districts within Rwanda



02

main activities highlighted



10

Projects conducted in 2020

In 2020, focus was laid on building foundations for sustainability of the outcomes and approaches, by strengthening the capacity of citizens and local leaders, linkages between citizen's forums, local leaders, media, and other community-based organizations. This was done through experience sharing sessions, community dialogues, local leaders training in participatory approaches, consultations, and feedback sessions.

Due to the pandemic, there was a shift in the approach

and most activities were conducted through media including radio and TV, community radios, as well as virtual and social media platforms.

The District Governance Advisors (DGAs) in all the 5 districts supported citizen forums to establish their phase out, transition and sustainability plans. The DGAs also increased engagement between local leaders and citizen forum members to present issues and citizen's priorities that need local

leaders' attention. The Citizen Forum phase out ceremonies organized at sector and district levels provided a good space for citizen forums, local leaders, and ordinary citizen representatives to discuss the way forward. Both citizens and local leaders are committed to continue working together in addressing community needs. We highlight 2 main activities from the 10 that were conducted in 2020.



ENHANCING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PROJECT ACTIVITIES

A. EXPANDING SPACE FOR DIALOGUE THROUGH MEDIA



In 2020, the media were an effective strategic partner as an adaptive measure to limit the spread of the corona virus. In creating a space to link decision-makers and citizens to engage in dialogue on existing and new government policies and programs, and for citizens to voice their priorities and/or ask for feedback on the implementation of government programs. Dialogues were held on community and national radio and television stations in Gasabo, Nyagatare, Rutsiro, Huye and Musanze. Dialogues were attended by local leaders, citizen representatives, and NAR representatives to discuss pressing issues which had been identified by citizens in their respective districts. The topics of discussion included: enhancing collaboration between citizens and local leaders in the fight against the spread of COVID-19; the link between participatory governance and a corruption-free community; the role of parents/guardians in promotion and protection of child rights; and achievements, challenges, and opportunities for citizen participation in governance consultation mechanisms.

Citizen forum members, through media, were able to hold decisionmakers accountable on issues affecting their communities. Also local leaders encouraged citizens to identify issues and approach the authorities to have them solved. As a result, some of these issues were addressed and/or given orientation by decision-makers. Media was effective in reaching a wider audience including youth, parents, teachers, decision-makers and practitioners among many other actors.



Our citizens have a right to quality services. If citizens are not well served at the village or cell level, we encourage them to go to the sector or district. We encourage all citizens to report any cases of corruption and injustice. We will continue to work with citizens to rectify all lingering issues."

Local leader in Rutsiro District.

"As CSOs operating within a strong and responsive leadership that listens and responds on advocacy issues, confrontational approaches do not work. We do advocacy in the context of Rwandan political will, and we achieve results, which is our main objective. We use mutual collaboration that brings both CSOs and government to discuss and jointly set mitigations on matters of concern."

NAR Deputy Executive Director

ENHANCING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PROJECT ACTIVITIES

B. CO-FACILITATING DIALOGUE SPACES FOR CITIZEN CONSULTATIONS IN DECISION-MAKING



During 2020, citizen participatory consultations and feedback sessions on district priorities and budget allocation were held by local leaders. The aim was to enhance citizens' consultation processes and create a space to give feedback on citizen's priorities and government programs. Organized in the 5 districts of operation, citizens highlighted various issues that affected their social, economic and harmonious living, while the local leaders pledged to find remedies to the issues.

We organised and facilitated consultative meetings in our districts of operation between decision-makers and citizen forum members regarding limited participation of citizens in local government Imihigo processes. Participants in these sessions discussed: how to increase meaningful participation of citizens in Imihigo planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation; what participants could do in their roles to ensure the Imihigo planning meaningfully engages citizens and starts on time; and suggestions for a sound policy framework on Imihigo that could boost alignment of district Imihigo with those of lower administrative entities.



