

KIGEME IWACU



VARIOUS ACTIVITIES GEARED TOWARDS SELF-RELIANCE IN KIGEME REFUGEE CAMP

'We, the youth participate in promoting peace through art'

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EDITORIAL

May peace be with you, dear readers of Kigeme Iwacu!

The youth from Kigeme is back with the third issue of Kigeme Iwacu magazine. This magazine strengthens the good relationship that is continuously witnessed amongst the youth of Kigeme camp and also the youth of surrounding areas of this camp.

This youth is composed of the youth from Kigeme camp and the Rwandan youth living in the vicinity of Kigeme camp.

As youth having understood that they have much in common, they sit down, identify a certain recent topic and start writing about it together in this magazine in a bid to raise awareness, educate or carry out advocacy in various domains as youth who have committed themselves to playing their role in their own community and elsewhere.

At this round, this issue of Kigeme Iwacu magazine will dwell on creation of jobs for refugees towards attaining self-reliance instead of waiting for handouts from various donors' organizations which support them. You may think that this is not possible and you think that it is like dreams while a person is a refugee!

In this magazine, you will find many examples and testimonies from some refugees of Kigeme Camp where they showed that they have well understood this topic at first glance. They have started undertaking small business activities. Today they can meet some of basic needs on daily basis. These examples show that it is possible and very much so!

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees UNHCR and the Government of Rwanda, through the Ministry which has refugees in its responsibilities (MIDIMAR) plans to support and raise awareness with the aim of teaching the refugees to be involved in the entrepreneurship program and starting small projects in order to develop themselves, because refugees are also capable. Like other Rwandan residents, if refugees understood this program, it could help them face some of the problems they encounter and contribute to the development of the host country.

We believe that this magazine will provide you with a lot of lessons which will help you to be bold and take decision, roll up sleeves and get to work. As the Kinyarwanda saying goes "Akimuhana kaza imvura ihise" loosely translated as something from outside comes after the rain.

We are grateful to people who live in Kigeme Camp who run small income generating activities, vendors, associations and co-operatives we interviewed and they provided us with information which, we believe, will help many people who will read this magazine. We thank partners and different organs in Kigeme Camp for their good collaboration shown to us namely MIDIMAR, refugees representative committee in the camp, UNHCR, Kigeme Cell and others. We thank in particular, our journalists for their sacrifice and courage displayed while gathering information and writing these stories.

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EVERY LITTLE BIT HELPS

After Congolese refugees arrived in Kigeme Camp in 2012 and currently already settled in that camp, the refugees and Rwandans living in the surrounding areas of Kigeme Camp, work together in various commercial activities in the market located near the camp. Some of the refugees we interviewed confirmed that creating self employment starting from the little you have is better because one grows slowly bigger instead of waiting for the huge capital as most of the people think.

When the refugees arrived in that camp, some of them made a good decision to start carrying out various activities which will help them to develop themselves including commercial activities.

It is in this framework that TUMAYINI Elysée known as Maombi, one of the shop keepers at the market who live in Kigeme Camp, runs a shop in which there are a variety of goods including cooking oil, clothes, curtains and other items. He said that he started with a small capital and now he says that he has reached a good level in his business.



TUMAYINI Elysée (Maombi) when we met him in his shop in the small market of Kigeme

Talking to Kigeme Iwacu magazine, he said that he started working as a shop attendant and was paid a salary of Twenty Five Thousand (25,000 RWF) per month. This young man said that he later decided to work for himself starting with a capital of 25,000 RWF. He said that he started selling bananas and avocados and other small items. His business flourished by growing little by little. Now he runs a shop worth Two hundred Fifty Thousand Rwandan Francs (250,000 RWF).

During the interview we held with him when we met at his work place, he told us as follows "I started with Twenty Five Thousand Rwandan Francs (25,000 RWF, doing small activities, but little by little, I made some profit up to now I have a capital equivalent to Two Hundred Fifty

Thousand Rwandan Francs (250,000 RWF). You understand that my business has been developing little by little".

The person in charge of youth in the refugees representative committee in Kigeme Camp said that they continued to raise awareness amongst the youth and taught them through different meetings, encouraging them to roll up sleeves and get to work. This was done in addition to advocacy in favor of youth carried out in collaboration with the camp management and different partners working in Kigeme Camp so that they develop themselves more.



