

PeaceInsight

Never Again Rwanda Newsletter

About Never Again

A peace building and social justice organization that arose 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.

2 #PeaceDayRwanda:

NAR and NURC host over 300 youth to reflect on how to use critical thinking in building peace.

4 Peace Day celebration in the Great Lakes region:

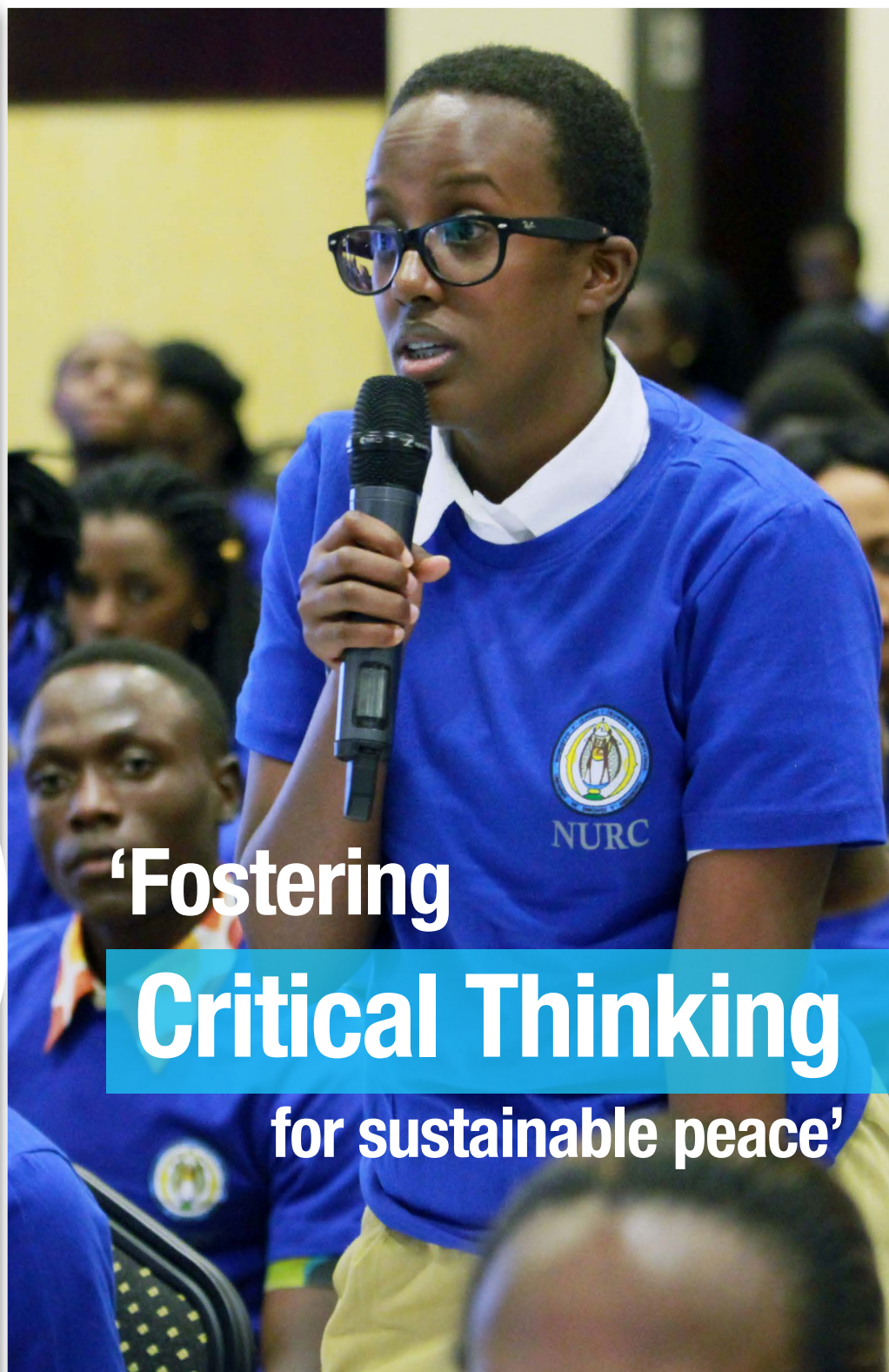
Youth from Rwanda and DRC celebrate peace day through dialogue and football for peace.