In each session, participants raised some key points that include:

- Need for increased awareness among citizens regarding the importance of Imihigo as well as the processes of Imihigo development, implementation and evaluation.
- Lack of citizen participation in development and validation of district Imihigo, resulting in citizens' needs and priorities not being reflected in district Imihigo.
- Need for direct engagement of citizens in the Imihigo evaluation process in order to assess whether performance of Imihigo targets has positively impacted communities.
- Prevalence of national priorities over district and sub-district priorities in Imihigo, in contrast to the rationale of the National Decentralisation Policy which outlines a bottom up Imihigo development approach.

The analysis and recommendations developed through this process will also be useful in informing the review of the national decentralisation policy and the potential development of a specific policy on Imihigo.

Citizens and local leaders lauded the consultation sessions, citing increased citizen participation and meaningful engagement in national programs.



“We are glad to be consulted and able to contribute to the development of our communities and country in general. As we jointly discussed the Imihigo planning processes and how they can be improved, we got to learn about our role and how our leaders can further improve service delivery and engagement of citizens in national programs”.

A male community member in Rutiro District.

“We can't afford not to let our constituents engage in devising solutions to issues in their communities. In my capacity, I will do my best to meaningfully engage residents in my area because I believe that when the population is engaged, they own the development as well”.

Local leader in Musanze District.

vi- PUBLIC POLICY INFORMATION MONITORING AND ADVOCACY (PPIMA)



Started in
2020

18



CSO Partners currently
implementing

Towards the end of 2020, NAR became one of the partners of the Public Policy Information, Monitoring and Advocacy (PPIMA) program that is supported by the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA). PPIMA is a civil society support program aimed at strengthening Rwandan CSOs to engage in policy influencing and empowering citizens to fulfil their development role through civic participation. It is currently being implemented by 18 CSO Partners. NAR's role is focused on the following key areas:

- Engage partners through capacity development strengthening and accompaniment.
- Consolidate the Community Score Card (CSC) data, further analyze it and generate advocacy products to engage with relevant policy makers and influencers.
- Open opportunities for PPIMA partners to engage with policy makers, to increase CSOs coalition for advocacy and public policy engagement.



NAR organized cross-learning sessions with the PPIMA partners with an aim to share experiences and discuss collaboration and coalition opportunities. The sessions also provided an opportunity for the PPIMA partners to collectively consolidate, prioritize and analyze pending issues raised by citizens through the CSC, upon which coalition opportunities for advocacy were determined.



“It is the first time, we as PPIMA Partners, are meeting to jointly analyze the CSC database and prioritize citizens’ issues that need joint advocacy at the national level. I am now equipped to effectively facilitate citizens’ issues prioritization exercises”.

Female participant from PPIMA partner organisation



“Analysis and prioritization of more than 4,000 CSC issues is not easy. I have really appreciated this participatory exercise, it is very helpful. I believe that using similar approach; our organizations can do better in terms of CSC issue analysis and prioritization”.

Male participant from PPIMA partner organisation



4 CSC issues were identified and the process to advocate for change kicked off. These issues included; service delivery challenges at sub-district entities, particularly at the Cell level; limited services and access to health posts; capacity building for elected local leaders; and the delayed rehabilitation of local roads and bridges. More issues to be further investigated and advocated for in 2021 were identified.

From the identified issues, a policy brief on the service delivery challenges and issues of institutionalization of capacity building at sub-district administrative levels was developed. The policy brief provided detailed recommendations that can be adopted by local leaders as well as other actors. More about the results and outcomes of the intervention will be highlighted in 2021.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PILLAR PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES



vii- YOUTH ENGAGE PROJECT

As 2020 came to an end, we received funding from the European Union to implement a 26 months “Youth Engage” project, in partnership with Interpeace. The project that is implemented in five districts of Gisagara, Huye, Nyamagabe, in southern province and Ngororero and Rusizi in Western Province has an overall goal to see government policies and programs becoming more responsive to youth needs and priorities.

In 2020, the project was introduced to actors at the national and local levels, to lay a firm foundation for collaboration and ensure effective realization of the objectives. The project will develop the capacities of youth to be more confident and willing to come together to identify, structure, analyze and envision solutions to (policy) issues impacting their lives. The project activities will also empower youth (representatives) to effectively use existing consultative platforms (direct or indirect) to constructively engage government authorities on their concerns, needs and priorities and hold them to account.

