



Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace.  
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# Best-practice publication

**“Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace.  
Our Diversity - our opportunity”**



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## Imprint

### **Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e. V.**

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## 1. Introduction

This “best-practice publication” is part of the EU-funded project “Great Lakes Network for Dialogues and Peace - Our Diversity - Our Opportunity!”. The publication shall act like a platform on which voices from inside of the action are demonstrated.

Voices from stakeholders involved in the action are shown in chapter 1. Best-practice cases from the action and recommendations for future actions outlined in chapter 2. Participating youth initiatives were asked to write down their own subjective success stories, a collection of these success stories can be found in chapter 3. Finally, a list of participating youth initiatives can be seen in chapter 4.



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## 2. Stakeholders' voices

## Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V. (KAS)

Democratic Republic of Congo



*"Bringing together, in various locations, hundreds of very committed and hopeful young people from 5 different countries? That is something very, very special! It was an immense pleasure to be part of the process of how the amazing participants from Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania and the DR Congo got to know their colleagues from the region and worked together on the very important topic of peace building – despite all existing challenges such as language and existing stereotypes – in the historically conflict-ridden Great Lakes region. The young people's energy should be an incentive and motivation for every other regional EU project of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in the future!"*

### Jakob Kerstan

Project Director and  
KAS Country  
Representative DRC





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## Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V. (KAS)

Tanzania



*"Fostering democracy and social cohesion in restrictive political environments is a big and challenging task - by including all major stakeholders this project enabled youth exchange across borders. A major achievement since regional exchange in the Great Lakes area is limited! Bringing young people closer to become catalysts of change was the aim of this project, the path is set..."*

### Tilman Feltes

KAS Resident

Representative Tanzania



## Pole Institute

### Democratic Republic of Congo



*"The project has been a great success in strengthening platforms because of its implementation approach. At the level of the organizations involved in its implementation, from an institutional point of view, this project has made it possible to connect and strengthen collaborative links between civil society organizations in the DRC, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. These organizations are now involved in peace-building in the Great Lakes region, through a process of strengthening the commitment and participation of youth and women's initiatives in peace-building. This project has enabled Pole Institute to forge closer ties with other stakeholders in the region.*

*Thanks to this project, two major networks are up and running, namely the network of youth initiatives supported by the project and the network of organizations involved in implementing the project."*

### Isaac Muchele

National Coordinator (DRC),  
Pole Institute,  
DRC







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## Vision Jeunesse Nouvelle

Rwanda



*"Peace is a continuous assignment!"*

*Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace project success is beyond national and regional dialogue spaces amplified youth initiatives network. YIs had opportunity to learn important new skills and reach out their fellows. Also, I salute YIs who implemented sub-grant project/idea. It proves their capability and impact people in their respective community. The project significantly extends my organization peace building and development intervention areas across the country and regional partners. It still needs great experiences and continuous assignment to positive peace. I highly recommend (EU) for the future to focus on both instructional organization capacity building and extend grant to more YIs."*

### **Bienfait Uwizeye**

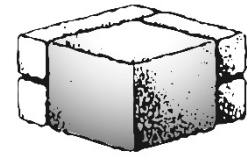
National Coordinator  
(Rwanda),  
Vision Jeunesse  
Nouvelle,  
Rwanda





## Cornerstone Development Africa

### Uganda



**CORNERSTONE  
DEVELOPMENT**

*“During its implementation, The Great Lakes Youth Network Project had several week-long physical meetings with the same participants with daily activities that enabled networking. As a result, the gelling and connection among the youth participants in the Great Lakes Youth Network project is simply incredible!!! The youth in the project connected very deeply at both personal and initiative levels. I have seen participants stand with each other in joyous and difficult times. This is true both at national and regional levels. I have no doubt that these relationships will last a lifetime and will be a basis for many great things that will happen in the Great Lakes Region among which will be peace.*

*Proudly associated.”*

### **Lydia Byogero**

National Coordinator Uganda,  
Cornerstone Development Africa (CDA)  
Uganda





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## LéO Africa Institute

### Uganda



Contributing to the Africa **We want.**

*"By working closely with local youth groups in Central and Western Uganda, committed to promoting peace in the Great Lakes Region across various critical domains such as gender equality, environmental sustainability, political representation, and more, the project has demonstrated the potency of grassroots engagement. The lessons learned from navigating the complexities of a diverse regional team have been invaluable, highlighting the importance of cultural sensitivity, open communication, and a shared commitment to the promotion of peaceful co-existence. Through this initiative, we have not only built a robust network but have contributed meaningfully to the broader goal of fostering peace and stability in the Great Lakes Region."*

### **Kwezi Tabaro**

National Coordinator Uganda,  
LéO Africa Institute,  
Uganda





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## **Actions for Democracy and Local Governance (ADLG)**

**Tanzania**



*“This was a unique project, the project team passed through tough and challenging COVID times, the HQ was in war zone of Goma, DRC, involving five countries of great lakes region with 100 plus young people! As a Tanzania organization, ADLG is proud to be part of these successes; there are many interesting success stories out there in Geita, Kagera, Mwanza and Kigoma regions, which were highly influenced by the Training of Trainers (ToT) in those areas.*

*For future EU actions in the region, this approach of partnership is still relevant; more investment in young people’s skills and knowledge is needed. These efforts and support must also enhance further exchange with local authorities and academic institutions on issues of Democracy, Justice, Security, Governance, Peace and Entrepreneurship.”*

### **Jimmy Luhende**

National  
Coordinator  
Tanzania,  
Actions for  
Democracy and  
Local Governance  
(ADLG),  
Tanzania

### 3. Best practices and recommendations for future actions

#### Best practices

- Enhanced visibility ensured that **voices of participating youth initiatives were heard at the state level** through active participation in national and international meeting involving diverse stakeholders
  - Positive ideas were developed for sustaining the **partnerships among the youth initiatives in future** and exploring ways to transform the community through the established network
- Invaluable **connections across the entire region** were facilitated, providing opportunities for learning from each other and engaging with diverse stakeholders
  - Successful **collaborations were fostered across diverse backgrounds** though the regional Peace Summer Schools
- **Contribution to growth of organizations** especially through capacity building workshops
  - Youth Initiatives have been strengthened, enabling them to **establish comparable projects autonomously**



## Recommendations for future actions

- More strategies **to support the growth of youth organizations** (in terms of capacities)
  - **Engage key political actors**, who serve as decision-makers in the region, in the actions undertaken
- Expand the scope of the project to encompass additional nations, such as **South Sudan and Kenya**, presently grappling with conflicts, thereby creating a platform for peer learning opportunities
  - Consider **establishing connections with prominent and larger organizations**. While youth initiatives within this project have mutually benefited from their similar levels, there is potential for richer insight by engaging with larger organizations for valuable learning experience
- Introduce a **peace-oriented class / training program**, coupled with a debate platform to determine an overall winner deserving a peace prize. This prize could entail a peaceful tour to a selected region or support for peace-related studies
  - Optimal implementation for the next project would involve **visiting conflict zones**, engaging in discussions with the involved groups, and actively seeking on-the-spot solutions
- While substantial progress has been made through youth initiatives, future endeavours, either through youth initiatives or



a new project, could strategically **concentrate on conflict-affected areas or communities**. This approach would involve synergizing the collective efforts of youth initiatives within the country.

- While the project notably benefited youth initiatives, the recommendation for greater community impact is for the organizers to **plan more dialogues, either in person or online**. This strategic approach, organized by youth initiatives within their respective countries, could actively involve a broader spectrum of individuals in the community
- **More funding allocated to sub-grantees**, to foster capacity of Youth Initiatives
  - Emphasize **incorporating ideas from youth** involved in the project, fostering collaborative planning with them rather than making decisions on their behalf



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## 4. Success stories told by Youth Initiatives





## (1) Actions For Peace And Development In Africa (APAD In Africa)

**Author:** Amos MUSA BYIMANA  
**Title:** Amos Musabyimana in the peacebuilding process in the community - how to become a change maker  
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**Country:** Rwanda



I remember that before joining the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* project, I considered myself a normal person. Even the work we did was focused on traditional dance and songs, which we performed at ceremonies and weddings, and we called ourselves the Ballet URUHONGORE RW'UMUCO.

As part of this project, I (Amos), was able to participate in a capacity-building training that took place in Bukoba-Tanzania. The skills acquired from that training made me become an equipped person with good skills. I started to think about how to develop our organisation's objectives, values, pillars, vision, and mission and we even changed the name of our organization from URUHONGORE RW'UMUCO to Actions for Peace And Development in Africa (APAD In Africa).

After that, I continued to participate in all the project activities and other Vision Jeunesse Nouvelle activities, where I built a strong network, shared experiences, and learned a lot from fellow young people who helped me and contributed to become who I am today.

Right now, we are not only Ballet URUHONGORE RW'UMUCO, but we have already finished applying for the Regal Certificate of Organization awarded by the Rwanda Government Board (RGB). We are training young people to create a better future for them by using savings that help them build self-resilience. Our facility features 4 group savings (Informal small microfinance group) and 1 tailoring class, as well as 20 young teenage pregnant participants, other community activities, and peace-building activities that take place on a daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly basis.

This project has had a great impact on me, traveling, making new friends, gaining experience, and expanding my knowledge and skills, which ultimately helped me change my community.



## (2) ASSOCIATION DES JEUNES DE SAINT CHARLES LWANGA (AJECL)

**Author:** Tuyishimire Jean Pierre

**Title:** My contribution to promote a culture of peace among Rwandan youth

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+250788232898

**Country:** Rwanda



This is how we promote a culture of peace among Rwanda youth. After the training I received during this project, I updated the module we use to train youth in our organization, especially Chapter 5 on conflict management, and incorporated the newly acquired skills. This module has helped 26 clubs in schools and 40 teachers we work with. In the last two years, over 1000 students graduated from our program through these clubs and now they know how to solve any type of conflict peacefully without resorting to violent means and how to help their families to overcome conflicts effectively.

So, by training a large number of young people on the culture of peace and effective ways for conflict management, the project contributed a lot to the sustainable peace and development in our region.



### (3) RWANDA SCOUT ASSOCIATION

**Author:** Umuhoza Magnifique  
**Title:** My journey to becoming peace builder resulting from being empowered by the Great Lakes Youth Network Project  
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**Country:** Rwanda



My name is Umuhoza Magnifique and I represented the Rwanda Scout Association in the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* project. I had the great opportunity to participate in the above-mentioned project activities and gained more skills to become a Trainer of Trainers. This gave me the chance to train around 27 young scouts and non-scouts about gender equality, equity, critical thinking, and decision-making.

This training, funded by the European Union in partnership with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and Vision Jeunesse Nouvelle in Rwanda, helped me to practice and share what I learned with others. The funds we received enabled our Association to gather young scouts and non-scouts, and equip them with different knowledge, skills, and attitudes. We also expanded advocacy of our organization encouraging youth to become scouts and gain more skills that will help them overcome challenges they may face in their daily life.

This project was my way of networking with different generations. I have learned more from the trainers, my fellow youths, and the leaders of the project. The best skills I acquired from the project are effective communication, time management, and the effective use of available resources. I am committed to continue to use all the skills acquired during the project to empower young people and my community to become agents of peace and sustainable development.



#### (4) GROUP SPREADING INITIATIVES ORGANIZATION (GSIO)

**Author:** GROUP SPREADING INITIATIVES ORGANIZATION (GSIO)  
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**Country:** Rwanda



GSIO is really grateful towards the Great Lakes Youth Network project. After the various training we received regarding peace building, we were able to understand well how to resolve any conflict, through discussions, games, sports, and dramas.

We pass on the knowledge we have gained to the youth we work with, especially to those who live in our neighborhood (Isibo), through the methods mentioned above. We have created an organization with the goal of establishing good relations, improving each other's abilities, and helping each other. We call it PEACE FAMILY. We were able to raise 15 million Rwandan francs in the past two and a half years to support the program of living in harmony, good relations, and development.

The young people we encounter every day at GSIO have already grasped the various ways to create peace and resolve conflicts among their peers.

This is why we are particularly grateful to those who thought of supporting the program because it connected the selected NGOs and added knowledge related to peacebuilding and conflict resolution through different methods. We would like to see this project continue with more funding to reach a high number of young people who need peacebuilding skills.

It seems that peace looks at me and you, and we will all strive to achieve it.



**(5) MUNINI MAIZE FARMER COOPERATIVE ORGANIZATION-MUMAFACO**

**Author:** NSABIYUMVA Sosthene

**Title:** Sosthene NSABIYUMVA's journey to success in peacebuilding-  
it's possible!

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**Country:** Rwanda



This project has impacted who I am. MUMAFACO is a youth-led organization of young people from Rwanda. MUMAFACO was disorganized in different parts of leadership due to conflicts among its members before joining the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* project. So, after joining this project, MUMAFACO is now well organized thanks to the new skills I have gained from different workshops I have attended in different countries like Tanzania, Uganda, and our home in Rwanda.

Joining this project has very important aspects such as acquiring knowledge in important fields like proficiency in public communication, and networking. MUMAFACO has partnered with various organizations in Rwanda and neighboring countries like Uganda and Tanzania to enhance growth and networking, particularly by sharing ideas on peacebuilding.