KARUMUNA Jackson, in charge of youth within the refugees representative committee in Kigeme Camp (Photo Kigeme Iwacu)

On the side of the authority of Kigeme Cell where this shopkeeper runs his business, they say that it is a good thing for these refugees to carry out income generating activities in this Cell. They contribute to the development of Kigeme Cell as said by the Executive Secretary of that Cell, Mr KAVOMA SEBIKABU Patrick. Furthermore, this Executive Secretary encourages refugees, especially those doing different activities to develop themselves to know how to make savings so that they can achieve more. He said: "It is good that they also enroll in credits and savings groups so that they manage well their property and can achieve much more".



Mr SEBIKABU KAVOMA Patrick, the Executive Secretary of Kigeme Cell. (Photo: Kigeme Iwacu)



Shopkeeper TUMAYINI Elysée (Maombi) (photo Javan M.)

Based on experience he has acquired, this shopkeeper believes that it takes time for seedling to grow into a tree. This is the reason why he advises dwellers of Kigeme Camp especially the youth that it is not necessary to start with a huge capital to create a job. Instead they must be bold and take decision to work, because one develops little by little.

Story by MUGENZI Javan

WORKING TOGETHER AND DEVELOPING THEMSELVES HELPED EVEN PEOPLE LIVING IN THE SURROUNDING AREAS OF KIGEME CAMP

After getting together and starting cows breeding, three brothers living in Kigeme Camp say that it is very important for them and other different people who live near the Camp, especially because they were able to give jobs thanks to this cows breeding.

These brothers are MUGABO Bankuriye, BISABO- Aime and RUKARA Eric. They live in Kigeme Camp which hosts Congolese refugees and is located in the Southern Province, Nyamagabe District, Gasaka Sector. After settling in this camp, they had an idea to work together and started cows breeding.

When you talk to them, you realize that even before they came to Rwanda as refugees they used to run this kind of cows breeding activity. They said that they like this job. When they arrived in Kigeme Camp, they chose not to remain idle and cross their hands. They instead decided to carry out cows breeding. Today they run this activity in the surrounding of Kigeme camp.

In their testimony, they revealed that they started this activity with difficulties because they started with one cow. When they obtained three cows, one of them was stolen and another died but they were not discouraged. They decided to sell the remaining cow and bought a jersey one because they thought it would quickly yield more production.

When he talked to Kigeme Iwacu journalists, MUGABO Bankuriye who spoke on behalf of his colleagues said: “We started with one cow and when we obtained three cows, one of them was stolen, another died. We sold the remaining cow, and collected money to buy a jersey cow, because we thought it would give us more production in due time.”

Up to now, they have obtained once again three cows, with the production of 35 liters of milk per day and they have buyers of all the milk. MUGABO Bankuriye said it in these terms: “This farming activity is important for us, now we can get 35 liters per day and we have buyers of all the milk whereby a liter is sold at 250 RWF, thus we can obtain 252, 500 RWF from the milk production”.



They breed cows which give a lot of milk production of at least 35 liters per day. (Photo Willy M.)

As they said it, this activity is not only beneficial to themselves because MUKARUGWIZA, a mother of 52 years old, who lives near Kigeme Camp, in Gasaka Sector, Kigeme Cell, Gakoma Village, has stressed this point when we met her tilling the land. She told us that she is the one who gave those brothers a piece of land for the cows breeding. In return, they provide her with manure produced by the cows. She told us that breeding their cows on her land is important for her because she gets manure which makes good harvest and her children get milk easily.



MUKARUGWIZA lives near the camp and is the one who gave a piece of land. She says that the cow breeding is very important for her. She was talking to Kigeme Iwacu journalists (photo Willy M.)

More importantly, up to now these farmers have given jobs to two people who are paid monthly while the person in charge of feeding the cows is paid 15,000 RWF and the night watchman is paid 10,000 RWF per month.

On the side of Kigeme Cell authority where these farmers live, Sebikabu KAVOMA Patrick, the Executive Secretary of this Cell says that they appreciate how refugees participated in different development activities which generate income in Kigeme Cell. He says that it is very important for the development of the Cell.