Building on the previous youth-related projects, NAR has learnt that when youth representatives and organizations are engaged and empowered, they play a pivotal role in championing for the voice of the youth, emphasizing their needs and priorities while contributing to quality policy formulation processes. Also, giving youth and leaders' spaces to discuss not only bridges the gap between youth organizations and decision-makers but also enhance youth's capacities for effective participation at the local and national level. We will highlight more about the activities and outcomes of this project in 2021.



05 Districts in Rwanda

Western Province
Ngororero and Rusizi



Southern Province
Nyamagabe, Gisagara and Huye



26 Months
“Youth Engage” project funded by EU

viii- INZIRA NZIZA PROJECT

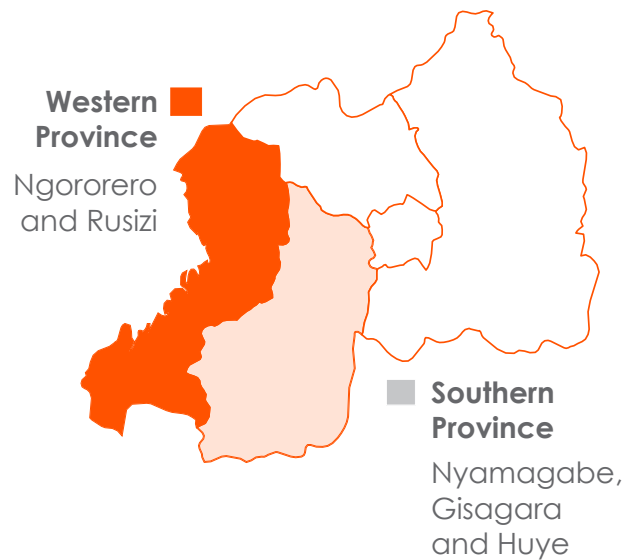
Inzira Nziza was a 3-year project funded by USAID Rwanda, which ended in 2020. It was implemented in five Districts namely; Huye, Nyamagabe, Gisagara, Ngororero, and Nyabihu.

The primary contribute to objective of Inzira Nziza was to the empowerment of a new generation of young Rwandan leaders to engage in critical analysis and dialogue on their rights and responsibilities towards improving spaces for peaceful dialogue and democratic

03
Year
Project
by USAID

05
Districts of
Rwanda

02
Provinces:
Western &
Southern



2,000+
Youth activists
engaged



values through human rights-based approaches. The project worked with the youth to strengthen their capacities, improve their confidence to participate in politics, and support them to develop sustainable and joint mechanisms that offer opportunities for dialogue on rights principles and democratic issues.

Project activities included roundtable discussions, critical thinking trainings, confidence building sessions and participatory theaters among many other dialogue and participation platforms. The components of the activities included improving youth's skills to engage in the political processes and influence public policy, fostering partnership between youth and local government for increased policy engagement and strengthening the capacity of youth-led CSOs to report on and advocate for human rights issues and good governance.

Since its inception, Inzira Nziza engaged over 2,000 youth activists from various backgrounds as well as local leaders from different administrative levels. As a result, both local leaders and youth attested to improved levels of confidence among youth, improved level of debate on democracy and inclusion, increased electoral engagement among youth, increased desire to participate in national programs and processes, as well as a self-driven commitment among youth to improve the livelihoods and rights of the most vulnerable community members.



"The Inzira Nziza activity built my confidence to engage with leaders by representing the interests of the youth. For example, I started to be active in the district council and eventually I ended up advocating for the construction of a cemetery. I shared my views and proposed where a cemetery would be built. This was later approved."

Male beneficiary

"The confidence gained has expanded beyond the project's interventions to help me in saving and starting some income generating activities in agriculture and livestock."

Female beneficiary

"At first, we were nervous about rights and governance based work due to its sensitive nature. However, we now feel confident and are able to engage more with youth after seeing the results and the kind of debates taking place in the created spaces."

Local leader

The prevailing COVID-19 circumstances and restrictions led to most activities to wrap up the project to be organized on traditional media and social media platforms. The project proved sustainable at the individual and interpersonal levels. The skills acquired, behaviors adopted, and trust established will be a long-term achievement, upon which NAR will continue to design other interventions to engage youth.