## (6) SEKAA YOUTH FOR YOUTH

**Author:** Sekaa Youth for Youth  
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**Country:** Rwanda



The *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* project successfully engaged different stakeholders including local communities, government agencies, NGOs, and conflict-affected individuals in peace-building efforts. The project conducted a series of workshops that equipped me with conflict resolution skills, enabling me to address disputes and tensions within my community. Through targeted programs, the project empowered young people to become agents of peace, fostering intergenerational understanding and preventing youth involvement in conflicts.

The project furthermore enabled the collaboration of existing local initiatives, maximizing resources, and avoiding duplication of efforts, resulting in a more effective and integrated approach. The project's research and advocacy efforts influenced policy changes at local and regional levels, creating an enabling environment for peace-building activities in the great lakes region.

### LESSONS LEARNED:

Tailoring interventions to the local context are crucial. What works in one region might not be applicable elsewhere due to cultural, historical, and socio-political differences.

I appreciated the inclusivity aspect as involving all segments of society, including marginalized groups and women, is essential for comprehensive peacebuilding and preventing future conflicts.

Being mindful of potential unintended negative consequences of interventions is vital to avoid exacerbating existing tensions. Remaining flexible and open to modifying strategies based on feedback and changing circumstances ensures effectiveness.

### CHALLENGES:

Overcoming historical animosities and deeply entrenched divisions within communities posed a significant challenge to building trust and cooperation. Political instability and external factors beyond the project's control could undermine efforts and reignite conflicts.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

Continuous Dialogue: Establish platforms for ongoing dialogue between conflicting parties to foster understanding and address grievances. Empower local leaders and communities to take ownership of the peace-building process, ensuring sustainability. Support educational programs that promote tolerance, inclusivity, and conflict resolution skills among youth. Combine top-down and bottom-up strategies, involving government bodies, civil society, and grassroots initiatives. Develop a flexible monitoring and



evaluation system that tracks progress and adapts strategies based on real-time feedback.

#### SOLUTIONS:

Establish centers staffed by trained mediators to provide a neutral space for conflicting parties to resolve disputes.

Cultural Exchange Programs: Organize exchange programs that enable individuals from different communities to interact and learn about each other's cultures.

Conduct workshops to address trauma caused by conflicts, helping individuals overcome emotional barriers to reconciliation. Integrate peace-building components into development projects to ensure they do not inadvertently worsen tensions. Utilize technology for conflict mapping, early warning systems, and information dissemination to prevent and manage conflicts.



## (7) RODI- RWANDA ORGANIZATION FOR DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

**Author:** RODI  
**Title:** The story of RODI's transformation in networking and peacebuilding  
**Contacts:** +250798493400  
**Country:** Rwanda



Before joining the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Peace and Dialogue*, RODI had never participated in any project outside the country or collaborated with any organization in the Great Lakes Region. RODI did not use social media frequently and had no communication plan.

RODI got the opportunity to be one of the youth initiatives participating in the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* where the project trained RODI's staff in different thematic areas like gender equity and equality, climate change, peacebuilding, and communication skills, which have contributed the organization's vision and mission. We also participated in the different summer schools that were organized in Goma and Uganda, as well as stakeholder meetings and other meetings including cross-border discussions.

The first summer school was a great blessing for RODI because it was a chance to visit different countries for the first time. Since then, we have been contemplating how we could begin looking for an activity that would connect us with other organizations from the Great Lakes Region.

At that moment, we received a call regarding a proposal for a small grant. We didn't care about the amount of money involved in doing it ourselves when we heard our dream of working in the Great Lakes Region came true. We immediately began working with TCAP (Tanzania Community Afya Promotion) in Tanzania Mwanza where we are implementing a small project called RAFIKI WA AMANI in two cities of both countries Tanzania (Mwanza) and Rwanda (Kigali).





## (8) SUSTAINABLE IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT ENGINEERS COOPERATION (SIMEC)

**Author:** MUJYANAMA Jean Claude  
**Title:** Building Bridges: a story of peaceful success and Unity  
**Contacts:** mujyanamajeandclaude@gmail.com / +250781172140.  
**Country:** Rwanda



“As SIMEC Organization working at Nyagatare district in the Eastern province of Rwanda, we were like an unknown but now the project opened the eyes and doors to be recognized and we are currently partnering with the other initiatives to contribute to the peace, development, and stability of our communities.”

As part of our involvement in the project, I introduced the collaboration agreement which was signed between our youth initiative and another initiative called Youth Forward Congo from Bukavu in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and we aimed to work together for environmental sustainability and dialogue and peace among our communities.

In terms of positive outcomes and results that have come from our participation in the project, we fostered better communication between our diverse groups, reduced community conflicts where we work, promoted understanding of peace among our staff, and contributed ideas through the various platforms created for open discussions among our initiatives.

Regarding the insights and knowledge gained from the project experience, we learned how to successfully promote conflict resolution, inclusivity, dialogues, collaboration, youth engagement, and sustainable development.

Among the difficulties and obstacles encountered as a participant while working on the project, were cultural misunderstandings due to languages, political challenges, and cultural sensitivity.

For the political issues we faced, a solution was to stay neutral and non-partisan, focusing on common values of peace and understanding, while actively engaging policymakers to support the project’s mission, which will help in the sustainability of the project.

Regarding cultural sensitivity, providing cultural competency training for network leaders and participants from youth initiatives in different countries together to navigate diverse perspectives and avoid misunderstandings, was important.



## (9) RWANDA YOUTH IN ACTION ORGANIZATION

**Author:** Fabrice ISHIMWE  
**Title:** Empowering Youth in Peacebuilding: A Journey of Transformation  
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**Country:** Rwanda



In the tumultuous landscape of conflict and unrest, my involvement in the peacebuilding process revolved around empowering young people to become active agents of change. This endeavor was carried out within the context of the Great Lakes Region, where violence and division had torn communities apart.

When I embarked on this journey, the situation was dire. Young people were disheartened, lacking opportunities, and their potential was squandered amidst the shadows of conflict. Youth structures were fragmented, struggling to find their voices amidst the chaos. The absence of avenues for dialogue and collaboration exacerbated the sense of hopelessness among the youth.

In collaboration with local organizations and community leaders, a comprehensive program was devised to address the complex issues at hand. Workshops, training sessions, and forums were organized to equip young people with skills in conflict resolution, communication, and leadership. These initiatives were conducted in neutral spaces to ensure inclusivity and provide a safe environment for open discussions.

Over time, a remarkable transformation took place. Young individuals who were once disillusioned started actively participating in dialogue sessions, sharing their experiences, fears, and aspirations. Collaborative projects emerged, transcending ethnic and cultural boundaries. The establishment of youth-led initiatives brought about tangible changes, such as community cleanup drives, cultural exchange events, and joint social projects.

Resolutions were negotiated through consensus-building dialogues, leading to agreements on local ceasefires and resource-sharing initiatives. Young people played a pivotal role in mediating conflicts and persuading entrenched factions to consider alternatives to violence. The commitments made during these discussions were marked by a shared vision of a peaceful future.

Today, the region is witnessing a sea change. The efforts of these young peacebuilders have had a ripple effect on the community. Once marginalized, youth structures have now become essential pillars of social transformation. The commitment to peace and cooperation has not only led to a decrease in violence but also paved the way for collaborative economic ventures and educational opportunities.



The prospects for young people are brighter than ever. They are stepping into leadership roles, contributing to policy decisions, and advocating for sustainable development. The skills they acquired during the peace-building process have not only transformed their lives but have also infused hope into generations to come.

One of the most remarkable experiences was the cross-cultural networking event. Young people from various countries, each with their unique stories and backgrounds, gathered to share their perspectives on peacebuilding. The energy and enthusiasm in the room were palpable as we engaged in deep conversations, realizing that despite our differences, our shared desire for peace united us. These interactions fostered new friendships and ignited a sense of global unity in our pursuit of common goals.

During these networking sessions, we had the privilege of learning from one another's experiences. Listening to firsthand accounts of conflict and resilience from young activists provided invaluable insights that textbooks could never capture. We discovered creative strategies and approaches that had succeeded in diverse contexts, inspiring us to adapt and apply these strategies within our own communities. These moments of collective learning transcended borders and gave us a newfound sense of purpose and hope.

The pinnacle of our journey was attending the peace summer school. The adventure began with air travel, a symbol of progress and connectivity. As we touched down in the host country, the excitement was palpable. Engaging in intensive workshops, lectures, and dialogues with scholars and experts in peacebuilding expanded our horizons. We returned home armed with new knowledge, strategies, and a profound sense of purpose.

The journey of empowering young people in the peacebuilding process has been one of profound change and resilience. The initial desolation has given way to a community united by shared aspirations. Through collaborative efforts, commitment, and dialogue, young people have reshaped their destiny, proving that they are not just the future, but the driving force of positive change in the present. The enduring legacy of their work serves as a testament to the power of youth in shaping a peaceful world.





## (10) SUCCESS TECH LAB

**Author:** TOBI TUMUKUNDE

**Title:** I realize that building peace starts with me, my family, my community, my nation and the world.

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**Country:** Rwanda



The training and discussions we did as part of this *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace project* made me understand that the country or soldiers are not the only ones who have responsibilities to build peace.

I am committed to taking responsibility for building peace wherever I am. I remember the day when the members of our family were together, and when we found out that there was a conflict between two sisters. They asked who should take the moment of their deceased parents, such as pictures. Our family members decided that the first-born sister should bless her little sister, but she refused. So I told them to bring those photos, and I went to make a copy so that everyone could take a photo of their parents.

I did this because I feel that I have a responsibility to build peace wherever I am.



## (11) TALENT FAMILY COMPANY

**Author:** NZAYISENGA Pierre  
**Title:** My involvement in the peace-building process  
**Contacts:** +250782575758  
**Country:** Rwanda



First, we were working from a small place and we didn't have enough knowledge about green skills before joining the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* project. Joining this project was a great opportunity for us because it helped us understand and integrate environmental protection and peacebuilding in our work. Naturally, environment and peace are cross-cutting and relevant in all areas of conservation, sustainable development, and security. The theme of Environment and Peace focuses on the integration of conservation in conflict prevention, mitigation, resolution, and recovery to build resilience in communities affected by conflict. At the most basic level, warfare devastates ecosystems and the livelihoods of those who depend on natural resources, and the anarchy of conflict situations leads to the uncontrolled, destructive exploitation of natural resources. Preventing these impacts allows for an easier movement toward sustainable peace.

Now, we are in a better position than we were before thanks to the project. It made us expand our areas of work even more and helped us create a rising awareness campaign for our products to reduce the cutting of trees and the use clay for chairs, vases, and animal statues. The collaboration in this project, *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace*, gave us the inspiration to teach the youth and involve them in our initiative for preserving the environment.

Furthermore, we learned that employment and peace are correlated. Our organization created jobs for more than 10 young people, who helped us make more products and expand our activities from one place (Ngoma) to the new one (Kigali).

Another thing is that, when the environment is damaged, peace is threatened too, which is why we make sure to make youth resilient. Therefore, we teach them how to protect the environment through the fabrication of home materials, chairs, different ornaments, and animal statues instead of using trees or clay, is a good way of peacebuilding.

A healthy environment promotes the well-being and proper development of an individual. We have now fifteen (15) employees and all of them are young people whom we have given jobs to help them in innovation and creativity through making fabrications that are not made of wood and clay as usual but use old tires and plastic materials to protect the environment, thus enabling us to contribute to the peace.



## (12) IMBONI ARTS AND ADVERTISEMENTS (IAA)

**Author:** Odile

**Title:** Unleashing the Power of Art in Peacebuilding: Odile talks about her achievements.

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**Country:** Rwanda



In the realm of poetry, painting, and theater, I have embarked on a transformative journey as an artist with the Great Lakes Youth Network project. My path has been filled with challenges and opportunities, guiding me toward creating meaningful change in my community. This success story reflects the concrete actions I have taken, the initial social situation, the ongoing progress, and the commitment made as an artist and a peace builder, and this narrative demonstrates the transformative power of art for social change.

I was involved in this project as an artist, with the opportunity to harness my skills and passion to initiate change through expressive poetry performances and videos on YouTube channels. My aim was to raise awareness of social issues and inspire dialogue. I organized painting workshops and exhibitions, providing a platform for community members to channel their emotions and experiences onto canvas, and fostering a sense of unity and understanding.

My commitment to social transformation through art pushed me to explore new avenues for change shared with IAA and we initiated partnerships with local community organizations and educational institutions to expand the reach of our artistic initiatives. By conducting different activities such as magnet theater performances to explore issues affecting communities and to encourage discussion and problem-solving with members of the audience. As actors, we perform a drama that presents a dilemma based on community issues that typically takes place in outdoor and public spaces with the aim of nurturing empathy and understanding among young people, planting the seeds of peace for future generations.

Through my journey, I have witnessed remarkable achievements as an artist and as a peacebuilder. Individuals who were once divided by deep-rooted prejudices have forged meaningful connections through art. Walls erected by fear and ignorance have been torn down, and replaced by a bridge of understanding and empathy. The transformative impact of art has helped break down barriers, inspired countless conversations, and fostered a sense of collective responsibility toward building a peaceful society.

