

*If it would destroy a [12-year-old] boy to be called a girl, what are we then teaching him about girls?
Tony Porter, is an author, educator and activist*

CONTEXT

For over two decades the Great Lakes Region has experienced civil wars, ethnic conflicts and genocide, which have caused human suffering and loss of lives, leading to humanitarian disasters. One of the most frequently reported characteristics of these conflicts has been the use of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) as a weapon of war. The issue is rather part of a broader context of unequal gender relations, ineffective institutions and general violence.

In Burundi, 91% residents of the 3 communes of intervention have seen, experienced, or known of a case of SGBV.

SISI VIJANA Project aims at addressing young men's behavior and vulnerabilities by challenging and eliminating attitudes, norms and behavior that create tolerance towards gender based violence.



TARGET



3700 YOUTH

REACHED



5170 YOUTH

Young men: 2/3

Young women: 1/3

GOAL

Women and girls in Burundi and in DRC live in societies demonstrating gender equitable attitudes and enjoy their right to a life without the threat of SGBV.

FOCUS

Gender equality and SGBV mitigation

VSLA (Village Savings and Loan Associations- NAWÉ NUZÉ) groups served as an attractive entry point for youth mobilization and a favourable environment for discussions on gender equality, power relations, positive masculinity, gender based violence prevention, Sexual and Reproductive Health for youth, etc.



Youth are influenced by many different actors. Parents teachers local authorities and religious leaders all play an important role in supporting and encouraging youth to change their behavior to support gender equality, sexual and reproductive health



3 YEARS IMPACT ON +5000 YOUTH

% of young men who demonstrate improved behaviour related to gender based violence in intimate relationships

Baseline
16%

Endline
96.5%

% of young men who have increased knowledge about gender based violence

Baseline
16%

Endline
67,9%

% of boys who demonstrate improved attitude towards women's empowerment

Baseline
23%

Endline
83,9%



SUSTAINABILITY

- Discussions around behaviour change will continue as long as there are VSLA*
- Partner organizations have agreed to monitor and supervise youth clubs
- The Youth Council builds on "SISI VIJANA" approaches and success and effectively collaborate with engaged men and girls in their community campaigns
- Existence of facilitators platform for regular meetings and exchanges on youth outreach initiatives

STRENGTHS

- Peer education on SISI VIJANA manual has been a successful approach as youth openly discuss their experiences, doubts and learnings
- Abatangamuco (Role model men) actively support the youth behaviour change by organizing intergenerational discussions and sharing testimonies on gender equality
- VSLA approach is adapted to allow youth mobilization
- Teachers and parents support and appreciate gender activists young men



LEARNING

- The VSLA approach in youth clubs, and as an entry point for all community interventions;
- Working with administration to increase accountability and mutual confidence;
- Working with intergenerational groups is worth considering to create new relationships between adults and youth.
- The power of stories and testimonies was seen during community awareness campaigns; those campaigns created satellite VSLA youth clubs.



CHALLENGES

- Young people are constantly changing homes, especially changing schools;
- At the beginning of the project, young people from political parties had doubts about the gatherings of young people, but after the situation improved;
- The project's inability to coach and support all young people interested in participating to project activities. The young people who wanted to be supervised by the project were in high number compared to the targets of the project.