**RESEARCH & ADVOCACY
PILLAR PROJECTS AND
ACTIVITIES**

ix- UNDERSTANDING THE IMPLICATION OF HISTORICAL WOUNDS ON INTERFAMILY CONFLICTS RESEARCH PROJECT



In collaboration with Interpeace and the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the research project on “Understanding the implication of historical wounds on interfamily conflicts in Post Genocide Rwanda” kicked off in 2020. The data collection exercise followed a mixedmethods approach (quantitative and qualitative) and more than 2,000 people were reached in 15 Districts of Rwanda. The objectives of the study were;

- To explore the typology of intra family conflicts in post-genocide Rwanda;
- To explore the typology of historical wounds experienced by families in conflict in post genocide Rwanda;
- To examine the effects of historical wounds on intra-family conflicts in post-genocide Rwanda;
- To identify other major factors that influence the outbreak of intra-family

conflicts in post-genocide Rwanda; and

- To explore and assess the effectiveness of existing mechanisms aimed to prevent and manage intrafamily conflicts and historical wounds.

The process was done in consultation with different experts and practitioners including meetings with members of the advisory committee. The advisory committee was composed of five experts and practitioners who were selected based on their reputable experience on the Rwandan historical context and their understanding of family conflicts.

The research process was finalized. Since it followed a participatory action research approach, the findings and recommendations will be shared with the respondents and different actors to ensure the Rwandan society continues to overcome its wounds and stay on the path to healing.

x- SUPPORT TO THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF COVID-19 SOCIAL PROTECTION RESPONSE IN RWANDA



In partnership with relevant GoR institutions with funding from the European Union, NAR kicked off the assessment exercise of the post COVID-19 social protection response. The exercise aimed to examine the effective implementation of the Government of Rwanda's Social Protection Response and Recovery Plan of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The assesment focused on four different factors to include; oversight on the COVID -19 recovery response plan; consultation of civil society actors; accountability and transparency; and the type of approach towards the response plan. The study aimed to document the successes, gaps and actionable recommendations for the preparation of possible future pandemics and shocks.

NAR worked with a team of experts who made up the evaluation committee. Safe and inclusive spaces for dialogue were created, key stakeholders at the local and national levels were engaged, within 15 districts (Huye, Gisagara, Kamonyi, Musanze, Burera, Gakenke, Rubavu, Nyamasheke, Rutsiro, Nyagatare, Gatsibo, Rwamagana, Gasabo, Kicukiro, Nyarugenge) in a bid to understand the recovery plan implementation.

The findings and recommendations of the report that will be available in 2021 will not only support the effective implementation of COVID-19 social protection response in Rwanda, it will also lead to strengthened responsibility, cooperation and accountability in Rwanda.

09 STORIES OF IMPACT



YOUTH CLUBS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Members from our affiliate youth clubs and associations conducted various independent activities in 2020. Their activities were geared towards increased youth engagement, tackling social justice challenges, strengthening youth participation and promoting peace among many other objectives.

YOUTH ESTIMATION - EMPOWERING EACH OTHER THROUGH THE YOUTH SUMMIT

Youth Estimation is a youth-led organization affiliated to Never Again Rwanda and it is located in Burera district in the Northern Province. In March 2020, they organized an annual youth summit, which served as a space for youth from different youth clubs and associations to engage in dialogue around some of their activities. The summit was an opportunity for youth to explore how they can grow together, develop their talents and empower their fellow youth.

Hinged on their vision to promote sustainable peace in Rwandan communities, they organized panel and plenary discussions on how to tackle unemployment, teen pregnancies, drug abuse and so many other youth related challenges. The participants talked about inspiring and educating young entrepreneurs and talent matching as a great way to improve the transition from school to work. Some of the invitees at the summit included; the Northern Province Governor, Police other local administrative units officials as well as youth representative's from different youth clubs and associations.

Youth participants pledged to continue empowering each other and working with the local leaders to devise solutions to their challenges.

