

NYIRAMUBANDE

English version



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THIS MAGAZINE, EACH CAMP, ITS LOCATION AREA AND OTHER ASPECTS THAT WILL HELP US DELVE DEEP INTO THIS MAGAZINE

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PUBLICATION OF EJO
YOUTH ECHO



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FOREWORD

Peace be with you, our dear readers!

For three years now, Kigeme youth have been informing you of various messages through your familiar magazine called Kigeme Iwacu, we hope these messages have reached you and that they supported you in your daily life, as they focused on promoting of a culture of peace and non-violent conflict resolution.

In the previous issue of this magazine, I told you that the magazine was gaining momentum. Now, the youth in Mahama, Mugombwa and Kigeme camps and their surrounding areas, joined their efforts to write a common magazine after receiving trainings in conflict sensitive journalism. They called that magazine Nyiramubande, meaning “echo”. This means that the messages they will regularly convey also concern them.

Ejo Youth Echo(EYE) trained 20 youth in Mugombwa, 10 youth from Huye Urban and 21 youth from Mahama. Among those youth trained in Mahama; six had been proposed by Humanity and Inclusion (HI) who had previously trained them in print media. Other youth were sent to us through collaboration with the “Rwanda Red Cross”. Most particularly, I thank you for this collaboration.

Through combined efforts, these youth – our youth journalists - produced issue number 1 of Nyiramubande magazine. In it the youth journalists tell us about the daily life in the camps, the historical background of the magazine and its functioning, and other various aspects likely to help readers know and understand a lot of things about the magazine and the rationale behind producing it.

Students, our fellow youth and also our elder brothers and sisters, on behalf of Nyiramubande team, I wish you attentive reading of this magazine. Its content will help you understand how colleagues of Kigeme Mahama and Mugombwa try to be catalysts for better relationships in the society where they live. I also request you to continue to be catalysts for peace where you live- may it be at your school, in your neighbourhood or in your relationship with others. Please continue to serve as a good example within the society.

I also take this opportunity to thank the stakeholders and various organisation within Kigeme, Mahama and Mugombwa camps as well as leaders of decentralised administrative entities within the vicinity of the camps for your collaboration in making possible the production of this magazine. These include the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA), the refugee executive committees, UNHCR, implementing partners including but not limited to the Rwandan Red Cross, Humanity Inclusion, the Cells of Kigeme, Mugombwa and Munini and other various stakeholders in those camps and from the surrounding areas who contributed in producing these articles. Most importantly, I thank all the youth journalists of Nyiramubande magazine for their sacrifice and commitment in gathering ideas and writing these articles.

MBONIGABA Jean Damascène, editor in chief

Editor in chief:

MBONIGABA Jean Damascène

Journalists

1. Kigeme

NIYODUSENGA Chantal
MUGENZI Javan
MUTABAZI Yves
NIYOYIZEYE Noah
SHUKURU Alphonse
NYAMPINGA Marie Grace
TWIZERIMANA Innocent

2. Mugombwa

NGAMIJE Safi
UWASE Nyirabukara
IRANZI Ntashyo
BUCUMI Jean Baptiste
IRANKUNDA Chantal
FURAHA Gentille
MBABAZI Naomi
BYIRINGIRO Innocent

3. Mahama

HATEGEKIMANA Didier
NGENDAKUMANA Jacques
KWIZERA Marie Grace
NAYEBARE Naomi
YIZERE Nadine
UWURINGIYIMANA Jean Nepo
IRADUKUNDA Clarisse
AKIMANAYAREMYE Gaston
KUBWIMANA Alexis
HAKIZIMANA Emmanuel
RUBERINTWARI Elie
NZAMBIMANA Jean-Luc
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MUKAMPONGANO Florence
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WHAT ARE THE REASONS AND OBJECTIVES FOR PRODUCING THIS MAGAZINE?

After the official release of Kigeme Iwacu magazine which met a wider readership and appreciation by quite many people; and has now already gained momentum, it changed its name to be called Nyiramubande. From now onwards, its production will be through trained youths from the camps of Mugombwa, Kigeme and Mahama. Based on the experience gained from this Magazine, I would like to share with you, in general, the main objective the youths have in writing this magazine.

Journalism, in general, plays a major role in educating, and transforming people.

It can be used for advocacy and other various aspects, however, we will not spend much time on this. Rather I like to focus on some important aspects of journalism that can help us clarify the reasons why we, the youth journalists, chose to practice journalism aimed at conflict resolution through written documents.

Some of the youths in Kigeme camp and its surrounding areas benefited from training sessions conducted by a Rwanda organization called Ejo Youth Echo supported by GIZ through a program aimed at peace building and conflict resolution – the GIZ Civil Peace Service.

Some of the reasons why we produce this magazine include dealing with conflicts noticed in camps and in its surrounding areas, wanting to report on activities likely to bring together refugees and Rwandan citizens; both young and old, and showing the role of the youths in scaling up good relations between refugees and Rwandan citizens.



NYAMPINGA Grace, Journalist of Nyiramubande Magazine who wrote this article photo:(Yves M.)

Producing this magazine is a good forum for us youth in the camps and their surrounding areas to meet and assess the problems we witness in our society. We discuss them and together search for solutions on what can be done e.g. like producing written material about our communities.

Currently, many organization are putting more efforts in promoting a culture of reading and writing particularly among the youth to help them shape their future situations. We also produce this magazine to promote a culture of writing and reading.

Furthermore, working on the magazine will help us become good and professional journalists in the future. Hence allowing those who will continue this exercise, to work as experienced professionals, to earn a living, to achieve self-development and also to develop their country as a whole. Sharing and increasing skills is very important for journalists because when they write or discuss with various people they gain more general knowledge on a variety of issues and enhanced knowledge of the media profession they practise.

This article mainly focuses on the research and opinions of NYAMPINGA Grace, a journalist of Nyiramubande from Kigeme

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

"KIGEME IWACU"

As from end of 2015, the organization Ejo Youth Echo conducted training sessions on journalism aimed at conflict resolution for the youths in Kigeme camp and its surrounding areas. After the training, the youths themselves, with the help of employees of Ejo Youth Echo thought about launching a magazine that will help them further put into practice lessons learnt during the training.

The following step concerned the name of the magazine, and out of several names suggested, Kigeme Iwacu gathered more votes and was from then onwards adopted as the magazine's name. We discussed with one of the youths in Kigeme camp who is also one of its journalists, MUTABAZI Yves, and he disclosed how it all started. He said, 'Actually Kigeme Iwacu magazine started in 2015 following a training by Ejo Youth Echo (EYE). Those trained comprised of refugees in Kigeme camp and residents surrounding the camp'.

The first issue dealt with life in and outside the camp. The youth continued to work and released issue number 2 in April 2016. The later dealt with peace competition in Kigeme camp, this competition was organised by Ejo Youth Echo to foster a culture of peace through arts. In July, 2017 the youth released Kigeme Iwacu issue number 3 dealing with various activities carried out by refugees in Kigeme camp related to self-reliance. In October 2017, the fourth issue was released and discussed activities of counselling and relationships in Kigeme camp. In May 2018, issue number five followed and focused on basic security of residents in the camp of Kigeme, especially road security, prevention of fire and lightning.



So far, there are five released issues of this magazine. Throughout all these years, distribution of Kigeme Iwacu Magazine took place in other camps in Rwanda, in libraries, in offices and in youth clubs for the youth from other camps and host communities to read, to gain knowledge or follow the example of the youth in Kigeme.

Kigeme Iwacu has evolved...

During this year 2018, selected youths in Mahama and Mugombwa camps and those from the surrounding areas also received training on journalism aimed at conflict resolution. After these trainings, they combined their efforts with the youths in Kigeme camp in order to come up with one magazine that will contain their shared articles.

From 13 to 14 August 2018, some of the trained youths in Mahama and Mugombwa camps organised a meeting to devise modalities of how to put in place a common magazine and see how they would call it. After extensive discussions with several names suggested, the name selected for the magazine that brings together these youths from different camps was “Nyiramubande”. This magazine will be more extensive than “Kigeme Iwacu” because it will contain 32 pages, compared to the former, which was 16 pages long.

Nyiramubande is set to be a magazine written by the youth journalists with the aim of promoting a culture of peace. With journalists comprised of youth with training in journalism aimed at conflict resolution from these camps listed above and those from their surrounding areas, it will help promote peace and good relations in and outside the camps along with enhancing the culture of reading.

Article by TWIZERE Innocent

WHAT JOURNALISTS OF KIGEME IWACU GAIN FROM “KOOMBOOK” LIBRARY

A part from the study visits to print newspapers namely *Imvaho Nshya* and *The New Times* in 2016 and additional training sessions on journalism aimed at conflict resolution, the youth journalists of Kigeme IWACU have a library used for self-training and to gain additional knowledge in journalism in general. This library is known as KOOMBOOK (modern and electronic library). This library contains books, documents, both audio and video lessons as well as pictures dealing with journalism and other various aspects.

