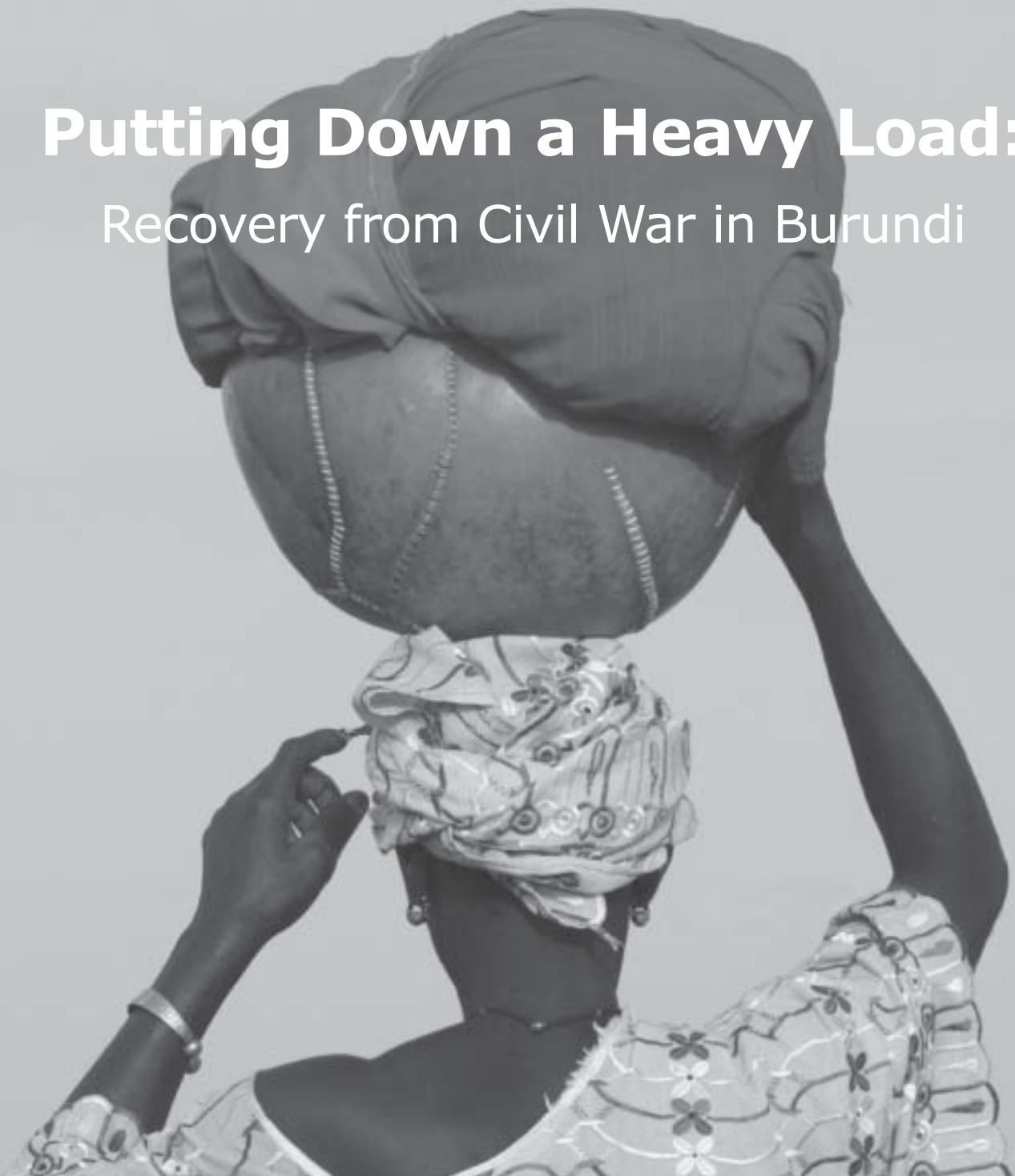


## Putting Down a Heavy Load: Recovery from Civil War in Burundi



*The medicine of bad actions is not more bad actions.*  
Burundian proverb



## Editorial Comment

**“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”**

Romans 12:21

**Burundi:** Recently I was on a webpage that had a map of the world. To get information about a country you were supposed to click on the country. Burundi was so small (about the size of Maryland) that it didn't even appear on the map! As one of the poorest countries (partly due to the twelve year civil war) in Africa it is not considered of any strategic interest. AGLI fundraiser, Tommy Zarembka, has found that Burundi is frequently excluded from lists of countries eligible for grants. Unlike Rwanda it has no extinct volcanoes with mountain gorillas on its summits. It does have a place called “the source of the Nile” but Tanzania, Rwanda, and Congo also have such “sources.”

Yet 8 to 9 million people live in Burundi. Should we then follow this conventional neglect and consider Burundi outside our area of interest and concern? This edition of PeaceWays—AGLI should convince you that important things are occurring in this out-of-the way place. For example, here is a quote from Marius Nzeyimana, interviewed after he visited Gitega prison to meet with those who killed his family members:

*When someone has done something wrong to you, especially these killings, he or she will come to avoid you, whatever he or she did, but it's up to us to start because we are the victims, to start letting them approach us, because we have loved each other, and we need them to see the love we are carrying for them and draw them to us. So that's what we did.*

In the past people have complained that our testimonies come from the end of our workshops and thus the positive reports are due to the “high” of being in the workshops. The articles in this issue dwell on long-range results. While many non-governmental and religious organizations conduct projects of a few years duration, AGLI's philosophy is to build a permanent, on-going relationship with people and adjust our involvement according to the needs expressed by our partners in the Great Lakes region.

The HROC program began in Mutaho in 2002 and continues to this day, six years later. To provide an understanding of the conditions in Mutaho we include **An Introduction to Mutaho** and **HROC Testimonies from Mutaho** from two members of that community. One of the most significant activities of the HROC program took place in August 2005 when a mostly Tutsi group from the Mutaho IDP camp (internally displaced persons) visited the Hutu prisoners who were accused of organizing the violence in Mutaho and being responsible for the deaths of many of their family members. In **Aftermath of the Visit to the Gitega Prison**, Adrien Niyongabo reports on the interviews he had with two of the participants on this trip and two of the prisoners who were visited.

If you read through this issue of PeaceWays—AGLI, I think that you will not consider Burundi and the work we all are doing there as “an insignificant, tangential part of world history,” but perhaps as a place on the cutting edge, leading the way towards a greater understanding of how to foster healing from wounds of violence.

Please enjoy!

**David Zarembka**

The African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) of the Friends Peace Teams strengthens, supports, and promotes peace activities at the grassroots level in the Great Lakes region of Africa (Burundi, Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda). To this end, AGLI responds to requests from local religious and non-governmental organizations that focus on conflict management, peace building, trauma healing, and reconciliation. AGLI sponsors Peace Teams composed of members from local partners and the international community.

Visit AGLI's website at:  
[www.aglionline.org](http://www.aglionline.org)

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## Burundi Issue

# Not Development, Transformation

From *All Quiet on the Quaker Front* ([www.quakerfront.com](http://www.quakerfront.com)),  
a blog by AGLI team member, Andrew Peterson

In my recent travels to Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and around Burundi, I had the chance to learn more about the work of AGLI as well as other organizations involved in peace and development work. It also gave me a chance to reflect on the eleven weeks that I have spent in Africa. Of course this is just a short time but it is long enough that I feel relatively at home here. It is even long enough to start to become wrapped up in the tangled complexities of being an “*umuzungu*” (which means both “white person” and also “rich person”), including the feeling of responsibility incurred by having

access to opportunities to marshal great resources while living in a land of great material need.