Youth estimation reiterated their commitment to help others in the community, to use debates and talent to raise awareness among their fellow youth and the community at large.

PEACE BUILDING INSTITUTE (PBI)

Every year, we convene university students and young professionals for the 2-weeks experience at peace building institute. From the meaningful teachings, workshops, visits to memorials and experience sharing, the participants pledge to make a difference in their communities. Some of them start peace-related organizations or interventions.

ENHANCING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACEBUILDING AND GOVERNANCE - AMNA

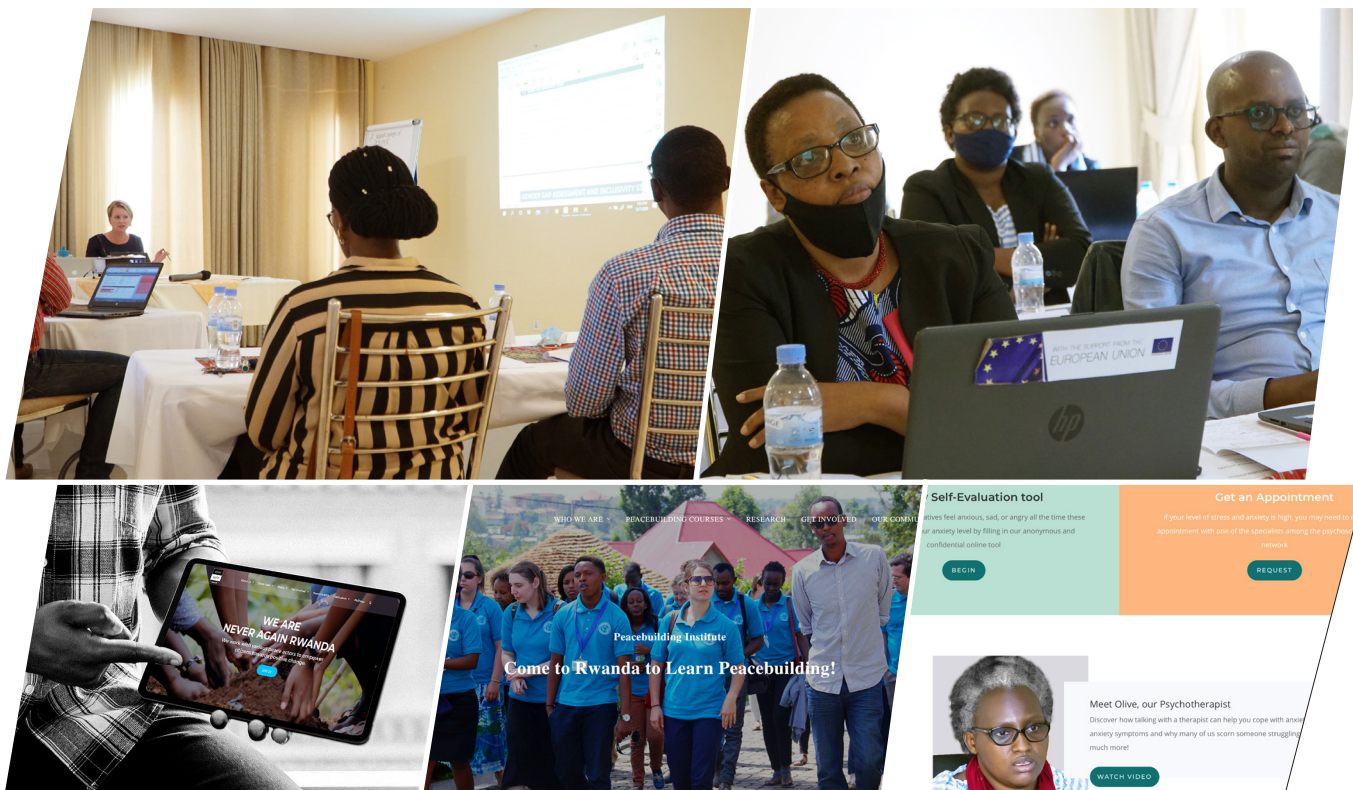
Ilaf Nasreldin, following her participation at the 2019 PBI workshop cofounded an organization "AMNA". The organization aims to end all violence against women in Sudan. One of their project was addressing the lack of women's participation in peacebuilding and governance as well as the importance of women's involvement in politics. The project was implemented in a duration of 3 months between December 2019 and February 2020.