What is KOOMBOOK?

Koombook is a modern library that uses technology to enable people to access various books in the library. This library is equipped with a particular internet connection possible to use in rural areas. However, this internet connection is not compatible with social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube and other social media with which people are familiar. Readers use “tablets” (it is a type of large screen mobile telephones) and the reader open them to retrieve various information.



*Readers of koombook use tablets when reading various material
Users of koombook use tablets when reading (File photo)*

We talked to TWIZERE Innocent and MUTABAZI Yves, some of the journalists of Kigeme camp. They informed us that the Koombook helps them to research and write articles, especially informs how to prepare an interview, how a journalist prepares his/her interviewee and how he/she behaves him/herself in order to get the information he/she wants and many more. They also say that Koombook enhances their knowledge of journalism because it contains two programs namely “Story maker” and “Media centre” on which you read issues related to journalism, and principles of article writing. Hence a person learn many things through its use.

Mutabazi Yves said, ‘Koombook usually has two major programs from which you may get assistance for self-training on journalism namely “Story maker” and “Media centre”. Even when browsing on Wikipedia; you may get additional information on journalism depending on what you want to know’.



MUTABAZI Yves, a journalist of NYIRAMUBANDE at Kigeme (Noah N.)

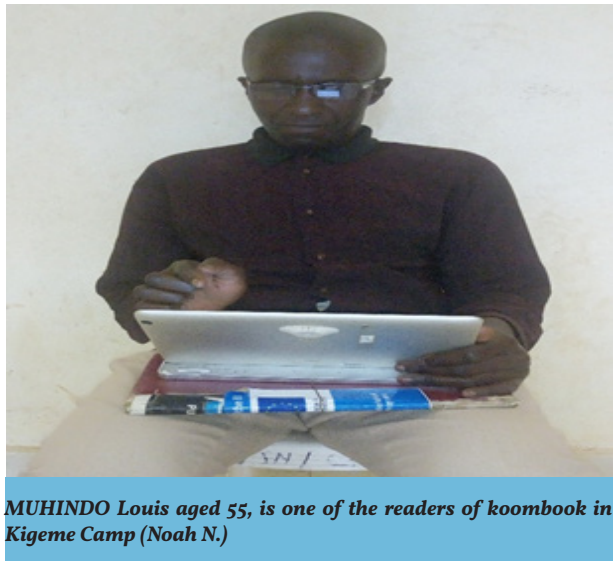


Twizere Innocent, a journalist of NYIRAMUBANDE at Kigeme (Noah N.)

TWIZERE Innocent says that Koombook also contains definitions of terms related to journalism that are comparable to a dictionary and helps us in writing article and knowing terms commonly used in journalism.

On the other hand, this library is not used by journalists only, because there are other people, mainly composed of students from secondary schools, who come to read information related to subjects they learn at school. Those students come from different school centres located within the vicinity of the camp and non-school youth. As for MUHINDO Louis, who is one of them and is not in school. He says that he reads information related to ICT (Information and Communication Technology), Religion, Geography and various other topics. He also says that Koombook has brought about change because tries to share with others the information he reads.

Up to now, apart from the 22 youth journalists of Kigeme Iwacu, who are also the first beneficiaries of Koombook library, within only one year, Rwandans as well as an estimated 1300 refugees have already used this library to enhance their knowledge.



MUHINDO Louis aged 55, is one of the readers of koombook in Kigeme Camp (Noah N.)

Article by NIYONIZEYE Noah

WHAT ARE THE READERS' COMMENTS ABOUT THE KIGEME IWACU MAGAZINE ?

The Kigeme Iwacu magazine has been in existence for three years and has been produced by the youth in Kigeme camp and also young Rwandans residing in the vicinity of the camp. These youths write this magazine with the aim of promoting a culture of peace and contributing to educating the larger community of refugees and Rwandans residing in their neighbourhood.

Three years after its release, a journalist of Kigeme Iwacu wanted to know the lessons readers have learnt from this magazine in their daily lives and contacted some of those different readers. Then MPATSWENUMUGABO Charles, one the young men residing outside the camp in Gakoma Village, told us that this magazine had become a better channel to easily get to know about the lives and information within the camp.

These are his own words:” Kigeme Iwacu has become a true channel to be aware of information from both in and outside the camps, which causes us to feel in good terms with each other because residents inside and outside the camps know each other. There is no community radio in our area, but Kigeme Iwacu made it possible to make known what happens in here”.

He is not the only one, because we also talked to MUTONI Honnette, who is 18 years old, residing in Kigeme camp. She says that since the release of Kigeme Iwacu magazine, she benefited a lot from it especially with regards to issue number 4 of Kigeme Iwacu, which discussed depression and emotional trauma. She further said, 'I benefited a lot from issue number 4 of this magazine that discussed depression and emotional trauma. For instance, my benefit is mainly because I've got to differentiate "emotional trauma" and "depression", before I was not aware of the difference”.

We managed to talk to a reader of Kigeme Iwacu, ISHIMWE Gilbert, aged 20, from Gisagara District, Mugombwa Sector. He is a reader of Kigeme Iwacu magazine from its first issue number to now. He said that he learnt a lot from it. He says that the articles in the magazine are encouraging people to create jobs and to promote peaceful coexistence between them, especially among residents in the camp and residents near the camp.

ISHIMWE Gilbert told us that the article that interested him most is the one that encouraged people to create jobs as published in issue three of Kigeme Iwacu. The wish expressed by ISHIMWE Gilbert was that distribution of the magazine would target all areas to reach even those residing outside the camp because it is hardly available. MURWANASHYAKA Elyse, aged 18 and UMUTONI Sarah, aged 21, both live in Kigeme camp; concur to say that they learnt a great deal from it especially on peaceful coexistence with neighbours and how to get job.



UMUTONI Sarah, one of those who appreciated Kigeme Iwacu magazine in Kigeme camp. (Photo: Shukuru)



MURWANASHYAKA Elyse holding a book) says that Kigeme Iwacu helped him get the information (photo: Shukuru)

This magazine has already changed its name to Nyiramubande. It is a magazine that will be distributed in various areas especially in the camps located in Rwanda and also in areas where those camps are located. The distribution will be for the youths and grown-ups to be able to read different news written by the youths, grouped together in the camps of Mahama, Kigeme and Mugombwa and areas where these camps are located.

Article by SHUKURU Alphonse

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT KIGEME CAMP

Kigeme camp is a camp located in Southern part of Rwanda in Nyamagabe District, Gasaka Sector, Kigeme Cell and Gakoma Village. This Kigeme camp started to accommodate Congolese refugees in 2012. Location of Kigeme camp is on two parallel hills with an asphalt road cutting through them. One hill is Site A and the other is Site B. In general, this camp covers a surface area of 34 ha. Kigeme Camp has eight quarters and twenty-nine (29) villages.

Refugees have representative committees at the camp level, the quarter level and the village level. A quarter and a village have leaders specifically a head of the village at the village level and head of quarter at quarter level, then a deputy head, a secretary, someone in-charge of security, someone in-charge of education, and someone in-charge of social welfare. In addition, there is a representative of persons with disabilities, a representative of gender and someone in-charge of youth, culture and sports. In Kigeme Camp, the executive committee representing refugees is represented by a chairperson, a deputy chairperson, a secretary, someone in-charge of security, someone in-charge of education, someone in-charge of social welfare, a representative of persons with disabilities, a representative of gender and someone in-charge of youth, culture and sports.

There are different organisations operating in Kigeme camp to assist refugees. The organisations include African Humanitarian Aid (AHA), PLAN International responsible for children's rights protection. World Vision is responsible for education, hygiene and sanitation in the camp. American Refugee Committee (ARC) is in charge of prevention of gender-based violence. GIZ/CPS is in charge of promoting a culture of peace and resolution of disputes between refugees and Rwandans. This occurs through debates and trainings for leaders and the youth. ADRA is in charge of distribution of supplies meant for refugees. INYENYERI is in charge of distribution of modern stoves and parettes as cooking energy. INKOMOKO is responsible for educating Congolese refugees how to promote their business development, Humanity Inclusion (HI) caters for those with disabilities and the elderly, PAM is responsible for food supply. All these projects have close collaboration with the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA) along with UNHCR.

Some refugees of Kigeme carry out livelihood activities including trade, agriculture etc. with the aim of promoting their own living and supplement the assistance provided by different stakeholders operating in the camp.



Kigeme camp is located in Nyamagabe District (File photo)

Concerning education, like other people living in Rwanda, residents of Kigeme camp benefit from education especially young people who have extensive right to education from pre-school, primary and secondary education. We interviewed Evariste BISENGA, responsible for education in this camp and an employee of World Vision. He told us that education is good in Kigeme camp and Rwandan children attend school together with refugee children.