7 Introducing Project Hope:

The project aims to instill fundamental hope into adolescents through psychotherapy.

never
again

– Rwanda –



**‘Fostering
Critical Thinking
for sustainable peace’**

NAR and NURC host International Day of Peace Celebration: A youth participant shares her point of view on how to make use of ‘Critical Thinking for Peace.’

PEACEBUILDING:

Young generation urged to Preserve Peace

Bishop John Rucyahana, President of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, implores youth to keep upholding and preserving peace in his opening remarks.

September was marked with celebrations of the International Day of Peace globally and Rwanda was no exception, as the National Unity and Reconciliation commission in collaboration with Never Again Rwanda among other Peace Actors organised an event to celebrate peace. As young people walked into the room that was branded with peace messages, and they changed from their top attires into T-shirts, they embodied peace principles and were ready to receive messages on the ideals of peace, which they would eventually spread country-wide, or even beyond the borders. The event attracted over 300 young participants, where they were urged to become the peacemakers of today and the future, allowing for positive action to manifest in their homes, schools, and communities.

Inspired by the global theme: "The Right to Peace - The Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 70", Rwanda adopted a national emphasis on: "Critical thinking for peace", with an aim to reflect on how and when critical thinking can contribute to tolerance, healing, and social cohesion among community members in the context of the post-1994 genocide Rwanda.

Youth have to play a big role in upholding the peace we have today and preserve it for the future generation.

- Bishop John Rucyahana
President, NURC

Young people who have experienced conflict firsthand have a vital role to play in peacebuilding. They have a clear vision of what peace could look like, and have the drive to work towards the realisation of these goals. Hinged on this approach, all speakers called on the young people to be the positive forces for peace,

"Youth should play a big role in upholding peace we have today and preserve it for the future generation". President of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission Bishop John Rucyahana

"Critical thinking facilitates youth to take different perspectives and reflection to contribute to peace values such as empathy,

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Disclaimer:

The views expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of Never Again Rwanda or their partner organisations.

respect, trust and taking action which promotes social cohesion". Dr. Joseph Ryarasa Nkurunziza, the Executive Director of Never Again Rwanda

"Young people, you are not too young to make peace. Use critical thinking when you are posting and reading messages on social media". Minister of Youth, Rosemary Mbabazi

Youth mobilization in peace-building efforts is more likely to be successful if young people are given the capabilities and opportunities to work with communities, families, local and national governments.

Stella Izere Umukunzi: "In Rwanda, we acquire skills from our families and schools, however our schools and families do not provide us with the capacity to acquire critical thinking skills. Youth often times become

The event attracted over **300** youth from across districts of Rwanda, as well as **13** representatives of organisations involved in peace & development.

victims of the environment they belong to.”

Pauline Umanankunda: “Lack of self-confidence is one of the issues that limit our critical thinking skills. Sometimes we follow the instructions of others without pausing and asking why. This also impedes our critical thinking.”

As the youth were called on to acquire critical thinking skills, there were also urged to say no to violence, injustice, corruption and stand up for peace and human rights wherever they are.

The event aimed to strengthen the capacity of youth and citizens to gain an understanding of reflective thinking and creativity in addressing peace challenges in their communities.