It occurred to me that such a position has its dangers, and so, one should carefully probe the depths of one’s motivations. It could be intoxicating, in a perverse way, to have the power to transform the lives of people – their ability to feed their family, heal from trauma, etc. – all for what people spend on a dinner at a restaurant in the U.S. In the extreme, it’s possible to imagine a megalomaniac development worker who delights in the arbitrary exercise of his power to say “yes” or “no” to his supplicants.

Even in less extreme forms though, being an *umuzungu* is a position of power. And power pursued carelessly, for its own sake or from vanity, only reinforces the divide between haves and have-nots, white and black, American and Burundian. Doesn’t one, in “helping the needy,” simply entrench the privilege of helping others, a privilege that increases positively with wealth?

I once read a news article documenting the competition for status among multi-millionaires in Silicon Valley over who was a bigger philanthropist. Few of us (and even fewer Burundians) will ever have the opportunity to join such

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## Introduction to Mutaho, Burundi

Mutaho is one of the communes that compose Gitega province, located in central Burundi. Because of its position on the route between Gitega and Ngozi, Burundi second and third largest towns, Mutaho's central district attracted many businessmen in the 1980's. A hospital in Mutaho, managed by doctors and nurses from Italy, had become the only place to go to receive good treatment at a reasonable cost. The various crops that are grown in the area made the Mutaho open market a vital point of supply for other localities in the country. Schools and churches started flourishing. Considerable traffic was apparent on a daily basis. Life was very enjoyable in Mutaho.

As with many other areas in Burundi, Mutaho did not escape the horrible nightmare that hit Burundi. On October 21, 1993, the first democratically elected Hutu president, after having served only three months of his presidency, was assassinated by a group of Tutsi military men. From there, Hutu launched massive killings of Tutsi in some localities of the country. Then, as retaliation, the Tutsi military responded by massacring Hutu and then back and forth killings began. One week after the assassination of the Hutu president, Mutaho was already contaminated by the craziness of Hutu-Tutsi bloodshed.

The former neighbors, who had shared joy and sorrow in community life for years, suddenly became enemies. To murder a Tutsi neighbor, just because he/she belonged to the group in control of the government and military, turned out to be a mark of prowess. The military retaliation, in the name of protecting Tutsi, made things worse. And the cycle of carnage that began with this hunting for human beings needed only a few months to make all that had made Mutaho prosperous evaporate in smoke. The stores at the market were broken into and their goods were stolen, the homes set on fire, people fled to the sound of the cries of babies and adults, the sound of machetes, and the firing off of guns. The once admirable hospital was ransacked and the personnel forced to leave. Darkness covered Mutaho. Tutsi who survived the killings abandoned their homes and gathered in a place which later became an Internal Displaced Persons (IDP) camp that was protected by Tutsi military forces. Hutu left their homes and had to spend their nights in the valleys or bushes for fear of being murdered by the Tutsi military.

With the peace initiative that was led from both within and outside of the country, the people of Mutaho were able to recover a more or less peaceful situation that enabled Hutu to return in their homes. Still, sporadic attacks forced them to flee to the bush as shelter. However, with the 2000 peace accord agreement between the Government at that time and the main faction (CNND-FDD) that was opposing the government, Mutaho was able to dream of returning to lasting peace as the open fighting had stopped.

In the aftermath of the war, Mutaho is facing a lot of problems and concerns. Uncountable widows and orphans are without help. Only the ruins of the old business district stand as reminders that Mutaho used to be a center for commerce. What is left of the hospital buildings remind the people of Mutaho the many lives that used to be saved from death because of the good care of that very talented staff used to provide. Many people are homeless and can only hopelessly gaze at the ruins of what used to be their birth place. Above all, the Internal Displaced Persons Camp at the center of the Mutaho tells the whole commune that a lot is still needed to have a safe life in the community and ensure a village of brotherhood. Hutu and Tutsi need a lot of healing and sustained reconciliation for hatred and suspicion to be replaced by love and trust.



## Aftermath of the Visit to the Gitega Prison



August 2005: HROC participants visiting Gitega Prison

*On October 21, 2004 on the last day of a HROC workshop, Agnes Ndayishimiye, a Tutsi, commented, “I am happy that I leave this workshop with a new dream that there will be a special day. That day, I see myself going to Gitega prison where our former administrator [a Hutu accused of being responsible for the killings of Tutsi in the area] is kept. I will ask to see him. I will be bringing him food [a sign of reconciliation in Burundian culture]. I will hug him. He will not, maybe, recognize me. I will tell him that I come from Mutaho IDP [internally displaced persons] camp. I will show him that love has replaced hatred. I will be happy that day.” It took almost a year until August 20, 2005 to arrange this visit. But when it happened, it was the talk of the town—actually it was broadcast on the radio. When I visited Mutaho in July of this year, people are still talking about the visit. The original story, “Love Has Replaced Hatred: A Visit to Gitega, Burundi, Prison” by Adrien Niyongabo can be found in the Winter 2005 issue of PeaceWays, page 6. This can be accessed from the AGLI webpage, <http://aglionline.org/publications/archives.htm>. Three years later Adrien Niyongabo, Coordinator of HROC in Burundi, went back to Mutaho to interview people from both sides—the villagers and the prisoners—to see how this affected their lives. David Zarembka*

In August 2005, a group of people who participated in a HROC workshop, wanting to put their desire for reconciliation into practice, decided to visit the prison in Gitega where people accused of participating in the violence in Mutaho were being held. This is the story of their visit, narrated by people who were involved: Révérien Ntukamazina and André Ndereyimana, who were being held in the prison, and Marius Nzeyimana and Espérance Nijimbere who were among those who visited the prisoners.

**Marius:** What we got from the HROC workshop has really made a big impact in our hearts. Before

it, I would never think of going to visit the people who were in prison in Gitega because one of them had killed my brother. But from the change that the workshop caused in me, I was able to be part of the team that visited the prison. It was not easy to suggest that we contribute food and money to the prisoners while knowing that one of prisoners had killed my brother. But I did it because I have been changed.

**Espérance:** The workshop made a big difference – I was no longer a woman who felt under pressure. I became happy by allowing myself to forgive, and from there I was able to ask to become part of the team who would visit the prisoners.

*The prisoners were not trusting at first, but they were open to transformation:*

**André:** When we heard that people from Mutaho were coming to visit us in the prison, we were surprised at first, and we were also suspicious. Not only us but other prisoners who were not from Mutaho were saying “Be suspicious—those people coming to visit us from Mutaho who say they want to visit you, it’s not with an open heart. They want to see who’s still alive here and then they will see how they can kill you.” We all had such fears at the beginning when we heard about the visit. But by the end we came to see that they really did bring us money and food just out of love.

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# Ways to Give



1. Stay informed on the progress of peacebuilding in the Great Lakes region of Africa.
2. Pray for/hold in the Light the success of AGLI programs in the region.
3. Attend an AGLI presentation.
4. Coordinate an AGLI presentation for your meeting, church, and/or community.
5. Choose a specific AGLI program and actively follow its development.
6. Join an AGLI workcamp or become a short/long term team member in the region.
7. Support AGLI or a particular AGLI program with your tax-deductible donation:

\* Mail a check to Friends Peace Teams/ AGLI, 1001 Park Avenue, St Louis, MO 63104 USA

\* Make an on-line donation with your credit/ debit card by visiting the AGLI website, [www.aglionline.org](http://www.aglionline.org)

\* Become a regular monthly or quarterly donor. Contact [tzarembka@comcast.net](mailto:tzarembka@comcast.net) for details.

