

PeaceInsight

Never Again Rwanda Newsletter

NAR hosts first 2017 Peacebuilding Institute Program

About Never Again

A peace building and social justice organization that arose in response to the 1994 genocide perpetrated against Tutsis.

Guided by a vision of a nation where citizens are agents of positive change and work together towards sustainable peace.

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– Rwanda –



NAR host first 2017 Peace Building Institute program



By Sonia Tona
Peace Insight

KIGALI:- The Peace building Institute (PBI) was established by Never Again Rwanda as a bi-annual platform that brings together Rwandan, regional, international university students and young professionals to study Genocide and examine the reconstruction efforts in the post-genocide Rwanda.

The program is conducted in two phases. In June [summer] PBI attracts international students and in December/January it attracts regional and local students. It is organized under the main theme "What can Rwanda teach the world?" PBI aims at empowering young people with skills to prevent and overcome violence and negative ethnicity by creating awareness about the history and consequences of Genocide.

This year's regional phase took place between 13th - 26th February and was attended by 21 young professionals from Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, South Sudan and Rwanda they were taught about understanding stages of Genocide, history and prevention and examined

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governance in post genocide societies along and transitional justice system in post-genocide Rwanda's experience to shape the world towards sustainable peace.

Group discussions and presentations on topics like mitigation measures to overcome conflict and insecurity, advantages and disadvantages of governance practices [per country of residence] and experiences from participant countries on citizen participation helped participants to get more engaged and also gain more insight on some of these topics.

In a bid to make the program more practical, participants were able to visit Kigali Memorial Center and Murimba Memorial Site to be able to understand more how the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi was planned and the impairment it had on the society. They also visited the King's palace in Nyanza where they were given a broader picture of Rwanda's culture and beliefs.

By the end of the program participants gained knowledge and skills in genocide/conflict prevention and pledged to improve existing projects in their communities and develop initiatives to address some conflicts in their respective societies as global peace ambassadors. **PI**



Participants following a presentation session at **CNLG**



ON THE ROAD: (Above) Machar Cyrillo a participant from South Sudan asks a question during their visit at CNLG (Below) Participants visit the King's palace at Nyanza



PARTICIPANTS' VOICE:

What did Rwanda teach you?

Peace Building Institute is a bi-annual 2 weeks program that is conducted in II phases June (summer) and in December/January (regional). This year's regional phase targeted Rwandan and regional university students as well as young professionals. It was organized under the main theme "What can Rwanda teach the world?". *PeaceInsight's* **Sonia Tona** spoke to participants from different countries and this is what they learned from the program.



Alex Kyokwijuka,

Executive Director
Youth Aid Africa

Uganda

"From PBI I learned that Rwanda has a lot to teach the world I was able to understand the facts that lead to the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi and also the measures the government of Rwanda put in place to get the country out of a dark past and rebuild it, I also admire the fact that Rwanda has a fairly developed sense of governance I hope this can be adopted in my country with time."



Susan Mollel

Volunteer for Dorice Mollel Foundation,
Tanzania

"Coming to Rwanda for PBI was a great experience for me ,I learned that the theme of the program was What can Rwanda teach the world and I was very interested after going through the sessions , group discussions and visiting memorial sites , I now know Rwandans are very strong people who went through a lot but in the end came back together and forgave each other and this made me realize that we should never take peace for granted



Nicole Umuziranenge

Radio presenter at Ejo Youth Echo/
Voice of America,

Rwanda

"The 2 weeks program was an eye opener for me I learned the importance of critical thinking before making decisions, I now understand the value of peace which is why plan to use journalism as a platform for me to be a global peace ambassador in my country and reach out to the youth and encourage them to get involved in programs that promote peace."



Machar Chol Cyrillo

WVSS, Program as Faith & Development (F&D) Zonal Coordinator, Greater Bahr el Ghazal Zone,

South Sudan

“I was very impressed by the reconciliation level in Rwandan society and this was made possible by a good governance system and I hope my country can learn Rwanda’s governance system.”

Leah Tesfamariam

Outreach Intern, Kenya Female Advisory Program (KEFEADO)

Kenya

“PBI was a great opportunity for me to learn and acquire peace building skills through discussions on topics like conflicts assessment tools, local and international courts among others I was able to learn from Rwanda’s history that all is possible even for societies we may consider totally broken they can still be rebuilt”

Debbie Karemera
Coordinator,
Peacebuilding Institute.



