



IBUKA a.s.b.l, the umbrella of survivors associations in Rwanda

# Newsletter 1

*November 2010*



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## Welcome Note

Dear readers and friends of survivors,

Ibuka is an umbrella organization for survivor associations in Rwanda, representing them at national and international levels. Ibuka means 'remember'. It was created in 1995 in order to address issues of justice, memory, social and economic problems faced by survivors.

Surely, we are all frustrated by what happened in Rwanda, It is not enough to walk away and do nothing. We need to raise awareness of thousands of survivors still in vulnerable conditions. Genocide consequences are very diverse, but together we can all do something to give hope and provide opportunities to survivors. Ibuka as an umbrella of Survivors' Associations is very much committed to working closely with any organization/institution and committed individuals to boost survivors' life conditions. We tirelessly work to provide advocacy with the survivors and monitoring all the activities engaged in problem solving of their challenges. So it is not too late to join us; your time has come to provide some help to Rwandan Genocide Survivors. By supporting Ibuka programs/projects, partnering with us, providing capacity building trainings to our workers or giving financial means to sustain and increase what we have already started; that can really make a difference in boosting survivors' life conditions.

This Newsletter is then brought to you in order to share with all of you the information about the progress, challenges as well as efforts that are being developed around our communities through Survivors' Associations initiatives. We hope to receive supportive feedback from you as we need to meet the future with more strength.

**Théodore SIMBURUDALI**

**President of IBUKA**

## Communication Matters

is the first of what I hope will be a quarterly newsletter, setting out the situation of survivors of the genocide in Rwanda today as conveyed by the survivor's organisations that operate under the umbrella of IBUKA.

IBUKA will publish this newsletter four times a year, which will set out and provide a vehicle for us all to learn more about the situation of survivors of the genocide in Rwanda today.

Even before SURF was established in 1997, our founder, Mary Kayitesi Blewitt, worked tirelessly to raise awareness of the challenges faced by survivors that she met in the immediate aftermath of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. Sixteen years on, many of the issues, on which she began then to campaign, remain as relevant today, which this newsletter highlights - issues such as justice and memory, education and healthcare.

What underlies the work of SURF, IBUKA, and all the survivor's organisations under its umbrella, is the importance of communication. Communication is critical to enable the survivors that we represent to ensure that we are aware of the areas where they need our support. Communication is critical to share between our organisations the work that we are undertaking, and the areas where we need to work more closely together to deliver some of the programmes written about here. Communication is critical to convey to the media and public, other donors and agencies, the situation of survivors – to secure funding for our work which is vital to meet the challenges set out here as well.

This summer we were fortunate to host a group from the UK Conservative Party who visited Rwanda for the fourth year as part of Project Umubano, a two week international

social action programme. As one of the members of that group, Will Goodhand, writes here, the toolkit they developed and workshop they delivered focused on three areas of our work: fundraising, communication, monitoring and evaluation. These three areas are all so closely interwoven.

All the organisations featured in this newsletter participated in the workshop. Though we all know the importance of the work that we undertake, we often fail to commit the resources required to effectively monitor and evaluate that work. Visiting the programmes it is not hard to understand why funding is prioritised for survivors in need, even if that is at the expense of reports that need to be written.

However, it is communication that is critical to bring such reports to the awareness of donors. It is these donors that can help realise the potential of programmes which we too often keep known only to ourselves. In so doing, we can raise the funding to enable us to scale up our work to provide support to the many more survivors still in need of support.

To that end, this newsletter serves. It is a first, but important, step in a more strategic communications plan lead by IBUKA. I congratulate all that have contributed articles – and appeal to the donors on whose desk this may fall, to join us in our work to help rebuild the lives of survivors through supporting the organisations featured here.

What we are continuing to learn is that communication matters, though it is only as important as the action it inspires.