Today, I am proud to see the seeds of social transformation take root in my community. Young people, inspired by the power of art, have become active agents of change and the IAA team helped them to join our academy of young artists. Collaborative initiatives between young artists have led to collective action, advocating for a society that embraces



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diversity, equality, and peace. This new generation holds the promise of a future filled with compassion, understanding, and a commitment to building a just and harmonious world.

*"Et si on remplaçait la haine par l'amour!*

*Et si on remplaçait l'arrogance par l'humilité!*

*Et si on remplaçait les préjugés par l'acceptation mutuelle!*

*Et surtout si on remplaçait l'animosité par l'humanisme!*

*Le monde ne sera pas en paix?*

*Mais qu'est-ce qui nous manque?" Odile*



### (13) STAND FOR PEOPLE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT-SPSD

**Author:** Emmanuel HAGUMIMANA  
**Country:** Rwanda



The Peace Summer schools were organized the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung together with the local partners of the respective countries. All the youth initiatives were invited to participate in the event.

Before I participated in the Peace Summer School event, I understood the term peacebuilding as actions that intervened to keep or maintain peace in the country to avoid conflicts. But during and after participating in the Peace Summer Schools organized by the project, I understood that the term peacebuilding comprises all the socioeconomic and political systems starting from the communities (children, youths, and parents), local leaders, police, and army up to the central level of the country. I understood that these structures must be well kept in the system to ensure collaboration and to guarantee their contribution to the overall development of the country.

Additionally, I understood that we must maintain good relations also with our neighboring countries, and complementarity in the socioeconomic and political affairs to keep fair interdependence towards peace promotion in the Great Lakes region.

From the Peace Summer School events organized by the project, I have acquired the necessary skills that helped developing projects related to peacebuilding and I was able to improve my network of organizations from DRC, Uganda, Tanzania, and Rwanda working in the same field. Currently, we are designing a consortium project, which helps us to access national and international funds.

Lastly, I have a tangible success story. My Organization "Stand for People Sustainable Development-SPSD" in collaboration with TBW-URUNANA has received a sub-grant from the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung that is being used to finance the activities planned in the approved project. This helps us in achieving our organization's mission.





#### (14) MEDICAL STUDENTS FOR CHOICE BURUNDI

**Author:** NDIHOKUBWAYO ELVIS  
**Title:** Youth can!  
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Since independence, Burundi has experienced all sorts of atrocities, including wars, social tensions, and gender-based violence. At the beginning of the year 2022, my organization, which aims to contribute to creating a Burundi beyond war through educating young people and the vulnerable, was selected to participate in the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* project. The skills that I acquired during the project helped me reach other youth-led organizations and exchange ideas on how we can contribute to ending gender-based violence that hinders inclusive development in Burundi.

This project taught me different skills and expanded my knowledge, including on gender equality and equity. Moreover, I am grateful to have participated in the regional multi-stakeholders meeting in Kigali, where we learned much from different speakers coming from different countries and backgrounds within the East African Community. It was a memorable experience. After that, my organization thought about how to contribute to ending gender-based violence through roundtables where leaders of initiatives can sit and exchange on how we can educate youth by creating a peaceful society where women's rights are respected. Equipping youth with positive image of masculinity is meaningful to see gender-based violence unrooted in the great lakes region.

As youth, we can shape our future!



## (15) PEACE CONSOLIDATION AND PROMOTION OF DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ENGLISH LANGUAGE (PCPDELA)

**Author:** MUNEZERRO Davin Arsène

**Title:** Davin Arsène emphasizes his network inclusion and capacity building

**Country:** Burundi



Emphasizing network and inclusion in my Burundi. The Great Lakes Youth Network Peace and Dialogue project has transformed my design thinking through capacity building around fundamental materials that youth participants and stakeholders rely on at conferences and Zoom meetings. Even though they joined late, the knowledge and skills acquired have been of great support in the youth initiatives.

The cross-border gender discussion between youth from Burundi, DR Congo, and Rwanda that took place in February 2023 was a great opportunity for me to get familiar with important materials and other youth initiatives that come from Rwanda and DR Congo. Exchanging stories about field actions, skills empowerment sessions, long-term action plans, and other more detailed patterns was paramount. The youth network that resulted from different exchanges that day brought more vivacity and an atmosphere of social cohesion. Therefore, the following sessions were promising to be educational, fun, and fruitful.

The sessions I have participated in contributed much to bringing the initiatives together and building a large network of youths with whom we can share success stories and are able to connect despite the distances of our countries.

Thanks to the project coordinating team, we now have future perspectives. The knowledge acquired during these sessions has been part of a new angle of approach to achieve programs bigger than the ones we used to implement. Thus, when I returned, I started giving testimonies of how the sessions have opened my mind and enriched future perspectives. Thanks to that, the initiative I represent is now working to incorporate new activities and methods of implementation to reach a lot more people out there.

Peace Consolidation and Promotion of Development through English Language (PCPDELA) is at the core of action, and its members are working in a team to find new strategies to be able to positively impact our future generations. The project expanded my knowledge and enhanced my skills in capacity building, design thinking, and awareness of peacekeeping. Thanks to the project, I realized that peace gives shape to all sectors of activities in the world.



## (16) EMPOWER YOUTH INITIATIVE(EYI)

**Author:** CUBAHIRO Alain Guillain Trésor

**Title:** My engagement in peacebuilding through the Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace

**Country:** Burundi



I am thrilled and honored to be part of the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace*. My participation in this project has been a transformative experience for me. My leadership journey before the project was full of passion but lacking the essential tools required to build sustainable peace.

Then, being part of the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* was a full success for me and the organization I represented because the program provided me with essential skills and knowledge regarding women and youth participation in decision-making, peacebuilding, and security processes. Growing up in a country severely damaged by a civil war, these skills were truly essential to me to contribute to building sustainable peace. As a young leader with proven leadership abilities, I value the skills I gained, especially in content creation on social media, incentivizing peace in my community.

In the meantime, I had the opportunity to network with a diverse group of incredible and aspiring leaders and humanitarian-oriented people from across the region. The intriguing common point for all participants was the eagerness to set up peaceful communities. Throughout interactive workshops, group presentations, and regional calls on Zoom, I gained valuable insights into the current challenging situation of my country and even of Africa and the methods required to address them. I can't express how much I value the opportunity granted to us to learn directly from established leaders and experts in due realms.

My engagement in peacebuilding is now refreshed, and I made a resolution to promote peace values such as unity, equity, inclusion, and diversity. As a co-founder of the Empower Youth initiative, a youth-focused organization, I have an opportunity to impact young people and members of our organization by teaching them the peace-building skills I have. I am also writing an individual action plan of how I will share these skills with young people. Our country will move towards peace and development once we make public the skills we have acquired.



## (17) FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT (AFFCAD)

**Author:** Namatovu Doris Isabel  
**Title:** Three years of dialogue for peace for youth  
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The Great Lakes Region has had a long history of conflict and violence, especially in countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda. Based on the available information, it is evident that children and youth have been heavily affected by conflicts in the region, including forced recruitment, sexual exploitation, and displacement. Youth participation in conflict and violence remains a persistent challenge in the Great Lakes Region, with dire consequences for their well-being and development.

Despite the challenges involved, young people in the region are now taking an active role in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. As a youth working with *Action For Fundamental Change And Development (AFFCAD)* - a youth-focused organization- the approach we use towards peacebuilding and conflict management is focused on economically empowering young people through capacity building and skills training, as economic frustrations and poverty are some of the major reasons why young people are easily radicalized or forced into acts of violence.

The *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace's* approach to kick start the project with a needs assessment for youth initiatives working towards the promotion of peace in the Great Lakes Region was an eye opener for me and showed us how much young people needed to be supported with capacity building to address the current conflicts in the region. Needless to say, the training equipped youth initiatives with knowledge on how they can organize themselves to promote peace and conflict resolution, for example, through non-violent communication, fundraising for resources, and gender mainstreaming, among others.

Moreover, the project's Peace Summer Schools have not only given young people across the region, like me, a platform to share experiences but also an opportunity for them to build networks and collaborate with each other. This has greatly contributed to the collective efforts of youth participation in peacebuilding and conflict management in the Great Lakes Region.

As a youth in Uganda, the project has provided me with an opportunity to network and collaborate with different youth initiatives within and outside of Uganda that have opened up many doors for me and my organization. A case in point is our newly established connection with the Ministry of Gender and Social Development, thanks to youth officer Ms. Sylvia Primer which has enabled AFFCAD to become part of the civil society organizations participating in the dissemination of the National Coordination Mechanism for Youth Programmes.

Furthermore, we learned that media engagement is key, especially when it comes to advocacy. It enables us to share our voice with millions of people, especially young people, talking about issues that affect them. Through the project, we have successfully participated in various radio talk shows, with different participants taking the lead in addressing these issues, which is a great step forward in spreading the message of peace.

As a project result, all participating youth initiatives have formed the *African Youth Coalition for Peace and Development*, a coalition meant to bring all participating youth initiatives and other youth together to promote peace across Africa. This is a clear indicator that despite the three-year project coming to an end, youth initiatives will continue working together for a common goal.

As the project is concluding, I would like to thank the project for bringing together different youth initiatives and creating a strong network of young people working towards peacebuilding in the Great Lakes Region. Many thanks to the European Union, the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, and all national coordinators from the different countries.





## (18) CREATIONS FORUM AFRIKA

**Author:** Creations Forum Afrika (CAF)  
**Title:** Creations Forum Afrika's quest for peace in the violence-prone Rwenzori region.  
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Peace is a daily, weekly, and even monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, and quietly building new structures. *Creations Forum Afrika* (CAF) has and continues to support peace initiatives in the region, contributing to making the world a better place to live in. CAF was very honored to participate in the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace*. We extend our gratitude to the EU for the endless support they rendered by providing all the resources that enabled the project to make great achievements. A lot was learned, and we are committed to replicating the knowledge and skills acquired with the bigger youth population in the region, working to ensure peace. Following, we will share with you some of the different project activities to document our experience, as well as the project's achievements:

### Radio talk shows:

Radio is one of the best channels for information sharing, and CAF finds it a valuable means to spread the message of peace, reaching many youths who couldn't directly benefit from the project. All the selected radio stations had a bigger youth listenership, and the peace message aired was well received by many youths, with many of them directly participating by calling in to contribute to the discussions and following on social media platforms. This forum was important because it provided an opportunity for the youth to be actively involved in the discussions by being moderators and panelists. Rabson Thembo, a youth representative from CAF who represented the initiative in the talk shows, confirms that the experience was one of its kind and has greatly improved his confidence in public speaking. Even when this project ends, he will still ride on the knowledge and skills acquired that enable him to reach out to the youth in need to support the peace processes in the region.

### Capacity building workshops:

This was a great experience because the effective participation of youth in the peace and development agenda has often been challenged by a lack of capacity. We greatly appreciate the capacity-building program because it has contributed to Lydia's leadership growth and enabled her to meaningfully engage at all levels when contributing to peace and development processes. Because of her enhanced capacity, she has become a ToT to teach the concepts, knowledge, and skills to the youth in our communities.



### ToT training:

Planning to have a small number of youth trained to be trainers was a good approach to project sustainability. These Trainers of Trainees will continue to train youth even when the project has ended. TOT from CAF is already doing great work among the youth, and this has enabled CAF to integrate some of the concepts into her programming because of their relevance to the work CAF does. For instance, CAF appreciates that the aspect of reckless communication is one of the causes of violence in the region.

### National and international stakeholder meetings:

These meetings provided a space for youth to interact easily with national and international stakeholders. These engagements also provided room for the stakeholders to understand the project and how to leverage its key achievements to improve the different programs. CAF appreciates the fact that the project considered all key sectors, i.e., youth leadership, police, the business community, media, entrepreneurship, and many more. These meetings enhanced networking and collaborations between youth and different entities. Out of these engagements, CAF was able to establish a working relationship with KQ HUB Africa, which CAF is supporting to implement an Arts Civic Empowerment Program in the Kasese district.

### Summer schools:

The project's annual summer schools have greatly promoted a culture of togetherness and belonging and, therefore, the need to work together to ensure peace in the region. This has fostered regional cooperation and coordination between youth from different countries. The youth are now considering formalizing the regional youth network to carry on the work in the region after the project has ended.

### City tours/ Visits to important sites:

Young people visiting important sites, such as the East African community HQ, the Rwandan parliament, the Rwanda memorial genocide grounds, or peace centers, gives them the feeling of being part of something and merges what has been learned with and in practice experience. Most importantly, these trips supported local tourism in the DRC, Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda and inspired young people to engage, dream big, and promote partnerships.



## (19) MENGO YOUTH DEVELOPMENT LINK

**Author:** Nakitende Angella

**Title:** Reshaping society: Lessons I learned in the peace-building process.

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My involvement in the *Great Lakes Youth Network For Dialogue And Peace* project activities has been transformative in my life, the organization, and my community. I have acquired knowledge on how to address various challenges that required solutions in our community in Kisenyi. One of these challenges is the prevalence of gender inequality and gender-based violence. In Kisenyi, many girls and women are marginalized, lacking economic opportunities, education, and decision-making platforms. Additionally, the region's geographic location greatly contributes to the youths' engagement in violence.