\* Host an AGLI fundraising event.

\* Ask your meeting, church, or other organization to include AGLI in their annual budget.

Continued from page 5

We spent time together and chatted and at the end we had a prayer. I remember them saying, “We don’t want to come back to visit you here. Rather, we want you to be released and be able to go home and then we can visit you at home.” It was like a dream.

*And some were even willing to put their life on the line to show their trust:*

**Révérien:** I had been in prison for three years when colleagues said somebody wanted to meet me at the gate. I jumped out at the opportunity, and as I approached the gate and saw Pastor Sebastian [a HROC facilitator], I just started crying, and then he also cried. He greeted me and told me that he had come simply to visit me as he had been my neighbor. We chatted a little bit, and they had brought us food and money, and we prayed for a while, and sang hymns.

It was the first time to see Tutsi come to the prison to visit the Hutu. They brought us food and money, but a rumor came that the Tutsi were coming here for no good— that they came to get us. “They are finding out who is here and bringing food with poison.” But I said, “The bananas are good, and as they look normal, how would they have put poison in them?” I grabbed four bananas and I ran to the kitchen. I ate one and then the second before a friend from Makauko grabbed one and said, “If you die, I will die too.” And another friend from Gutshuru did the same. When we went to sleep at night, one person woke me up just to check if I was still alive, in fact I was quite happy to have eaten the bananas because it had been so long since I had eaten bananas, because they are expensive and prisoners can’t afford them.

The next morning we were together with the prisoners from Mutaho to share the food, and as they knew we had eaten some, they all wanted their portion. And God answered our prayers, because we are now out of the prison.

*The visit served as an example to other communities as well:*

**Révérien:** I liked the visit because afterwards people wrote letters to their churches and missions, saying “Even Tutsi from Mutaho came to visit the prisoners! Yet you have never come to see us – Have we been forgotten by our homes?”

And when the administrator of Gishuli followed our example by bringing food, the people of that district said it was not enough, because while they were thankful that food had been brought, they said, “What about the people from Gishuli themselves coming to visit us? We would like cooperation, just like when we saw the people of Mutaho talking to the prisoners from Mutaho.”

*Reactions to the visit:*

**Esperance:** Some of the others in the IDP camp did not understand why we did the visit. They even went so far as to imagine that we were being paid money by Hutu to have the visit. But of course this wasn’t true for any of us. It was from the love, the compassion that we learned in the workshop, and knowing that we need to rebuild our community.

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# HROC Testimonies from Mutaho

## J rome Birorewuname

There's a gift I received in the HROC workshop. Two times I was taken, and people tried to kill me. I still have scars on my forehead, neck, and leg, shaped by a machete.

There was an old man there who had tried to kill me. He was a neighbor like my father as he had been feeding me with his kids as if we were just like family. But surprisingly he was the one who brought the machete and cut my neck. They [the Hutu attackers] thought that I had died but I had not. I was with other people [Tutsi] who were even stronger than me, but they died immediately.

When I was in the HROC workshop, there is a session where you share about your sufferings and that man shared about his sufferings. He added that during the massacres in our community he was not there, but in Cibitoke. I got angry because I knew he's the one who took me to the killers. They had tied my arms

in the back, and he was the one who was pulling me there. On our way to that place, he was telling me terrible things that I still remember. So because of anger, I walked out. I called one of the facilitators and I asked for a private time to meet with that person.

Before the training, each time we would see each other at the bar, he would run away immediately. This happened more than three times. So in the HROC training I had a chance to ask him, "Please, why do you run each time you see me when you are at the bar?" He said, "You know, Jerome, every time I have been with you I was shameful. I didn't have anything to say because I could not deny all the bad things I did to you so I just tried to hide it. You know I am the one who took your rabbits, I am the one who took your chickens, I am the one who took your hoes, and everything you had in your house, I took them. So I will ask you to write down all the things that you

lost, and I will pay them one after another."

I responded, "I have been living with soldiers. I could have asked them to come and kill you or I could have told them to come and kick you out of the community. You know that there are many who are living in Tanzania in the refugee camp because of what they did. But I never wished you to be there because I know that they are also suffering. I'm not going to kill you or ask you to pay. So please, don't run anymore when you see me. Maybe while you're running you might just fall into a hole and you will hurt yourself and maybe die. Please believe that I really have forgiven you, and I don't have any bad wishes for you."

So he was very, very happy. He could not understand it because he knew what he did to me, and he was surprised to hear that I would not take him to jail or whatever but I have forgiven him.

But I survived two times. I have not yet met with the ones who tried to kill me for the second time, but I am planning to ask the HROC facilitator to invite them and meet with them in a workshop so we can deal with our problem.

*Where does that forgiveness come from?* – Frankly, it didn't take effort to forgive them so much as it took time. I have never been in prison. I am now 42 years old, but I would say that prison is not a good place to be. There are those who have been taken to prison, and now they are back home. I wonder if the relationship has been improved, I mean between the victim and the perpetrator. But I would say it would have worsened.

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J rome Birorewuname

relationship has been improved, I mean between the victim and the perpetrator. But I would say it would have worsened. And it would not prevent the perpetrator from planning other harmful things. But as I just let things go, I think it made a big impact on the person. Not as a person myself, but believe that through my behavior there is another power that works through me to come and transform the person.

In a way I do not understand why and how I did it, but I do know that I didn't pay anything, and yet I believe that that will be a lasting relationship with my killer.

**Bike story:** Very recently, I was just coming back from church, and by chance I recognized one of the people who had fled to Tanzania. He was surprised to see me, and he said, "Are you still alive?" because he had been involved in the killings. "Are you surprised to see me alive?" I asked. "I really could never expect you to be alive." But that time, he had a lot of luggage and he was trying to find a bicycle taxi so he could go home and find someone to help him carry the load.

The bicycle taxi men were trying to charge him 3,000 Burundian Francs (about \$2.50), when it should be only 500 (\$.42). And he was just arriving so he had no money. I told him, "Don't worry, I have a bicycle. Take it, and you can just bring it back to me when you're done with it. He looked me in the eyes and asked "Are you really giving me your bicycle?" "Yes," I said, "And if anything bad happens to you, I would rather prefer it happening to my bicycle and you staying safe."

Later a friend from the internally displaced persons camp came to me and asked why I had given my bicycle to a Hutu who had just

arrived from Tanzania. And I said, "There is this meat, *indindura*—cow intestine—the meat that changes things. Normally it's given to women—they say if she has been giving birth to girls, and then eats *indindura*, she will give birth to boys. So if we agree that *indindura* is a delicious meat, we need to eat it, and if you eat it, it changes you, and after being changed, you can give it to others. You see these people that come from Tanzania—we are the ones to show them that we have changed. If we just give them a warm welcome and show them that they have been away from the community for fifteen years, so they don't know where to go, everything has changed here. So unless we show them the way, they will never believe that Burundi has changed. So that's why we need to show them we have eaten *indindura*, so everyone can understand."

That is what I did it to that person. When he went to his community, I'm sure he told them who gave him the bicycle, and he told them how he had been welcomed in the IDP camp. And that will improve the way the village people treat us—once we go there, they will treat us as human beings, as friends. That's how we can make the change, that's how we can make forgiveness take place, so that's why I say forgiveness is important.

**Big stipend?** Yes. Once time when I was coming from the workshop, going home, they said, "Where are you coming from?" I said, "I'm coming from the workshop." They said, "Oh yeah, you must have received a big stipend for three days?" [It is the custom for many non-profit organizations to give sitting allowances to those who attend workshops, but HROC does not do this.] I said, "Big stipend?"