Even though there is still not concrete findings on how critical thinking links to peace building, different approaches and strategies have shown that critical thinking is an integral part of trust building, and it does contribute to positive actions that lead to peace when applied with positive peace values such as empathy, forgiveness, respect, resilience, and compassion. **PI**



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Pictorial: International Day of Peace



A panel discussion on 'Critical Thinking for Peace' comprised of representatives of AEGIS Trust, Rwanda Education Board, and youth from NAR affiliated clubs and associations. The panel was moderated by NAR's Eric Mahoro and Laurence Mukayiranga of NURC.

3 Recommendations on fostering 'Critical Thinking for Peace'

1. Everyone has a right to peace and a responsibility to preserve peace. Youth are urged to contribute to peacebuilding and reconciliation, by understanding the history of the country and hence fight manipulation.
2. Youth are urged to have the habit of thinking critically so that their strength is used in building the country not destroying it.
3. Youth committed not to spend their whole time in entertainment, rather to consider their role in building the future of Rwanda.



Robert Mugabo, a youth from NAR's associations and clubs, shares recommendations from the youth.



International actors in peacebuilding also provided input on the importance of critical thinking for peace.



The Peace Day celebration gathered youth, as well as a diverse range of actors involved in peacebuilding and sustainable development in Rwanda.



Light Moment: Bishop Rucyahana, Mr. Fidele Ndayisaba, and Dr. Joseph Ryarasa Nkurunziza, join youth as they closed the celebration with a song.

PEACEBUILDING:

Peace Day Celebration in the Great Lakes Region



Players celebrate after the 'Football for Peace' game at the International Day of Peace celebrations.



Never Again Rwanda with the DRC Congo partner, Pole Institute took the International day of Peace celebrations to the Goma-Rubavu border communities. The event was organized amongst a series of different activities in Rubavu and Goma, including: a youth dialogue session on

critical thinking for peace, a dialogue on the compensation of victims whose houses were demolished in Birere and a football for peace.

The youth dialogue session aimed to: provide a platform for exchange of experiences and good practices; promote the role of the youth in peace, security and development processes; promote dialogue between the youth and decision makers; and reinforce the capacities of youth in coordinating, networking and educating the population on their role in the promotion of peace through the use of critical thinking skills. Youth participants from Rwanda and Congo used the open floor to discuss how to resist manipulation, while defining critical thinking. "Critical thinking to me means the ability to not accept what we are told without proof or the act of responsible and reflective thinking."

Crossing over to the DRC, in Goma another similar event was held to tackle the issue of the demolition of properties of families that were living at Birere border side in Goma and the delayed compensation of the victims, a situation if not resolved, could

About the Program

Led by Interpeace, the program has brought together six local NGOs in Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to teach participants to tolerate differences and to resolve conflict in non-violent ways.

jeopardize the peace building efforts in the region. In the event that convened victims and leaders, resolutions were adopted and a committee was created to follow-up with the implementation of the resolutions.

To wide up the series of events, a Football for Peace game between youth from Rwanda and youth from DRC/Goma was organized. The game with guidelines [the first of its kind] aimed to spread the ideals of peace to not only the players, but also to the nearby communities.

Throughout the event, peace actors were called upon to work tirelessly to strengthen mutual respect and trust between the youth from Rwanda and DRC and to equip both groups of young people with competencies to develop local projects that promote peace, so as to ensure the active role of the youth as peace builders and initiators for reconciliation in their very own communities. **PI**



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“For peace to be attained, youth have to take the lead role thus, as leaders we pledge to support youth to choose peace so as to drive to development.”

- Gilbert Gahunde
Director of Good Governance, Rubavu



Youth from Rwanda and DRC discuss the 'Critical Thinking for Peace' theme during the IDP.