He says that it is good for refugees to be involved into development activities in a bid to attain self-reliance because it contributes to development of the Cell. "They participate in various development activities like other Rwandans who work in Kigeme by paying security and hygiene contributions etc".

While celebrating the International Refugee Day on 20th June 2017, the UNHCR Representative in Rwanda, Mr. SABER AZAM, according to this organization website: <http://www.unhcr.org/rw>, reiterated the fact that refugees are capable and it is very possible that they can provide support to their own communities and to the host country. He said this in these words: "Although refugees live most of the time in difficult conditions, a big number of refugees are capable, they are skilled and visionary and they can manage to stand on their own feet and contribute to their own communities and host countries, and we have to respect them and empower them."

Story by MUPENZI Muyobokey, NIYONIZEYE Noah and UWAMPAMAHORO Claire

THEY ARE HAPPY FOR HAVING ACHIEVED A LOT INCLUDING A CERTIFICATE AS A COOPERATIVE RECOGNIZED BY RWANDAN LAW

Normally, when people get together and work together in development groups, it accelerates and eases the ways to show production of what they do because people who work together have good results. It is in this framework that some refugees from Kigeme Camp striving to see how they can overcome challenges facing them, they formed various groups or associations to carry out different activities.



MUJAWIMANA Esther, the representative of Ejo Heza Cooperative (photo Willy M.)

For instance, the group named Ejo Heza, which has a certificate authorizing them to work as a cooperative dealing with tailoring. They make clothes for people living in the camp and those living near the camp

MUJAWIMANA Esther, representative of this association, says that they came together as people who normally used to do this activity and started being five people. She said that they used to do the same job before coming to take refuge in Rwanda. She said that they started as a small team with only 5 sewing machines. They continued to work together although it was not easy.

She said that after four years working together, they have made great progress, both as an association and as members in particular. While explaining us about their achievements, she said: "Today we are 33 members and we have acquired 33 sewing machines, one iron and a sewing workshop, although it has become very small because we increased in numbers.

Moreover, she adds that they are no longer called a group because they have received certificate allowing them to work as a cooperative officially recognized by the Rwanda Cooperative Agency.

Some of the members of this cooperative reveal that they have a lot of clients. For them, being members of a cooperative has led to positive transformation in their life.

For example, NYIRAZINA Noella said that being a member of this cooperative has brought many positive changes in her life because it has enabled her to get out of loneliness. She can now solve some problems for herself including buying clothes for herself, buying different items for her children without necessarily having to wait for subsidies from the camp. She said this in these terms: "I no longer feel lonely because I used to wonder how I would survive but today I am fine. I can buy clothes for myself. I do not have many debts that need to be paid off when I have run short of food. I am able to buy shoes for my children and other necessary things thanks to the fact that I belong to this cooperative".



NYIRAZINA Noella is a tailor in Kigeme Ejo Heza Cooperative (photo Willy M.)

The Representative of Kigeme Camp, Mrs UWAMBAYIKIREZI Rosette mentioned that the management approached them and advised them to work together to become a cooperative. Later they were referred to the heads of cooperatives in Nyamagabe District and now they have got certificate allowing them to work as a recognized cooperative. She said: "They sew clothes very well and I myself take my clothes there. They also participate in various exhibitions and perform well".



Madam UWAMBAYIKIREZI Rosette, the Manager of Kigeme Camp (Photo Kigeme Iwacu)

She added that with other people who work together, they will continue to carry out advocacy for them in order to ensure that their activities are known and yield more production to cater for the needs of their daily life.

Members of the cooperative say that they find clients but they still have challenges of lack of enough space because they are too many. They revealed to us that they have another challenge of getting modern overcasting stitch machines in order to be able to improve quality of what they make. As far as these issues are concerned, the camp management promised that they will continue to do advocacy for them so that even remaining challenges be addressed.

Story by SHUKURU Alphonse and SHYAKA Rodrigue

INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES LEAD TO SELF-RELIANCE FOR REFUGEES, WHAT IS YOUR OPINION? DO YOU THINK IT IS POSSIBLE?