The project activities widened my knowledge and understanding of peace through capacity-building workshops that addressed peace-hindering issues, for instance, gender inequality and gender-based violence (GBV); or peace-promoting issues, such as economic stability and inclusivity; and equipped us with the tools to advocate for societal change.

Through the *Great Lakes Youth Network For Dialogue And Peace* project, I and my fellow youth at MYDEL acquired tools that helped us change our society. The project enabled us to learn and network with other initiatives. It also emphasized the importance of promoting peace and stability.

We incorporated ideas, strategies, and addressed issues in our region. We conducted dialogues and workshops on youth involvement in peace focused on raising awareness of the role of youth in peacebuilding; ghetto parliament, which advocates for meaningful inclusion of the ghetto youth in decision-making processes; and GBV prevention dialogue meetings which navigated strategies for conflict prevention. As a result, more young people in the community of Kisenyi became aware of the importance of gender equality, and victims also sought help.

We are currently working on increasing awareness of GBV ensuring the launch of a GBV prevention program that advocates for women and girls to promote gender equality and equip women and girls with the skills to become entrepreneurs, as well as to reach out to more young people and the community to inform them about the consequences of GBV and its relation to peace. We also actively engaged with community leaders and policymakers to advocate for policies addressing GBV, which resulted in their announced commitment to prioritize GBV in the Kampala central region.





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In summary, the *Great Lakes Youth Network For Dialogue And Peace* (GLYN) project has laid a foundation for us young people to continue with our efforts in addressing peace-related issues. It has provided a network and an umbrella for youth who have become agents of change, centering conversations around peace and stability by fighting against violence in the region and challenging policymakers by calling for youth inclusivity and advocating for peace. The project has nurtured unity among us, for example, through the peace summer school, which brought youth from all over the region together and created a platform for open dialogue. It sparked new ideas and resolutions and paved the way for the youth to promote peace in the Great Lakes Region.

Anticipating the future, we are optimistic about young people's prospects building on to the foundation laid by the GLYN project. They are now well equipped with tools and a network that enables national and cross-border partnerships that will help them to promote peace and advocate for the implementation of regional policies in the Great Lakes Region. The zeal the young people exhibit positions them where their efforts yield lasting impact, where discrimination and violence will be eradicated, and where the Great Lakes region upholds peace. Seeing the determination of my fellow young people reaffirms my belief in their transformative power. They have the power to create positive change in the region. Truly, we shape the future.



## (20) Peace Builders Coalition (PBC)

**Author:** Gerald Barekye

**Title:** If not for this project, where would I explore my potential in peacebuilding?

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**Country:** Uganda



It was in 2019 when I got an opportunity to participate in a boot camp on peacebuilding that was under the Coalition for Action [1325 \(COACT\)](#). The boot camp presented me with an opportunity to explore my potential and improve my confidence in carrying out peacebuilding activities from the local to the global level. That boot camp helped me to find a new youth-led organization called Peace Builders Coalition ([PBC](#)) together with three other colleagues from the Ntungamo district.

With that background, the knowledge gained in peacebuilding and the network I established led me to participate in the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace*. The project introduced me to new approaches in peacebuilding through a series of activities, including capacity-building workshops, peace summer schools, and multi-stakeholder engagements, and provided platforms for communications to reach wide coverage of people, including radio talk shows and Zoom meetings, among others.

Furthermore, the project's network gave me the opportunity to connect to different youth-led organizations across the Great Lakes Region. For example, PBC has been able to make official partnerships and signed MoUs with two organizations in the Democratic Republic of Congo, one in Burundi, two in Rwanda, and one in Tanzania. In addition, PBC became one of the founding members of the African Youth Coalition for Peace and Development, a network that has been formed to sustain the Great Lakes Project for Dialogue and Peace. All these opportunities have come along with this project, and this enhanced my capacity and my organization's capacity in peace-building activities at all levels.

Previously, I was doing peace-building work at the community level, and I would not have imagined the severity of the conflict in the Great Lakes Region and the role young people would play in solving the re-occurrence of conflicts in the region. The project exposed me and our organization to be known at regional and global levels. For instance, the project launched a website where our organization was published, and this increased our coverage and network by giving us references.

Furthermore, the organization was operating at the community level, and this project exposed us to national and international platforms that have allowed us to connect and network to build our capacities and organizational structures. As of current, our organization is well structured with relevant young people who have benefited from this project by building their capacities in organizational management. The organization is now one of the leading peacebuilding organizations in the Ntungamo district and Uganda



at large. The organization that was previously community-based is now in the process of registering as a Non-Governmental Organisation in Uganda.

Currently, my and my entire team's capacity has been enhanced and improved in the field of peacebuilding. The knowledge we gained has enabled us to train 28 young people in the Ntungamo district using the project book manual that was developed. The trained young people are now peace ambassadors representing PBC at the district level. Further, PBC has nurtured young leaders in education institutions and established a network of young peacebuilders in education institutions. As of now, four peace clubs have been fully established in four secondary schools in the Ntungamo district (Kyamate, Ntungamo, Nyakyeru, and Ruhanga secondary school).

Through workshops and using media, I have been able to touch the lives of young people in Uganda and build their capacity in peacebuilding, conflict analysis, effective communication, and Mediation. The networks from this project have opened opportunities for us as an organization, and we believe that together we can build an inclusive, peaceful world.

I wish that the project was repeated to keep resolving conflicts in the region!





## (21) ACTION FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT UGANDA (ACoyDE)

**Author:** Mwaka Geraldine

**Title:** A problem shared is a problem solved! The changing, transitioning, and promising peace situation in my community.

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The *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* project provided experience and knowledge through various capacity-building exercises, which helped participants build more confidence and expand their networking space. Through annual summer schools, different conferences, and workshops, my organization was able to carry out a peace-building workshop, including members from our organization as well as a few members from other organizations and a few youths from the community in which peace-building processes were taught. Different stakeholders were also involved, that is, government officials and people in the media.

Initially, there was limited exposure and knowledge of the peace context, the roles of young people in peace-building processes, the contribution of gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and conflict management, as well as the role of state and non-state actors in peace-building processes. Now, on the other hand, the young people in our organization are able to express themselves confidently with facts on the conflict situation in the Great Lakes Region as well as the different peace-building processes and conflict resolution methods.

In conclusion, there's a more positive attitude from young people regarding peace-building processes. There's improvement in how young people resolve conflicts in the community. More peaceful methods of conflict resolution are being used, including mediation, adjudication, reconciliation, and negotiation, and young people are pledging to promote peace in all their aspects of life, that is families, workplaces, politics, promoting gender equity, and relating with people in society.



## (22) YOUTH FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT UGANDA (YOPEDU)

**Author:** CHRISTOPHER AHIMBISIBWE  
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I thought I knew what I was doing in line with my profession was enough to understand the youth. The day I joined *Youth for Peace and Development Uganda (YOPEDU)*, which linked me to the global world of fellow youth full of expertise and experience, changed my thinking and way of working. The Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace, which I like to call the “Visual Gate Opener,” changed my life and the way I do things when it comes to youth participation.

For me, it was not easy to understand from the start why youth should be involved in peace dialogues, as they still seemed to be so young to be involved with such issues. However, through the different training workshops I attended, I have received the answer that would describe where I belong.

For instance, the Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) Agenda, established by UNSCR2250 (2015), recognizes young people’s inclusion and participation as a key dimension of building and sustaining peace and security for all. This was one of many reasons that described and answered my question. Going back to my initiative, we have now another level of understanding of what we should be doing to sustain and develop our initiative because we have what it needs to train other youth in our community.





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Putting the benefit of capacity-building aside, the connections and friendships we made through different dialogues by meeting different youth initiatives across the region are enlarging our organization's network and helping our initiative gain visibility. The most special moment was when we managed to be among the winners of the subgrant scheme competition.

Sharing experiences with fellow youth from different countries was also another level of understanding of how youth can, directly and indirectly, be a part of nation-building.

The international activities, like the summer school program, were also a gate opener for us to discover more information concerning intercultural perspectives and beliefs.

Looking, it was necessary for the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* to work with us since it was the only way of bringing youth on board. It is important to understand that peace is more than the absence of war and violence. It is also about the attitudes and political, economic, and social structures that promote and sustain peace.



**(23) AGRI THAMANI**

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Kagera region in Tanzania has been known for its conflict. For this reason, a youth ToT, the peace mini training to youth initiatives, has yielded tremendous impact towards network expansion and creating more peace ambassadors in the Kagera region.

The following two participants reported that they had been incorporating topics we learned into their youth programs:

“Through the training, I was able to learn about conflict resolution, and now I use non-violent communication and dialogue to defuse tensions individually and with the community I serve. However, I also teach the same elements when training my fellow youths in our YTO programs, where I can see behavioral change as I see youth embrace and celebrate diversity and live in harmony with their peers but also resolve conflicts without resorting to violence within the community” *Jovitha from Youth Vocational Training (YTO).*

“*Abeid Bushira*” from Hope Organization is passionate about digital inclusion for all, and he works closely with youths in peripheral communities. *Abeid* reported that he involves peace-building elements during his field visits and capacitates his fellow youths on the necessary skills to resolve conflicts peacefully, understand diversity, and work together towards common goals.

“After receiving the trainings, I have personally improved in terms of interacting with my fellows respectfully and in a non-violent manner, but also I share the knowledge received from the training with my fellow youths, which I see has brought great impact as youths are becoming more aware of the importance of respecting each other’s opinions and perspectives thus dramatic decrease in violence in my area” *Abeid.*



## (24) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE SUPPORT ORGANIZATION (CODISO)

**Author:** Fredrick Mukiza Felix  
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CODISO has used education in the community of Ngara district as a powerful tool for change by creating a safe environment for children through Community trainings, radio talk shows and TV shows, and the formation of 20 school clubs in 3 wards on preventing GBV. We managed to partner with *The Populace Foundation International* (TPFI) from Kampala-Uganda - a youth initiative that is part of the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace*- and together, we are implementing this project that fight Gender-based violence.

Furthermore, we established CODISO Youth Groups, where young men are engaged in carpentry and agriculture, and young women are engaged in sewing and agriculture. The groups have been established by 20 young people, 10 are male and 10 female who meet every week to discuss issues related to young people and look at the opportunities available in the community around them.

All of these young people have skills, and each of them is responsible to continue sharing their knowledge in the community by teaching five other young people so that these young people can eventually have their own income and live a peaceful life.

The youth is also involved in vegetable gardening and cultivating groundnuts, beans, and maize. Furthermore, they are in the process of officially registering their groups so that they have the possibility to apply for youth loans from the Council. All of this could not have been possible without being equipped by the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace Project*. We believe in the positive role that youth can play in building sustainable peace within the region.





## (25) FADHILI TEENS TANZANIA

**Author:** Salah Emmanuel  
**Title:** Salah talks about the impact of his participation in the Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace Project.  
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My participation in the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace Project* has been a transformative experience that has shaped my perspective on peacebuilding processes and my participation in the project, focusing on the summer school and the regional multi-stakeholders meeting that served as a catalyst for increased collaboration between youth structures, civil society organizations, government agencies, and international partners has had a significant impact on me. During these activities, the project brought together youth from diverse backgrounds to engage in meaningful discussions, capacity-building activities, and collaborative initiatives.

The summer school held in DR Congo in January 2022 provided a platform for participants to meet, exchange, connect, and continue dialogue for peace between youth groups with national and international stakeholders in politics, business, and civil society and explore various topics related to conflict resolution, peacebuilding strategies, human rights, and sustainable development. Through engaging discussions, workshops, and team-building activities, I gained valuable knowledge and skills necessary for promoting peace within my respective community. This exchange of ideas fostered a sense of unity and understanding among youth from different ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds.

As a result of the project, several resolutions and commitments were made. Firstly, I collectively pledged to promote peace and non-violence within my community by organizing awareness sessions, advocating for youth inclusion in decision-making processes at local, national, and regional levels, as well as being in a network of young peacebuilders to facilitate ongoing collaboration and support.

The prospects for youth involved in the Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace project are promising since I have gained valuable skills in gender equality, non-violent communication, and media use in peacebuilding, advocacy, and project management that will serve me well in the future. Moreover, the network established during the project provides a platform for ongoing collaboration and knowledge sharing among young peacebuilders.

In conclusion, my participation in the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace Project* has been a life-changing experience. This is primarily due to the exposure I gained through various activities, such as visiting Bulimba in DR Congo, engaging in team-building games and intercultural performances, participating in football games for peace, and enjoying entertainment events. Additionally, visiting significant places like the Kigali



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Genocide Memorial and the Rwanda Parliament was a deeply impactful experience since the Kigali Genocide Memorial served as a stark reminder of the atrocities committed during the Rwandan genocide.

Firsthand, I witnessed the power of dialogue, collaboration, and youth empowerment in promoting peace. The project has not only equipped me with the necessary knowledge to contribute to peacebuilding efforts but has also connected me with a network of like-minded individuals and civil society who are committed to creating a better future for the Great Lakes region.