***Editorial***

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## Culture

### The founding story of Indangamirwa, a traditional Rwandan dancing troop formed by the Dukundane Family

The Dukundane Family (D.F) Association was founded in 2007 by former members of Survivors' Students Association in St Andrew College (AERG St Andre). The D.F members valued their cultural heritage and practiced it through traditional dances, songs, poems and other traditional games. So in 2008 they decided to found a permanent traditional dancing troop which they called Indangamirwa, (literally meaning those to be seen). Indangamirwa is part of an initiative called Dancing troop, Audio system and Protocol team Project.

Since their formation in 2008 the Indangamirwa has been entertaining at different events and ceremonies across Rwanda. The troop generated income due to the high quality of their performances. Gradually Indangamirwa developed to not only preserve cultural traditions but also to provide a supportive and safe atmosphere for its members. It offers a strong environment which encourages emotional sharing and fosters recovery from the hardship that many of D.F members endured during the genocide. D.F leaders have observed that members are more self-motivated which has reduced loneliness and helps deal with trauma, one of the immediate consequences of the genocide which young survivors are particularly affected by.

One of the Indangamirwa members said *"Through our dances we find ways to relax our minds and we feel very connected with each other and this enables us to endure the suffering we have been through while we were so young."*

Currently D.F has over 200 members 50 of which are part of Indangamirwa, 24 girls and 26 boys, whose average of age is 21. During the troop's performances the rest of D.F joins in which motivates the troop to keep growing. Indangamirwa leader Miss Liliane Rutera Uwase, (Secretary of D.F), believes the long term goal is to become the leading teaching troop of Rwandan culture. To this end, Indangamirwa will start providing free training sessions for a wide range of people interested in

learning about the Rwandan culture through dances, poems, songs and other games by the start of the imminent long academic holidays (middle of November up to January 2011).



Figure 1. The Indangamirwa dancing troop performing.

These free sessions will be completely inclusive and offered to people ranging from pupils in primary schools up to elder members of the community. In the future they hope to open an Indangamirwa Academy, offering continuous training sessions. They would like to target a new generation of juniors who will be entertaining alongside their elders during different public

events/ceremonies. Through this academy D.F feels it will contribute towards preserving peace and conserving traditional Rwandan cultural values.

Indangamirwa currently trains every Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 16h00 to 18h00. Outside of these times they can be contacted through the D.F office in Nyamirambo, Nyarugenge district of Kigali City.

Indangamirwa are ready to help at your weddings, events, concerts and any other entertaining events.

We value what we do and we do what we value as well. So join us in preserving and promoting the worth of our culture.

For more details contact Dukundane Family on:

+250 788 85 32 33 or +250 788 54 84 74 or by email:  
lilianeu2006@yahoo.fr or jjrousseau02@yahoo.fr.

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## Education and Youth Empowerment

### Duharankubaho empowering young survivors by developing skills

The Duharankubaho Association\* was developed by young survivors who have finished or are still pursuing university studies.

Duharankubaho members used to only work on short term projects for example cultivation of small agricultural projects. However Duharankubaho realised that its members would benefit from training to develop longer term projects which could better enable them to access external funding and realistically meet donor requirements.

Thus Duharankubaho invited members to participate in one week of training from 30<sup>th</sup> August to 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2010, covering production, monitoring and evaluation of small as well as large socio-economic projects. This training by experts from the Rwanda Development Board (RDB) was designed to help survivors resolve challenges they face as heads of their families, and was funded by the Imbuto Foundation ([www.imbutofoundation.org](http://www.imbutofoundation.org)).

Through the scheme, participants showed leadership, dedication and the free communication between trainers, officials at the Imbuto Foundation and participants fostered development on both sides.

It is hoped that skills gained from this training will help Duharankubaho members to make progress and resolve problems. Duharankubaho plan to evaluate the learning outcomes in order to further develop members' skills and

identify other training requirements to be used in the wider community to work towards a brighter future.



Figure 2. Members who took part in the Duharankubaho training scheme.

The Duharankubaho would like to take this opportunity to thank Imbuto Foundation for its continuous support.

If you are interested in finding out more about Duharankubaho or would like to support this vital skills training please contact: +250 788 45 55 35/+250 722 45 55 35|[duharankubaho@yahoo.fr](mailto:duharankubaho@yahoo.fr)

\* Duharankubaho is Kinyarwanda for Struggle for Living.