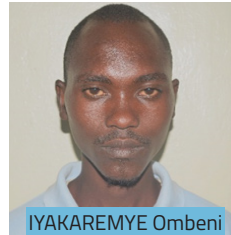
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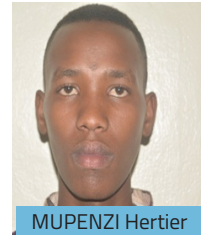
DUSABE Aline



BYIRINGIRO Jackson



IYAKAREMYE Ombeni



MUPENZI Hertier



MUKAGAJU Esperance

Thinking about and starting income generating activities is a point which is stressed by many people. They show how it is one of the factors which help given society to solve its problems, especially those related to the global unemployment issue. Youth unemployment is a common issue whereby many people contend that it is a problem both for the educated and the non-educated.

Both the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugees Affairs (MIDIMAR) have started awareness campaigns aimed at helping refugees to change their mindset so that they can be part of self-reliance programme and be able to solve their problems and contribute to the development of the areas where they live.

About this topic, we wanted to know the opinion of the youth and talked to different youth from Kigeme camp and they gave us various ideas.

KAMANZI Cyuzuzo, 22 years old: He said: “in fact it is not easy to have a startup capital for income generating activities. It is indeed difficult”.

DUSABE Aline, 20 years old: She said: “I find that the most important thing is to have ideas and feeling for work. I advise youth, especially the uneducated youth, who do not have anything to do, to find jobs and cease to wait just for supports”.

BYIRINGIRO Jackson with too much confidence said: “it is possible to start income generating activities while being a refugee, because refugees are capable. I just urge youth to have confidence in them, work hard for their future. Although it is clear that there are not enough means. What matters is to have good ideas”.

IYAKAREMYE Ombeni, 22 years old, lives at Quartier 2, in Kigeme camp: He said “it is very possible to start business while being a refugee. I tried once and saved some 500 FRW per month. In two years I had reached twelve thousand Rwandan Francs (12,000 RWF) to which my parents added three thousand (3,000 RWF). I started to sell Tigo airtime. Later I started selling MTN airtime. It helped me a lot but today I have returned to school. I advised those who did not go to school that instead of sitting without doing anything in the camp, they should create jobs and start business little by little.

MUPENZI Hertier, 19 years old. He lives at Quartier 7 in Kigeme. He said” Some people think it is not possible because when I look around, I find that some refugees who arrived at the camp and who were empty handed, after having left their properties, while fleeing to Rwanda but when they arrived here, they accepted to save, worked hard and now they have developed a lot”.

MUKAGAJU Esperance, 18 years old. She lives at Quartier 8 in Kigeme camp: She said: “It is possible to create jobs, although refugees face many problems including lack of capital”. I know people who have started with a small capital and now they have developed a lot”.

GIRAMATA Olive lives at Quartier 8 in Kigeme Camp: She said: “It is possible because it is a new way of starting to be self-reliant and solve our problems because subsidies will not last long or will sometimes be reduced.

Story by MUSABYIMANA Laurien and UMUHOZA Clemence
Photo by MUGISHA Willy

SMALL INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES DOES NOT REQUIRE A HUGE CAPITAL

Many people tend to think that individual economic development requires a lot of capital and most of the time people are discouraged by the fact that they do not have enough money to start business. However, experts have demonstrated that individual economic development does not require a capital of a lot of money but that it only requires thinking, being bold and implementing your ideas.

For example, MURIZABORO Jeannette, a mother living in Kigeme Camp said that when she started her job of hair dressing , which is her source of income, she started from scratch but now she is known in Kigeme Camp as the person who plaits hair very well. She finds that she is developing little by little.

Kigeme Iwacu found her at her workplace. This woman, who is married, with two children, has this to say:

Kigeme Iwacu: When did you start plaiting hair in Kigeme Camp?

MURIZABORO Jeannette: I started to plait hair in this Camp in 2013

Kigeme Iwacu: Where did you learn it from?

MURIZABORO Jeannette: I learnt it from Congo in 2006.

Kigeme Iwacu: After arriving in Kigeme Camp, where did you get the capital?

MURIZABORO Jeannette: I did not start with capital but the first person whose hair I plaited, brought streaks and I plaited her hair. I bought the needle with the money she paid me for plaiting hair, thus I got the basic materials.