In Kigeme, there are various school centres such as Groupe Scolaire Kigeme B, Groupe scolaire Gasaka, Groupe scolaire Kigeme A and other various centres, Excluding GS Kigeme A, all of them are for twelve Year Basic Education Programs where refugee children and Rwandans attend the same schools. Around 308 students of Kigeme camp attend boarding schools in different districts of the country.

Concerning health issues, residents of Kigeme camp seek medical treatment at a health post located within the camp. This health post helps refugees whenever there is a case of illness and operates under African Humanitarian Action (AHA). This organization also has health animators in each village who take care of patients by bringing them to the health post within the camp. There is also a youth centre that helps them with advice on how to avoid AIDS, unwanted pregnancies and various other issues related to reproductive health.

Like any other refugees living in Rwanda, those of Kigeme camp enjoy adequate rights and freedoms. They may go out for various livelihood activities and attend school and do other various activities whenever possible inside the country with support from by authorities in charge.

This is all we have to tell you in brief for you to get to know a bit about Kigeme camp. However, we will regularly discuss each category in in our upcoming issues.

Article by MUGENZI Javan

ARTIST SHUKURU ALPHONSE ALIAS STENTON SAYS HE WANTS TO SIGNIFICANTLY EXPLOIT HIS SINGING TALENT IN THE FUTURE

SHUKURU Alphonse, artist in Kigeme camp also known under his artist name Stenton, aged 22 is a HIP POP singer promoting a culture of peace. He says he wants to make much use of his talent within the coming years when he completes his secondary education.

He emphasized this after shooting a video clip with a famous music group here in Rwanda namely DREAM BOYS. This young man says that as he carries on his profession, he gets successful day in day out and instils in him some confidence that his dreams will come true.

This artist recently made a video clip of one of his songs composed while participating in one of the projects operating in the camp known as NEC (Nutrition Education Counselling). This was soon after winning a singing competition organised by this project.



Artist SHUKURU Alphonse also known as Stenton in Kigeme Camp (photo: I. Twizere)

To make Stenton's artistic creation known, the project sought the help from professional Rwandan artists known as DREAM BOYS. On 25/10/2018 they came to Kigeme camp with their camera operators to shoot a video clip for him. In an interview with Nyiramubande magazine, Stenton declared: 'More particularly, I would like to thank NEC for organising this event to shoot an audio/video clip for my song, because this is an event that requires significant financial means that I could not afford as a refugee especially because I am jobless and cannot cover the costs of this event.'

Stenton added, 'Refugees also have the potential but their efforts are compromised and they do not step ahead as others did because of lack of assistance to develop our talents.' He added, 'I think that for these talents to flourish in the camp of Kigeme, I would like to request leaders representing us to conduct advocacy for us because we have the will and the talents. Much as Imbutu Foundation promotes Rwandan artists, it should also organise various competitions for us to be known outside the camps.'

We also talked to one of the artist from DREAM BOYS, PLATINI who came with a producer to shoot video and audio clips for this artist in Kigeme camp. We tried to ask him whether after this event there might be another program for Dream Boys to keep on promoting his talents.

He said in his own words: 'We came here, in this camp, due to NEC project in charge of fighting against malnutrition, so after this event, we do not know what will be next.'



Artist Platini from Dream Boys group flanking Stenton in a project to shoot a video clip for the song by this artist (photo: I. Twizere)

However, I would request for farmers in this camp, the leaders of UNHCR and other programs operating in this camp, to help promote your talents and support you in recording songs and shooting music videos.'

We met some of the residents to ask them what their views were. We talked to UWERA Henry, aged 35, residing in Kigeme camp, Q3 V2. In his words, he said, 'It is surprising! It pleases to see a refugee child shooting an audio and video clip.' He further says that, 'I also request the authorities to help them because here in the camp, there are talents; they should try to see how to help them as far as possible'.

UWITONZE Zelotte, aged 29, monitors activities of NEC in Kigeme camp. Nyiramubande magazine contacted him to know which criteria they used to choose SHUKURU Alphonse. He replied there was a competition organised by NEC in all the camps. He emerged winner in Kigeme with the help of some professional musicians who selected him for his song that he had produced in relation to fighting malnutrition and they shot an audio and video clip for it.



Zelotte UWITONZE, Employee of PLAN International, which implements the NEC project (photo: I. TWIZERE)

When asked if there are any changes, he expects from the shooting of audio and video clip for his song, Zelote replied that there will be some change on those who will hear the song. He said that those who will listen to the song, mainly the youth because they love music, will get the message aimed at changing their mind-set concerning nutrition mainly among the youth because they love music.

Art is one of the best tools used in social mobilisation aimed mainly to educate. This project thinks promoting this artist will be important in educating residents of the camp to take a balanced diet for both the young children and grown-ups, which is the focus of the message in this song.

Article by TWIZERE Innocent

GET TO KNOW MUGOMBWA, A SECTOR IN GISAGARA DISTRICT WHERE THERE IS A CAMP OF REFUGEES FROM THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Those who know the area where this camp is located, they now say that there used to be a tall hill area with very big trees. It was referred as a scarily place. They also say that in the past there was a small market called Gatwaro where residents sold their products. This is the place where catholic Christians in Mugombwa parish used to practice the Way of the Cross. There is also a big cross and it was a steep hill which helped them remember the suffering of Jesus when he was about to die.

Some of the residents in the surroundings of this camp are surprised at how this place has undergone better change after the settlement of the camp of Congolese refugees. HABİYAMBERE Evariste, a resident of Mugombwa Sector, Mugombwa Cell, Kagorama Village, aged 21, also a barber, says it was very hard to see a person who used to practise farming activities in this area in the past. He said, 'before you could not find anyone with whom to collaborate because the place was not populated. The area; it was covered with forests and now many activities are performed and give significant productivity'. Upon arriving of refugees in this area, you find a large number of people composed of children and grown-ups.

Currently, in the area where this camp is located, because of the crowd of people you find different activities such as farming, trade, cattle breeding, construction and many more and you find that, overall, the people collaborate especially refugees and Rwandans. There is plenty of banana plantations in this area.



HABIYAMBERE Evariste says that since the camp exists in Mugombwa, this area has been prosperous and their activities are very productive (photo: Ntashyo IRANZI).

Some of the public places include Bishya, Kabuga, Muganza, Mukindo wa Makwaza and elsewhere. You find Rwandans and refugees carrying various livelihood activities.

Diversified manual work is available in this area such as maintaining roads to enable vehicles to pass. Residents of Mugombwa practice various sport: Theatre, traditional dance, football, volleyball, kunyobanwa and many more. Regarding education, when you arrive in Mugombwa both refugees and Rwandans have equal rights to schooling, and you find other wage earners in different projects operating inside or outside the camp.

This area is home to intensive banana growing because this crop is predominant in the area. In the area where the camp is located, there are infrastructures such as health posts (which is in the camp and outside this camp), school centres, sector office, a church, well-maintained mud roads, etc.

Residents in Mugombwa camp and Rwandans around it use these infrastructures like ordinary nationals as revealed by KAREKEZI Kennedy who resides in Village 3 in Mugombwa camp who says he appreciates how both refugees and Rwandans have equal rights to different infrastructures available outside this camp.



KAREKEZI Kennedy, a resident of Mugombwa camp, says that those in the camp have several activities that bring them together including some of infrastructures available here (photo: Ntashyo IRANZI)

Article by IRANZI Ntashyo

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW IN ORDER TO BETTER UNDERSTAND MUGOMBWA CAMP

Mugombwa camp is located in Southern Province, Gisagara District, Mugombwa Sector and is home to Congolese refugees. Mugombwa camp is also at a distance of 20 km from Huye City and is home to Congolese refugees since 2014. Figures of October 2018 indicate that Mugombwa camp accommodates 9357 refugees as published by UNHCR.

A Journalist of Nyiramubande in Mugombwa camp toured this camp surrounded by a beautiful natural forest, a primary school centre and a pre-primary school. There are offices of Mugombwa Sector and other various organizations including those in charge of security near this camp. This camp has an executive refugee committee comprised of eight (8) persons, which represent the refugees. A chairperson represents the committee, with the assistance of vice chairperson, someone in-charge of security, a secretary, and someone in-charge of social welfare, someone in-charge of youths, a representative of persons with disabilities and the elderly, someone in-charge of education and heads of quarters.

This camp comprises of 8 quarters and 28 villages, each quarter has water fountains, toilets, bathrooms, water drainage to avoid damage to the homes because homes are very close to one another. Soon after the establishment of this camp in Mugombwa, UNHCR and the various stakeholders continued to take care of refugees to provide for all their needs both food, basic home equipment, education, health etc.



Photo showing part of Mugombwa camp (File photo)

In Mugombwa camp, they started receiving cash for food, so called cash-based interventions (CBI). We contacted UMUHOZA Solange and MUKESHIMANA Alice who are some of the beneficiaries of this financial resource. They told us that some people form groups to carry out some trade activities. Cash money helps them as they try to increase the amount they get to manage to survive through the whole month.

