

FRIENDS PEACE HOUSE / URUGO RW'AMAHORO



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Who are we?

We are a not-for-profit, church-based, peace-building organization.

Our vision:

To build sustainable peace in Rwanda

Our mission:

Uniting the people of Rwanda and rehabilitating the traumatized Rwandese society.

Our values:

- We believe that Rwandese unity is possible.
- We believe that all Rwandese people – regardless of faith, tribe, or region – can change and live together peacefully.
- We also believe that peace is a group effort.

Our Objectives:

- Building sustainable peace in Rwanda
- Healing Rwandese community for peaceful cohabitation
- Restoration of human relations in Rwandese community
- Between 2008 and 2012, focusing on the districts of Kicukiro, Gicumbi, and Burera, to bring change into these communities

Our strategies:

- To organize seminars, debates, awareness-raising trainings, forums, and conferences
- To organize collective activities for groups and associations benefiting from our programs
- To organize community festivals

Background:

Following the Tutsi Genocide in 1994, the Friends Church in Rwanda took part in the rehabilitation of the disunited and destabilized Rwandese society. This effort began with the care of orphans and widows. The endeavor grew into the opening of a centre for peace, in order to have a central location through which peace-building activities could take place.

The Friends Church of Rwanda is a historical peace church, which is why it was deemed important that such a centre be opened. Friends Peace House was launched in December 2000, beginning with conflict resolution workshops for women. From there, Friends Peace House has grown to collaborate with people across the spectrum of ethnicity, religion, gender, and geographic region of Rwanda.

Staff:

We have 20 permanent employees. We have 168 part-time workshop facilitators.

The training modules that we use:

- 1) Resolution and prevention of conflicts
- 2) Youth rights to participate in development
- 3) Women's rights
- 4) Children's Rights
- 5) Peace education in schools
- 6) AVP: Alternative to Violence program
- 7) HROC: Healing and Rebuilding our Communities
- 8) Income generation
- 9) HIV/AIDS awareness

We have so far trained:

- * 1500 young people
- * 4104 people in HROC
- * 5800 people in AVP
- * 1300 women
- * 120 children in children's rights
- * 250 teachers and 25 headmasters on Mediation and Peace Education in school

We work hand in hand with the following organizations:

- CAPI
- MCC
- NPA
- NCA
- LWF
- EU (European Union)
- USAID
- American Embassy
- AGLI
- CRS
- QPN
- AYINET
- Platform of civil society
- Centre for Interfaith Relations Rwanda

FRIENDS PEACE HOUSE PROGRAMMES:

Youth Department

Target group: Youth (boys and girls)

- 30 associations comprised of 5000 members (Eastern Province, Kigali City and Northern Province.)
- 1500 youth have attended trainings
- 16 facilitators

Youth department activities include:

- Conflict prevention and peace education
 - Peace education happens in primary and secondary school with 10 different facilitators.
- Seminars for youth (3-5 days) on such topics as:
 - Peace education and conflict resolution
 - Human rights and development
 - Protection of environment and natural resources
 - Prevention and fight against AIDS

There is also a training of trainers (14 days); we currently have trained 13 Trainers.

- Peace Library: We have a library to reinforce knowledge about peace, as well as to facilitate research on peace.
- Day of Reflection: We choose a thematic subject and hold discussions and debate on said subject
- Peace lunch/Evening video:
 - Teaching through the projection of films relating to peace, with debate and discussion about the films
- Seminars on youth and development, covering such topics as:
 - The rights of the youth
 - What is development?
 - Youth and development
 - The participation of youth in development

For these seminars we have 2 modules: The participation of youth in development; and Income generation. We have 6 trained facilitators for these seminars.

- Research Project: With the assistance of local authorities, youth research the opinions and ideas (with regards to a particular topic) of youth at a national level. This research is compiled into a report which is then distributed.
- Radio Broadcasts: We hold radio broadcasts to disseminate information about peace.

Women and children's department

Target Group: We work with women of all levels. We currently have 1300 beneficiaries. Besides one permanent employee in the field, we have 16 different facilitators for this department.

We have 6 programmes in women and children's department:

1. Conflict resolution and prevention

This programme is intended to teach women their role in resolving conflicts. We teach them what conflicts are, how they start, the conflict cycle, how conflicts can be resolved, and how one can live with them without any inconvenience. We have now started to invite men to these workshops, since they must also participate in conflict resolution.

2. Rights of women

This program teaches about women's rights, especially the rights of Rwandese women with regards to property. This is because following the genocide, with the enormous increase of women-headed households – due to the increase of both widows and orphans – it was important to change the law to reflect the new demographic reality. Men are also invited to take part in these workshops so that they may take part in understanding the rights of women, and so that families together can help in sensitizing their children about gender balance and complementarities. We also talk about gender-based violence.

3. Rights of Children

This programme aims at teaching rights of children.

We have two levels of trainings:

- To teach children about their rights.
- To teach educators about the rights of children (parents, teachers of both formal schools and Sunday school).

Thereafter, we organize games with the aim of promoting children's talents, through songs, poems, and drama.

4. Women and AIDS

This programme provides common knowledge about HIV/AIDS with the intention of teaching how to solve conflicts that rise in families due to AIDS. Such conflict often arises due to the confusion surrounding the person who has contracted HIV/AIDS, such as the method of transmission. We also teach about how people have the capacity to keep living a good life, even though they may be HIV positive.

5. Women in Dialogue

This programme brings together Genocide widows and women whose husbands are in prison because of the Genocide. Women in Dialogue provides the following teachings to the participants:

- Trauma healing
- Alternatives to violence
- Conflict resolution
- Mediation skills
- Income-generating activities

The women form associations, which hold regular meetings and gather several times per year for different peace and development activities.

6. **Women's Forum**

This programme gathers together women peacemakers in the Great Lakes region to share opinions and experiences of working for peace.

HROC: Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities

HROC-RWANDA started in 2003, with the name of “Trauma Healing”, but from its outset, the objectives were ‘Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities’. To date, 4104 people have attended HROC workshops. HROC currently has 37 facilitators.

HROC works with three target groups:

- Released prisoners
- Genocide survivors
- The Batwa people

HROC conducts trauma-healing workshops. The lessons in the three-day workshops outline:

- What is trauma?
- Its causes
- Consequences
- Loss, grief and mourning
- Building trust

AVP: Alternatives to Violence Programme

AVP, a programme that started in 2001, conducts conflict resolution trainings. Since its outset, AVP has conducted 290 trainings, to a total of 5800 people, among them church leaders, ex-prisoners, as well as repatriated refugees from Tanzania. AVP currently has 70 different trainers.

Gacaca and Reintegration

Gacaca and Reintegration is a programme aiming to accompany different Rwandese communities as they attempt to find normal life once again, post-genocide. This accompaniment happens in places where there are released prisoners (due to either the presidential decree or the Gacaca courts) going home, living side by side with genocide survivors.

The target group is both Genocide survivors and released prisoners.

Activities to date include trainings in peace education and peaceful cohabitation, as well as the construction of 15 different houses by different Gacaca and Reintegration groups.

Mediation Programme

The mediation programme is a programme which builds skills of the participants on how to deal with conflict. This is done through the use of standard mediation methodology.

Community festival

Friends Peace House holds a community festival once a year to celebrate the International Day of Peace. Different community leaders are invited to participate, as well as participants of different FPH programmes, people who share powerful testimonies about how they have been changed by the message of peace and reconciliation.