Kigeme Iwacu: Were these basic materials enough?

MURIZABORO Jeannette: No, they were not sufficient but they were just basic materials used to plait hair.

Kigeme Iwacu: How do you make money with these cheap materials?

MURIZABORO Jeannette: After getting materials, I started to work and when I got some money I would buy something I needed and save some remaining amount. When money increased, I would buy streaks for plaiting hair in Nyamagabe City. Afterwards, ARC came to look for people with micro projects. I joined the competition and won. I was given support of Eighty thousand Rwandan francs (80,000 RWF) in addition to the existing Sixty thousand Rwandan Francs (60,000 RWF) I had saved. So I could buy other streaks.

Kigeme Iwacu: What is your wish for your project in order to develop it further?

MURIZABORO Jeannette: If I happen to have a saloon to work from, it can help me. There are some clients who need to wash their hair and they have to go to town because I don't have enough materials and enough space



MURIZABORO Jeannette, hair dresser in Kigeme camp (Photo, MUGISHA Willy)

This testimony is not particular from MURIZABORO Jeannette alone because when you talk to other many people in this camp, you find that they have testimony of what they have achieved thanks to entrepreneurship in micro projects. As confirmed by MUKARURANGWA Françoise who crafts small baskets (types of bags that they craft), gives testimony that she started to craft these baskets without any tangible amount but today she has achieved a lot. She has even apprentices being trained for a fee

In an interview with her she said: "I started to craft these baskets in 2012 when we were in a temporary camp of Nkamira. Today it has helped me to get out of poverty. Others come and I teach them to craft baskets. They pay me fifteen thousand Rwandan Francs (15,000RWF) for the training.

The Manager of Kigeme Camp, Mrs UWAMBAYIKIREZI Rosette says that as the camp management, they put more emphasis on teaching residents of this camp to change their mindset, roll out sleeves and get to work, especially because they are in a country which supports that they work hard, strive for self-reliance and find ways to overcome challenges they face starting from the little they have and not wait for the support from charitable organizations

She says this in these terms: “In different meetings held with the residents from this camp, we teach them and we will continue to tell them that they are in a good country which supports that they work hard and develop themselves.”

For one to start business for individual economic development, experts identified five elements that can help to achieve it, these are: Be bold and put your ideas into practice, refuse to be despised, believe in development of your work, take advantage of opportunities available and avoid being slave of time. It is advisable to learn from these pieces of advice so that you can become an entrepreneur.

Story by NKURUNZIZA Emmanuel Abdoul Karimu na NKURUNZIZA Jimmy

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY FROM KIGEME CAMP AFFIRM THAT WHAT THEY HAVE ACHIEVED IS AN INDICATOR THAT DISABILITY IS NOT INABILITY.

Some people with disability from Kigeme Camp after having been together, affirm that what they have achieved is one of the many indicators showing that they are also capable. Moreover, they want to show that those with disability can attain self-reliance, hence overcome some problems instead of waiting for handouts.

Within the framework of joining efforts to work together and fight against loneliness, in 2013 people with disability who live in Kigeme Camp located in Nyamagabe had an idea of forming an association. They called it: “TWSUNGANE ABAFITE UBUMUGA KIGEME” – People with Disability (PWD) from Kigeme, let’s come together and support each other.”

This association did not fail to participate in handicrafts which can be useful to the members of the association in their everyday life. Thus they can develop themselves. After a donor supported them with a house, the latter generates income because it is lent out to different partners, who have worked in Kigeme camp. The Chairperson of this association NGARUYE Octave, said that they started growing vegetables and mushrooms using kitchen gardens. He said that vegetables were harvested and distributed to members of association in a bid to fight against malnutrition, and sell other vegetables outside the camp.

He affirmed that they have achieved a lot based on getting together. Now they plan to start a restaurant in the camp where food and beverages will be sold.



NGARUYE OCTAVE, LEADER OF ASSOCIATION TWSUNGANE ABAFITE UBUMUGA (PHOTO JAVAN M.)

In an interview we held with him, he said, “In the past we used to grow vegetables but now we plan to run so many things including a café restaurant. We plan to open it in order to help people in this camp to have access to food and beverages.

As indicated by some of the members of this association, getting together helped them to get out of loneliness. We could join others and could show them that we are capable of something like other people without disability.