Concerning recreational activities, there are sports and different teams of volleyball, football, seat ball, theatrical performance, acrobatics, karate, basketball and modern and traditional dances in Mugombwa camp. All these recreational activities are different, as there are trainers who come from this camp. With the collaboration of implementing partners operating in the camp they have been trained to now train others in sports, theatre or dance. These recreational activities are inclusive for all in the camp and host community.

This camp has various faiths including Adventists who are dominant, ADEPR, Roman Catholicism, Islam and other religious worshippers. They conduct their service in their places of worship in full freedom. The life lived by Rwandans apparently is not different from that of refugees in Mugombwa camp with the assistance of stakeholders such as the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA), PLAN, ADRA, WFP, WORLD VISION, INKOMOKO, HI, ARC, LAF, AHA, GIZ and UNHCR.

We visited AHA, one of the organizations in charge of health services in the camp. We easily entered their health post and saw people lining up with papers showing photos of their family members. We came closer to some of these patients, UWASE Olive and MUTIJIMA Emmanuel, who told us those were forms for medical treatment in absence of which one cannot receive medication. They continued telling us that even with a transfer to a higher health facility e.g. a hospital; they keep treated based on those forms. They say they receive good health services and other services provided by stakeholders in this camp.

Concerning hygiene, the view of the journalist is that the camp is very clean. When you arrive in its different parts, whether in homes, though small, the streets, the water drainages and elsewhere, these are all very clean. The organisation World Vision ensures hygiene and sanitation activities as well as education in Mugombwa camp.

The camp has its own library. Those willing to read, residents of the camp of Mugombwa, mainly students use this library every day and on the weekends to enrich their knowledge. This library was built by UNHCR and is managed by Vision Jeunesse Nouvelle and World Vision, with support from UNHCR and GIZ/CPS. This library welcomes both grown-ups and young, refugees and Rwandans from near the camp

In general, Mugombwa camp enjoys good organisation and is a secure camp. Its residents have frequent visits to residents outside this camp. Residents in this camp are very convivial people with a culture of peace and harmony. In summary, you would witness further qualities once you visit this camp.

Article by UWASE Nyirabukara

LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE IN MUGOMBWA CAMP AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

There is good progress of livelihood activities in Mugombwa camp and in its surroundings. This means that some of the residents in and outside the camp conduct joint activities in their daily life like farming, trade, cattle breeding, etc. Truly, the activities we listed above help in solving some of the problems faced and in enhancing food security. Farming is the source of livelihood for many people in Mugombwa Sector. They practise modern farming using chemical and organic fertilizers as part of increasing productivity and land consolidation.

Some of dominant crops in this sector include Bananas, beans, rice, sweet potatoes and maize. Some residents say they get good production thanks to using chemical fertilizers and timely farming following advice given by agricultural animators/advisors. Further, banana tree growing is predominant. At the market, one bunch of food banana sells at 2,500 or 3,000 Rwanda francs according to some farmers in Mugombwa sector. Also worth mentioning is that cattle can easily get feed with banana trunks or sometimes people brew banana to get drinking banana juice, and also sell them to a local plant to get money.

Currently, residents of Mugombwa camp and Rwandans in its vicinity have a marshland of 55 ha donated by Gisagara District and have started to grow maize there. That marshland is Misizi. Some residents in the camp and in its vicinity express their satisfaction with the decision by the authorities of Gisagara District and stakeholders including the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA) and UNHCR to share among them the marshland to perform various farming activities.



Refugees and Rwandans exploit a portion of Misizi marshland (Editorial photo)

Other key activities to promote development of the area are trade & cattle breeding. Location of the camp contributes to trade exchange between residents in the camp and residents outside it. Understandably, trade keeps expanding. As an example, a sack of charcoal costs five thousand up from three thousand Rwanda francs. In the past, people would sometimes go to sell charcoal in Huye District but currently, the sale takes place near them thanks to the increasing number of customers following settlement of this camp. This means that even those who are unable to sell, a farmer or a cattle breeder or anyone can do income-generating activities.

Joining credit and saving groups is another initiative by residents in the camp and its surroundings to promote their own development. Groups are either mixed (Rwandans and refugees) or separately for only refugees which means that even residents near the camp can also join these groups.

We cannot forget to tell you that apart from development activities listed above, in camp and its surroundings there are also various crafts such as sewing, hairdressing & cutting, airtime sale, woodwork, construction and many more. All this contribute to expansion of livelihood activities

Other residents in Mugombwa camp lease land for farming from citizens outside the camp. According to them, one can lease a plot of land at ten thousand Rwanda francs (10,000) for one year depending on the size of the land. Therefore, this contributes to increased farming activities and availability of livelihood pending arrival food assistance.

In an interview with RWAGASORE Aime, president of the executive committee representing refugees said, 'Those from outside the camp give us plots of land and we farm. No one can give you a plot of land if you are not friends. In addition, they take care of our crops outside the camp because we live inside the camp. In general, we cooperate well with those outside the camp'.



RWAGASORE Aime, Coordinator of the committee representing refugees in Mugombwa cap (Editorial photo)

Article by BUCUMI Jean Baptiste and IRANKUNDA Chantal

BENEFITS JOURNALISTS OF MUGOMBWA WILL GAIN FROM WRITING A MAGAZINE THAT BRINGS TOGETHER CAMPS OF MUGOMBWA, KIGEME AND MAHAMA AND AREAS WHERE THEY ARE LOCATED

Some youth inside and outside the camps of Mahama, Mugombwa and Kigeme came together to produce a common magazine they all called “Nyiramubande”, after they had been trained by a local organization called “Ejo Youth Echo” supported by GIZ on journalism aimed at promoting a culture of peace.

Journalists from Mugombwa are among those trained later on and are new. They are all going to produce an article for the magazine for their first time. Within this framework, we wanted to examine together the benefits journalists of Mugombwa will have in coming together.

Some interviewees think it is very important, because they will enhance their relations to journalists in the camps of Kigeme, Mahama and their surroundings. They also say that working together will help them know one another and achieve increased productivity in their undertaking. They also say that in their ordinary life, when people are always together, they discuss and tell one another their feelings; their relations get stronger and take roots.

A journalist of Nyiramubande of Mugombwa camp talked to NKURUNZIZA Jackson who is also a journalist of Nyiramubande and told him that it will help them know various information from all corners where Nyiramubande operates. Jackson said, ‘the move to come together amongst us will help know information on all sides, because there is diversified information in those camps that we will get to know and share among us. This is very interesting as it will be a much easier way to know information from our colleagues in the camps’.



IRANZI Ntashyo, a journalist of Mugombwa and writes for Nyiramubande magazine (photo: Innocent B.)

As for NDAHERANWA Yves, he says that it will be very beneficial for him for his long time dreams to come true, as he wants to become a famous journalist. Nyiramubande magazine will allow him to learn much from his fellow journalists at Nyiramubande in Mahama, and especially those in Kigeme as the pioneers of the magazine. He said, ‘For a long time, I wanted to be a famous journalist, so working together with other journalists in Kigeme and Mahama will help my dreams come true. He also said that coming together helps them know each other and share their knowledge’.

Safi NGAMIJE, a journalist of Nyiramubande in Mugombwa camp, says that usually people have different capacities and even at school, students do not perform equally. They do not memorise their lessons the same way, as capacities are different. During the trainings we attended, we understood things differently, some understood well, others performed moderately. Working together will help us fully understand, as we will always be closer to each other, explaining to those not present to catch up with their lessons. By regularly writing a lot we will also learn much about journalism, even those aspects not covered by the trainings”.



NGAMIJE Safi, a journalist of Mugombwa also writing for Nyiramubande Magazine (photo: Innocent B.)



NDAHERANWA Yves, a journalist at Mugombwa, and writes for Nyiramubande Magazine (photo: Innocent B.)

In general, these journalists say that since journalists have different behaviours, this will help them learn and know about others' behaviours and respect their behaviours.

In a word, this merger is crucial, as it will help journalists work together and develop the media profession that promotes peace hence their affiliated media groups in their centres will develop based on the knowledge these journalists will learn from this magazine.

Article by BYIRINGIRO Innocent

THERE IS GOOD RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN RESIDENTS OF MUGOMBWA CAMP AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

On 3 September 2018, Nyiramubande Magazine, prepared and produced by the youth inside and outside the camps of Mugombwa, Mahama and Kigeme, talked to residents of Mugombwa camp and its surroundings in order to examine the relations between refugees and Rwandans about four years since this camp is established.

Some of our interviewees residing in Quarters 4 and 6 in Mugombwa camp and who did not want that their names and photos to go public in this story. They said that soon after arriving in Mugombwa camp in 2014, they enjoyed a warm welcome by the District Authorities, those of the Sector and various other organisations operating in Mugombwa camp in collaboration with UNHCR and the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA).