## (26) FADHILI TEENS TANZANIA

**Author:** Vivian H. Kori

**Title:** My involvement in the peace-building process: Emmanuella talks about her social transformation

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**Country:** Tanzania



Being part of this youth initiative on peacebuilding has helped me transform my thinking about peace processes and the role of us as youth in maintaining that peace. The initiative gave me many opportunities to share and discuss different ideas and experiences and to learn how former youth have contributed to the peacebuilding process in their respective countries.

The summer school that was held in Entebbe, Uganda, was very engaging, and we shared very constructive approaches among us who attended the meeting during the days of the event. Engaging scholars and activists in peace dialogues that involve youth have helped us creating a clear picture of what we should do to maintain peace and engage ourselves in supporting other youth in maintaining peace, starting at the family level.

In the beginning, many youths who were part of the project were not aware of their role in issues or practices that are used as a channel in hiding peacebuilding or supporting the peacebuilding process. Many young people do not think about taking leadership positions, leading transformation, and maintaining what they think is right for the country. Rather, they are used by older politicians or political systems to fulfill their political desires.

Different trainings, capacity building, dialogues, and meetings organized helped us generate transformative ideas and knowledge that would first help individuals and our nations in general.

The project has also helped us as youth to make commitments to working to support other youth and our communities and to act as agents of change in maintaining peace and security among our Great Lake Regions. I count this as a great achievement of this project.



## (27) HIMIZA SOCIAL JUSTICE

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**Title:** Strengthening youth participation and the role of Youths handbook  
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Under the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace Project*, as a ToT, we worked every day for two years to strengthen youth initiatives in Tanzania together with civil society organizations, partner institutions, and government agencies. More than 40 people were trained under the “Multi-stakeholders Program,” and another 30 young people gained training under the Mini-local Training.

In addition, we supported young activists in implementing dozens of socially important initiatives and innovative projects aimed at improving peace and gender in Tanzania.

Young women developed leadership skills through training and found platforms to make their voices heard and influence decision-making in public matters. In consultative forums with community leaders, both young men and women articulated their concerns and robustly engaged, challenged, and debated ideas with other interlocutors to find mutually agreeable solutions. Newly acquired leadership skills helped young men and women advocate for peace and gender equality. Around 30 youth equipped with training and support, organizational development, and gender transformative action raised their voice for positive change as youth initiatives.

As ToTs, we have been part of this network, and one of its most prized achievements is the development of the Youth Action Handbook. It is a set of practical exercises that help raise awareness on conflict issues, such as the consequences of harmful gender norms in conflict-affected societies. As an experienced ToT, Silas loves recounting the story of his training in Tanzania with the Youth Action Handbook. The Mini Local Training was the first time our Youth Action Handbook was applied, and its success was immediate, Silas recalled. Following the training, youths immediately began to share the knowledge and skills they had gained with the other networks of the region.

### Building a dialogue between peacebuilders and police: a success story from Tanzania

As we learned from Silas (ToT) and Grance’s experience in Tanzania, the value of our networks lies in their ability to bring people together for meaningful conversations on relevant issues for their communities. The ability to build connections does not stop at peacebuilders and civil society representatives; it can also extend to peacekeepers, local leaders, and decision-makers. Our ToT from Tanzania, Silas, shared an incredible success story, where a meaningful encounter occurred between civil society activists and local



women ward councilors. During a Mini-Training Capacity Building Workshop, women could engage in an interactive and open conversation, which was facilitated by Silas.

There, they found the space to share their commitment to promoting gender inclusivity in Tanzania's police program of community awareness and peacebuilding. These are the moments when we witness our members' power to stimulate change in their societies. As the knowledge flows from the police (community education department) to peacebuilders, we can appreciate the network's ability to provide safe spaces for youths to dialogue and learn from each other.

The challenges that I observed during the project are as follows: It is not easy to track the positive impact since the project supports organization and manpower development through training hence it can be measured properly only in the long run. Many youths want to join the local mini-training, but due to budget limitations, we cannot take everyone in.

The major lesson learned from this project is the fact that youth initiatives are the right platforms to support peace development.



## (28) UMOJA WA WAWEZESHAJI KIOO

**Author:** Amina Kasim

**Title:** "Harmony Unleashed: Celebrating the Transformative Power of Youth Initiatives in the Great Lakes Region"

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Throughout the project, it became evident that empowering youth to take the lead in promoting peace and unity is crucial, as we have the energy, creativity, and determination to drive positive change within our communities. We could see this in different dialogues that we held, which showed us that investing in us not only enhances our sense of ownership but also creates a sustainable impact.

I learned that collaboration among our initiatives is key to achieving sustainable peace and collective impact. Building a strong network among our initiatives provides a powerful mechanism for collective action and sharing experiences and best practices that enable our initiatives to leverage their strengths and address challenges effectively.

Recognizing the importance of local ownership and sustainability, the project empowered local youth leaders by providing us with capacity-building opportunities, mentorship, and resources and ensured that the initiatives would continue to thrive long after its conclusion. Furthermore, dialogue emerged as a driving force for positive transformation; we had an open conversation, active listening, and respectful exchanges, and the project facilitated the understanding of diverse perspectives and fostered empathy, ultimately paving the way for lasting peace.

Furthermore, the project organized youth peace summer schools. These events brought together representatives from all participating youth initiatives from different countries for an intensive workshop featuring interactive sessions, skill-building workshops, and group activities designed to foster trust, cooperation, and understanding among the participants. Notably, a cultural exchange evening showcased diverse performances, traditional music, and art, celebrating the richness of the region's cultural heritage and promoting intercultural appreciation. The atmosphere of unity, creativity, and shared purpose was truly inspiring, solidifying the network's commitment to fostering peace.

One of the most memorable moments was a cross-border cultural exchange program that connected youth from Tanzania and those from Rwanda. Participants had the opportunity to immerse themselves in each other's cultures, traditions, and daily lives, breaking down barriers and building lasting friendships rooted in mutual respect.

At the project's inception, one of the key challenges was the existing mistrust and limited cooperation between different youth initiatives. Overcoming this barrier required



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dedicated efforts to establish open lines of communication, build relationships, and foster an environment of trust and collaboration.

The region's linguistic and cultural diversity posed another significant challenge. Bridging these gaps required the development of innovative approaches to ensure effective communication and inclusive participation, enabling diverse voices to be heard and valued.

I faced resource constraints, limiting my capacity to actively contribute to the project. The challenge was addressed through resource mobilization efforts, including partnering with local and international organizations, seeking grants, and sharing resources among the network to ensure equal opportunities for all participants.



**(29) MIKONO YETU ORGANIZATION**



**Author:** Gervas J. Malembeka  
**Title:** My participation in the Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace  
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I participated in the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* project as a youth peacebuilder. I attended training and workshops on peace and conflict resolution, and I participated in dialogues and other activities that promoted peace and understanding in the Great Lakes Region. The work was carried out in the context of a region that has been plagued by conflict for many years. The goal of the network was to empower young people to be agents of peace and to build a more peaceful future for the region.

Before I participated in the network, I was aware of the conflict in the Great Lakes region, but I did not have a deep understanding of the issues. I also did not know how I could contribute to peacebuilding. However, through my participation in the network, I gained a deeper understanding of the conflict and the challenges facing young people in the region. I also learned how I could use my skills and talents to be a force for peace.

As a result of my participation in the network, I am now more aware of the challenges that young people in the Great Lakes Region face and how I can contribute to peacebuilding. I am also more connected to other young people who are working for peace. I am committed to continuing my work as a youth peacebuilder and to helping to build a more peaceful future for the region.

Today, young people in the Great Lakes Region are playing an increasingly important role in peacebuilding. They are organizing and mobilizing to promote peace and understanding. They are also working to address the root causes of conflict. The future of peace in the Great Lakes Region depends on the engagement of young people. I am optimistic about the prospects for peace in the region, and I believe that young people will play a key role in building a more peaceful future.





### (30) MWANGAZA SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOR COMMUNICATION CHANGE ORGANIZATION

**Author:** Raphael Sitta Maduka  
**Title:** Raphael talks about his social transformation  
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The Mwangaza social and behavior communication change organization has done different activities through the training provided within the realm of the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* project. These activities are, for instance, beekeeping as a source of income, planting trees to adapt to climate change, and demonstrating how to start small businesses among youths and women to empower youth and promote peace, gender equity, and equality.

Beekeeping became very popular during the project, as it provides people with the possibility to become financially independent through harvesting honey. Youths engage in entrepreneurship to expand their income to achieve their needs in terms of food, medicine, and protection of the environment.

In the beginning, it was quite difficult for young people to understand what the project was about and why it was important to address the role of youth in peacekeeping, so it was hard to implement the project in certain local communities where most of the youth are not educated. Mwangaza organization's role was to provide education to the youth so that they were able to understand and participate in the project. After participating in the project, the local youth acquired the knowledge and skills to conduct the training themselves and to become a youth ambassador for peace.

Peace and security among communities is another success in our district, where youths and elders are successful in promoting peace in their families and communities to avoid internal and external conflicts. Our organization helps youth participate in development planning, meetings, and conferences to participate and raise their voice in decision-making processes.



### (31) Mwanza Youth and Children Network-MYCN

**Author:** MYCN

**Title:** MYCN success story in the Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace project

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**Country:** Tanzania



In 2022, Mwanza Youth CN joined 25 other youth initiatives in Tanzania to implement the “*Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace*” project, which was based on the conviction that youth are fundamental agents for creating lasting peace among communities and contributing to successful development.

Fadhila Emmanuel, a member of MYCN, was selected to be one among four youth ToTs (trainer of trainers) based in Mwanza, Tanzania, after receiving the first training with other youth initiatives within the project. After she was selected, she received the first ToT training in Kigali, attended the peace summer school in Uganda and Goma, and finally completed the onboard training in Bukoba. Fadhila has conducted two trainings in Mwanza, reaching out to 58 young people from different youth initiatives who strengthened their capacities on critical thinking, communications and media use, conflict management, gender equality and equity, and non-violence communication.

Some successes were obtained by youth initiatives from this training. Two of our beneficiaries shared their experience, explaining how they used to see things before and after the training and their commitment.

Rehema Jonathan, who works with the Urafiki Girls Organization in Mwanza, attended both trainings and was passionate about solving community challenges for girls and teenagers. Through the training, she learned about triggers of conflicts such as unemployment, low communication skills, and lack of empathy, among others. “We were busy teaching the youth to empower themselves through different programs, but we didn’t think that we were preventing them from entering into conflicts. I will use the knowledge I acquired here to expand our programs and link them with conflict prevention to prevent more violence and conflict in the community, especially to girls”, she explained.

Jenifa Tuppa Elias, who works with the Binti Inuka Organization in Mwanza, also shared her testimony after the training in which she took part: “What I learned during the training was that there is no equality without equity. As an organization based on promoting girls’ access to equitable education and the fight against gender discrimination, we will also promote equity for all.”. Equality and equity for all will prevent violence and conflict in the community.



### (32) POWER OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (PYD)

**Author:** Padius Boniphace

**Title:** Padius talks about Promoting social interaction through the cross-border economy.

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During my involvement and active participation in various activities of the Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace project, such as the Peace Summer School, Multi-stakeholder conferences, the onboard training, and training of trainers, I noticed a significant challenge regarding social classes and the lack of cross-national relations among youth. It became apparent that the absence of cross-national tools or activities hindered the development of mutual relationships among young individuals. For instance, during the first peace summer school, I observed that youth from Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, and DR Congo tended to segregate themselves based on their nationalities.

These observations led me to reflect upon the potential consequences if there were to be a cross-border conflict. Would the youth be equipped to take the frontline in resolving such conflicts without any pre-existing connections or shared interests? Unfortunately, the answer seemed discouraging. Without any mutual connections or beneficial relationships, it would be difficult for the youth to engage actively in conflict resolution efforts.

These realizations became a turning point for me. I recognized the urgent need to connect the youth of the Great Lakes Region and provide them with opportunities for direct mutual benefits. Upon returning to Tanzania after engaging in various activities in Uganda and Rwanda, I started brainstorming on how we could unite all the national potentials to foster unity among the youth.

Drawing inspiration from our project activities and visits, particularly the Peace Summer School in Entebbe, Uganda, in September 2022 and the regional Multi-stakeholders Conference in Kigali, Rwanda, in March 2023, I witnessed the existence of economic potentials that could effectively connect youth and enable them to establish a sense of brotherhood and sisterhood. Recognizing the significance of these opportunities, I reported my findings to the organization, and together, we embarked on the initiative to create international business connections that would benefit all the stakeholders within the Great Lakes Youth Networks for Dialogue and Peace (Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, and DR Congo).

We've set up a group of entrepreneurs who make wood products, such as wooden plates, wooden hotpots, wooden glasses, wooden bowls, and so on. They get wood from the areas near Mrongo, near the Uganda border, and use it to make wooden plates, bowls,



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hotpots, glasses, and other wood-based products. After producing these items, they sell them to youth groups located at the border between Tanzania and Rwanda (Rusumo) and at the border between Tanzania and Uganda (Mrongo). This initiative has brought these young people together, fostering unity and promoting peace among the youth of these border regions.