## Hope in Progress

### Case Study: Survivor Namahirwe Josiane's story of how she became self-sufficient

Namahirwe Josianne was born in 1985 in Kabuye cell, Mukarange sector, Muhazi commune to Bugoro Aloys and Zaninka Anastasie. However today she lives in Bwiza cell, Mukarange sector, and Kayonza district in the Eastern province. Her father, mother and three of her siblings were killed during the 1994 Tutsi Genocide. When her parents died in the 1994 Tutsi Genocide, Josianne was 9 years old. However despite her young age, she decided to take on the care of her two surviving younger sisters and support them in their return to education.

She and her younger siblings went to live with their oldest sister who had been widowed ; and lost most of her family due to the Genocide. They lived together for 4 years (1994-1998) until they decided to return to their family home. Unfortunately the family home had been destroyed and so they had to rebuild it using materials that had remained intact e.g. iron sheets, as well as money they received from people who had taken their property during the Genocide.

In 1999, aged 15 Josianne had finished primary six when she decided not to return to school and instead to stay at home and start taking care of the property and family banana plantation which was in poor state. Her sisters were in secondary school, one studying in second year and the younger one in first year; she also took care of their two little cousins, whose parents were killed during the genocide.



Figure 3. Josianne with her cow donated to her family by the Barakabaho Foundation.

In 2002 she was introduced to the Barakabaho Foundation, where she learnt how to create modern banana plantations as part of a group called the 'Twerimbuto'. Alongside other orphans Twerimbuto also provided agricultural and farming skills as well as education on children's rights, and laws that deal with succession and inheritance of property in Rwanda. The Foundation also donated some goats and a cow to further help the family business. With the financial help and education provided by the Barakabaho Foundation she was able to develop the banana plantation. From 2002 to 2009, she worked tirelessly and was able to increase the plantation from the original 40 acres left by her parents to 1.2 hectares. She now earns between 80,000Frw and 100,000Frw per month. Josianne and her family are now able to be self-sufficient.



Figure 4. Bananas on Josianne's plantation.

Despite the difficulties and hardship endured, Josianne and her family are full of hope and believe that life must

go on. They are very happy with their achievements so far and encourage fellow survivors to do the same.

*For those of us who have lost so much, there are many steps we can take to try to keep legacies alive. Difficulties do not pass, but sharing them can make it possible to bridge the divisions left by horror and make a new journey for the new living. So let us stand and work for self sufficiency.*

For more information please contact Barakabaho Foundation on: +250 788 56 74 66|ntagara@hotmail.com

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## Healing Trauma

### Healing of trauma through Solidarity Camps for orphan headed households

Rwanda has a large number of orphans who lost their relatives at a young age. Many may be unaware of the death of their relatives and some will now be responsible for their households. They face numerous problems including trauma and so require financial as well as psychological help.

Uyisenga n'Imanzi's approach to these psychosocial issues is to organise Solidarity Camps 3 times a year. For children who have survived this type of trauma it is better for them to verbalise their feelings and so Solidarity Camps were established. The Camp creates: discussion about what they have experienced, freedom of expression, enables participants to be aware of their history and how it has affected them.

The Solidarity Camps can provide an environment for orphans who are responsible for households to identify and express emotion. Many of these children do not know how to cope with negative emotions and like other trauma survivors prefer to keep their feelings private. They do not even have the vocabulary to express what they have

experienced and how they feel about it. Most of the orphaned children headed households have difficulties speaking and those who dare to speak are not listened to and so retreat into themselves, thus becoming isolated in the community. Expression of emotions are explored through role-play, dancing with and playing games with others. They are encouraged to share their feelings both during small group discussions and also on a one to one basis with psychologists and trained counsellors who help them develop strategies to overcome them.

Mental health issues explored include: trauma, grief, adolescence post-trauma, reproductive health, drug abuse, active listening, and group expression.