... participants left Rwanda ready to share what they had learned over the two weeks, implement peacebuilding initiatives and share their experiences with their peers. It was also an opportunity to reflect on their individuals roles in their communities and how they can become more active citizens in order to foster change.



Spaces for Peace:

Transforming youth into agents of change

Youth urged
to preach
the gospel of
peace says

By Richard Mutabazi
Never Again Rwanda

The Rwandan society is still marked by the wounds left by the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, and the great lakes region is tremored by violence, discrimination and dissimilarity.

To respond to this, Never Again Rwanda (NAR) initiated Spaces for Peace around the country, where diverse groups of citizens assemble monthly to dialogue on delicate issues, through a societal healing process that strengthens the societal ability to openly and peacefully address conflict.

One of the running spaces is the "Peace & Real life club" composed of students attending Groupe Scolaire Byumba - INYANGE.

On February 8th 2017, the club bringing together 26 youth from various social background held its monthly Peace dialogue. The 2 hours dialogue was attended by a delegation from the Embassy of Sweden in Kigali - Rwanda led by H.E Ambassador Jenny Ohlsson, joined by the Mayor of Gicumbi District, Mr. Juvenal MUDAHERANWA and NAR Country Director, Joseph Ryarasa Nkurunziza.

"My club - Peace & Real life - brought me out of loneliness. Now, I feel empowered to help



other persons in isolation", self-confessed Grace TUYAMBAZE, the youngest of the club while her fellow Israel MWISENEZA, aged 24 acknowledges that skills acquired from the monthly Peace dialogue helped him acquire non-violent methods to solve conflicts, which led him get back to his cooperative that had unfairly rejected him.

Reacting to the club members testimonies, the Ambassador commended their efforts in building a peaceful society: "You are at the perfect age to influence your schoolmates, siblings, parents, and a wider community", she said.

Among the highlighted club achievements, highly acclaimed was the fact of bringing



Dr Joseph R. Nkurunziza

Lets celebrate March, with more **Women in Peacebuilding**



Justice and as a result laws that favor women empowerment were formulated.

In Rwanda we have a quota system that ensures women are in key decision-making position. Our parliament has the largest number of women representation in the world.

While Rwandan women have all these achievements to celebrate in this month, the number of those groomed to trade in our kind of work is still relatively small.

The UN testifies that, "Peacebuilding is the foundation for sustainable human security and equitable development in many countries that have previously suffered conflict." The UN Security Council recognizes that [globally] women are disproportionately affected by conflict, and to address this, women should play a key role in achieving lasting peace after conflict.

The AU Commission on Women, Peace and Security also recommends that women, peace and security should be mainstreamed into national strategies and this call we as peace-actors are making to various governments around the continent.

In some societies women are still perceived to have no skills, and no knowledge or social status needed to be peace actors and peace ambassadors.

As advocates of peace we need to change this mindset by being involved in more debates on how leaders and society views the role of women in Peacebuilding. We also need to involve women in all peace processes because they have greater voices in the public sphere.

*The writer is the Country Director
Never Again Rwanda.
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Welcome to our March issue of PeaceInsight. March is a special month because it comprehends the International Women's Day and as such, the month is celebrated as the Women's month in many different societies across the globe.

At NAR, being a Peacebuilding organization, it's imperative that we recognize the strides Rwanda has made to include women in the Peacebuilding process, which has really gained momentum in recent years.

Just after the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi there was a need to rebuild both human capital as well as the human psyche to embrace the Rwandan woman.

Rwandan women had suffered during the ethnic conflict and their wounds needed to be nursed. Some had bore children as victims of rape others had contracted diseases including HIV and as a consequence most households lacked the guidance of women.

Rwanda decided to implement some legal measures to address some of these hostilities. A gender desk was introduced at the Ministry of

together local students [Rwandese] and those from Gihembe Refugee camp [Congolese] who used to perceive each other as antagonists, resulting from typecasts and dissimilarities.

The Mayor of Gicumbi District, who attended the dialogue, applauded the club members' involvement in Peace initiatives and pledged to replicate the Never again Rwanda model in other schools.

A call for the club members to go out and preach the gospel of peace was made by Dr. Joseph Ryarasa Nkurunziza, NAR country Director; " You should learn from your various background so to shape your peaceful future, and that of a country", he mentioned.