The aim was to involve more women in peacebuilding and decisionmaking processes. The project was combined with workshops on different key topics to include; critical thinking, stereotypes and identify manipulation, exploring the Darfur conflict, the role of education and culture in inciting and preventing conflicts, good governance and transitional justice among many others.

The project targeted 30 young men and women and as they finalized the workshops, they lauded the teachings for increasing their knowledge about the importance of women's participation. They committed to challenge cultural and social perspectives and also to push for women's representation in peacebuilding, governing and political spaces.



10 INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES



In 2020, NAR trained staff on Gender analysis and mainstreaming hinged on the gender gap assessment that was conducted. This was followed by the review of the institution's gender policy, which explicits NAR's commitments to support gender equality for the staff, partners, programs, projects and the people we work with.

NAR also fast tracked the institutionalization of digital platforms to facilitate dialogues and share knowledge.

NAR begun to manage internally the performance, measurement, and reporting of its various websites (www.neveragainrwanda.org; www.pbirwanda.org; www.youthvoices.org.rw; www.wellness.neveragainrwanda.org)

The Organization is now able to internally create, develop, launch, and measure public awareness and mobilization digital campaigns

to support existing traditional communication efforts on the field and via social media.

This transformation also includes the development of a new and internal data management function to reinforce data-driven decisionmaking as well as the ties between data management and operational efficiency. This transformation allows NAR to continuously improve its efficiency regarding knowledge and content management.

The first few months of 2021 will be dedicated to developing, managing and engaging NAR's various communities (alumni, peace agents, policy makers, youth leaders, citizen forum facilitators). NAR is committed to continue systems improvement, grow insitutional and individual capacities as well refine its internal policies, in a bid to deliver to its mandate.

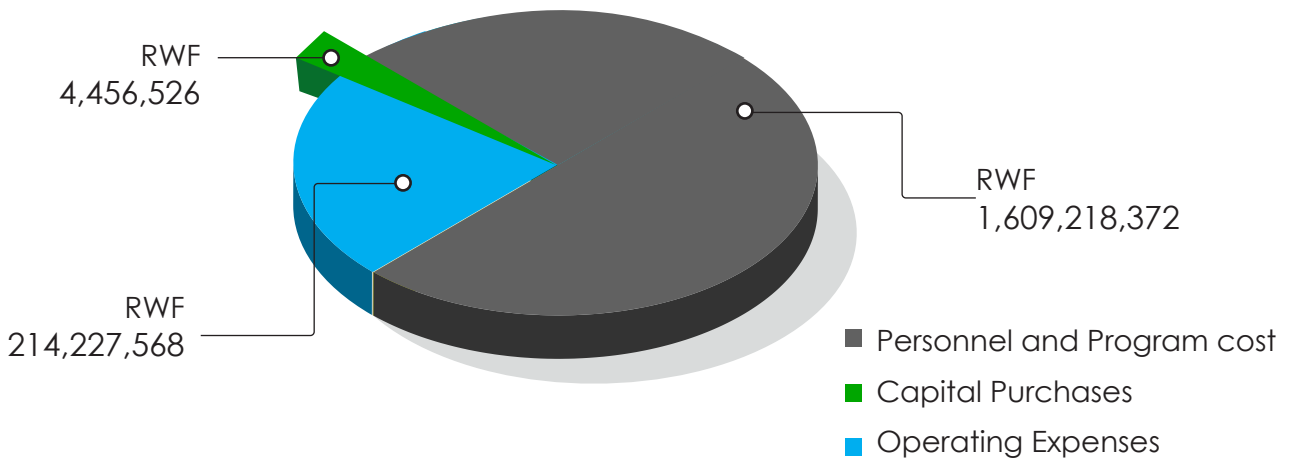
11 FINANCIALS

BUDGET VS EXPENDITURES

CATEGORY	BUDGET	EXPENDITURES	VARIANCE
Personnel and Program costs	RWF 1,988,984,213	RWF 1,609,218,372	RWF 359,623,092
Capital Purchases	RWF 4,456,526	RWF 4,456,526	RWF -
Operating Costs	RWF 214,227,568	RWF 214,227,568	RWF -
Total Program Costs	RWF 2,207,668,307	RWF 1,848,045,216	RWF 359,623,092