The following 3 key subject areas emerged:

#### 1. Expression of emotions

*"Before coming in Solidarity Camps, I always felt sad, I did not think that I could have someone to whom I could tell my problems and who could understand me. I never had*

*the chance to of talk about my own things, I had preferred to keep silent. For a long time I stayed silent without talking to anyone. After attending the solidarity camp, I met with other children who had had the same life circumstances as mine and I guessed the role of the Solidarity Camps is to bring us together, to separate us with the solitary behaviour and grief. It's also a chance to relax mentally and to express our emotions because there we have people who are able to hear our hurting."*

## 2. Sharing of experiences

Children living alone reported that attending the Solidarity Camps allowed them to share experiences and see they were not the only one in their situation. Being listened to by others in the group gave participants the capacity to recognise and respect each other. *"...the role of camps for me is that if you spent all the time being quiet, Solidarity Camps gives you time to laugh with others, be happy. It was during the Solidarity Camps I've seen a person who lives in the same conditions as me. I also noticed that there are other people we share the suffering. At the beginning you may have the thoughts that you are the only to live with hard problems, but it is after hearing the others' stories and make comparison that guess that you are among those living with few problems."*

## 3. Give meaning to life

The adolescents interviewed told us that the Solidarity Camps help them to reconnect with their role in society and the meaning of community. For example:

*"I lost my whole family during the Genocide, I recognise the significant role of the Solidarity Camps. If I had not participated in the Solidarity Camps, I could not have a sense of community. Before participating in the Solidarity Camps, I did not speak, I felt like nobody understands me. I was all locked up and the life was for me like something which was meaningless. But after participating in the Solidarity Camps, I saw that life has a significant meaning"*

## In summary

Participation in the Solidarity Camps was an opportunity for orphan heads of households to find a link to their society and help each other within their communities to overcome trauma. They were given the opportunity and tools to express their valid negative emotions, given coping strategies for these and realised they were not alone in their experiences. This resulted in an increased confidence in themselves and the ability to move forward in their life.

For more information contact Uyisenga n'Imanzi on: +250 788 30 50 07|Uyisenga@gmail.com

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## New AVEGA Health Centre opened in Kigali, Rwanda

AVEGA have helped over 12,000 women diagnosed with different degrees of trauma. Many suffer from psychosomatic illnesses presenting with symptoms of extreme sadness, isolation and depression. Most of the women are the primary caretakers for at least 5 children, both their biological children and orphans of their relatives who were killed during the genocide. Many are incapable of working due to age, severe trauma and physical handicap caused by machete wounds. Usually these women do not have any family to take care of them.

AVEGA's counselling services are funded by Catholics for Overseas Development - UK (CAFOD), and Association of Trauma Survivors (ARCT) contributes to training costs. AVEGA has 585 active counselors throughout Rwanda, all

of who are on permanent stand by and can be called upon at any time. AVEGA's counsellors frequently make house calls to assist with trauma cases. The counsellors conduct individual and group therapy, regular case conferences, and meet to exchange ideas for improvement.

The Psycho-Medical Department in Kigali was created by AVEGA in 1996. Within the Department, AVEGA developed a clinic to take care of its members who were traumatised and affected by wounds of Genocide. Despite the small size of the clinic the services are specially designed and the clinic aims to make people feel comfortable. To date this clinic has treated 2300 members and their dependants infected with HIV as a consequence of rape during Genocide.

With the aid of the Ministry of Health, AVEGA was able to expand the existing clinic and has become the health centre for the entire population in the surrounding district of Gasabo. This was done using support from medical insurance companies such as Mutual Health among others, with the aim of providing an even better service.

### The New AVEGA Clinic

On Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2010, the new AVEGA clinic (built on the same site as the original one) was inaugurated by the First Lady of Rwanda, Jeanette Kagame. It is able to hospitalise patients and provide: family planning, ante-natal and maternity consultations, and immunisation. The clinic continues to provide care and treatment for patients infected by HIV and AIDS. The centre is run by Doctor Rangira Ephrem (Head of Psycho – Medical Department) assisted by Alphonsine Nyirahabimana (Head Nurse) and 4 auxiliary nurses. In addition, there are 3 counsellors, 2 social workers, 2 laboratory technicians, and 1 data manager.