He said, "Yes, of course if you are there for three days." I told him, "Yes, I got a lot out of the workshop." I gave him this example, "You know *ugali* [maize meal, mush]?" "Yes, of course, I am Burundian, I know *ugali*." "Imagine that you have a lot of *ugali* in front of you, but your heart is bleeding, will the *ugali* take away the hurt and bitterness from the wound in your heart?" He said, "No." "That's why I say it's a lot of money, because I come home with peace." Even if they had given us those big, big stipends, there would be no meaning to it for me because my heart was still bleeding, but now I have my heart. So peace is more meaningful than money.

### Sylvia Ndirariha

The HROC workshop is the only workshop I have ever attended. The pleasing thing was that the man who wanted to kill me in the war was in the workshop. In the part of the workshop where we talk about our suffering, I felt compelled to speak about what happened to me.

I had two brother-in-laws, one had been killed and the other had been hidden somewhere, I didn't know where. My husband was in Bujumbura so I was at home with my five kids. We had locked the door, and the man came and broke the door down with a machete and came into our bedroom. He stood in front of me and asked, "Where are your brother-in-laws?" And I said, "One has been already killed and I don't know where the other is." "You need to show us where he has been hidden."

When I said I didn't know, they took me outside. There was a group of five or six of them and one had a metal bar. And he hit me with the bar three times and I lost

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# Goodness is Not a Debt

The Ryarunyinya community, in the Ruhororo Commune in Ngozi Province (northern Burundi), had been selected to host the next HROC workshops in Rohororo. Ryarunyinya has been affected by the civil war that occurred in Burundi for more than 10 years from 1993. The Mubanga Internal Displaced People Camp, which is still holding Tutsi who do not feel safe enough to go back home, is an indicator that things are still difficult. Life seems to have started to become more enjoyable though the last agricultural season had not given folks a good harvest.

On our way to Nyarunyinya, the team has to pass by the other workshop sites to deliver needed materials. At this time of the year, we would not expect to have much rain. But, it did heavily rain on the day of our travel. Trying to connect with Rurengera (located in Mutaho), our small car slid and we got stuck in the mud. No injury, no damage! Hopeless while looking at the shape of the road we had taken, we felt miserable! I have never been in that part of the country and could not expect anybody that would know me.

We spent thirty minutes in the rain, trying to get the car out of the mud, when two men passed by. They asked us if we would pay them to come and help. That was too gloomy to hear from a Burundian. Normally, when a person is in a situation of need, the one who sees him or her just comes in and helps. At the end the helped person has to thank the helper. I remember several times, on my way from school I helped elderly mums to carry their fire wood or water buckets for long distance. I still value the special thanks I got from them; hugs, blessings, best wishes for future life, and from time to time a piece of cassava (manioc), probably from the provision for their evening meal. I know that “Goodness is not a debt” so I should not expect to be given similar treatment in return.

However, our time was going to come. Two guys on bicycles recognized me even though I was very wet and covered with mud. They stopped and greeted me warmly. They then parked their bikes and asked what they could do to help.

We told them that they should try to lift the car from the mud. They then convinced the

other guys who had been asking us for pay for assistance. What a group! The children who were coming from school at that time joined in and helped pull the car out and in few minutes, we were out of the mud, happy and very excited.

So, who were the two men? No one else than two extraordinary men who attended one of our first HROC workshops in Mutaho. Once they saw me, they shouted, “Oh, it is Adrien, it is Adrien from HROC!” They told the other guys that they should not ask us for money to help pull out the car. Rather, they should thank us for having brought HROC to Mutaho.

It flashed in my mind that one of the two had had serious PTSD and was struggling to overcome it at the time of that HROC workshop. Now, he seemed very healthy, energetic, smiling. He had totally changed. What a wonderful time for me to see him again. I hugged some of the folks there and thanked them for the help and gave high fives to some of the school children. We were able to deliver the materials for the other workshop though it was very late in the night. We reached Ryarunyinya around 8 p.m. During our night driving, though shivering in my wet cloths, my heart was so warm for, after 5 years, people are still valuing what HROC did for them and wish others to go through the same experience. 🙏



Pushing the HROC car out of the mud

consciousness. I fell down and this is while I was carrying one of my children on my back. I don't know how long I was unconscious before I came to and got up. When I went back to inside the man came with his machete. I was thinking he was going to use it against me, but he did not. Instead he dropped it and said, "Where is he?" And I again told him I did not know.

Back in the workshop, I knew him, and I have never spoken to him since he did this. I would just walk away from him anytime I saw him. I considered him a killer since he was going to kill me. But in the workshop I had opened myself and I told him about how I had been feeling and what I thought of him. So we had this time to be together, and he also apologized for what he did, asking for forgiveness. I felt able to forgive him, and I have done so. Now when we meet, we are friends. Sometimes when I go to the village to cultivate my plot, I ask him for water, and other times he comes to my home in the internally displaced persons' camp. So I would say our relationship has been revived, and now we are more understanding of one another. And so I was happy for attending the workshop and happy to have the chance to speak with the man who attacked me.


Now I think this in my heart. I saw many, many bad things. And they have suppressed things and changed my way of thinking, I was going to run out but from the workshop I attended, I feel different. I have many reasons for why I was able to forgive and part of it was from the other thing that happened during that same time when the man came with the machete. While I was in my bedroom, three of my children were hiding in the ceiling. And the other people who were with the man had spears and were stabbing them into the ceiling to see if anyone was there. [Ceilings in Burundi are frequently made of papyrus reeds.] I don't know how they managed to miss my kids with every attempt – the three of them were just laying there in the ceiling. I

think about how thankful I am that God saved them – they would have been killed if they had been discovered, but God saved them. And from that I think, "Why not I forgive the one who wanted to kill me?"

And it's something that's so needed in our community, it is no longer time for hating one another. It is time to seek for love and reconciliation so I'm proud of being among those who are working for that. I feel joy in my heart for having done such a thing. I am a poor woman so I don't have money for it, but if I did, I would buy cups of tea, and he and I would drink from the same cup, just to be together, to feel connected, and to show that I have love for him.

*Do your kids show signs of trauma from their experience of lying on the ceiling?* Yes, they show signs of trauma. I had two boys and three girls. One of them died—he was shot in Gitega. The other boy came back for the memorial of his brother and said that he would never again come back here because he was afraid. Of the three girls, one of them is grown up now and has attended a HROC workshop. She is now working on her trauma and she seems to be improving.

But the other two are still traumatized. I cannot really ask them to go back to their community. If they are asked to go there to harvest cassava or something for cooking, most of the days they will say, "No, mom, I can't go there, they will kill us." I tell them that the killing is over, but they do not believe it. So it's only when we're together that they can go. If they accept to go, they are so fearful that they don't want to stay there for very long. So I would like them to attend HROC workshops as their sister did.

Now that I have talked to the man who wanted to kill me, and they have heard about it, they have asked me how I came to this and I explained how I had been helped. 

## Speaking in a Mosque

By Florence Ntakarutimana

AGLI organized my speaking tour to the United States for me from June 10 to July 28, 2008. I participated in different yearly meetings of Friends as well as the FGC and FUM Conferences. I also had the privilege of giving a talk at Illinois University, on Urbana public television, and at the Mosque at Urbana-Champaign. It was a big experience for me to talk to Muslims for the first time in my life. I entered the Mosque at 7: 30 p.m. Everybody welcomed me warmly. Juice and cakes were ready for me and we had introductions. After giving the talk everybody was very interested to know more about AGLI/HROC. I remember that they were very curious to know if we invite Muslims in HROC workshops, which we do. One of the Muslims thanked me a lot, as a Christian, for coming to share our way of peacemaking with them.