### (33) RADIO JOY



**Author:** Elisheba Andrea Ndijenyene  
**Title:** Being a journalist and Peacebuilder: Elisheba talks about her social transformation  
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**Country:** Tanzania

Hey there! My name is Elisheba Andrea Ndijenyene from Tanzania, and I am a journalist working with a community radio station known as Radio Joy FM located in the Kigoma region, west of Tanzania. When we started to be part of this project, I had little knowledge about peacebuilding and conflict resolution. In short, I had general knowledge about peace. As a young journalist, I have been working in the media industry for six years now. I enjoy working with the media the most, because I am directly involved with people's lives by preparing, producing, and airing programs that change people's behavior. When I started working on the Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace project, as I said, I didn't know a lot about the Great Lakes Region, peacebuilding, and the challenges that youth are facing in the Great Lakes Region. One of my favorite parts of the project was the training we received before starting to implement these ideas among youth. In the first workshop, we learned a lot about conflict resolution, gender, mass media, and public speaking.

One of the greatest challenges to successful collaboration across the Great Lakes Region is language barriers. I realized this during the project's peace summer schools, as we met with youth from four different countries speaking English, French, Swahili, and Kinyarwanda. Many young people have a lot of ideas and thoughts, but they couldn't communicate them properly because of the language barrier.

However, I have learned that Great Lakes youth share the same obstacles, such as poverty, unemployment, hunger, political instability, and many others. By coming together and realizing that we are facing the same challenges, we just emerge our means of solving it. We discussed how youth can employ themselves rather than waiting to be employed by the government or private sector, so what we have done so far is to connect youth with loan companies so that they can take loans as capital and start their own business. We have succeeded in doing that by producing programs that help youth understand entrepreneurship.

The most important thing I have learned throughout the project is that building peace is one thing, but keeping peace is another. In a country that has experienced war and conflicts, people have experienced bloodshed, death, and fighting. It is easy for them to fight for peacekeeping because they know the cost of peace. But also, as a youth initiative and a journalist, it is my job to continue to educate and create awareness about peacebuilding, especially in Tanzania.

I love how we have learned about conflict resolution as the theme of the project for dialogue and peace. That means we can resolve our issues, misunderstandings, and problems without fighting and bloodshed. We have learned that dialogue is the best and easiest way to solve conflict and build peace. We believe the Great Lakes Region is one so we can find our way out in any challenges we have faced as a group and as individuals.

I have so many special moments, but I will share a few of them with you guys. Traveling to the Great Lakes Region countries that are in the project was so awesome to me. I had a good time experiencing different foods, drinks, music, and cultures in general. Moreover, I enjoyed all the summer schools that were hosted during the project.

As a journalist, I have been speaking on many platforms throughout my career, but during the project, it was my first time speaking in front of many people from different countries, and it was superb to me. I am grateful to my country director for giving me that opportunity. From Goma to Entebbe and Kigali, I have seen myself improve every day in public speaking and knowledge of peace and other agendas.

But all in all, seeing my community transforming through the program we produce gives me the power to go on. After we aired the message of peace, youth were able to engage in peace-building activities, and we connected them with other youth initiatives.

However, our community also faced challenges in conflict resolution. Through the knowledge and skills, I acquired during the project, we were able to convince the community to use dialogue as a means of resolving conflicts rather than fighting and shed





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blood. As a result, the youth were able to resolve a conflict that lasted for so long between pastoralists and farmers, who were fighting over land. Thanks to our efforts, they decided to talk and find a solution together.



### (34) SHIRIKA LA KIJANA ANGAZA TANZANIA - SHIKIATA

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**Title:** Michael's journey towards positive change.  
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During my participation in the '*Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace project*, I underwent a week-long capacity-building training that covered various modules essential for youth initiatives from the Great Lakes Region. The gender equality module specifically caught my attention and opened my eyes to the prevalent issue of gender-based violence (GBV) faced by many adolescents, particularly in schools.

In response to this alarming challenge, I was motivated to take action and initiated the "Break the Silence on GBV" project. With the support of the Global Youth Mobilization organization, I successfully managed and implemented the project, reaching a significant number of adolescents. Through this project, we raised awareness about gender-based violence, educated the youth on effective measures to combat it, and empowered them to stand against this social injustice.

On the other hand, the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* project has become an eye-opener; it has helped me step out of my comfort zone and grab opportunities around peace. My efforts were recognized, and I was honored with the Tanzania Emerging Youth Award (TEYA 2022) for being an Outstanding Youth in Peace and Security. This recognition further fueled my commitment to peacebuilding and youth empowerment.

Moreover, my engagement in peacebuilding activities and participation in various training and regional conferences within the Great Lakes Youth Network provided me with valuable networking opportunities and insights into potential collaborations within the region. Through these experiences, I have built meaningful connections with like-minded individuals and organizations, broadening my perspective on regional challenges and opportunities.

Today, the "Break the Silence on GBV" initiative, which received more attention through my participation in the "*Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace project*" continues to make a positive impact in the lives of young people, empowering them to speak out against gender-based violence and fostering a safer and more inclusive community.

In conclusion, my involvement in this project has been instrumental in driving positive change. Through my commitment to addressing social injustices and promoting peacebuilding efforts, I aim to continue making a lasting impact on the lives of young people and contributing to the development of inclusive and peaceful communities across the Great Lakes Region.





### (35) TANZANIA, FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT

**Author:** Agnes Sheltiely

**Title:** My involvement in the peace-building process: Emmanuella talks about her social transformation.

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**Country:** Tanzania



#### Media and peacebuilding

Hey there, I'm Agnes and delighted to share my story of transformation with you. Through skills gained from the peace summer school, we managed to use media as a driver of peace in diverse ways: building bridges between youths and elders, youths and decision-makers at the local government level, such as the ward security committee in Katoro (Tanzania); improving governance; increasing our staff's knowledge of complex issues and providing early warning of potential conflicts...

The peace summer school program gave Miriam Edson, a youth member of the Foundation for Community Driven Development, in-depth knowledge of the interrelation and complexity of issues in peace and development work. The opportunity to engage in dialogue and discuss with youths from Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, Tanzania, and DR Congo has given her an aspiration to work in the context of the Great Lakes Region.

#### Moments for youth's knowledge exchange

"We have seen a reduction in gender-based violence and discrimination: our families used to honor boys, but now girls can go to school. Gender roles are less entrenched. Next, we should move outside of the city to other rural areas where the prevalence of gender-based violence is even higher," said Agnes, a young leader from the protection and conflict committee in mining areas at CDD Tanzania.

We intend to continue learning from the experiences of our Great Lakes Youth Network and the many ways in which the different youth initiatives strive to achieve change in their communities. By promoting knowledge-sharing opportunities across our network, we will turn our commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment into concrete and effective actions.

Thanks to the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* project, I have gained new skills and acquired knowledge on solving disputes and preventing conflicts. I understood the importance of building confidence in Women Leaders and others who are not leaders so that they can participate in conflict resolution starting from the local level. For instance, I have observed the importance of using alternative dispute resolution to restore the friendship of parties, the Win-win or lose-lose situation is not expensive and time consuming.



Some challenges faced during this project can be resumed as political instability that prevented some stakeholders from attending events, negative attitudes of some governments toward NGO engagement in public affairs, financial constraints that make the implementation of some activities of the project difficult, and the existence of strange/draconian laws in some countries like Tanzania, that oblige CSOs to receive a permit from the responsible authorities to implement the project. Furthermore, we saw a lot of gender discrimination and chauvinism, where some of the tribes believed in male superiority and where it was difficult for men to allow their women to be trained and engage in conflict resolution.

Despite these challenges, we learned a lot during the project, such as how to successfully engage in peacebuilding and what effects it has. Both formal and informal (Alternative Dispute Resolutions) aims to manage, mitigate, resolve, and transform central aspects of conflicts thoroughly in civil society through informal dialogue, negotiation, and mediation. We also learned about the importance of economic emancipation, as most conflicts emanate from economic grievances, which is why youth should involve themselves in economic activities to prevent unnecessary conflicts. Furthermore, political emancipation plays an important role as people, regardless of their gender, should be involved in political issues, should be included in decision-making processes, and should be represented fully.

The special moments for me were acquiring knowledge from the presenters on how to achieve leadership goals, culture exchange, adventures from different nations, and networking with different people across the world.



### (36) TUJENGE THEATRE FOR ARTS AND DEVELOPMENT

**Author:** Josephat Kaigwa  
**Title:** The Best of Tujenge Project through the Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace  
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Throughout the implementation period of the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* project, "Tujenge" has been able to provide education to the community through various art groups, community public meetings, debates, concerts, seminars, conferences, and various sectors on Peace and tranquility for the citizens. All of this became possible after they were empowered by the training they received as part of the aforementioned project.

After being empowered academically and in terms of peace through this project, "Tujenge" is thankful to the EU and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung for starting this project, as it will prevent many youths from being manipulated by politicians and individuals with ill intentions who wrongly use religion as a shield to incite and provoke conflicts, leading to a lack of peace and stability in society and the country.

Furthermore, it is essential for the youth to change their mindset and perspective by engaging in various productive activities, breaking free from dependency and false beliefs by avoiding involvement in harmful groups that promote drug abuse and substance addiction.



### (37) WADADA SOLUTIONS ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ORGANIZATION.

**Author:** Anitha D. Samson (Contact person)  
**Title:** How the Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace helped me improve my picture of the power of youth in peacebuilding  
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**Country:** Tanzania



My name is Sharlon Kidima, and I am one of the youth beneficiaries of the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* project. Participating in the project's Peace Summer Schools was one of the best experiences of my life. During Peace Summer Schools, which were organized every year since the beginning of the project, youth from different parts of East Africa (Tanzania, Rwanda, Congo, Uganda) met and connected. The different activities brought everyone together in sharing thoughts and opinions, showing us that there is no difference between us.

Before I had the opportunity to be one of the beneficiaries of this project, I thought that people differed according to their nationalities, although we are all Africans. Having different views and different ways of doing things made me believe there was no need or possibility of sitting at one table and speaking the same language.

I also believed that matters of national conflict did not concern me as a youth and that these were very strong and sensitive issues that a youth shouldn't give his or her opinion about. I used to say, "*elder's matter*", and if you ask any young person, they will tell you the same. Unfortunately, not a lot of young people get this precious chance for their minds to be filled with positive change.

Things are different now, and I have come to realize through the Peace Summer School events that we are one despite differences in language and nationalities. Regular meetings and networking of youth from different nationalities are a good and sustainable way to strengthen peace amongst these nations, and I learned that youth should be put at the forefront of peacebuilding. In my opinion, youth are the most affected individuals in both conflict and peace, and they are the key to destroying and promoting peace in any nation.

Thanks to this, I was able to write an article in my university's magazine entitled *Non-governmental organizations striving for peacebuilding and conflict resolution*" which spoke about how the *Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace* project has awakened non-governmental organizations in Tanzania towards putting youth at the forefront in peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives. I am very proud of this, and it is all thanks to the project.



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Furthermore, the benefits of the project encompass the distribution of sub-grants to each country's youth initiatives to keep supporting and engaging youth in peacebuilding activities, of which our organization is one of the beneficiaries.



### (38) YOUTH VOCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFORMATION (YOUTH-VDT)

**Author:** Youth VDT  
**Title:** About Youth - VDT's involvement in the Peace Project. Youth entrepreneurship is key!  
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Youth VDT member Nicholas, who attended the Peace Summer School in Goma, DR Congo, and later in Uganda, met many motivated young people who shared their stories related to the capacity-building training. He then decided that he would use the skills and connections he acquired to improve Youth VDT's work both in economic stability (entrepreneurship) and seeking space for youth voices in Tanzania.

Over the three years of the project, Youth VDT has strengthened its internal capacities, linking well with other youths in the Great Lakes Region for dialogue. Now, Youth VDT is establishing business connections in DR Congo to sell leather materials like school shoes, belts, and school bags.

With its internal capacities, Youth VDT applied and was awarded AWE (Academy for Women Entrepreneurs), adding value to the leather industry and materials and support for young women in the local communities. It's an American entity being led by women to help women entrepreneurs in East Africa. Every year AWE chooses five regions in East Africa and sends a call to these women entrepreneurs for them to compete.

Women in Youth Vdt won the call and got funds buying machines and mentorship. This fund has enabled us to buy more machines to process shoes and in turn has increased production from 5 pairs a week to 20 pairs a week.

Youth VDT is proud to be part of a family that implements the Youth, Peace, and Security agenda through youth entrepreneurship because we know that youth unemployment and dissatisfaction feed extremism, political instability, and conflicts. Youth entrepreneurship is key!

### (39) DYNAMICS OF YOUNG PEACEBUILDERS (DYJAP-Asbl)

**Author:** SHUKRANI BACUBAKA Elie

**Title:** Sensitizing young people on the role to be played in contributing to peace, development, and countering violent extremism in society



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**Country:** DRC

The DYJAP took part in February 2023 in Burundi in a major activity under the theme: "*Women and youth participation in decision-making, peace building and security processes: challenges and opportunities*". Through this activity we learned so much about the role that young people must play in contributing to peace and development in our region. We have learned that young people must be aware of the great mission they have, that of cultivating the values of peace, sensitizing other young people, to fight against the various conflicts that are observed in our Great Lakes region, creating a state of mistrust and preventing us from working together for our development.