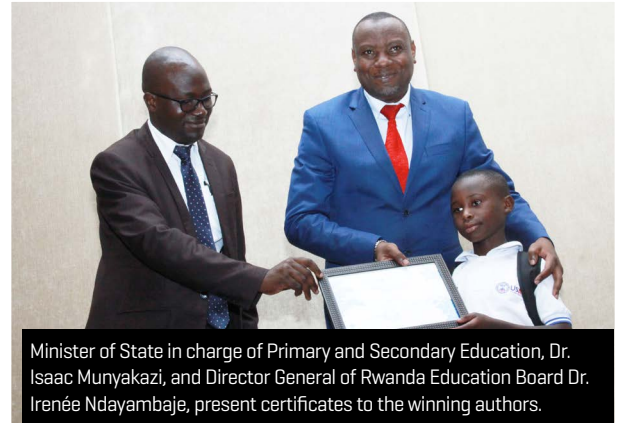
EDUCATION:

Read a book, Write your Future!

The best 24 stories were awarded by the Andika Rwanda program supported by USAID and Rwanda Education Board on Literacy Day 2018. These winning stories are available in P1 Classroom Libraries.



Two of the authors of winning stories read some of the reading materials given to them as prizes during the event.



Minister of State in charge of Primary and Secondary Education, Dr. Isaac Munyakazi, and Director General of Rwanda Education Board Dr. Irénée Ndayambaje, present certificates to the winning authors.



USAID Rwanda Mission Director Leslie Marbury delivers remarks during the Literacy Day event.

It is often said that “If children do not enjoy reading when they are young, then they are unlikely to do so when they get older.”

This was emphasized during the International Literacy day which took place on the 8th of September, as Rwanda joined the rest of the world to observe the day aiming to reflect and address literacy challenges.

The celebrations that attracted over 200 participants including government officials in the education sector, literacy related civil society organizations and students from different schools, coincided with the awarding ceremony of the 24 Andika Rwanda national level winners. The story and poetry writing competition attracted over 80,000 entries from all over the country, including 2 entries from students with visual impairment from the School of the Blind in Nyaruguru District. Through their stories and poems, contestants wrote about different subjects not limited to the importance of a teacher, my country, a good flower, my mother, among so many topics. The winners were given different assorted awards including; tablets, USAID

branded school bags, and scholastic materials.

During the event, a read aloud exercise was done by the Minister of State in charge of Primary and Secondary Education Dr. Isaac Munyakazi together with the US Embassy in Rwanda Mission Director Leslie Marbury, which was meant to inspire parents to practice the culture of reading story books for their children as an approach of enticing them to read books, which increases their vocabulary, thinking capacity and hones their writing skills.

Andika Rwanda is a project that Rwanda implements with the support of USAID Soma Umenye, with an aim to increase children’s access to Kinyarwanda stories and poems; and to promote the culture of reading and writing across Rwanda by unleashing the collective creative writing power of children, adolescents’ teachers, parents, and the public.

Winners of the Andika Rwanda competition attested to the fact that they didn’t know they could write winning stories or poems and pledged to continue reading and writing and

encouraging their peers to do so. Parents also vowed to start reading for their children, not only to harness their writing abilities but also to promote their brain development and imagination and teach them about their language.

At Never Again Rwanda we believe in empowering Communities for Peace and Social Justice through various social, economic and psychological aspects in order to build to a society that enjoys sustainable peace, development and social justice. **PI**



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SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS:

“I can now sell and bake cakes, courtesy of this training.” - Youth

Jeannette Muhawenimana from Rwinkwavu Sector of Kayonza District is a high school graduate, who after finishing school, had no hope for the future because her parents were not able to either afford her university studies, or help her start a business.

When Huguka Dukore, a 5-year USAID funded activity went to their area, she registered for the trainings, which would eventually equip her with technical skills that would help restore her hope and give her a reason to live. She started to discover her full potential and confidence after receiving the technical skills, she can now bake cakes among other pastries, a skill that earns her an income and will help her to employ others.

Jeannette lauded the trainings saying that they were not only limited to learning about Pastry & Bakery but also on how to produce quality products among other work-based learning skills on self-employment,



Beneficiaries of the Huguka Dukore activity in Kayonza after their practical session on pastry and bakery.



“We will use our acquired skills to start small and determine which small priority to focus on for our overall business goals and then later on work with others to grow our business.”