This was a big experience for me for **Peace has no limit.**

## Rema (Have Courage): The Mutaho Widows Group

One of the legacies from the interethnic killings that occurred in Mutaho is the large number of widows and orphans, both Hutu and Tutsi. The Friends Church, one of the most inclusive churches in that area, has had to face the challenge of supporting these members. In a country that is among the four poorest in the world, even the married people are hardly able to cover their family's basic needs. Burundi's economy is doing poorly. The wage of a whole days work is barely 1,500Fbu (\$1.25) for unskilled construction workers and maybe only 500Fbu (\$0.41) per day to cultivate someone's field.

The main concern the Friends Church wanted to respond to was bringing psychological support to the widows. In a patriarchal society like that of Burundi, widows tend to be ignored and looked down at. Pastor Sara Gakobwa, responsible for Mutaho Monthly Meeting, had the courage to gather the widows from her church and start sharing-listening sessions on Saturdays. The main activities were singing, preaching and praying.

In one of the pastoral meetings that are organized by the Burundi Yearly Meeting, Pastor Sara, the only female pastor in the Burundi Yearly Meeting, presented the request of supporting war widows who are so numerous in most churches. She explained that these widows were struggling to feed their families, to send their children to school, to access health care, to rebuild their homes, and so on. Later on, relatives of some Friends missionaries who were in the country at the time sent her some money for the care of

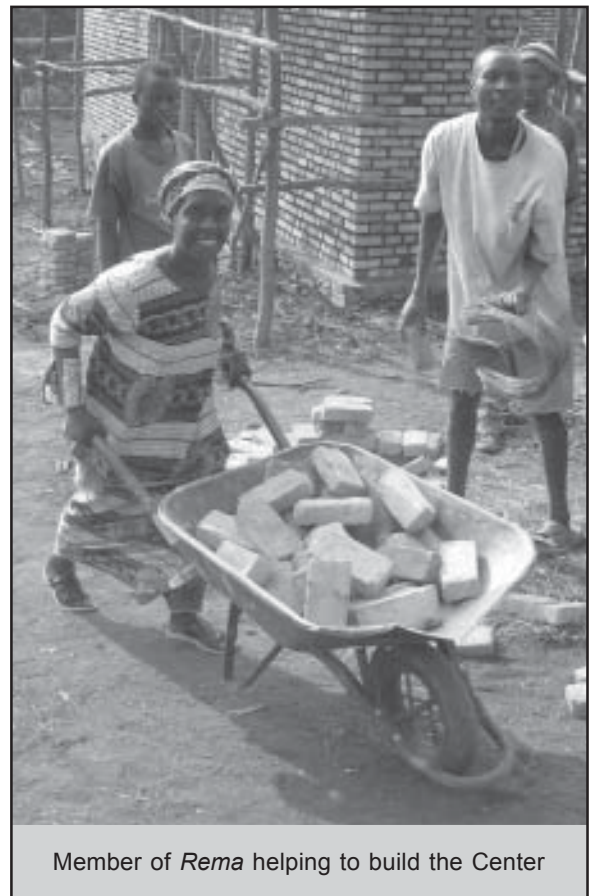
widows. Pastor Sara did not keep it for only the Mutaho Church widows; she shared it with five different monthly meetings in the area so that each one got \$20. They used the money to start various project but it did not go very far. Beside the singing and preaching sessions, the group was able to cultivate a plot that had been offered by the church. But the return was not very significant because they could not afford to buy the fertilizers.

The Mutaho Widows Group, called *Rema* ("Have Courage!") kept up their weekly gatherings. In 2003-2004, when HROC workshops were conducted in the area, the first women to be invited were impressed and reported to the group that every one should try to attend these workshops. Pastor Sara made a specific request for the widows to be given a chance to attend these healing workshops. It would have been hard for HROC to only invite the widows in the workshop. The whole community was and still is in a critical need of healing. After a number of workshops, the Mutaho Widows Group reported to HROC-Burundi that it had been easy for them to do a follow up since they were already meeting weekly to support each other. It was from those follow-up meetings that they finally made an appeal

to HROC-Burundi asking for financial support so that they could run an income generating activity. Their suggestion was to raise goats.

Twenty goats were purchased for the forty-six widows. One goat was given to two women, one often a Hutu and the other a Tutsi. Since the Hutu lived in the countryside, the Hutu usually kept the goat and the Tutsi woman would go visit her Hutu partner to see who the goat was doing. Then when the goat gave birth to a female kid and it was big enough, it was given to the second person. Again when this goat gives birth to a female, it is given to another woman. So soon all the women will have goats. The significance of the

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Member of *Rema* helping to build the Center

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goat is that when the manure is used on the field, the yield is easily doubled or tripled. This goats' project allowed the widows to lessen their daily suffering.

The group became more tightly knit and known by the community to the point that other women joined them. The Mutaho Widows Group wants to have a cooperative. Their plan is to build a conference room that could be rented to people for seminars and workshops, rooms for guests to stay overnight, storage for crops harvested, and a small store to serve the neighborhood, which currently has no such store. The project aims to help widows be self-sufficient as they are the head of the family. Through AGLI, F(f)riends in Oregon and in Olympia, Washington contributed funds to launch the Mutaho Widows Cooperative construction. The hope is to finish the construction by the end of this year and then to open the store soon thereafter.

### **Lidaine Ntikazokura**

I am a member of *Rema*, Mutaho Widows Group. I am really thankful for what has been done since we started our association. You have been very supportive towards us, you gave us goats, and the goats are doing very well, and that has been very helpful. You have also been coming to support us, that shows the love and care that you have, and now you are helping us to build a storage area where we can put our harvest. You remember that last year our beans were stolen because we did not have anywhere to store them, so we look forward to having a safe place to store them this year.

Mutaho is an area that witnessed the war first hand, and it left some

of us widows. During war, life becomes very tough. Normally the head of a family is a man, but in his absence the woman becomes head of the family. Things no longer go as you wish. That was the situation with me. I need to look after the children, to provide whatever is needed but I cannot do it as one person. I find myself incapable of being successful in the two roles as mother and father, leaving me to watch hopelessly at what is happening. We have to pay school fees for the children, to buy clothes for them and ourselves. Sometimes we struggle to find a way. Also sometimes our houses fall down and we need to rebuild them, but to rebuild a house as a widow is a terribly difficult thing.

We are comforted when we are with other members of the association, but once we are home and face all the challenges I mentioned, the sorrow comes back. What can one do? You're all by yourself, waiting on God to do a miracle and provide the things you're looking for.

So I am really thankful to *Rema* for the help they gave me, such as the goat I received. I cannot afford buying manure to fertilize my fields, but now I can provide it from the goat, which will help me feed my family.


More important is our weekly gathering. We meet and share about our life and comfort one another. That's really important. I like how our *Rema* members work together. We grow beans and potatoes and such together, and when we harvest them we share some of the harvest and keep the other part for next season. That also instructs us in how to plan for our own activities; not just to eat everything we harvest

but just be sure that next season we have seeds.

*Do you see any future for Rema?* Yes, for example the new building will help us increase our harvest. If we keep the harvest safe, it will help generate some cash. It will also be used to house some other projects to generate income that will be shared among us.

*Could you tell us about your family life?* I am thankful my kids understand our situation which we're in. I lost my husband and two of our kids died, now I have two daughters and one son. The youngest is in 5th grade, and the two others are now at home. It's terrible I could not afford to pay for school for even one child, so at one point they had to drop out. But she went back because of the government decision to make primary school free.