Some citizens residing around Mugombwa camp say that it was not easy to trust refugees, as said NSABIMANA Jean Marie who lives near Mugombwa camp. He said, 'We thought Congolese are bad people and are criminals who are never in good term with other people but we have already witnessed the contrary'.

On the other hand, MUPENZI Mpirwa, a citizen in Mugombwa camp stated that he could never talk to people from outside the camp because he thought they had nothing in common. He thought all the people were criminals and that sharing with them was a problem to the extent that whenever he saw a person from outside the camp inside a pub, he could not drink anything there. This is why most of the time he would drink his beer inside the camp.

Apart from these interviewees, we also wanted to know about the situation of education. We visited Groupe Scolaire Mugombwa, which accommodates children from in and outside the camp. They told us that initially relations were difficult because students thought that they had nothing in common. They were suspicious and would not seat on the same chairs nor revise their lessons together because they were afraid. Therefore, refugees and Rwandans would sit separately.

In an interview with NYABUTSITSI Benoit, the coordinator of education working for World Vision, the organisation responsible for education in Mugombwa camp says that the policy that refugees and Rwandans study together started ever since refugees arrived in Mugombwa camp in 2014, though it was very difficult. He said, 'You understand that the method of learning had changed from French to English, It was difficult even if they had taken time to get explanation and be educated on the orientation of education system in Rwanda. There were still challenges, as the culture of the Congolese refugees is a bit different from that of Mugombwa residents, as well as the fact that children from outside the camp were not familiar with those inside the camp whereby those inside the camp were afraid of those from outside the camp'.



NYABUTSITSI Benoit, an employee of World Vision in Mugombwa camp and in charge of coordinating education activities (Editorial photo)

'So far', he added, 'in collaboration with UNHCR, the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management(MINEMA), authorities of Mugombwa Sector and other stakeholders, we conducted a sensitization campaign to educate these students and now refugees can hardly be distinguished from Rwandans. At school, they share food and other facilities within the centre such as the library, classrooms, etc.'

Some students say they now join in discussions when they leave classrooms to talk about how to avoid conflicts by promoting a culture of peace. They also learn to live in harmony with their colleagues.

Back in the camp and outside it, citizens told us that they develop good social relationships with each other, as they collaborate in work to develop their social welfare in their daily life such as trade, agriculture and cattle breeding.

Apart from these different activities carried out together, there are intermarriages between refugees and Rwandans. This is a sign of love between them, as highlighted by one young man called NSHIZIRUNGU Busogi also known as Love. He has a Rwandan wife and says this proves that relationships between the communities are very good.

He says him and his wife live a happy life with no problems at home. He adds that, initially, it was difficult since some people were not very receptive of this relationship. However, now the situation has normalised with neighbours visiting him. He also visits them as usual. Nevertheless, he still faces obstacles, as he has not been able to proceed to legal process of marriage.



NSHIZIRUNGU BUSOGI also known as Love is married to a Rwandan wife with whom he lives (photo: Gentille F)

As to trade, citizens in and outside the camp say that there are easy trade exchanges meaning that those in the camp buy products from outside while those outside buy the ones from inside the camp. This is true as no one is barred from buying from his/her colleague whether in or outside the camp.

As regards to cattle rearing, there are citizens inside the camp who have their cattle outside the camp because their colleagues outside the camp lend them land for cattle rearing due to good relationships. In that case, a citizen from outside the camp gets manure from the cattle and cattle owners in the camp get milk for their children and for sale at the market. Some cattle owners whose cattle are outside the camp told us this. No cattle should stay inside the camp due to the situation inside camps.

After listening to the two sides, we approached leaders especially those in charge of security in Mugombwa camp. They told us there is no conflict issue referred to them as of recent. NSENGIMANA Jackson, in-charge of security within the committee representing refugees in Mugombwa camp says they no longer receive many problems regarding conflict, even if nothing is perfect when people live together.

As disclosed by some citizens, developing mutual good relationships is crucial and peace is the basis for development. This is why they will keep promoting peace and educate others by encouraging them to develop mutual good relationships.

Article by FURAHA Gentille, MBABAZI Naomi and UWASE Sandrine

SPORT AND LEISURE IN MUGOMBWA CAMP: THE BRIDGE OF LOVE, HARMONY AND PEACE

After noticing that activities of sports and leisure in Mugombwa camp contribute significantly in advancing social harmony between different communities especially the youth, Nyiramubande magazine wanted to know how and what type of activities are conducted. Our microphones circulated among residents of Mugombwa camp who were on the modern and beautiful Volleyball and Basketball field. We found many children and youth, from the camp as well as those residing near Mugombwa camp. They were happy, as you will realize yourselves.

RUGEMA Charles is a young man residing in Mugombwa camp. He said that this playground came as a solution to his problems and as a source of joy for his friends. Prior to its construction, he would leave school and stay unhappy for lack of occupation. He further said that since its construction, students meet to play volleyball and basketball together with Rwandan citizens residing near the camp. This is the reason why they have developed strong ties.

We also talked to NZABAMWITA Emmanuel, one of Rwandan youths residing in areas surrounding the camp and a co-player on this ground. He started telling us that before coming to play here, it was difficult to talk to some Congolese refugee youth, as it was difficult for him to enter the camp, as there was nothing to be busy with there.

Asked about the reason of his meeting other youth, he replied that employees of Vision Jeunesse Nouvelle in collaboration with GIZ/CPS brought them together as part of promoting a culture of peace for residents inside and outside the camp. This young man added that playing together helps promote life in harmony as brothers and sisters. UWASE Jacqueline and DUSABE Florence stated that this game helps build unity, friendship and love among them. Collaboration in various activities such as umuganda community work, mutual assistance, visits and savings groups whereby each one contributes a sum of money for self-development also emphasized this.

We further talked to some youth, mainly girls who preferred anonymity, who were on the playground. They told us that these leisure activities prevent them from various bad habits. Some parents living around the camp consider them to be girls with no cultural values, but as time goes by, they will notice the contrary. To conclude this interview, one of these girls remarked: 'I encourage my colleagues to love volleyball and basketball because this will fight against isolation, avoid bad habits, and enhance relationship. I also request our brothers to support us.'

In Mugombwa camp, there are players of seat ball. It is mainly practised by those with disability but it is also open to those with no disability. This is a much-liked game as UWASE NYIRABUKARA and UWAMAHORO said. They also say that thanks to the assistance of the organization responsible for persons with disability in the camp, Humanity Inclusion formerly known as Handicap International, they now have a trainer for this game. Being asked whether they play together with Rwanda from around the camp, they replied that currently they aren't but the flow is open for whoever wishing to participate.

If you happen to be in Mugombwa camp, you will find a strong karate team. Nyiramubande Magazine wanted to know the status of this sport in the camp. We went to the place where children aged 4 to 15 years old and youths aged 16 years and above practise Karate. We talked to RUTIKANGA Mpenzi, a young man aged 20, and head of karate boys and girls. He told us that this sport helps them stick together as youth. The sport also helps them concentrate and avoid vagrancy. He said, 'It is a helpful sport, despite those not familiar considering it as a sport that teaches you how to fight'.

He continued saying that it is a sport requiring a lot discipline as no one should exert violence. He adds that it teaches helpful techniques for self-defence in case of an attack from criminals. We wanted to know whether there are any Rwandan youths, who also practice this sport with them, but said there are none. Some time ago, when they arrived in Mugombwa camp, they started to practise this sport with others from outside the camp and they would sometimes reach out to them. However, this later stopped. Currently those in and outside the camp practise separately as two teams.



RUTIKANGA Mpenzi, Karate player and head of Karate club in Mugombwa camp (photo: Safi)

Concerning dances and leisure moments, residents of Mugombwa find joy in Kinyarwanda dances and modern dances, very popular among the youths.

A journalist of Nyiramubande talking to KANYAMIBWA Alexis, trainer of Kinyarwanda dance performers, said that these dances often focus on the culture of ancestors. They do so in order to preserve the tradition for its perpetuation. As goes the saying, he who does not know his origins can lose his direction. He further tells us that they perform these dances in collaboration with the Rwandan youth, especially as they found their culture is almost similar when it comes to dances, the language they use and matching rhythms.

However, he says that they still face constraints in getting drums and drumsticks to increase their leisure moments through traditional dances. Inyange z'Amahoro, in partnership with Vision Jeunesse Nouvelle, is one of the clubs performing Kinyarwanda dances in Mugombwa camp.



Inyange z'Amahoro in traditional dances in Mugombwa camp (VJN File photo)

Concerning modern dance mainly for the youths, a journalist of Nyiramubande managed to talk to one club that seeks to fight drugs. MUGABO Felix and IBUKIMANA told the magazine that they created the club in order to fight against drug abuse among their fellow youth.

They further said that the club helps to bring joy to them despite the challenges. Some people discourage them and blame them for taking drugs whereas they fight drug consumption. They request parents and other grown up people to stay closer with them through visits and advice.