- Youth Beneficiary
Rwinkwavu, Kayonza District

entrepreneurship, and access to financing and planning.

Although access to start-up capital is still a challenge, she hopes to combine efforts with others colleagues to use their abilities, to pass on the skills to other vulnerable youth, who they can work with to create a group that would venture heavily in pastry and bakery. “We will use our acquired skills to start small and determine which small priority to focus on for our overall business goals and then later on work with others to grow our business.”

Successful startups are often hailed as heroic, but the reality is that they often start by overcoming such adversities like limited or no capital, lack of labor or resources and no working space. Their inspiring story is often fueled by the promise of wild riches.

Such stories like Jeannette’s reminds us that even though many people still think you

need a degree, financial clout, or a string of qualifications, what is really needed is the will and commitment to take that first leap of faith to start.

Huguka Dukore is a 5-year (2016-2021) USAID program, which implements activities that will be supporting 40,000 vulnerable youth, across 19 out of 30 districts countrywide. NAR is one of the Implementing Partners funded by Education Development Center during its implementation. It is through stories like these that this project is able to realize its overall objective. **PI**



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Mikhaila Musoni

Coordinator - African Democracy Forum

The Link between

Democracy and Peacebuilding

Since the independence era on the continent, Africa has experienced various forms of violence and oppression along with cases of mass atrocities and genocide in some parts of the region. The people who call Africa home know first-hand the perils of such instability, which is often aggravated by the negative impact on social needs such as healthcare and education; along with the absence of a good strong leadership able to sustain a nation where warfare dominates or a post conflict state.

It therefore comes as no surprise that research undertaken in Sub-Saharan Africa by Afro barometer indicates that the majority of African households support democracy,

“For democracy to be successfully implemented, there needs to be peace, as peace implies a state in which democracy can flourish on account of the stability within a nation.”

viewing it as the most suitable political option to guide the continent. Democracy I agree has been successful over the course of many years and has been fine-tuned to meet the needs of a modern world. For instance in Ancient Athens where democracy has its origins did not include women or slaves or uneducated men. In the west for a long period, it did not include women or people of colour. As such the world has come a long way in the respect of all of humanity. Advocating that innate rights purported in many Constitutions is the right of all people, regardless of their culture, language or racial grouping.

However for democracy to be successfully implemented there needs to be peace as peace implies a state in which democracy can flourish on account of the stability within a nation. Democracy and peace need to work in union and the process is never done for any nation. It is for this reason that we celebrate both components each year, mindful of the strides made, cognizant of the ground lost if at all and anxiously engaged in committing ourselves to do better.

Building peace and sustaining democracy is an effort that is the responsibility of us, all from those in

government, to civil society and the citizen itself as it is in our collective best interest. Success in peace and democracy makes room for development. Development is much needed in Africa, for the success of this generation and the ones to come depend on it. And as we seek to influence and cement our presence in a family of nations, it is imperative that we develop our places and spaces in which to grow.

The process of development in Africa rests on the progress of democracy and peace. Education for all is becoming the norm, empowering our women and improving our healthcare services along with housing. As such on a daily basis we see the eradication of poverty on our continent. The rest of the world is learning concerning Africa that peace is about more than just the absence of war and democracy is about more than one person one vote. Peace and democracy is about how much we develop and how much access we've created for ourselves to improve our lived experiences. The Bondei proverb rings true for all of Africa "sticks in a bundle are unbreakable." This has been the undertaking of Africa concerning democracy and peace. It is a work in progress, but work that is bearing fruits already. **PI**



PEACEBUILDING:

Instilling fundamental 'Hope' in Adolescents

Project Hope is a method proposed by Anthony Scioli, PhD, as a method of instilling fundamental hope in adolescents through a psychotherapeutic approach. Hope in its fullest sense encompasses the four greatest needs of a human being. These include attachment (trust, openness, and connection), survival (self-regulation and feelings of liberation), mastery (empowerment, ambition, and ideals), and spirituality (faith and higher support for attachment, survival and mastery). The workshop topics were sequenced to reflect the natural growth of hope. Attachments are the first seeds of hope. After attachment is established, survival skills are developed and once these two pillars are in place, mastery is required. After mastery, there is need for spiritual hope.