During this project, DYJAP was able to obtain support to carry out a project on the supervision of young people on the fight against violent extremism. A very beneficial project for young people that invites them to identify and contribute their efforts to solve some major problems that block the stability of the country in the region and that hinder its development. It is true that our region has several problems that prevent it from emerging, but among these problems, the project has dealt with the rise of violent extremism that is gaining momentum in the community, especially through the dissemination of messages of hatred and calls for violence that led to disturbing uncivil acts and constitutes a great danger on the issue of peacebuilding and living together in





the community. region.

With regard to violent extremism, many young people have committed themselves to being promoters of peace by sharing and conveying messages of peace and development; and also to fight against the proliferation of rumors, hate messages in social networks and other platforms, to be ready to participate and contribute to all activities that may occur in this logic.

Young people are already at work in their various environments by raising awareness among other young people, by organizing exchange activities and discussions for a change in mentality. And the greatest wish for the future would be to increase the project's activities in rural areas of our different regions, so that awareness reaches young people from all social strata. And finally, to organize activities to encourage young people to create small entrepreneurial activities, lucrative to contribute to development and fight against unemployment and the lack of employment that many young people face and are exposed to different kinds of manipulation. Because when young people are well trained and supervised, it is a long-term investment to see the explosion of development in our region.



#### (40) MWANAMKE KESHO

**Author:** Grace Maroy

**Title:** Energies and Synergies of Peace: Jamaa Great Lakes and Mwanamke Kesho train young people through Spaces set up



**Country:** DRC

During the first year of implementation of the regional project, meetings were organized to allow young people from the Great Lakes region to meet, exchange and start a new adventure of collaboration.

These regional meetings were organized in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda. These are the rare opportunities through which youth initiatives in the Great Lakes region have been able to identify joint actions and opportunities to strengthen their collaboration in the peace process in the region.

Thus, each other connected and collaborates today. This is the case of Jamaa Grands Lacs, located in Goma, and Mwanamke, Kesho, located in Bukavu, which have formalized their partnership in the training of young people in diversified sectors since the beginning of March 2023. In Bukavu and Goma, Mwanamke Kesho and Jamaa Grands Lacs, have set up youth training spaces (Citizen University and Youth Space) through which young people meet every week and are trained on topics that meet their needs for civic engagement in the process of peacebuilding and environmental protection.





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*"Today, these two organizations are working together and collaborating with the on-board resources in the facilitation of training through these spaces. Through our participation in the various regional conferences, we have understood the importance of connecting and building the capacities of other young people. This approach only reinforces the impact of our actions in the region."* (Grace Maroy, Mwanamke Kesho).

*"The regional peace conferences were a springboard for our organizations to start a new form of collaboration in the process of strengthening the citizen engagement of young people in the peace process in the Great Lakes region with a focus on the eastern part of the DRC."* (Mumbere Sivihwa, Jamaa Great Lakes).



#### (41) ALL TOWARDS A NEW CONGO (TCN ASBL)

**Author:** Carine Lobela  
**Title:** My Transformation from Community Leader to Activist Leader for Peacebuilding in the Great Lakes Region.  
**Contacts:** +243974214530  
**Country:** DRC



Tous vers un Congo Nouveau, TCN, is a youth association that works in several areas, including good citizenship and community recognition. We have participated in the Great Lakes youth for dialogue and peace project since the November 2021 capacity and have acquired knowledge in non-violent communication and peacebuilding, because the Great Lakes region is now a conflict region that must go beyond this stage to consider integral development.

It is true that I have always been active in the TCN association, in the student committee and other structures that campaign for the fight against GBV and discrimination of all kinds. Peace issues only interested me when I heard gunshots, all that mattered to me was the safety and well-being of my family no matter what happened around me.

What I didn't know was that peace and security go hand in hand, and to separate them was to get neither. I was seriously appalled by our interventions with the refugees, and although I had no idea what peace really was, I already found the situation to be critical.

After our first training, we organized a debriefing session during which I tried as much as I could to give the TCN members and other guests the essentials of our training. We had two Regional Peace Schools in 2022 where we were able to connect with other young people from Rwanda, Uganda, and Tanzania, ... I was surprised to find that our realities were not that different and that finding a solution for one country would be like finding a solution for a problem in another country.

What really changed in me was that I became the first peace preacher, a transmitter of peace messages, fighting day and night against messages of hatred both among the students under our authority and in our respective homes and organizations.

I have resolved to maintain good relations with everyone to at least reduce the causes of conflict between me and those around me, the result is that people around me trust me more, share their communication difficulties with one or the other and I try as best I can to mediate between them. My community involvement has been strengthened and increased on the issues of peaceful coexistence and peacebuilding in the Great Lakes region.

Our non-profit organisation has taken off since these sessions thanks to the exercises we had done during the first capacity, which consisted of taking recommendations from others on the problems of our organisation. After application, we managed to have more

partners, to organize fundraising evenings to assist the displaced by war, to continue our assistance to destitute children, but also to do some training for the staff.

This project has been very beneficial not only for me but also for our organization because a network has been created and we are in the process of designing projects between initiatives in Goma, Beni, Bukavu, Uganda, ... which, in the future, will bear good fruit. We are now peacebuilders, and we will never stop striving for peace to be restored in our country and for the so-called conflict zone to become a peaceful zone of the Great Lakes countries.





**(42) CLUB OF YOUNG VISIONARIES FOR PEACE (CJVP - Asbl)**



**Author:** BALUME SHIRAKERA Salmon

**Title:** My Involvement in the Peacebuilding Process: Conflict Management and Peaceful Coexistence.

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**Country:** DRC

I am Saumon BALUME, Coordinator of the Club des Jeunes Visionnaires pour la Paix, a non-profit organization working in North Kivu in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

CJVP and I had started participating in the activities organized as part of the Great Lakes Youth Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace project. This was an opportunity for us to deepen our knowledge in the field of peacebuilding as a humanitarian actor. I am a young man from Masisi territory, a territory that has never known peace for more than 2 decades; It was born only from war movement to repetition. I then set myself the goal of being an actor of peace and the project came to help me realize my dream, because thanks to the achievements of this project, I had to organize restitution sessions within CJVP and in my community in order to create a culture of peace and banish the culture of hatred.

During the capacitation sessions, the Critical Thinking module was very important for me, because previously I would have to jump into situations without having taken the time to do an analysis and the result was not satisfactory, but now thanks to this module on Critical Thinking, before being carried away by any situation, I take the time to analyze. This allows me to make a good decision.

This project was of great importance to me, as it allowed me to meet young people from the Great Lakes countries (Burundi, DR Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda) at the same time. This has created a very warm climate of exchange around themes that are in line with peace. Before this meeting, I thought that the young people of other Great Lakes countries did not care about the security situation and I considered them to be actors in our suffering, but thanks to the exchanges we had with these young people during the various regional peace schools, we understood the desire to fight social injustices and the concerns of the restoration of peace in the region. Thanks to this project, I have understood that our differences are a source of opportunity, and we must capitalize on them.

From an organizational point of view, this project has allowed us to make good advocacy. Thanks to the achievements of this project, the CJVP-asbl in collaboration with other youth organizations was able to produce an advocacy note in favor of marginalized young people (young people demobilized from armed groups, the disabled, etc.) requesting a tax exemption for entrepreneurial activities in their favor. We had to submit this advocacy



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document to the governorate of North Kivu province. In the past, we thought we were advocating with the authorities about a given situation, but after taking the module on advocacy, we understood that we were lobbying instead of advocacy.



**(43) NEW VISION FOR PEACE (NVP-Asbl)**



**Author:** Me Placide MWISHA NGOY,

**Title:** A Commitment That Changes Lives and Transforms Conflicts in the Locality of Sake

**Contacts:** newvisionforpeace2015@gmail.com / mwingonvp@gmail.com / +243998713151

**Country:** DRC

Since 2021, I have been engaged with the organization "New Vision for Peace" alongside the Sake community, through capacity building trainings, awareness campaigns, roundtables, and mini trainings on "Peacebuilding, Peaceful Conflict Resolution, Gender and Inclusion and the Challenges of Global Warming. This is part of the Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace project co-funded by the Konrad Foundation and the European Union. The locality of Sake is in the territory of Masisi, North Kivu Province in the Democratic Republic of Congo. It has been plagued by inter-ethnic armed conflicts for more than two decades.

The work we have done has been done in a precarious, relatively calm context that requires large-scale interventions to get communities to be agents of peace and change in their communities. We have adapted to the context by being resilient to cement the foundations for the project's actions, which will have to be sustainable to achieve the expected results. Being in a multicultural environment, we have ensured the representativeness of all layers of the community as well as the gender dimension on each organized activity.

From our discussions with young people, we learned the following:

- Young people are major agents of change if they are mentored;
- Young people have long been ignored in efforts to promote peace and social transformation; That is why they have been subject to a lot of manipulation in all the conflicts and crises that have shaken the area;
- A certain dynamic of youth associations and initiatives dedicated to the cause of change is already in place and requires the support of development partners from all walks of the world;
- Young people become involved in armed groups because they are not sufficiently taken into account in government peace and development policies;
- Young people are ready to support all initiatives for change;
- The young people have created an inter-community structure called "Masisi Inter-Community Youth, JICOM" to federate their efforts to put an end to anti-values in their communities;
- The youth organizations in the area are ready to accompany the upcoming activities that will be organized by the youth initiatives that are accompanied by the project "Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace";



- The project is a response to the perceived needs of the community, except for a few adjustments that should be taken into account once the project is renewed;

The following success stories can be remembered:

1. The young Chantal Zawadi from the Hunde community, whose father has been fighting over a field with someone from the Hutu community for several years, had already built a prejudice according to which the Hutus are bad people, because they are the ones who are always at the origin of land conflicts in Masisi territory. After her participation in our activities, especially on the conflict management and critical thinking modules, she committed herself to contributing to change in her community and to abandon this way of seeing things, because in every community there are good people as well as bad people and you cannot identify a person at fault in relation to a community;
2. The establishment of a consortium between New Vision for Peace, Europe Africa Youth Network and The World and Peoples Transform for a project on "the effects of global warming in the peacebuilding process" which finds its justification through the implementation of the Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace project, because it was through networking that we were in contact with the leaders of these two organizations;
3. In the Mayutsa neighborhood of Sake, two young beneficiaries of our trainings found a group of young people who wanted to burn a young Hutu who had just stolen a chicken, insisting that all Hutu are thieves and that this person must be executed at all costs to serve as a lesson to others. The two young people took a moment to raise awareness among the group who were already hard at work on the notions of non-violence and critical thinking and in the end the group of young people finally resolved to abandon their criminal enterprise by committing themselves to be agents of peace and change from now on;
4. As part of our activities on the fight against global warming, we have planted two hundred (200) trees in the locality of Sake;
5. In the course of the activities we directly reached three thousand young people (3000) young people and indirectly twelve thousand young people (12000) and we found in the community a dominant opinion according to which to work in the area you have to be from the area and you should not tolerate it for the labour to be imported from elsewhere. After our exchange sessions today, this view is toned down and the young people have understood that anyone can work in the area in the same way that they can work elsewhere.

In short, I would like to say that this project has been an opportunity for us to make our contribution to peace and development in our area of intervention. We will always be at the forefront of our organization for community actions to mobilize youth to address the challenges facing our community.



**(44) RESEARCH WITHOUT BORDERS (RSF-Asbl)**



**Author:** HESHIMA NGUBA Raphael

**Title:** Community Engagement: A Lasting Solution for Peace and Democracy in Eastern Congo

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**Country:** DRC

Community engagement is a better approach to achieving a democratic solution and promoting peace in the country. In the past, several problems related to the lack of rapprochement between host and displaced communities, inter-ethnic conflicts, the non-involvement of young people and women in decision-making within decision-making bodies, the non-collaboration between civil society actors and organizations, etc., are practices that we experienced within our Bashali chiefdom in Masisi territory. However, after being selected to participate in the Great Lakes Youth Network for Peace project, we learned that cultural diversity must be capitalized on to alleviate the challenges that the community faces at the local level.

Prior to my participation in project activities such as capacity building on gender, critical thinking and public speaking, regional peace conferences, cross-border conferences, etc., alongside other colleagues who are members of youth initiatives in our organization, our structure did not have a specific strategic plan for peacebuilding as well as gender mainstreaming in its programs. After a while, thanks to the knowledge acquired, the organization adopted a strategic plan specific to peacebuilding and the other to integrate gender into research programs.





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Apart from these, we have developed a program called "Youth and Children in Peace building" through which children and young people, aged 8 to 12, 13 to 15 and 16 years old selected from the various primary and secondary schools, are grouped in a school of peace in the courses of Poems of Peace, Drawing of Peace, Song of Peace, and Theatre of Peace. These children, after having participated in the programme's activities within RSF, give feedback to their peers in the community to bring about effective social transformation from the grassroots.