A theatrical performance group has gained momentum in Mugombwa camp. It is a club that deals with theatrical performance called Mapendo. Most people appreciate it.

We interviewed BYIRINGIRO Gideon, one of the actors in Mapendo. It brings together youths from inside the camp and Rwandan youths living in vicinity of the camp. He told us that Vision Jeunesse Nouvelle supports their club financially in collaboration with GIZ/CPS. He adds that, amongst them, they teach citizens of all occupations, refugees and Rwandans to love one another through their theatrical performances.



Mapendo club performing a play inside and outside the camp. (VJN File photo)

In his conclusion, he says that he performs in another club exclusively for refugees that is called ANTI-SIDA where they use theatrical performances to sensitise its residents on fighting against AIDS. This club is supported by AHA, the organization in charge of health in the camp.

Rwagasore Theoneste, representative of the youth in Mugombwa Sector, says that activities bringing together the youth in and outside the camp have been important. Before these activities, when residents in camp met those outside the camp on the football playground, they would expect disputes after the match. In his own words, he said, 'It is indeed true that compared to the situation in the past, there is now some change because, in the past, we would gather to play on the playground with awareness of possible disputes after the match. However, these days, residents from in and outside the camp meet for a peaceful and friendly match'.



RWAGASORE Theoneste, Head of National Youth Council in Mugombwa Sector (Editorial photo)

All our interviewees thank the organizations who assist in sports and leisure activities. These organizations are Vision Jeunesse Nouvelle in supported by GIZ/CPS, PLAN International in conjunction with UNHCR as well as Mugombwa sector administrative structures. This is especially true for the representatives of the youth in this sector and in the camp, as they have been assisting and promoting leisure and entertainment in the camp of Mugombwa and in its surroundings.

These youth concluded on a note of particular thanks to Nyiramubande magazine that planned to visit them in the different places where they operate.

Article by NGAMIJE Safi

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MAHAMA, THE MOST POPULATED SECTOR IN RWANDA

Mahama is one of twelve sectors making up Kirehe District, Eastern Province. This sector shares borders with Tanzania with Akagera River being the natural separation line. The sector is located at thirteen kilometres (Km 13) from Kigali-Rusumo main road at an area called Rusozi. It has an area of one hundred and two kilometres square ((km² 102) with 24,377 inhabitants distributed among 5,496 households. Apparently, Mahama is a rural sector but thanks to various infrastructure by the government, namely electricity, residents seem to develop quickly.

This sector has various infrastructures namely pre-primary, primary and secondary schools, health centres; markets, running water and roads in all four (4) Cells namely, Mwoga; Saruhembe; Kamombo and Munini.



Electricity supplied to residents of Munini and Mwoga (Photo:Gaston)

More particularly, Mahama camp is located in Munini Cell. The government collaborates with stakeholders such as the UNHCR to strengthen its primary services such as health services due to the large number of its residents. These include already settled Rwandan citizens and Burundian refugees who live there since 26 April 2015. They came here following a relocation from transit camps throughout Rwanda. This happened after they fled their home Country, Burundi, due to insecurity.

Currently, 57 932 Burundians reside in this camp and all families live in homes covered with iron sheets.



Residents of Mahama Sector live in rather strong homes covered with iron sheets (Photo: Gaston)

Due to the large number of residents in the camp, focus is on ensuring hygiene to avoid various epidemics. This is why each village has an adequate number of washrooms. Each village has about eight toilets cleaned daily by GHDF (an organization operating in Mahama Camp that monitors hygiene and sanitation activities) in collaboration with UNHCR.



Every eight homes have eight toilet rooms (Photo: Gaston)

Mahama camp covers an area of one hundred thirty hectares (130ha) with thirteen (13) UNHCR stakeholders implementing partners. Tand the Police in collaboration with various organs ensure security of the camp. There is also GIZ, a German Development Organization that conducts various activities related to promoting the a culture of peace. This is the same organization, which supported Ejo Youth Echo (EYE) to train youths in and outside the camp on journalism aimed at conflict prevention.

Different organizations including Rwanda Red Cross, an organization dealing with emergency management, operate in Mahama and elsewhere. They all combine efforts to preserve the welfare of refugees and residents around the camp

The camp has access to different facilities such as pre-primary schools, vocational schools, health centres with a hospital, three libraries, entertainment centres for children and youths (YFSs and CFSs), playgrounds for volleyball, basketball and handball, games for disabled persons and physical games (karate, athletics and judo).

The camp comprises of nine quarters and of eighteen villages (18) supervised by a refugee committees elected by residents in each village. A committee of eight people heads the camp. It includes the president of the camp elected from among those elected in all quarters. On government level, the Ministry in Charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA) runs the camp.

Both residents in the camp or villages surrounding it have different opportunities. Residents outside the camp got jobs in various projects operating in this camp; suppliers won different tenders, their businesses developed because buyers and wholesale dealers increased etc.

The refugees had a lot of opportunities including various lessons from trainings as well as volunteering jobs in all organizations operating in the camp. Most youths got chances to learn various vocational skills with some of them attending lessons inside the camp while others went to study in various vocational schools in Rwanda. Refugees also get assistance from organizations with sections of livelihood; women learn how to sew various types of items and have a women opportunity centre. Students who completed secondary education have chances to attend various universities in Rwanda and many more opportunities.

As earlier noticed, the Mahama Sector is very populated because it has a total of 82,309 residents (refugees and Rwandans included). This makes it the sector that tops the lists of most populated sectors in Rwanda.

Article by: Gaston AKIMANAYAREMYE and KUBWIMANA Alexis

THE COLLABORATION IN THE COMMON SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS CAUSED BY REFUGEE LIFE

Following arrival of Burundian refugees in Mahama camp, the location of the camp settlement was an area already inhabited by Rwandans. However, refugees in Mahama camp say that it was not easy to cope with the new mode of life.

Usually, a refugee situation is one of the circumstances that are difficult for those affected mainly because their usual life has changed due to displacement from their own property and separation from family members etc. Such a situation carries different challenges affecting life.



NDAYIKENGURUTSE Nadia, one of the refugees in Mahama camp told journalists of Nyiramubande magazine: 'I am one of those who arrived here first; Rwandans are kind people because they welcomed us. Life as a refugee is a bad thing. Lack of fire wood for instance, I had never lit fire with papyrus, but at that time, papyrus was the only fire wood available. Market prices kept rising due to high demand while diseases, robberies kept increasing and unexpected people to feed were also a challenge; in a word, refugee life is the worst situation ever'. Though she says that it was difficult when the camp started, now is the time we should rejoice because as days pass, life gradually gets better.

HAKIZAMUNGU Adelte, Executive Secretary of Mahama Sector notes: 'Usually every start is difficult hence the variety of problems. Gradually we solve problems thanks to collaboration of organizations and also one of partner donor organization. As people continue to face this harsh situation, so problems get solved progressively'.

He added that fighting is one of the problems caused by the refugee situation. Therefore, it is attempted to put in place associations bringing together Burundian refugees and Rwandan citizens around the camp to help in the better functioning and self-development as a whole.



Gareth MUREBWAYIRE, Camp manager states: ‘The situation is very positive and we hope that even a few pending issues will soon be resolved. We hold a general meetings and a coordination meeting with UNHCR and representatives the service providers. These entail discussions on positive and negative issues, in order to come up with solutions. Especially as these agencies are constantly monitoring their activities. However, everything is normal, so we encourage refugees to work together to form associations that will help them achieve their development. Other service providers will then assist in educating the youth to create income generating activities’.

So far, Rwandans and Burundians are on good terms. When there are job opportunities outside the camp, Burundians get jobs and manage to solve some of their problems.

Article by YIZERE Nadine, UWURINGIYIMANA Jean Nepo and IRADUKUNDA Clarisse

BURUNDIAN REFUGEES RESIDING IN MAHAMA CAMP DEVELOP GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH RWANDANS RESIDING IN ITS SURROUNDINGS

An estimated 57 932 Burundians comprising of men, women and children are living in Mahama camp. Many say that they are in very good terms with Rwandans residing in Mahama Sector. Rwandan citizens around this camp who welcomed them confirm that their relationships with Burundians refugees are very good.

Pastor KWIBISHATSE Jean Bosco, a leader representing Burundian refugees in Mahama camp, in an interview with Nyiramubande Magazine said: ‘We as Burundians living in Mahama camp have perfect relationships with Rwandans who welcomed us. We buy items from each other; help each other in many different activities including umuganda community works, various physical training games, infrastructures such as schools and health facilities. Another sign of good relationships is that we often farm together with Rwandans under HINGA TUGABANE program; and equally share product when crops are ripe and rear our cattle together. Actually, what is yet to be witnessed is intermarriage’.