KAZUNGU Jacqueline, one of the members of this association, had this story to tell: “Now I know how to sew clothes using a machine. I eat vegetables I have grown myself. More importantly, I am one of the prospective workers once the restaurant opens.”

Like his colleagues, NGARUYE Octave, told us that he has other various projects such as sewing workshop which will employ people with disability who have undergone such training and others who are being trained in partnership with GIZ. In addition to that, they have a plan to start a livestock project, so that they can have milk and eggs which they will use in the restaurant project they are planning to launch.

MUSONI Jackson, a staff of UNHCR, based at Huye said that in a bid to promote self-reliance and entrepreneurship for refugees, emphasis was put on sensitizing refugees to be involved in this program. He said that advocacy will be carried out in favor of refugees to ensure marketing for their activities.

Up to now, this association has 102 members. Today it is under the process of receiving certificate issued by the District so that they can form a recognized association in accordance with the Rwandan laws. They also wish to express gratitude to the management of Kigeme Camp, Handicap International which advocates for them and GIZ which helped them to secure a work place for restaurant operations and which financially supported 40 PWD through training in different vocational fields in a school located in Nyanza District, known as HVP Gatagara.

Based on their achievements thanks to getting together, PWD from Kigeme Camp are advising other PWD as well as people without disability that working together can lead them to individual economic growth.

Story by MUGENZI Javan

GASHEJA SAYS THAT AFTER GETTING A JOB HE IS NOW LIVING DECENTLY AND HE SUPPORTS HIS FAMILY

In the previous issue No 2 of *Kigeme Iwacu*, we focused on peace competition dubbed “Youth Peace Competition”. This Competition took place in Kigeme Camp at the beginning of April 2016.

In this competition, competitors were gathered into groups, whereby a group was made up with at least four people. This competition was organized by Ejo Youth Echo under the sponsorship of GIZ, through GIZ/Civil Peace Services in the department in charge of refugees.

This competition was organized in a bid to sensitize non-educated youth to give their contribution in conflict resolution in Kigeme Camp through artifacts. Among them, 20 people belonging to 5 groups who emerged best were rewarded with one-year scholarship in Don Bosco Nyamagabe Technical Secondary School located in Nyamagabe District, in the Southern Province.



GASHEJA NSENGIYUMVA is now skilled in bending steel bars; here he was at a petrol station under construction at Gishushu in Kigali (Photo, Kigeme Iwacu)

GASHEJA NSENGIYUMVA is one of the students who won the competition. He and his colleagues were taken to this school to undergo technical training. He enrolled in construction. Today he is employed in Kigali, Gasabo District, Remera Sector where he is employed in different construction works.

When we visited him at his work place in Remera Sector, he told us that his life has become better compared to the situation before the training. He said that before enrolling in technical training, he was living in the camp without going to school. He was jobless. He did not believe he would have a brighter future. In this way, it was easy for him to be lured into misconduct. However, today the situation has changed. He earns money on monthly basis. He supports his family which stays in Kigeme Refugee Camp.

In his own words, he said: “When I was still in the camp, before I underwent training on construction, I could not envisage any brighter future for me. As you know, life in the camp is not easy. Today I work hard in construction works. I earn money and provide for myself. I buy what I need and support my family which stays in the camp.

GASHEJA did not forget to thank GIZ which helped him to study and secure a job. Today he has a plan to individual economic development. GASHEJA's father called ZIRAKUNDWA NSENGIYUMVA, who lives in Kigeme Refugee Camp says their child supports them in many ways including feeding them when they have run out of subsidies. He supports them to solve other problems that they may face in life.

When this man talked to Kigeme Iwacu, he said: “I thank GIZ project which helped my child to study construction, and helped him to secure a job. Today my child is neither a beggar nor a vagrant but he provides for himself.

He went on to say: “He helps us a lot. For example, yesterday but one, when we did not have anything at home, we called him and he sent us some money”.

The representative of GIZ project in the Refugees Camps, MUHIRWA Michel, says that when they organized youth competition in Kigeme Camp whereby winners were granted scholarship in different technical training, the purpose was to sensitize youth on their role in conflict resolution, pacific cohabitation and individual economic development. “Our project aims first to help refugees and their neighbors to live peacefully, but we found that this was not enough, that is why we included helping youth with skills which will can lead them to individual economic development in their daily life.

