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20 YEARS zfd Ziviler Friedensdienst Civil Peace Service
We don't turn our backs on conflict.

Civil Peace Service Rwanda

We empower Great Lakes communities today for a peaceful tomorrow

The challenge

26 years after the Genocide against the Tutsi, Rwanda is still recovering from that traumatic experience.

At the same time, the achievements of rapid economic growth, a fast-paced modernization process, and the inherent societal change call for the development of new communication formats and tools, as well as guided educational processes that multiply opportunities for increasing civic participation and exchange between generations.

Our approach

The Civil Peace Service (ZFD by its German acronym) in Rwanda supports the Rwandan reconciliation process to improve conditions for strengthening a culture of peace in the country and the Great Lakes region. Thereby, the programme contributes to SDG 16.

The work of the ZFD in Rwanda is carried out by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) gGmbH and Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Entwicklungshilfe e.V. (AGEH).

The GIZ ZFD programme has been implemented in Rwanda for close to 18 years. It currently supports nine civil society organizations and one university working in the areas of peace education, conflict transformation, psychosocial and trauma counselling, the empowerment of youth and vulnerable people, *Dealing with the Past*, conflict-sensitive journalism and *Critical Thinking*.

Currently, a team of nine GIZ national staff and eleven international advisors in the programme support partner organizations' peacebuilding activities.

In 2014, partnering with UNHCR, the ZFD integrated a refugee component in its portfolio to foster peaceful cohabitation in refugee camps and adjacent communities (see separate factsheet).

Project Name	Promoting Peace Competences and Civil Society Networks in the Great Lakes Region
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Rwanda
Lead executing agency	GIZ Civil Peace Service, AGEH Civil Peace Service
Duration GIZ ZFD programme	2001-2020

In a recent development, a regional programme scope including Rwanda, Burundi, and the Eastern Kivu region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has emerged. In this regard, the ZFD partners with four civil society organizations and a network of victims' associations in Burundi. There, the programme strengthens psychosocial support services to victims of periods of socio-political unrest and partner capacities in *Dealing with the Past*. Additionally, project activities strengthening civil society networks are being explored with existing Rwandan and Burundian partners as well as four new partner organizations in the Kivu region.

Conflict-sensitive journalism in Rwanda and the Great Lakes region

The media plays an important role in supporting (regional) reconciliation. In this regard, every week, Ejo Youth Echo (EYE), one of the ZFD partners, airs a national radio show relating to conflict-sensitive topics that are relevant to young people.



L. to r.: EYE interviewing singer Mani Martin during Amani Festival; A community peacebuilding activity hosted by PIASS



L. to r.: Student sharing her opinion at a conference organized by NAR. Family sharing their positive experience after ARCT Ruhuka session.

Dialogue

In cooperation with Never Again Rwanda (NAR), the ZFD develops and consolidates methods of non-violent conflict resolution while promoting dialogue and critical thinking. The cooperation with Vision Jeunesse Nouvelle (VJN) has been focusing on cultural projects (e.g. forum theatre, music & sports) for teachers, local political authorities as well as youth to build mutual understanding on both sides of the border with DRC.

In a similar vein, a partnership with the Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS) aims at strengthening the institution's outreach activities, thus linking academic peace studies to community peacebuilding needs.

Trauma work

The consequences of the genocide remain pervasive in Rwanda. Large numbers of traumatized people and a lack of knowledge and access to methods of civil conflict resolution constitute problems for reconciliation and peaceful cohabitation. A partner in this regard is ARCT Ruhuka, an association of trauma counsellors, that strengthens non-violent conflict resolution mechanisms in families and advocates the improvement of MHPSS services.

Dealing with the past

With a focus on the victims' memory, the ZFD partner AEGIS Trust conducts research and peace education activities to prevent a return to violence in the future. Expected results from the partnership with ARCT Ruhuka include improving capacity for culturally adapted, trauma-sensitive psychosocial interventions.

Impact

Through the cross-border peacebuilding programme "Tujenge Amani" participants from Rwanda and the DRC have taken part in art, film, and sports projects to reduce prejudice and negative perceptions of other groups than their own.

Volunteers have been trained in trauma counselling and conflict transformation. They have been providing psychosocial and mediation services.

Several commemoration conferences, workshops and mobile exhibition tours have been conducted to facilitate intergenerational dialogue and exchange on experiences of violence and genocide. This has supported an integrative understanding of commemoration and reconciliation.

Key actors have been trained in methods of conflict transformation and Human Rights awareness.

Students and teachers have used their skills in educational cinema (Cineduc) and "Public Speaking and Exchange" methods at local, regional, and national level.

ZFD partners have also developed a Critical Thinking toolkit informing teaching and discussions in schools and peace clubs.

Conflict-sensitive radio shows are followed by youth throughout the Great Lakes region. Young people are appreciated as responsible actors in developing future perspectives for sustainable peaceful dialogue.

Finally, young journalists from Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC have been trained in conflict-sensitive, fair, and impartial journalism that enhances the quality of the programs they produce and reduces prejudice.

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On behalf of

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