We widows have many sorrows. I remember when my neighbors refused to help me rebuild my house. But then they changed and they bought me some tiles, but they broke and so when it rains now the roof leaks.

And since during the war many bad things happened to me, when I remember my husband or my two kids who died, it makes me sad but we have to carry on. I still have hope. I have hope that one day I will have a good house for me and my kids. I have hope that someday I will buy clothes so that my children will have a second set. It's hard to see your child in only one set of clothes all the time when other kids can change. I also hope we will be able to have enough food for our families. 

# Heading to the FWA's Kamenge Clinic

By Dr. Alexia Nibona, Director

*There were moments when I felt alone in the world and felt very sad. At those times, if I was at home, I would find myself heading to the FWA's Kamenge Clinic because I was sure that there was always someone there who was ready to listen to me, understand me, counsel me, comfort me, and give a feeling of living again.*

Claudine Iradukunda



The interconnected challenges faced by women in Kamenge, a poor suburb of Bujumbura, the capitol of Burundi, include the following.

- HIV/AIDS: The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Kamenge is not known but the World Bank estimates that Burundi as a whole has an infection rate of 11.2% and in a preliminary test done by the FWA's clinic, 17% of the people tested were HIV positive.

- The lack of food security (especially as food prices have in some cases doubled over the past year) which exacerbates the difficulty of healing from diseases such as HIV/AIDS. According to the World Food Program, only 18 percent of Burundi's population is food secure, and thirty-four percent are extremely food insecure (consuming less than 1,400 kcal per day). They also estimate that 70 percent of family expenditure goes to food, which makes rising prices very difficult to cope with

- The lack of access to clean drinking water.

- The lack of appropriate local health care.

- Psychosocial trauma from the war.

- Stigmatization of people who are HIV+.

- Sexual violence: While there are no official statistics on domestic violence, a recent survey by the

Association of Catholic Women Jurists estimated that one out of every three women in Bujumbura is being beaten at home. It's conceivable this number is even higher in Kamenge.

The challenges faced by the people of Kamenge are considerable. Yet they are also a proud, resilient, and caring people who want urgently to rebuild their lives, to care for each other, and to create a better future. I want to thank AGLI for the support that it has given to FWA — from its beginning until today — and for supporting me as the Director of the FWA, initially part-time, and now as full-time staff.

Currently FWA has an Executive Committee of 11 members that meets four times a year and 37 members that make up the General Assembly that meets once a year. Personnel that work at the clinic include Dr. Alexia Nibona, Director; Joselyne Dusabe, Program Director; Marcelline Girukwishaka, Manager and Accountant; two nurses, a hygienist, and a custodian, plus a volunteer treasurer and a psychological counselor.

The clinic is currently involved in helping the people of Kamenge, with

- HIV/AIDS testing, treatment of opportunistic infections;

- Information about and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases;

- Prevention of mother-child HIV transmission;

- Counseling, including plans to have HROC/HIV trainings; and

- Anti-stigmatization sensitization.

This July, three people came from the United States and Canada to participate in a workcamp to help expand the clinic [see article on page 15]. With the completion of the additional rooms, supported by this year's workcamp, we will be able to be certified as a treatment site for anti-retrovirals and other more advanced forms of treatment by the Ministry Public Health. To achieve certification, we will also need to hire additional nurses that have been trained by the Ministry of Health and have a Program Director for HIV/AIDS.

We were recently able, with the support of AGLI, to purchase a small plot of land that is adjacent to the clinic. This will enable us to construct additional buildings to house administrative offices and other programs, such as income-generating activities for chronically ill patients who otherwise are unable to have adequate nutrition.

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## Testimonies from Clinic Clients

**Vénérande Nsenkambabaye** is 46 years old, an unemployed widow, the mother of six children, living in Kamenge:

*In 2004, I just happened to be passing by when I saw the sign for FWA and, as I knew I was HIV positive, I asked if I could be treated there and they accepted me right away. I told them that I was also diabetic.*

*FWA helps us greatly, comforting us and providing us with free medicine. Before coming to the clinic, I felt alone and isolated, without seeing love when we were together in a psychological health meeting and when we were eating together. Personally, I was touched by the welcome that we received at the clinic by Claire, Alexia, and others. FWA also helped us a lot by providing school supplies to my children. When I returned, I said that I wasn't as sick as before, and when I came down with malaria, I always came directly to the clinic where they tested me and provided me with free treatment.*

*Looking forward, first I would like to know if it would be possible to receive anti-retroviral treatment from the clinic. Secondly, it would make a big*



Friends Women's Association's Kamenge Clinic in Bujumbura

*difference if FWA could assist me in providing for my children because it is difficult to satisfy the needs of my children (who are also sick) as an unemployed widow. For example, perhaps FWA could provide a little start up capital so that I could start a small business that would help me provide for my family.*



**Edmond Miburo**, 40 years old, lives in Kamenge with his HIV+ wife, is unemployed, and has five children.

*I was an orphan, and was raised by my stepmother, so I didn't have a chance to attend school. Everything started with the period of the inter-ethnic Crisis [in 1993]. I was taking a bus to the province of Cibitoke when the bus was stopped by armed bandits. I was seriously wounded by the bandits and had to be taken to the hospital where they cared for me for a long time. After leaving the hospital I continued to be sick, and so I decided to be tested for HIV/AIDS and discovered I was HIV positive. [Edmond thinks he contracted HIV while in the hospital.]*

*FWA gives us a warm welcome and helps us connect to others living with HIV/AIDS, though they are limited in what they are able to*

*provide as treatment. Most of the medicine I am able to get I receive from FWA. FWA doesn't provide anti-retrovirals, but I would really love it if they did.*

*FWA helps us send our children to school by providing school materials, and also provides some training about the proper ways to raise children.*

*I want to sincerely thank FWA because it has really helped us during our hard times. I continue to hope they will be able to provide anti-retrovirals, after that they could also help with other necessities such as help with an activity to generate a little money, as it is I live in a small room with my wife and my 5 children.*

# A Day in the Life of a Workcamper

By Sara Gmitter

We get up around 7 am, dress and have breakfast, then we walk to the market where we smush into a bus. Sometimes Jocelyn [Kamenge Clinic's program director] comes with us, which is nice because then she can translate the conversations going on around us. Many conversations end up involving the whole bus. If you're half sitting in someone's lap, you might as well insert yourself in their conversation too. We get off in Kamenge and walk to the clinic accompanied by the usual children's chorus, "*Muzungu bon BON, Muzungu bon BON!*" ("White person, candy, candy"). We walk the same path at about the same time every day and see pretty much the same kids and we never give them candy, yet they get excited every time.

At the clinic we go around and greet everyone with a handshake. If their hands happen to be full of mud or brick dust or cement, they'll offer up their forearm and we shake that instead. There's even a formality for being dirty. Then John, a second year workcamper from Canada, and I change into work clothes. I've been wearing the same shirt and pants at the work site for 6 days now. So I fit right in with the paid Burundian laborers who do pretty much the same thing. It makes it a lot easier to remember everyone's name: Guy in the pink shirt—Clovis. Every day, Pink shirt—Clovis. Now somehow when Claire [clinic nurse] and Jocelyn and Odette [Adrien Niyongabo's wife] pitch in—usually wearing skirts by the way—they manage to stay clean while doing exactly the same work I'm doing. I end up covered in red dirt and cement and now mud. They say when you have to wash your own clothes without a washing machine, you learn to keep clean. And I have noticed that the Burundians never sit down on the ground. Even when we were working on the re-bar cages [long iron bars fastened together for reinforcement] for the cement, which is all clipping and tying wire really close to the ground, they always chose to hunker on their feet rather than sit cross legged.