Today GIZ has paid school fees for 77 students undergoing technical training in Kigeme Camp. Among them, 21 students enrolled in Don Bosco Nyamagabe Secondary School, others enrolled in IPRC South, in Huye District while others

were taken to study in Nyanza District, HVP – Gatagara.

These are refugees from Kigeme Refugee Camp and other Rwandans living in the surrounding areas of Kigeme Camp. They live with different disabilities. They undergo various technical training in this school which is well known for impacting technical training to PWD.



Zirakundwa NSENGIYUMVA, father of Gasheja NSENGIYUMVA (Photo Kigeme Iwacu)



Photo: Muhirwa Michel, representative of GIZ/ZFD working in refugee camps in Rwanda (File Photo)

Editorial

SHOEMAKERS IN KIGEME CAMP SAY THAT THIS PROFESSION CHANGED THEIR LIVES

Some shoemakers working in Kigeme Camp say that although shoe making is a profession which is despised by many people, they make money from it and their life has changed compared to their situation before taking up this profession.

In an interview with Kigeme Iwacu, when we met them at their work they declared that this profession has enabled them to provide for themselves and that it prevented them from being vagrant and wandering idly in the streets.

In his testimony, IZABAYO NIYOMUGABO, 22 years old, who is also a shoemaker in Kigeme Camp, says that he started this profession in 2012. Thus he has been doing it for the last five years. He says that for him to do this job in Kigeme Camp, he did not like to remain idle. He wanted to provide for himself. In his own words he said: "I have been working in this profession for the last five years. It has prevented me from wandering aimlessly in the streets. It has helped me to support my family with basic needs". More importantly, he told us that this profession has helped him to buy clothes for himself and meet basic needs without relying on his parents.



Izabayo NIYOMUGABO says that shoemaking in Kigeme Camp prevents him from vagrancy and he earns a living from his profession

This testimony is similar to another testimony by NTEZI-YAREMYE Claude who is married, with children. He said that this profession has helped him to secure a job and be able to support his family. In his own words he said: "Since I have started shoe making as my profession, I have not requested for a credit. I eat every day. I buy shoes and body lotion for my children.

Concerning promotion of these activities by entrepreneurs including their marketing, Jackson MUSONI, an employee of UNHCR says that the latter will closely work with non-governmental Organizations such as INKOMOKO based in Kigeme Camp and other various entrepreneurs who work in Rwanda to help UNHCR in marketing refugees' products and services, training refugees in accounting or necessary training aimed at self-reliance.

As confirmed Kigeme Iwacu, they say that on normal days, every one earns 1000 FRW. They also took the opportunity to urge youth and other capable people to roll out sleeves and get to work, because as the saying goes he who does not work should not eat

Story by TWIZERE Innocent and IRIBAGIZA Fasil

WHY IT IS NECESSARY FOR REFUGEES TO CREATE JOBS AND PROVIDE FOR THEMSELVES

A report published by UNHCR on 19 June 2017 indicates that in 2017 the number of displaced people around the world due to conflicts, persecution and wars has reached 65,6 million people.

In this report, UNHCR states that at least every 1 minute, 20 people are displaced from their home due to conflicts, persecution, war and so on.

Today Rwanda only counts 170, 000 refugees on its soil. These refugees are composed of refugees from DRC and Burundi.

The increase of refugees is coinciding with the economic crisis around the world and politics of some countries which do not include refugees' affairs in their mandate, hence their contribution to refugees' organizations is reduced or cancelled for good.

As a result, some countries, in collaboration with UNHCR, put in place a mechanism to enable refugees to attain self-reliance by finding solutions for themselves through creation of jobs and marketing their products.

Rwanda is one of the countries which are committed to empowering refugees to solve problems they face.

On 19 June 2017, while talking to The New Times, the former Minister in charge of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs' Affairs, Hon. MUKANTABANA Séraphine said: "An effective mechanism we have come up with is that refugees should not stay in the camp waiting for maize, beans and other different handouts. We want refugees to work and use their knowledge and capabilities so that they develop themselves and their families.