INCOME VS EXPENDITURES

Income:
RWF 2,207,668,307



12 NAR IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS

2020 was a milestone for Never Again Rwanda to learn from its past and chart a new direction for the next five years from 2021 - 2025. A new strategic plan was developed, building on the lessons and challenges from the last 5 years. In the next 5 years, NAR is committed to continue engaging society to make a difference.

VISION

A society that enjoys sustainable peace and social justice

MISSION

To engage society to embrace sustainable peace and social justice

VALUE STATEMENT

Making a Difference, Empowering Citizens.

CORE VALUES

Respect for diversity, Integrity, Passion, Partnering, Excellence, Innovation.

VALUES

- **Respect for diversity** - We accept that each individual is unique, and recognize individual differences. We work with stakeholders with diverse values and cultures.
- **Integrity** - We are honest and ethical in all our activities.
- **Passion** - We are passionate about the work we do to empower citizens. We are motivated and committed to our work
- **Partnering** – we value building long-term partnerships and relationships with relevant stakeholders, by continuously exploring new opportunities and by working together to create mutual sustainable value.
- **Excellence** – we mean delivering quality service and products to all our stakeholders
- **Innovation** - we strive to be creative. We listen, seek, learn and come up with the best ideas.

NAR WILL BE OPERATING ON 5 PILLARS.

1. PEACEBUILDING:

The goal of this pillar is to empower citizens with non-violent means of resolving conflict, build trust and promote trauma healing and genocide prevention. Citizens will be trained in dialogue facilitation skills, and peace education and spaces for peaceful dialogue will be created.

2. GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS:

The goal of this pillar is to promote participatory and inclusive decisionmaking processes and advance rights-based approaches. Citizencentered approaches will be used to mobilize citizens to participate in policy making. NAR will bridge the gap between citizens and decisionmakers by creating spaces for dialogue.

3. RESEARCH:

The goal of this pillar is for NAR to become an established think tank through quality research. All our interventions are evidence-based through research and our research will be used to understand various issues and increase public awareness of those issues. NAR will repackage its research in formats that can be easily deciphered by citizens.

4. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT:

The goal of this pillar is to increase the capacity of the youth to become peace agents, improve their livelihoods, advocate for their rights and those of the vulnerable populations in their community. This will be done through human rights and peace education, critical thinking skills, creating safe spaces for dialogue, supporting youth-initiated projects, facilitating intergenerational dialogues and engaging youth in democratic processes.

5. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP:

The goal of this pillar is to build strategic partnerships for increased policy engagement and advocacy. NAR will leverage its good reputation and capacity to mobilize and develop coalitions and partnerships. Partnerships will be established with relevant stakeholders for different purposes including collectively advocating for issues, monitoring public policy, and collaborating in the implementation of activities.

OUR NEXT 5 YEARS WILL BE GUIDED BY 3 CROSS-CUTTING THEMES.

GENDER:

We mainstream gender at all levels to ensure that both men and women are included and fully participate in programs at both the local and community level.

SOCIAL INCLUSION:

NAR will promote inclusion of vulnerable groups in its programs. This will entail working with persons with disabilities, adolescents, orphans, and other marginalised groups. NAR will work with organisations representing vulnerable groups.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:

We improve our internal practices, processes and operations that focus on employee wellness, diversity, and inclusion, as well as on eco-friendly conditions and sustainability in our activities.

We are optimistic of the next 5 years.



– Rwanda –

Engaging Society, Making a Difference.

"I learnt that while truth, justice and reconciliation are involuntary actions for a post-conflict society, the most important ingredient to reconciliation and a powerful tool for conflict prevention is forgiveness. Forgiveness is strength and it is humanity's best hope for peace."

Male participant, Kenya (PBI February workshop)

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