Mr. KWIBISHATSE Jean Bosco further said nothing could harm relationships between Burundians and Rwandans because there is an established committee for peace talks with the support of German development cooperation , GIZ. This committee comprises people of all sides and is responsible for educating and preventing conflicts. He said, ‘When there are problems between refugees and Rwandans, we search for mechanisms to solve conflicts through the committee for peace dialogue. This committee is jointly composed of Burundians and Rwandans living in areas surrounding Mahama camp’.

Mr. HAKIZAMUNGU Adelte, the Executive Secretary of Mahama Sector, also confirmed this information saying: «Burundians living in Mahama Sector are in perfect relationships with Rwandans, with regularly trading with each other. In the beginning, there were cases of crop stealing and tree cutting for fire wood from citizens’ fields. However, so far, refugees are good neighbours with Rwandans



Pasteur Kwibishatse Jean Bosco, Chairperson of the Committee of Burundian Refugees in Mahama Camp (photo: Gaston)



HAKIZAMUNGU Adelite, Executive Secretary of Mahama Sector (photo: lie R)

The Executive Secretary of Mahama Sector commends service providers operating in Mahama refugee camp for their significant contribution in assisting refugees and Rwandans living around the camp. Mr. HAKIZAMUNGU Adelite particularly thanks OXFAM, which helped supply clean water to citizens around the camp and Rwanda Red Cross that assisted many citizens' toilets and giving them cattle such as cows, etc. According to this leader, these are some of activities to promote good relationships. Instead of considering Burundians refugees not as a source of problems but as part of solution to problems.

Burundians residing in Mahama camp and Rwandans living around it need to live in peace as brothers and sisters. We encourage them to work hard in trade and craft industry. As a matter of fact, 72 309 people reside in Mahama Sector, 57 932 are Burundians living in the camp while the remaining 24 309 are Rwandans living around the camp which is a great potential in terms of trade exchange.

Article by HAKIZIMANA Emmanuel and RUBERINTWARI Elie

LIFE OPPORTUNITIES REFUGEES IN MAHAMA CAMP SHARE WITH RESIDENTS IN ITS SURROUNDING AREAS

As explained by various leaders of Rwanda, a refugee camp is not a solitary confinement. This principle allows Burundian refugees of Mahama to have joint access to many opportunities with Citizens around it. In compliance with rules for entry and living the camp, refugees enjoy the right to self-development in performing various tasks in activities monitored by the State or activities of individual operators when conditions are met.



Pasteur Kwibishatse Jean Bosco, Chairperson of the Committee of Burundian Refugees in Mahama Camp (photo: Gaston)

The refugee representative says, 'The rule is that a refugee should not have equal rights to assume government functions as a national but this does not restrict some refugees to benefit from opportunities of work as nationals when they prove the capacity required by the employer'.

It is the reason why some Burundians become teachers after successfully passing the test, dispensing lessons in State-owned or privately owned secondary schools. Worth noting is that in schooling, students must follow lessons together regardless of whether you are a refugee or Rwandan. Classes are conducted together, in the same language in front of the same teacher, Burundian or Rwandan. From primary to university education, opportunities to study are equal for refugees and nationals.

Concerning public health, residents around the camp can enter the camp for medical treatment by the same physician. Some of which are refugees who assist as volunteers. As you walk around on the football ground located in an area called Munini, you meet Burundians and Rwandans studying or teaching how to ride a motorbike.

This is where associations train hndri how to drive a vehicle in order to give opportunities to refugees to drive. They are supposed to get the capacity to compete with others on labour market for vehicle driving. There is a market around the camp at a place called Kabeza where Burundians and Rwandans do their retail trade together and get the opportunity to attain development at the same level in compliance with laws governing trade in Rwanda.

Those performing manual work such as farmers and cattle breeders can be hired on a daily basis which contribute to the livelihood of their families. Those in need of land rent land from a citizen who possess it to further farming or cattle rearing in compliance with land lease agreements.

There is much to say and opportunities for self-development for both refugees and citizens are many in Government owned activities, among private companies and self-employment including farming and cattle breeding. Readers of Nyiramubande magazine should bear in mind that the motto for every Rwandan citizen is to strive for self-reliance. A Burundian proverb says, 'SOLICITED WATER NEVER WASHES AWAY DIRT' and 'WHAT YOU HAVE IN HAND IS WORTH MORE WHAT YOU EXPECT TO GET', let us work towards self-development.

Article by NZAMBIMANA Jean-Luc, AMAHORO Diane and MUKAMPONGANO Florence

NO MORE LONG DISTANCE TO SEEK FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT BECAUSE THEY HAVE TWO HEALTH FACILITIES NEAR THEM

During the period from 2000-2014, citizens residing in Mahama Sector in particular people from the cells of Munini and Mwoga, had to walk a long distance whenever they needed medical treatment. It was difficult for citizens in these two cells to get medical services whenever one citizen fell sick, declared Mukagasana Thacianne, one of those living in Munini Cell in her interview with Nyiramubande.

She added, 'When I settled here in 2000, it was difficult for us to get medical treatment. When I fell sick, I had to go to a small health post that was at Muganza and we walked a long distance that would take one hour for strong people. There were no motorbikes, and you would sometimes return home without treatment because there was a large crowd of patients. We would reach our home late in evening at 6pm. This happened to me as I got a referral to transfer my child to the hospital in Kibungo. I arrived late because of lack of means of transport and my child died while on my way.

Well, there is a lot to say, but now if I happen to be in labour, I would rush to ARC (American Refugee Committee) health post or to that of Save the Children International and get immediate care regardless of whether I am Rwandan or a refugee. Nowadays, we all seek medical treatment in the camp. We now live in harmony and I thank benefactors who give us medical treatment free of charge, I do not know how to thank God".



MUKAGASASANA Thacianne, a citizen in the Sector of Mahama
(photo Didier H.)

Burundian refugees settled in this sector, following insecurity in their country, which made them flee to Rwanda. The citizens in these areas surrounding the camp got a solution as earlier said by Mukagasana because in this camp there are two health centres namely ARC (American Refugees Committees) health centre and Save the Children health centre. These centres assist refugees and residents living around the camp.

Provision of assistance includes examining patients, hospitalization of patients, laboratory tests, assistance in AIDS disease surveillance, a nutritional centre, caring for mothers and distribution of medicines.

All this assistance is provided to refugees in this camp and to citizens around the camp. KASIMU, the person in charge of health issues at UNHCR in Mahama camp, told Nyiramubande about some of the diseases affecting refugees since their settlement in this camp. These include malaria, diarrhoea and pneumonia. The later mainly affecting young children.



In Mahama camp, there are two health facilities. Refugees and Rwandans seek medical treatment in these health facilities (photo: internet)

However, he adds that malaria prevalence was an average of 2% in 2017. Other diseases caused by poor hygiene such as diarrhoea declined to an average of 5%. Pneumonia has declined from 28% and now reaches 4%; adding that a lot of efforts was deployed to fight these diseases.

After investing more effort in a mobilization campaigns aimed at fighting various diseases in Mahama camp, these diseases declined, due to education of refugees in collaboration with various service providers the number of unwanted pregnancies among youth also declined. Hence, there are positive results from mobilisation campaigns conducted on a daily basis.

Article by HATEGEKIMANA Didier, NGENDAKUMANA Jacques, KWIZERA Grace and NAYEBARE Naomi

EDUCATION IN AND OUTSIDE MAHAMA CAMP

After arrival of Burundian refugees in Mahama camp in 2015, it is now about three years since their settlement in this camp. Currently Burundian refugee children study together with Rwandan children living in the areas surrounding the camp. This is also why Mahama Sector has a very large school with 157 classrooms, and 152 toilets. The number of students is 21 300. Because of the large number of students, a school centre called *GS paysannat L* is a school centre managed by five (5) directors.

Nyiramubande Magazine contacted SEBISOGO Jean Paul, one of these directors, who told us much about the health, education, social welfare of this centre before and after Burundian refugees arrived in Rwanda. He said, 'Before, this centre had 41 classrooms with limited number of students. With the collaboration of ADRA, which is in charge of education in Mahama camp, this centre underwent extensions. Another 112 classrooms and 152 toilets were built and the number of teachers increased to reach 392; 192 Rwandans and 200 Burundians.