News:

SIT students get to learn from NAR visit

By Richard Mutabazi
Never Again

KIGALI:- Students from the School for International Training [SIT] visited Never Again Rwanda [NAR] to get a deeper understanding of the peacebuilding and reconciliation process in Rwanda following the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

Eric Mahoro NAR's, the Director of Programs while representing the Country Director, shared NAR experience in reconciliation and healing and the role the institution is playing as a civil society organization to sustain Peace, not only in Rwanda but also in the region.



EMPHASIS: [Above] Eric Mahoro programs director at NAR speaks to the SIT delegation about NAR's intervention in healing and reconciliation [Below] SIT delegation pose for a group photo. **Photo © Peter Ndahiro**

Students viewed the NAR profile video for a better understanding of the Vision, Mission, best approaches and the different success stories.

Mahoro highlighted the various approaches used by NAR to build sustainable peace. He pointed out 'Participatory Governance' and the 'Societal Healing for Sustainable Peace in Rwanda' program and also talked about the 'Great Lakes Regional Peace Building' program.

Students got an opportunity to interact in a question-and-answer session where most of the interventions revolved around the interdependency of governance and healing and the effort of the government to

handle ethnicity.

The students also queried about Non Governmental Organisations [NGOs] and their role in peacebuilding as well as the role of NAR in the regional peace stability.

Students concluded the visit with a positive note. They intimated that the visit helped them better understand the tragic history of Rwanda and the encouraging journey that the country has taken towards reconstruction.

"This gives me a clear picture of the huge work ahead of humanity. Thank you NAR for your message on peace", signed Leah B, the students leader. **PI**

NAR leads on healing through research

Research is the backbone of most of NAR's activities.

Odeth Kantengwa, head of R&D spoke to **PeaceInsight's Sonia Tona** about the importance of her department.

Tell us about the research department of NAR?

Research at NAR plays a unique and cross cutting role, all on-going activities in other departments of NAR like governance, peace building, human rights and economic empowerment are fed by research this can be in terms of activities or findings. It is on the basis of these findings that we promote evidence-based advocacy and this enables NAR's various stakeholders to make informed decisions.

What is the relevance of this department to NAR's work?

This department has been in existence for nearly three years. The research findings we have carried out created more visibility for NAR as an organization mostly with its stakeholders. We don't just conduct research but we also engage different players including government institutions. For example when the Ministry of Local Government endorse our work, we are able to project our research findings indicating what has been established. Where there is gap we suggest recommendations on how these issues can be tackled.

After you carry out the research, how do you utilize the findings?

First of all the findings enable NAR to know how its various programs are being implemented and the challenges that still emerge and any possible solutions to ad-

dress them. We base this on actual facts on the ground. NAR uses participatory action research [PAR] methods to identify key challenges to peace and to reinforce the importance of public participation as a foundation for effective decision-making and good governance. This research gathers citizen priorities that will guide advocacy efforts to inform politicians of citizens' needs and help to improve public policy.

Can you sight some significant examples?

For example 'Societal Healing In Rwanda: A Mapping of Actors and Approaches' focused on healing. The second research was carried out in the governance and human rights department and it was titled, 'Governing With And For Citizens: Lessons From Post Genocide Rwanda'. We have carried out a number of studies in different programs of the organization but the former research study stood out and with its findings NAR emerged as one of the leading organizations that are on healing. **PI**



FEATURE:



6 ways to successfully engage youths in 'Peacebuilding'

Adapted from the Internet
Written by **Manola De Vos**

So how can organizations leverage youth engagement to uproot violence inherent in their communities and countries? Here are some best practices that development leaders — particularly program designers and managers, the opportunities they need to become agents of peace.

1 Create 'Spaces for Youths' to express and listen to their opinions

Rather than simply acknowledging them as victims or perpetrators of violence, it's vital to engage youths as social actors with their

own views and contributions. Youth voices in peace building are present everywhere, but sometimes not recognized. The creation of spaces for youth to express their opinion to decision-makers and broader society ensures that they have the opportunity to be heard.

2 Enhance the peace-building knowledge and skills

Although most young peace builders create positive impact with minimal resources, it's important to provide them with the tools they need to become more effective change-makers. In concrete terms, this means giving them access to the teachers, facilitators, educational programs and networks that can

hone their conflict resolution and leadership skills. Institutions should give training opportunities, which range from content-based topics such as conflict or gender to more practical-focused areas such as advocacy or project management.