We work on whatever the task of the moment is—hauling cement or mud or bricks or stones or laying bricks or slinging mud or whatever and its one of the best parts of the day, even if sometimes there's not a lot of work for us to do. While we're working and during the down times I try to pick up as much Kirundi [the language of Burundi] as I can along the way. In the

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Sara with Marie Claire Kamugisha, the FWA nurse



Pouring concrete for lintel at the Kamenge Clinic

beginning I didn't write things down and I needed a lot of repetition and very often I found I must have been altering the words slightly as I repeated them (like playing a game of telephone with myself) so that by the time I repeat them back to a Kirundi speaker later, they'd evolved into entirely different words. Once I started writing things down I learned much faster.

By the second week everyone has become my teacher. The masons take a moment to explain the difference between "here" and "there" ("aha" and "hariya"). Grethe, one of the volunteers leads me through the conjugation of "I come" in all tenses. Jonathan who is 8 [Adrien's son and the youngest workcamper], loads me up with vocabulary for parts of the body and trees and his sister Katia [Adrien's ten year old daughter] teaches me a Kirundi song in our downtime. She's pretty amazing. She sings a line for me and I try to sing it back. When I get it wrong—and I often do—she repeats more slowly. I try again and get closer. Not good enough. She slows down even more and carefully enunciates each syllable. She has it down to a

science, the breaking down and then stringing back together of words and phrases. If I get it right she says, "Encore" and makes me do it again. If I get it wrong and try to laugh it off, oh isn't it funny how I'm making a hash of this line, she never cracks a smile but gives me this total teacher look which says "laugh all you want, missy, we're not leaving til you get it right." Duly chastened, I listen to her repeat the line and try again. By the end of our second session I was able to get each line individually though I couldn't remember the whole song at once.

The learning of Kirundi became not only a way to connect but a shared experience. I felt a sense of pride going from pointing and gesturing, through the Tarzan stage of "big stones, street" to being the first person to respond to a call for more *amatafari* (bricks) to "we are going to eat, I will come back". But more than that, I felt all the people I worked with also had a sense of pride in what good teachers they were and that my progress was their accomplishment as well. When Jonathan and Katia's father [Adrien] came to the worksite one day, they showed off my ability to

identify and give the Kirundi names of local trees as if I were a prize spaniel.

For lunch we walk about 10 minutes to the FWA [Friend's Women's Association] restaurant. Three months ago FWA opened a restaurant to provide employment for women from the clinic who have HIV/AIDS. It's very simple, two rooms with a couple of tables, a store room and a place for the pots and pans and things. The cooking is done outside over a charcoal fire. The menu is a piece of notebook paper tacked up to the wall which is written in a combination of Swahili and Kirundi and offers: rice and beans 400 francs (about 33 cents); rice and beans and cabbage 500 francs. There's a meat option and then a couple different combinations of rice, beans, cabbage and meat. For us they like to experiment with new food options to perhaps add to the menu so, though we usually have some combination of rice and beans and meat, there's also some form of potato, or sometimes the rice is replaced with pasta and sometimes the meat is goat meatballs in a tomato sauce instead of stewed beef in a tomato sauce.

While we eat there's often lively conversation in Kirundi which eventually Odette or Claire translates the gist of for us, but things must get left out because the translation is never nearly as funny as the conversation itself apparently was. Then, after conjugating our way through from "I am hungry, you are hungry, he is hungry," etc., to "I am full, you are full, he is full" etc. in Kirundi, we walk back to work for another couple hours until 3 pm. Then we wash our hands and change our clothes if we have them, shake hands with everyone, say *N'ejo* (see you tomorrow), smush back into a bus and come home. 🐾

## AGLI Team Members

**Working Group, USA:** Laura Shieler Chico, Anna Crumley-Effinger, Rosalie Dance (recording clerk), Rachel Fretz (clerk), Rachel Madenyika, Adrien Niyongabo, Tom Paxson (treasurer), Mumia Shimaka.

**Staff:** Dawn Rubbert (program manager), Kathy Wright, SL (FPT administrative coordinator), Tommy Zarembka (fundraiser/publicist), David Zarembka (coordinator)

**Burundi:** Joselyne Dusabe, Marcelline Girukwishaka, Adrien Niyongabo, Alexia Nibona, Florence Ntakarutimana, Desire Nzeyimana, Andrew Peterson

**Kenya:** Getry Agizah, Janet Ifedha, Gladys Kamonya, Malesi Kinaro, Eunice Okwemba, Bernard Ongala, Peter Serete

**North Kivu, Congo:** Zawadi Nikuze

**Rwanda:** Theoneste Bizimana, David Bucura, Josephine Mukangoga, Innocent Rwabuhihi, Solange Maniraguha

**Uganda:** Hellen Kabuni, Barbara Wybar



**Marius:** Frankly, not everyone was happy about the visit. If you have reached out to create a friend, the enemy of your new friend will not be happy with your new relationship, and that person might do whatever he or she can to make your friendship fall apart.

But for me, when we did the visit, it was like putting down a heavy load I had been carrying. If you are traumatized and you see the one who caused your trauma, it continues to re-traumatize you, or might cause you to just run away because it is too much. But choosing to reach out was a way of digging out— you know this root, the root of war, the root of killing — it is deep in our hearts. And we need to uproot it, and in order to uproot it we need to start by forgiving those who are close, who are in our communities.

For example, if I have purchased something on store credit, but then I delayed to pay back my debt, I would always feel ashamed, and if I came upon the shop owner I would want to change my path because I feel he is accusing me. The same way, when someone has done something wrong to you, especially these killings, he or she will come to avoid you, whatever he or she did, but it's up to us to start because we are the victims, to start letting them approach us, because we have loved each other, and we need them to see the love we are carrying for them and draw them to us. So that's what we did.

*One of the more important roles of the visit was the way it helped prisoners become re-integrated in their community when they were released from prison:*

**Marius:** We say in Kirundi, “The medicine of bad actions is not more bad actions.” I learned this to be true

— now our relationship is like brothers. The man who killed my brother now comes to help me cultivate my plot and I go help him to cultivate his. This makes other people in village question themselves, saying, “Hmmm, Marius is a Tutsi and the other man is a Hutu, how is it that they are helping each other when they know what happened between their families?”

So the visit to Gitega was very, very fruitful. Fortunately, after the visit, some of the prisoners were released and now they are back in the community. And now we are sharing. When we meet at the bar, we share the same beer, whereas that was never possible before. So it has really strengthened our relationship and it has created a sense of forgiveness in our community. That's why I am asking you to do more HROC workshops for everybody living in our community.

**André:** The visit to us in prison meant a lot to all of us and it was a very strong foundation to our re-integration. Once we were released we were afraid of going near the IDPs because of all that had happened between us.

Then something happened — I was walking around and there was a group of IDP people nearby and one of them would recognize me from the prison visit. He would rush and come and hug me. That was really special! And the others around me would be wide-eyed, saying, “What is happening? I don't understand — this guy is hugging a former prisoner!” It was really touching, just to see how deep the conversation was with the person from the IDP camp, and it was also a big part of feeling welcome in the community. Now, when we are out we sometimes stop by where they live



**Marius Nzeyimana**

and they stop by us, and this is only because we feel supported by what we have shared.