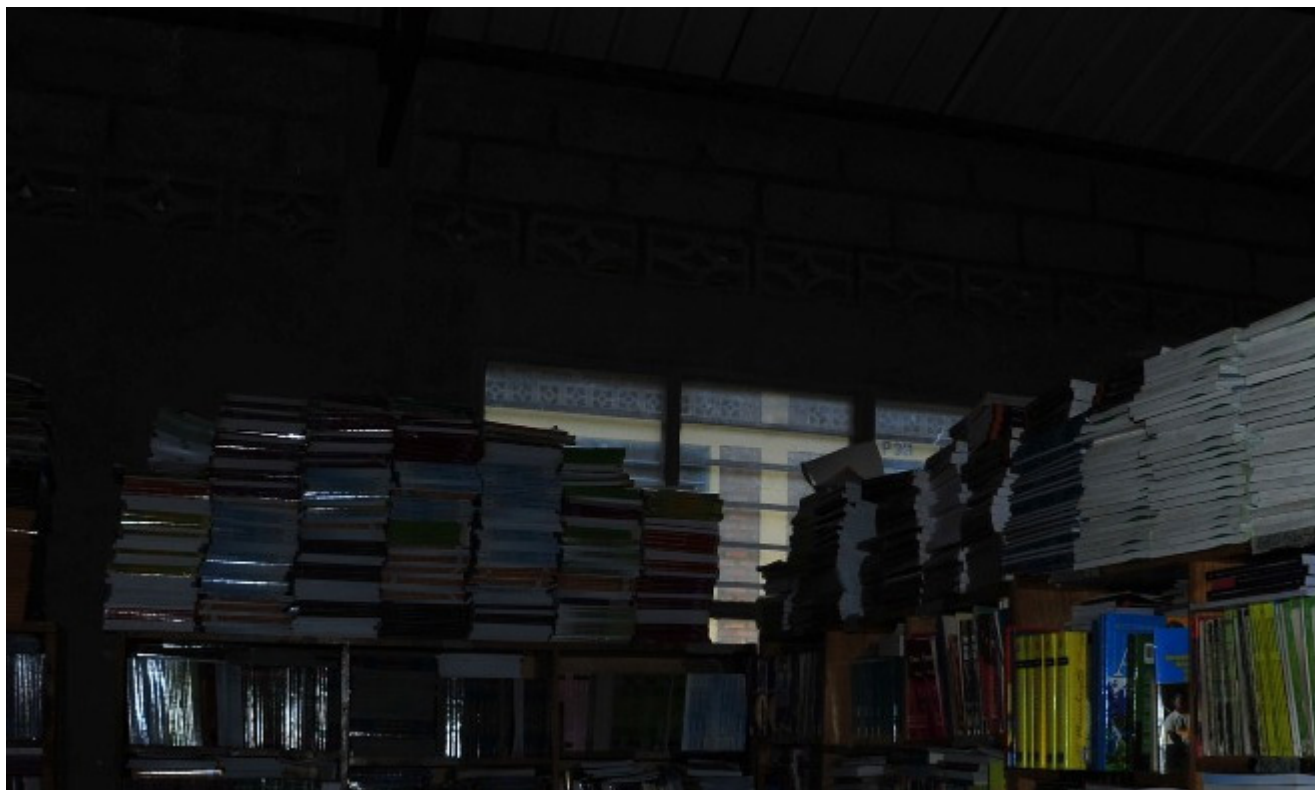


Students in secondary school attend the centre for primary and secondary school called '*Paysannat L*' located in Mahama Sector (photo: Umuseke.com)

The number of students kept increasing so that in 2018 students were more than 21300. There are children who study in two sections in this centre: students in primary and those in secondary school. Those in primary school include Rwandans and Burundians from in and outside the camp: Figures indicate that 13490 Burundian children study at this school; 6519 girls and 6971 boys. Regarding Rwandan schoolchildren, girls are 1437 while 1348 are boys, totalling 2785.

In secondary school, there are also Rwandans and Burundians. For Burundians, girls are 1606 while boys are 2375. For Rwandans, girls are 320 and 300 boys, totalling 620. Furthermore, 150 children with disability are studying at this centre of whom 122 are in primary - 56 boys and 66 girls. The secondary school has 28 students with disabilities of whom 11 are girls and 17 boys.

The language of instruction is English in secondary schools and Kinyarwanda in primary schools. He further added that it was difficult at the beginning of 2016, because there were many constraints. These include emotional trauma, children who were orphans, incorporating children with physical disabilities and cultures that were different between Burundians and Rwandans. He told us that various strategies are in place to face these problems including provision of training to teachers who can teach children with disability. Buildings allowing easy access for children with disability are available to ensure their better learning.



Bookstore (photo: Umuseke.com)

Concerning school attendance, Burundians and Rwandans attend school at a satisfactory level of 80%. In order to encourage children to attend school, Burundians and Rwandans in general get notebooks, pens, and food at school. Service Providers also distribute school uniforms and shoes but to Burundians only. As regards to school performance, Burundians and Rwandans perform well at national exams at a level of 80%.

At this school, the upper secondary school has different sections including Mathematics, Economics and Geography (M.E.G), Kinyarwanda, English and French (EFK), and History, Economics and Geography (H.E.G).

There are plans to include other sections. He concluded highlighting some of the challenges they face that include lack of sufficient accommodation for teachers and a large number of students.

Article by NDAYIKENGURUTSE Henriette, AKIMANAYAREMYE Gaston and UWAMAHORO Chantal

COLLABORATION BETWEEN BURUNDIAN YOUTH LIVING IN MAHAMA CAMP AND THE YOUTH FROM THE SURROUNDING AREAS IN PROMOTING A CULTURE OF PEACE THROUGH SPORT, CULTURE AND ACTIVITIES OF LEISURE CLUBS

By forming different groups, youth from in and outside the camp try to search for solutions to problems composed of isolation, sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), school dropouts, unwanted pregnancies, etc. There are about 138 youth clubs bringing together youth residing in and outside the camp. These clubs are sports teams, groups for those with disability, groups for traditional cultural activities and leisure and a club of girls showing the strength of the youth in changing the world and promoting a culture of peace.

These groups comprise of various sections; sports including football, basketball, volleyball, boxing and specific groups related to sports for those with disability such as seat ball, handball, etc.



Refugees in Mahama camp enjoy leisure moments with girls playing basketball during inauguration of some of the playgrounds in this camp (photo: Igihe.com)

Regarding traditional culture, there are clubs for Burundian and Rwandan dances and drum clubs as well as Intore. There are also clubs of theatrical performance, modern dance (intambo), clubs of players of physical training and racing and acrobatics. All these clubs contribute significantly to promoting a culture of peace as confirmed by some of our interviewees in this camp and its surroundings.



Refugees of Mahama camp dance in Kirundi traditional culture (photo: Igihe.com)

Jacques NGENDAKUMANA, Secretary in Mahama camp commends the progress achieved in promoting harmony and enhancing a culture of peace through sport, culture and leisure saying, 'Before it was not easy because we could not cope with our problems of living as refugees, reconciliation etc. as residents around the camp considered us as strangers'.

We later got a forum to bring us together in sport, culture and leisure activities which brought together the youths of Mahama in general. These activities later grew stronger in 2017- 2018 when the German Development Agency (GIZ) put exceptional efforts in activities to bring together residents in and outside the camp. Worth mentioning is journalism aimed at preventing conflicts and activities of umuganda such as rehabilitating homes of vulnerable people in and outside the camp. All of the above is considered as a significant contribution in enhancing a culture of peace and harmony among Burundian refugees and Rwandans residing in Mahama Sector'.



Jacques NGENDAKUMANA; Secretary for the Youths in Mahama camp (Photo Eric. I)

Simeon MFASHWANAYO, the representative of the youths residing around Mahama camp appreciates the assistance at their disposal. This includes the construction of two football playgrounds in and outside the camp and a requests for the construction of a cultural centre. The latter is to avail them with facilities allowing hosting night performances which highlight cultural values and offering them time for leisure. The aim is to bring together residents in and outside the camp and to promote a culture of peace. He concluded with a message to these youths in these words: 'The future of the country lies in the hands of the youths; let us avoid prostitution, drug abuse, but instead promote a culture of work so that we can become the youths enjoying a brighter future'.

The person in charge of youth at Save the Children indicates the contribution they are going to give in collaboration with UNHCR, the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA) and various stakeholders. They are going to construct two officially recognized football playgrounds in the camp and outside it, three basketball playgrounds.

Two grounds of volleyball, three youth friendly Spaces, a modern library and a music school. All this helps the youth to dissociate with drug abuse and other bad habits. He emphasizes his testimony by saying, 'All these youth clubs make up a strong forum to bring together residents of the camp and around it, through a special contribution in building peace, changing history and preserving harmony through its activities'. He concludes by requesting all those concerned to construct sufficient game and leisure facilities that comply with the rules and that are user friendly for those with disability.



Simeon MFASHWANAYO, leader in charge of Youth around Mahama camp in Munini Cell.
(Photo Gaston. A)



Sixbert SANGWA, leader in charge of the youth at Save the children
(Photo Eric. I)

Despite construction of a modern library spearheaded by Save the Children, we cannot conclude without informing you that in Mahama camp there are other two libraries. One is included in the IDEASBOX run by the international organization that caters for persons with disability, Humanity & Inclusion, and another is in Maison Shalom Centre. All these libraries contribute to enriching the knowledge of refugees and residents near the camp and especially the youths who receive various lessons such as ICT, drawing, and video production.

Article by Eric INGABIRE and Fabrice NITUNGA