3 Build trust with governments

Youth mobilization in peace-building efforts is more likely to be successful if young people are given the capabilities and opportunities to work with local and national governments.

With few constructive avenues to influence local and national politics, young people tend to view governments as beset by corruption. Conversely, governments often fail to take into account the views of youths in policymaking, and may have different priorities for peace.

As such, joint workshops, community projects or platforms can all help bridge the divide between youths and government officials.

4 Promote intergenerational exchange

Rather than working with youths in isolation, peace-building projects seeking the engagement of youths should also include parents and elders.

Youths are deeply influenced by the attitudes of their entourage. Yet adults might perceive youth-led initiatives as a threat to their own power and position. This points to the need for youth peace-building projects to be accompanied by dialogue and cooperation between young people, their relatives and community elders.

Seek more inclusive means for young people to express themselves and participate in awareness-raising among the wider population.

Young people alone by no means have the answers to the challenges the world and communities around the world are facing. Neither do older generations. By bringing together the vision of young people today, and the experience of older generations, new answers to challenges are created.

5 Strengthen monitoring and evaluation

While efficiencies can always be found, monitoring and evaluation activities need to be undertaken, improved and made routine across all peace-building initiatives capitalizing on youth engagement.

Suffering from a chronic lack of financial support, youth peace-building activities often have very limited ability to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of their work — a situation that seriously impedes the visibility and sustainability of their initiatives.

6 Support youths who are positively contributing to their communities

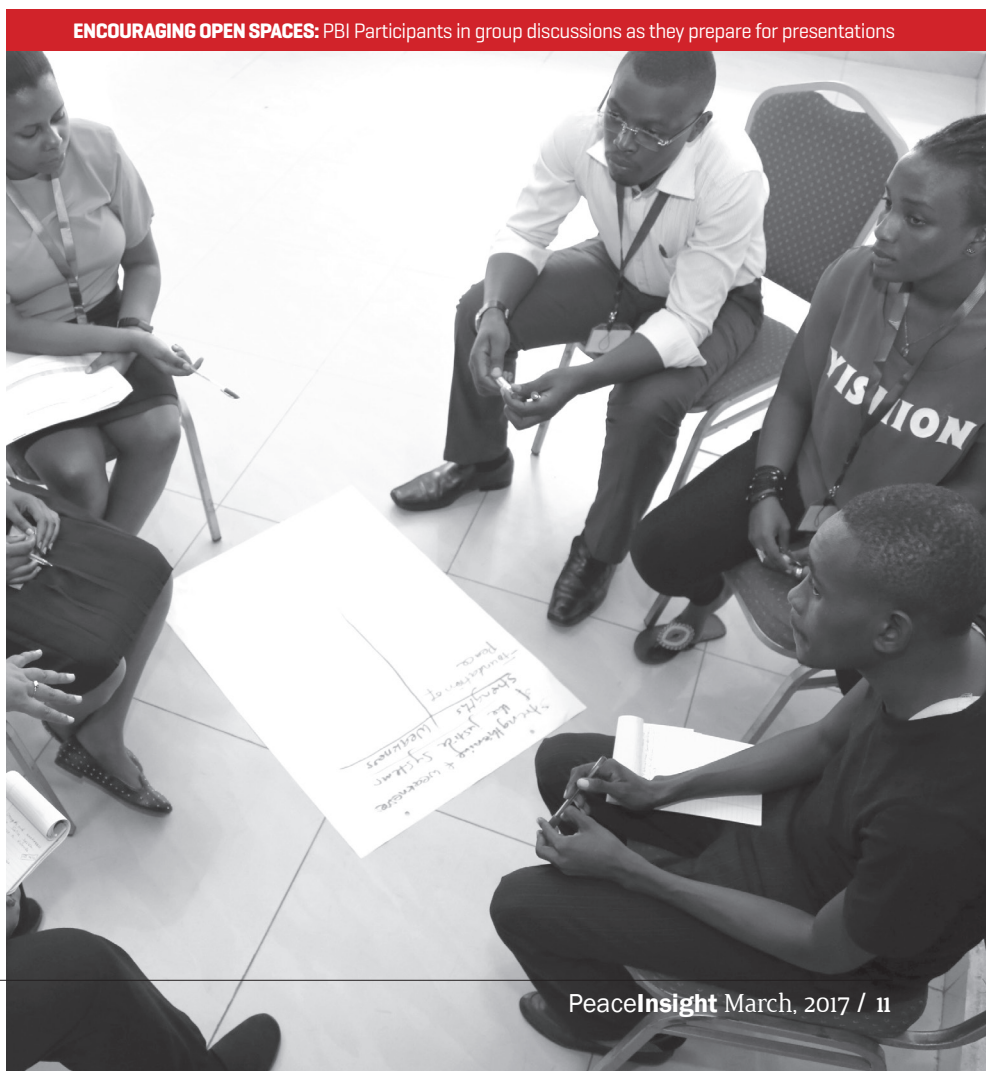
Finally, it's crucial to avoid rewarding "bad behavior" by incentivizing young people who are