The Peace Building team at Never Again Rwanda began Project Hope by visiting various schools, where fifteen participants were selected from five different schools in Gasabo District; two students (male and female) and a teacher represented each school, to participate



Youth from Project Hope pose for a photo after receiving certificates for their participation in the project.

in the Pilot Program, which took place over a series of three consecutive weekends. These participants underwent training to become "Hope Providers." The main goal of the project is to instill fundamental hope, as a resource for youth to actively engage in the world and cope with the vicissitudes of human life.

Participants lauded Hope project as a great initiative that has allowed them to think critically, be more open-minded and has given

them a platform to share their newly acquired knowledge and skills with others in their communities. **PI**



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GOVERNANCE:

'Inzira Nziza' Youth discuss Political Tolerance

Never Again Rwanda, through the Inzira Nziza activity hosted a dialogue session for youth champions to interact with officials from Parliament, National Youth Council and the National Consultative

Forum of Political Parties Forum (NFPO). This dialogue session brought together 50 youth leaders from Kigali and districts of Ngororero, Nyabihu, Nyamagabe, Huye and Gisagara where Inzira Nziza project is implemented.

During the open discussion, youth not only shared their views and opinions but also committed to scaling up their sense of ownership.

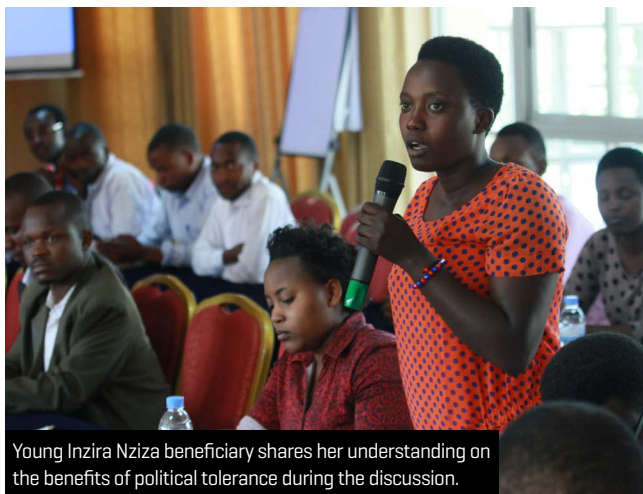
Ruth Irankunda a youth participant from Ngororero District, reiterated how Inzira Nziza supported youth to express and debate their views on democratic values, and

take leadership roles in political participation as they effectively promote and protect human rights and democracy through decisions that are informed by youth's perspectives and priorities. Munyaneza Issac also called upon the political spectrum to ensure that the youth are afforded equal opportunity to take part in political decisions.

The Executive Secretary of the National Forum for Political Parties Burasanzwe Oswald also noted that the multiparty system in Rwanda helped with fostering trust and transparency between political parties. "In 1994 the country was destroyed, but we introduced a multiparty system that has helped us to maintain public trust and create transparency between political parties." **PI**

By Eric Birori

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Young Inzira Nziza beneficiary shares her understanding on the benefits of political tolerance during the discussion.

In our next edition

October 2018

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2 **Role of Civil Society in Development:** OP-ED analysis on the changing role that NGO's play in democracy & development.

4 **Inzira Nziza Update:** Inzira Nziza has continued to bring together political leaders and youth through October across Districts in Rwanda.

8 **Opinion:** As we continue celebrate 70 years of the declaration of human rights, NAR's Teddy Gatali discusses its lasting importance.

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— Rwanda —



Young People and
Mental Health
in a changing world

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