On this note, the former Representative of UNHCR in Rwanda SABER Azam told the New Times that although refugees are vulnerable people and lead difficult lives, refugees are capable, have knowledge and are proactive by working for themselves and help their families and neighbors living in the surrounding areas of the camp, that is why we must respect and help them.

WHAT DOES UNHCR PLAN AS REGARDS THIS PROGRAM?

UNHCR wishes that refugees be productive, use their capacities to become self-reliant and contribute to development in their communities.

As far as refugees are concerned, this vision will be reached through one of the two mechanisms namely:

1. Providing salaried jobs;
2. Striving for self-reliance and creating own jobs.

Advocacy for refugees will be the third component which will facilitate implementation of this project aimed at ensuring positive change for refugees in Rwanda.

As for creation of jobs for refugees, the Public Sector Federation will be the key partner in this project. UNHCR will work with this federation and other individuals who work with this federation so that it shows them that refugees are skilled people and that their skills can be used in business. At this time, UNHCR will try to establish whether refugees who were trained on required skills are needed at the labor market.

As regards self-reliance and entrepreneurship, UNHCR will closely work with non-governmental organizations such as INKOMOKO which is based in Kigeme Camp and other various entrepreneurs who work in Rwanda.

These non-governmental organizations and entrepreneurs will help UNHCR to build a market for refugees' products or services and train refugees in accounting or other necessary skills for refugees to be able to attain self-reliance.



MUSONI Jackson, UNHCR staff – based in Huye Office (File Photo)

Due to reasons of advocacy aimed at changing lives of refugees in this project, there will be collaboration between non-governmental organizations which work here in the country as well as international organizations, media and social media so that they publish information regarding income generating activities which were done by refugees in Rwanda and which account for change in refugees' lives as well as rights to employment and free movement everywhere in Rwanda.

Within the framework of implementation of this program, there will be collaboration through One UN and UNDAF (The United Nations Development Assistance Plan) in order to ensure smooth collaboration in terms of activities for refugees relating to self-reliance for themselves and their neighbors.

Likewise, this program and its implementation will be harmonized with and contribute to Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) and Vision 2020.

In order to help refugees to secure jobs and attain self-reliance in line with entrepreneurship, a concrete program was devised to conduct advocacy and awareness towards the Government of Rwanda and private operators. What is important is that the advocacy is aimed at striving for self-reliance.

Refugees' mindset is one of important things which will help to attain sustainable self-reliance. If a refugee, for one reason or another, does not want to strive for self-reliance, he/she will never understand self-reliance agenda and its meaning. Like other residents, refugees want to change their lives and their families, but when they are not encouraged to strive for self-reliance, living in the camp and being supported by UNHCR, they can feel that they are more comfortable than being self-reliant. UNHCR and partners will conduct advocacy with a view to showing refugees that it is in their best sustainable interest to embrace this program geared towards empowerment of refugees and self-reliance. Emphasis should be put on ensuring that refugees do not confuse self-reliance with finding permanent residence for them

Some countries allow refugees to have right to work at their soil as provided for in article 17, 18 and 19 of the Refugee Convention of 1951. Rwanda took the lead to allow refugees to work, make free movement inside the country, do busi-

ness, pay taxes, create jobs and contribute to development of Rwanda. The right to work is harmonized with opening up to employment opportunities, making refugees contribute to economic development of host countries.

On the other hand, although there is free work movement, there are challenges which still prevent refugees from contributing to building Rwandan society including challenges at the labor market, failure to receive financial support for refugees' entrepreneurs, especially from the banks and other similar challenges, which are faced by displaced people.

Rwanda has a big number of entrepreneurs or associations working in business which can solve problems such as problems faced by the society. These entrepreneurs can be used as drive change for refugees' lives without being enrolled in non-salaried jobs.

UNHCR will work with partners and other non-governmental organizations working in entrepreneurship in Rwanda so that they can employ refugees in their activities as workers.

Almost all refugees who are in Rwanda share the same culture with Rwandans. Thus willingness and other related assets can be included in the Rwandan economy. Almost all refugees who are in Rwanda speak Kinyarwanda, share the same culture with Rwandans, in fact, refugees and Rwandans, although they have different nationalities they have much in common.