positively contributing to their communities.

In general, young people feel marginalized and their voices are not heard or trusted as credible. But when they commit violence, the international community rushes in. We have to be more conscious, cautious and thoughtful in our approach to youth engagement and avoid sending the message that we only care about you when you cause harm.

Simple rewarding systems such as certificates, prizes and scholarships can serve as great incentives for youth. They can also inspire their peers to take action and participate in peace programs.

Further, try to situate your organization's programming for young people within larger peacebuilding efforts. Without comprehensive efforts to change the underlying factors that contributed to war in the first place, youths might feel that their efforts are in vain.



ENCOURAGING OPEN SPACES: PBI Participants in group discussions as they prepare for presentations

Peace Beyond Borders:

How a small local organization turned into a global 'Peacebuilding' influence

Read full version of this article on our website: www.neveragainrwanda.org

By Immy Mulekatete

In 2002, three young students at the former University of Rwanda in Huye bore an idea that would eventually turn into a major peace building influence.

At that time the university was marred by tensions, as hate words were scribbled on the walls of the campus buildings. The three students refused to be bystanders and initiated a platform that would help them act as peace ambassadors.

As young people they had witnessed and learned of how the youth had been manipulated into committing violent acts, which led to the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsis. They felt the urge to change the status quo. As they deliberated, wishing that the manipulations should never happen again, a small but would be influential organization that would later be known as 'Never Again Rwanda [NAR]' was born.

In 2004 the same students organized an essay writing competition to reach out to the Rwandan youth and the turnout was tremendous. Participants wrote essays, songs and poems about "what youth can do to make the notion of 'Never Again' a reality. This sparked the formation of clubs in schools and associations for non-schooling youth of which they continued to organize initiatives to build sustainable peace.

For about two years al-

though NAR had built an influential 'Peacebuilding' movement it operated on little funds that the young founders had invested. In 2004 their work caught the attention of Care International, which bankrolled their first funding to boost more of their engagement efforts.

"As the years went by, we realized that not only youth need to be empowered to become active citizens but the Rwandan population at large hence expanding our horizon to include adults without excluding decision makers/influential leaders, media, academicians and researchers," said Eric Mahoro, the Program Director,

"We realized that 'Peacebuilding' requires a collective effort and that the entire society has a vital role to play, in addition to providing citizens with a platform to discuss hindrances to peace action needed to be taken at different levels hence inclusion of local leaders and decision makers," he adds

Today 'Never Again Rwanda' is a major influential 'Peacebuilding' institution. It commissions researches, converges various conferences, attracting international dignitaries and even engaging the wounded in different tactical ways. Partnering with Interpeace NAR established referred to as 'Spaces for Peace' where the wounded are provided with safe spaces to share and discuss about their wounds, thus starting a process for societal healing.

The recipe for healing in NAR's perspective started from carrying out a study to determine the number of people struggling with post-conflict trauma, to convening victims and perpetrators to talk about their pain. Imagine, meeting someone who you witnessed murdering your entire family or who you were told killed your relatives. It wasn't easy but has been worth it.

With over 69 affiliated youth clubs and associations across Rwanda NAR has been built on credibility as one of its strongest values. It collaborates with top global and local researchers and academicians who specialize in the discipline of 'societal healing'. Currently the organization has grown to attract more than 1,000 beneficiaries.

"Our activities are spread countrywide to an extent that some institutions consider NAR as an exemplary organization mostly due to our evidence based research and target population. Our Great Lakes program has largely contributed to our presence in the region in addition to the Peacebuilding Institute," says Mahoro. **PI**

never
again
Rwanda



NAR
Programs
Director:
Eric Mahoro