Figure 5. The opening of the new AVEGA clinic by the First Lady of Rwanda, Jeanette Kagame.

AVEGA accompanies the women, consoles them, teaches them how to take care of themselves, advises on good nutrition and how to grow crops such as beans, sorghum, and peas, and how to live with the HIV. They are encouraged to express their feelings, as they are often incapable of facing their despair and desolation, and reluctant to accept the children born from the rape. The clinic aim to raise the women's morale and explain to them that it is possible to live with HIV: by taking good care of oneself, taking medication, attending counselling, and sharing honestly.



Figure 6. The new AVEGA clinic.

If you would like more information, please contact us on:  
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## Remembrance

**Can you believe that while we remember our beloved ones who perished during genocide against Tutsi, there are families who are not remembered because none of them survived?**



## Groupe des Anciens Etudiants Rescapés du Génocide GA.E.R.G

### Remember the families who completely perished

It is almost 16 years since the implementation of a long planned genocide against Tutsi, which was planned and executed from April 7, 1994 by former political leaders, high ranking military officials and supported by mobilised Hutu militia. By these actions every Tutsi was victimised from foetuses to old men and women together with their properties and belongings.

These atrocities were so extreme that there are some Tutsi families who completely perished. Their homes are now bushes because no survivors were left to inherit them, and their families cannot be remembered.

Association of former Students who survived genocide against Tutsi (GAERG) main objective is to remember those who perished. They also aim to encourage the survivors to live and reconstruct their lives to live well.

GAERG collects names of completely perished families in Rwanda. They do this through two methods: online data collection and field data collection.

Online data collection - GAERG members are connected through an electronic forum; they are sent a form which asks them to complete information about the families and relatives completely perished during the Genocide.

Field data collection – information is collected from different regions of Rwanda. In 2010 in partnership with IBUKA Nyamagabe, 713 families have been identified using following steps:

- First meeting with Ibuka Committee in different sectors of Nyamagabe district - In this meeting,

the delegation of GAERG explain to the Ibuka committee and Nyamagabe leaders the purpose of remembering completely perished families and how the Ibuka Committee and Nyamagabe leaders will work together to gather the necessary information.

- Forms distributed to Ibuka committee members in different sectors of Nyamagabe District.
- Meeting between Ibuka committee and survivors in different sectors in order to exchange information about completely perished families in their sectors and fill forms.
- Data is redistributed to Ibuka district committee and then to the GAERG committee.
- Data entry and data analysis and database creation.

### Memorial of perished families

On the night of 6<sup>th</sup> June 2009 an overnight vigil and remembrance ceremony was held at the Ntarama Genocide Memorial Site in Bugesera. That evening 786 completely perished families were remembered thus keeping their memory alive.

This year (2010) the 16<sup>th</sup> remembrance of Genocide is commemorated. GAERG's event took place at Murambi memorial site in Nyamagabe District on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2010 from 18:00. Attendees remembered 1499 completely perished families, composed 56806 members so as to keep their memories alive.

### Future GAERG objectives

GAERG believe they have a responsibility to continue remembering completely perished families, thus, they would like to do the following:

Gather all names of completely perished families in 30 districts of Rwanda, along with all necessary information about the families and use of their properties, further develop their database and electronic archiving and ensure the knowledge of the Genocide is maintained in order to prevent another in future generations.

These objectives will be achieved in partnership with other organisations of survivors of Genocide, and with different institutions whose aim is to encourage and improve the lives of Genocide survivors and prevent any future occurrences of Genocide in Rwanda.

For more details contact us on: +250 788 76 45 01|aristarquen81@gmail.com

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## Social Development

### The One Dollar Campaign

In December 2008 the Rwandan Diaspora, in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, launched a landmark fundraising campaign for the re-housing and rehabilitation of student survivors of Genocide. The campaign (originally initiated by the Genocide Survivor's Student Association - AERG), duly noted that 4,000 students were resigned to remaining at their respective schools and universities, during the holiday period (at the discretion of the institution in which they studied) as they had nowhere else to go.