Now, thanks to these commitments, we have managed to put in place a coordination of civil society actors that was previously dispersed. The members of the host community live together with the displaced, inter-ethnic conflicts are no longer of the same magnitude as before, although the security context remains complex within the DR Congo and especially in its eastern part. We are not going to end without saying that thanks to the achievements of the project and our commitment within the community, we have also fought for the participation of young people in decision-making bodies at the local level, which has made it possible for us to support one of our young people; Mr. MUTIMA NYANGUBA Élisée who currently assumes and plays the roles of the president of the Local Youth Council of the Bashali chiefdom.



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**(45) YOUTH ENGAGED FOR DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL PROGRESS  
(YEDSP-Asbl)**



**Author:** AMANI HABIMANA Jospin

**Title:** *Networking and Peer Learning in the Great Lakes Region for Peacebuilding*

**Contacts:** [yedspdrc@gmail.com](mailto:yedspdrc@gmail.com) / +243990346979/ +243 0977554155

**Country:** DRC

In 2020, we were admitted to the Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Dialogue project, and I was appointed to take part in the activities on behalf of our organization. It was a first regional connection for us, a platform where we had the opportunity to exchange with other peace actors in the region about the work we do and vice versa. In addition to this networking, the project's platform (website) gave visibility space to our organization. We also benefited from the sessions of the capacities in various areas, which is very important for the growth of our organization and the success of our projects.

Thanking the stakeholders of the project, especially the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and Pole Institute for this opportunity, we can recommend that they expand this program to other countries in conflict as well as model countries that are making progress on or off the continent.



**(46) AMKA CONGO Collective**



**Author:** LIMBA NYAKURA Antoinette

**Title:** *Conflict Prevention through Solid Peace Education: I Broke Barriers by Changing the Narrative*

**Contacts:** +243979056563 / [nyakuralimba@gmail.com](mailto:nyakuralimba@gmail.com)

**Country:** DRC

Since 2021, I have been a beneficiary of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation's Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace project in collaboration with Pole Institute of the DRC and other organizations in Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. This project co-funded by the European Union has shaped me through its capacity building activities, networking with other youth initiatives and cross-border exchanges. The big challenge I faced during this project was to deconstruct the prejudices I had nurtured in myself because of a lack of knowledge of the context. This project has fostered the integration and consideration of all strata of society and has allowed me to erase the processes of exclusion that had been inscribed in me.

What constituted the richness of this project, with the selection of themes in line with the reality of our daily lives, was the fact that it was carried out with young victims and/or actors of conflicts, because I am one of those who believe that peacebuilding is more effective and has a better chance of succeeding when local voices, especially those who are most targeted by violence, are at the helm. Most of us young beneficiaries of this project live in areas affected by armed conflict or organized crime. It was not easy to take ownership of the achievements of this project in a society where we only see the youth as opportunists.

Being born in a country with conflict, I recovered the merits of the project as a trainer on a wider audience of young people in Bukavu who are not direct participants in the project through feedback sessions in terms of mini training or local training so that the young people of Bukavu are actively involved in dialogue and the search for peace in their communities first, and then to the Great Lakes subregion. This project deserves to be renewed with new tools to better respond to the evolving expectations of young people as peacebuilders in order to value the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the search for consensus at the expense of solutions imposed by force.

Through the organized Regional Peace Schools, I realized that it was possible to work together to fight against violence, prejudice, stigma and stereotypes towards other communities and other nationalities that I considered the enemies. I took every meeting with other young people as an opportunity to promote social cohesion between us and to create a healthy and safe cooperation, to share experiences and network. I played a small part in the sickness of my province, but since I have been in this project, I have played a big role in remedying it. And with the connection of young people from other



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countries, we are working to build a nonviolent future, where conflicts are resolved without weapons and without violence.

In short, we, the young people who have benefited from this project, are proof that peace, in language and behavior, transcends cultural divides. I am aware that there is still a long way to go to hope for an effective and lasting peace, but we can still rub our hands together for having taken a step in turning conflict into an opportunity.



**(47) YOUTH FOR PEACE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT, IN THE  
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (JPDMR Asbl)**



**Author:** BIRAGI KASOLE Éphrem  
**Title:** *From Structural Transformation to Peacebuilding in the Great Lakes Countries.*  
**Contacts:** jpdmrasblsk@gmail.com / kasolecibaya@yahoo.fr / +243853722976  
**Country:** DRC

The organization Youth for Peace and Development of the Rural World, JPDMR Asbl is an initiative of the youth of South Kivu whose headquarters are in Bukavu. Since its creation, it has been operating structurally in a vacuum. From the Great Lakes Youth Network for Dialogue and Peace project, we have benefited from training support through a package of 10 Modules covering additional themes. Thanks to this series of training, we have been able to open the regional, national, local, and even global checkbook through the networking opportunities offered to us, among other things.

We are already working in consortium with 4 other youth organizations in the field of the fight against the abuse of drugs and other psychoactive substances that today hinder the young people of South Kivu. We retain the added value of this project in that it has networked us with other youth initiatives in our city of Bukavu and in the province of South Kivu and in the countries of the Great Lakes sub-region that remained unknown to us and with which we are now carrying out activities, whether within the framework of this regional project or within the framework of other development projects as well as investment projects.

This project has given us opportunities for learning and networking, but also forums for expression at the regional level. During our stay in the city of Entebbe in Uganda, on the sidelines of the peace summer school, I had the opportunity to participate in the commemoration of the International Day of Peace, where young Congolese left a very striking message about the security situation prevailing in eastern DRC. Remember that this day is commemorated every September 21st.



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## 5. List of involved Youth Initiatives



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Rwanda		
No	Name	Focal Person
1	Easy and Possible	NIYIGENA SANO François
2	EYE (Ejo Youth Echo)	UWAMAHORO Nadine
3	TBW (TOGETHER FOR A BETTER WORLD) Urunana	Sezibera Nyakare Jean
4	Youth Impact Mission	NKOTANYI Peter
5	Miracle Coner Rwanda	BIZIMANA Adrien
6	YWD (YOUNG WOMEN DESTINATION)	BAMURANGE Julienne
7	Talent Family Company	NZAYISENGA Pierre
8	Success Tech Lab	Tobi Tumukunde
9	SIMEC (Sustainable Irrigation Management Engineers Cooperation)	BYIRINGIRO Boniface
10	Rwanda Youth in Action	Isaie Mbonyinshuti
11	RODI (Rwanda Organization for Development Initiatives)	Uwimana Chrysostome
12	KOLOME (Knot Of Life Opportunity) Development House	NIYODUSHIMA Olivier
13	Imboni arts and Advertisement	Jeanette FURAHA
14	Friends Peace House	Samvura Antoine
15	Anevorwa (Action d'aide aux Nécessiteux Veuves et Orphelins au Rwanda )	Ishimwe Rugira Gisele
16	SEKAA for youth organization	Rusanganwa Eustache Marius
17	Stand for People Sustainable Development	HAGUMIMANA Emmanuel
18	Group spreading initiatives organization	Ephrem Nelson Sekagarura
19	Rwanda Scouts Association	RUCYAHANA Viateur
20	URUHONGORE RW'UMUCO	Amos MUSBYIMANA
21	MUMAFACO:Munini Maise Farmers Cooperative	Zakarie SEKAMANA
22	APROFAPER	Post. Jean Faustin GAPIRA
23	LIVE LONG IN GOAL( LIGO RWANDA)	Bonavanture BYUKUSENGE
24	AJECL ( Association des Jeunes de St Charles Lwanga)	Father, Theogene IYAKAREMWE
25	Peace Voice for family	Abdoulah UWIMANA





Tanzania		
No	Name	Focal Person
1	Fadhili Teens Tanzania	Atanas Bugenyi
2	Foundation for Community Driven development	Syrus Sheltielly
3	Himiza Social Justice	Bernard Otieno
4	New Light Children Centre Organization	Paulina Alex
5	Kagera development and credit revolving fund	Angelo Augustine
6	Kasulu Youth Development	Beatrice Kahoya
7	Mwanza Youth and Children Network	Brightius Titus
8	Radio Joy FM	Elisheba Ndijenyene
9	Sauti ya Wanawake	Sophia Donald
10	Kijana Angaza Tanzania	Jamhuri Deule
11	Tanzania Women Empowering in Action	Festo Mrina
12	Tanzania Community Afya Promotion	Henry Evarist
13	Mwangaza Organisation	Tyryphone Luhangula
14	NYAKITONDO Youth For Development Tanzania	
15	Umoja wa Wazeshaji Kioo	Edward Saimon
16	Youth Vocational Development and Transformational	Nicolaus Ngelela
17	Agri Thamani Foundation	Neema Lugangira
18	Bwawani Vijana Vision	
19	Youth and Environment Vision	Jonathan Kassib
20	Wadada Solutions on Gender Based Organisation	Lucy John /Anita Samson
21	Tujenge Theater for Arts and Development	Josephat Kaigwa
22	Mikono Yetu	
23	Community Development Initiative Support (CODISO)	Felix Niy'Illema
24	Care for dignity and innovation (CDI)	Joyceline Joseph
25	Power of Youth Development (PYD)	Dorosela Gerald



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Uganda		
No	Name	Focal Person
1	KQ Hub Africa	Ian Joseph Wabwire
2	Youth for Peace and Development -YOPEDU	Edgar Buryahika
3	Action for Youth Development Uganda (ACOYDE)	Owashaba Caroline
4	Integrated Community Action for Development (ICAD)	Ahmed Menya
5	The Young Pan - Africanists Development Fundation (YOPADEF)	Mukotanyi Alex
6	Bakash Media Foundation	Bruno Komurubuga
7	The Populace Foundation International (TPFI)	Richard Obedi
8	National Youth Advocacy Platform. (NYAP)	Evelyn Zalwango
9	Ndejje University Community Sport Education Program (NUCSEP)	John Bosco Kaddu
10	Center for Electoral Justice and Research (CEJR)	Kago Mahande Joshua
11	Action for Fundamental Change and Development (AFFCAD)	Prudence Atukwasa
12	Embibo Gender Initiative	Namata Tendo
13	Mengo Youth Development Link (MYDEL)	Lutaya Pascal
14	Foundation for Male Engagement Uganda (FOME)	Joseph Nyende
15	Peace Builders Coalition	Barekye Gerald
16	Big-Spit Cooperation	Bwango Issa Draei
17	Smart Youth Network	Busingye Nurudin
18	Creations Forum Africa	Johncation Muhindo
19	Twogere	Godfrey Kagaayi
20	National Christian Students Association (NSCA)	Simon Ssenyonga
21	Kanungu Development Initiative	Kisambira Isaac
22	Mazungumizo	Diogo Eric
23	Recreation for Development & Peace (RPD)	Lydia Nyamata
24	CIYOTA	Ntakamazze Nziyonvira
25	HLEN	Caleb Mbitse

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)		
No	Name	Focal Person
1	Fondation de l'Est des Jeunes Entrepreneurs	Mbeo Mastaki
2	Tous vers un Congo Nouveau	THOMAS Budida
3	Youth Engaged for Development and Social Progress	MUSAFIRIMUGAZA Justin /
4	Jeunes Unis pour la Recherche de l'Excellence	Joseph Katya Lukogho
5	Collectif AMKA CONGO	Jack Sinzahera et Antoinette Limba/
6	Solidarité pour le Bien-etre et le développement Communautaire	Ngolombe
7	Dynamique des jeunes artisans de la paix	Abdoul F
8	Action Intégrée pour le Relèvement Communautaire et la Protection de l'Environnement	Elisabeth sifa Mutabesha
9	Syndicat des Jeunes pour la Transformation Sociale	Elisee Nyanguba
10	Action et Initiatives pour la protection de la femme et de l'enfant	Eric Kambale
11	Club des jeunes Visionnaires pour la Paix	Balume Saumon
12	Amicale des Jeunes Chrétiens pour le Développement Social	Masemo Moba Kifwa
13	Programme d'appui aux Congolais engagés pour la Paix et la Démocratie	Janvier Angisobange Anzaboa
14	Coalition des Jeunes pour la Paix et le Développement de Kitshanga	Dunia Cedric
15	Jamaa Grands-Lacs	Nicolas Mumbere
16	Youth Forward Congo	Kambere Wasingya
17	New Vision for Peace	Mwisha Placide
18	RSF (Recherche Sans Frontière)	Raphael Nguba
19	Mouvement International de la Jeunesse d'Afrique	TRESOR MBAYAH MATHE
20	Jeunesse pour la paix et le Développement du Monde Rural	Kasole Cibaya
21	Nouvelle espérance de développement NED	Deborah Kesse
22	Ligue pour la Promotion de la jeunesse et l'entrepreneuriat au Congo	Rolland LOBO Rimba
23	Les Jeunes Motivés par l'essentiel	Grace Kakule
24	Mwanamuke Kesho	Grace Maroy
25	Débout RDC-Nouvelles	Bernardin Matabaro



Burundi		
No	Name	Focal Person
1	Go For Impact Today	Cassien Yabimpaye
2	MSFC	Elvis NDIHOKUBWAYO
3	BUDITAR	Irantije Arletty
4	EYI	Alain Tresor CUBAHIRO
5	PCPDELA	Davin Arsene Munezero