**Révérien:** From the workshop I attended after I was released, I learned how to live in harmony with others, especially those who were accusing me of having killed or helped to kill their relatives. It was not easy. When I was in the prison, a widow came and accused me of having facilitated the killing of their relatives as I was a leader in the commune. But it wasn't true. Another woman falsely said, “One time you followed me with a machete and tried to kill me.” It was only later, after I had been released that she retracted her claims. I really felt pleased to know that she was recognizing what she had done. And I said, “You are my neighbor, please don't be afraid anymore. If you come to the community to cultivate your plot, if you don't want to carry your hoe home, I can just keep it for you. Or if it gets dark and you don't want to go home, stay at my house, you will be safe.” And we got once again connected, and that was my experience from the HROC workshop. 🍌

*The vision of the early Quakers (and in my reading, of Christians, among others) was the transformation of the world through love. This love transforms in many ways from the redemption of individuals to the renewal of love between people to restructuring economic, political and social relations to be more equitable, just, peaceful and inclusive. The power of that kind of love is inestimable and it is a power available to anyone willing to trust in it regardless of income level, political views or situation.*

Continued from page 3

a competition. Certainly one also senses that there is something awry in this type of thinking. Isn't helping each other about more than the quantity of things that one gives? Don't we have more to give than our money?

Moreover, considering outcomes, how do we know that the addition of resources will make a difference in the long-term when much of the trouble to date is rooted in mistrust, disunity, violence, feelings of shame and abandonment, and social exclusion?

*If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging symbol. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor, and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. (I Corinthians 13:1-3)*

How true this strikes me as being, even if just thinking about it narrowly in relation to the relatively mundane, practical task of evaluation of the work of nonprofits. In particular, with large nonprofits, while I believe they are filled with people who have the best of intentions, still one cannot help but wonder how their work can be deep, transformative, and responsive to individuals when they are so thoroughly institutional and bureaucratic. I suppose that right

now my doppelganger, who works for one of these big NGOs, is writing a blog questioning how small NGOs can work effectively. But for myself, I wonder how (or if) they try to ground themselves in a set of shared values, something that goes deeper than job descriptions and evaluation criteria.

Setting aside nonprofits and focusing on individuals, I think people can tell when someone is really motivated by love, and my guess is that Burundians are quite adept at doing so. When one first arrives, it is impossible not to be rather overtaken by displays of high regard for simply being a white person. For example, merely having a white person attend a wedding is considered special, and so one is (embarrassingly) ushered up to the front to the most important seats. It would be a mistake to confuse this fascination with deep-seated respect or admiration which must be earned through real dedication and love.

Love, as I mean it here, is not just a feeling one gets in the head or heart; love is a selfless concern for the welfare of others grounded in humility, deep listening and, thus, understanding. Love is made real through action including, but not limited to, the giving of material resources. To refuse to help would surely be to deny love, "for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Luke 12:34)

The vision of the early Quakers (and in my reading, of Christians, among others) was the transformation of

the world through love. This love transforms in many ways from the redemption of individuals to the renewal of love between people to restructuring economic, political and social relations to be more equitable, just, peaceful and inclusive. The power of that kind of love is inestimable and it is a power available to anyone willing to trust in it regardless of income level, political views or situation. "Development" should not be the use of wealth to merely spread aimless wealth to new corners of the earth, for, as John Woolman wrote:

*Wealth is attended with power, by which bargains and proceedings, contrary to universal righteousness, are supported; and hence oppression, carried on with worldly policy and order, clothes itself with the name of justice and becomes like a seed of discord in the soul. And as this spirit which wanders from the pure habitation prevails, so the seeds of war swell and sprout, and grow, and become strong, until much fruit is ripened. (A Plea for the Poor (1793), Part X)*

I feel honored to work with staff who not only have strong integrity and ensure that our work is strategically sound but who also do their work with sincere dedication and love. And as I see it, love is also a focus of our work since trauma healing and nonviolence training is about showing people love and about reconnecting people to love in their own lives. 🌱



# AGLI UPDATES

## **Congo, North Kivu:**

The new HROC program in North Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo, continues to facilitate about four HROC workshops per month in the internally displaced (IDP) camps near Goma. Two of their female facilitators have been “lost” when they fled their homes and went to IDP camps. With over 500,000 people in the camps it is impossible to find someone. Both here and in the similar situation in Kenya many children were separated from their family and have great difficulty finding them again.

## **Kenya:**

The AVP program in western Kenya has received a contract from the United States Institute of Peace to conduct 40 Basic AVP workshops in eight communities for 800 youth involved in the recent violence. Also in cooperation with the Laikipia Nature Conservancy, directed by Kuki Gallmann, writer of the best-seller, *I Dream of Africa*, for 160 graduates of the Basic workshop, AVP will facilitate eight Advanced AVP workshops each morning for a week, while the Conservancy will lead art, craft, music, and poetry work in the afternoons.

Friends for Peace and Community Development and AVP-Nairobi, AGLI’s partners in Kenya, are hosting the AVP International Gathering in Kakamega from Sept 14 to 20. At this point 110 people from 22 countries all over the world have registered to attend.

AVP in western Kenya, with the support of the Chace Fund of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, has completed the first phase of introducing AVP to traditional, pastoral “warriors” in northwestern Kenya. This has been the most difficult project to implement that AGLI has been involved—it essentially took us a year and a half to do a project that should have taken six months. One delay was caused by fighting between the Turkana and Pokot and another by the violence in Kenya at the beginning of this year. In the end we trained nine Turkana AVP facilitators including three women even though we were told that women would not be allowed to attend these initial workshops. All nine are members of the Turkana area Friends’ Church.

From March 1 through August 15, AVP-Western Kenya has conducted 103 AVP workshops, one HROC basic workshop, and one two-week HROC training for facilitators. Most of these have been with youth.

## **Rwanda:**

Emily Higgs, a recent graduate of Haverford College, spent six weeks as a team member with AGLI in Rwanda. With Nyatomba Emmanuel, she has written an excellent report, “To Love My Country Without Fear: Evaluation of Alternatives to Violence Project Workshops in Rwandan Resettlement Camps.” It is posted

on the AGLI website, [www.aglionline.org](http://www.aglionline.org). What is significant about this project was that this time AGLI has used AVP to intervene as a preventative measure as the Hutu and Tutsi refugees who were expelled from Tanzania where they lived separately were placed in resettlement villages together under great suspicion. As the report states, “*It was after the AVP workshop that I started loving my country without fear,*” said Mudaheramwa Cyprien. To be able to love Rwanda without fear, to love one’s neighbors, to forgive those who inflicted the wounds upon their hearts, and to live in peace within communities previously saturated with distrust and hatred, are impressive accomplishments.” This work was supported by the Drane Family Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation.

On her return to the United States, Emily Higgs is going to take the place of Anna Crumley-Effinger (two time AGLI workcamper and AGLI Working Group member) as an intern at the Quaker United Nations Office in New York. Anna will be going to Nairobi, Kenya, to work with the American Friends Service Committee on their Eastern and Central African programs. Congratulations to both!



# BURUNDI



## **Kamenge Clinic Staff**

Back (top) row, left to right: Gudura Ndayikengurukiye, Martin Nahishakiye, Samuel Niyonzima, Alexia Nibona  
Middle row, left to right: Marie Claire Kamugisha, Marcelline Girukwishaka  
Front row, kneeling, left to right: Joselyn Dusabe, Goreth Bicereza and Francine Feza

## **Burundi HROC Team**

Left to right: Desire Nzeyimana, Adrien Niyongabo, Andrew Peterson, and Florence Ntakarutimana

