



Result Area: Functioning Rule of Law

The Building Bridges in Burundi (BBB) program is developed to mitigate the root causes of conflict and instability in Burundi. The program aims at transforming the lives of young men and women between 15 and 25 years, by giving them the means to become responsible and resilient citizens. The three result areas of the BBB program are Income Generating and Livelihood Opportunities, Functioning Rule of Law, and Human Security.

Functioning Rule of Law

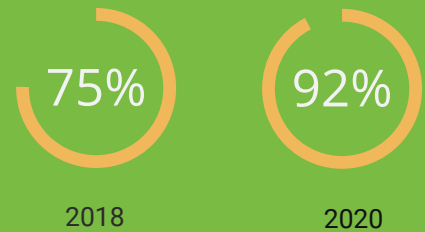
The aim of the result area 'Functioning Rule of Law' is to improve the social contract and restore trust between local administrative authorities, civil society, and citizens by the end of 2021. One of the key activities is to establish community-based mediators and paralegals to prevent and solve conflicts effectively and peacefully. An underlying area of attention has been to facilitate trauma healing, psychosocial support, and forgiveness to help youngsters and their communities to deal with the legacies of a violent past.

“ Before BBB, I hated anyone of this other ethnicity, following the painful experiences of my family in the past. When I started to participate in the BBB program, everything really changed in me. I have given myself the job of changing my friends who see things as I saw them in the past. ”

BBB Youth Group Participant

Building Bridges in Burundi

Key results 2020



participants reporting that justice institutions have settled their disputes in an accountable manner



of participants have confidence in transitional justice mechanisms



people reached through transitional justice awareness sessions

ABOUT BBB

The BBB Consortium, comprising Help a Child (lead), American Friends Service Committee, Cord and Stichting CMC Mensen met een Missie as well as ten implementing partners, is supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Netherlands under the Address Root Causes (ARC) program.



American Friends Service Committee



arcburundi.org

"I overcame ethnic differences by learning to forgive"

Violette is a strong woman. She firmly believes that "peace cannot exist as long as some measure humanity by the length of the nose." It was a long way to get to this point, as Violette struggled with heavy distress from her past.

The story of Violette goes back a long time. In 1993, a Burundian president was assassinated. Violette, who was only nine years old at the time, saw her family being massacred. Saved at the last minute, she incurred a machete blow to her head. From this moment on, she developed a hatred against people of the other ethnic group: "I saw any person of a different ethnicity than mine as an enemy to the point of not wanting to see or meet them."

"It was difficult for me to be able to forgive."

In 2007, the person who had struck Violette in the head with a machete asked for her forgiveness, after being on the run for fourteen years. When he had heard that Violette was alive, he went to find her. "He came to my house and begged for my forgiveness for what he had done to me. At the first moment, it was difficult for me to be able to forgive", says Violette.

Violette



"I understood that a violation committed by a single person cannot be attributed to a whole group of people."

"It was the Dutsimbatanze Amahoro program, facilitated by ALM, that made me understand that a violation committed by a single person cannot be attributed to a whole group of people", she says.

Then Violette decided to find the person who killed her parents and allow him to meet her. Violette: "It was difficult to sit face to face with the one who slaughtered my family, but I was able to forgive him."

Today, Violette is a schoolteacher. She made the decision to talk about her story and teach peaceful coexistence as a key to development.