Since 2006 AERG has set about creating a development plan that will build and create safe and secure housing for survivors who do not have homes and by actively campaigning. Public institutions, private organisations and civil society bodies have been mobilized in order to gain major support for this important project.

The "One Dollar Campaign" dubbed so due to its intention to amass financial aid for this project, aims to design and build an 800-bed hostel facility for the student survivors of genocide, whilst incorporating an infrastructure that will also support the surrounding community. The campaign was officially launched on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2009. Government and non-government institutions, the private sector, religious bodies, civil society, students and individuals all

contributed towards its success, and on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2010 the One Dollar Campaign had collected over 900 million Rwandan Francs (Rwf) in cash and over 150 million Rwf in pledge. This demonstrates the achievement and the positive prospects of the scheme. Initially the aim was to just raise funds but gradually it has progressed into a proposal that is generating further income to not only plan and oversee the vital stages of the build, but also to invest in the lives of the students, therefore impacting positively on their lives.

The success of the concept of this venture has been fundamental in achieving the support and backing that it has gained. Managed by a team that is overseen by advisory board members of AERG; the topography survey, master plans, architectural, technical and tender documentation have been completed and at present the recruitment of a contractor is at an advanced stage, with the tender award being scheduled this month.



Figure 7. Jean Paul Kabera, former coordinator AERG; James Musoni, Hon Minister of Local Government; General James Kabarebe, Minister of Defence; Janvier Forongo, Executive Secretary of IBUKA; Atome; General Ibingira; and Appolinaire Sayinzoga, Project Manager of the One Dollar Campaign, explaining about the complex during the foundation stone laying ceremony in July 2010.

The complex will be constructed in phases (in Kagugu cell, Kinyinya sector, Gsabo District and Kigali City) providing that further financial resources can be raised.

The concepts for the design of the hostels were based on the resources that were made available and also the magnitude of demand, so a philosophical view of sharing has been adopted. Flexibility has been built into the design to enable future changes, when the last group of student survivors will have graduated in 15 years time. To maintain the sustainability of the scheme multipurpose halls and commercial facilities have been added as income-generating initiatives, which will also help effectively maintain the utilities, such as water, electricity and lighting. At the same time the multipurpose halls can be used by students and neighbours for entertainment, public talks and community mobilisation, while the commercial facilities will give jobs and services to the neighborhood. The integration of sport facilities will enable students and the community to practice and exercise and will be used as a positive instrument to engage students.

The first stage of the build consisting of the hostel, restaurant and kitchen, and external works (which includes: security fence, landscaping, retaining walls, walkways and a waste water treatment plant) will be facilitated by the funding that is already in place. Initially 192 students will be accommodated in this first phase as soon as it has been completed (planned for December 2011).

The progress of the remaining phases will be determined by financial capacity and will be planned accordingly. Upon

completion, the complex will house 800 students, will offer a conducive learning atmosphere and will consist of 4 hostels, sports facilities, a business and a multipurpose hall (for income generating activities), a library, and a psycho-social facility, costing approximately 4.5 billion Rwf in total.

The One Dollar Campaign will not only have a positive impact for the survivors of Genocide, but for the entire supporting community as a whole. For the students, this paves the way for a conducive, safe and caring environment allowing them to perform better in their academic activities, have a well balanced lifestyle and make them confident citizens. For the community, the complex will create jobs in the surrounding vicinity, and provide entertainment and sport facilities.



Figure 8. From left: Jean Paul Kabera, former coordinator AERG; James Musoni, Hon Minister of Local Government; General James Kabarebe, Minister of Defence during foundation stone laying ceremony.

The One Dollar Campaign is working to enhance the lives of the survivors of Genocide, but it still has while to go in reaching its objective. To achieve the target for this campaign a further 3.5 billion Rwf must be raised and put towards the physical construction of the build. Moreover ongoing support from different partners will be crucial in raising the expectations, confidence, and personal skills of every young survivor which will benefit from the project, setting them on a path for what can only be deemed a promising and more secure future.

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