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# REHABILITATIVE JUSTICE FOR RECONCILIATION IN RWANDA PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT

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## SUMMARY

Fondation DiDé has obtained a grant from USAID/Duteze imbere Ubutabera (DIU) to carry out a 15 months to 18 months raised up project called “Rehabilitative Justice for Reconciliation in Rwanda, 2019-2020”.

The project focused on psychosocial rehabilitation of people in conflict with the law, especially on psychological preparation of to-be-released prisoners and awareness raising of the community to facilitate their reintegration. The project worked in prison with the purpose to conduct rehabilitative psychosocial to help prisoners who committed genocide against Tutsi to better understand their situation and reestablish social links. **The goal was to give them a second chance to reintegrate into the community after their release.** At the same time, in the community, the project focused on forgiveness, reintegration and reconciliation by preparing victims, families of both sides (perpetrator and victim), and the community at large to welcome ex-prisoners back as full members.

As existing initiatives are “short-term” and do not allow enough time for healing, the project has trained peer educators selected among prisoners as well as identified members of the community to continue the job as facilitators. Peer educators are supported in that task by prison and local authorities.

The project targeted the population composed of to- be- released prisoners perpetrators of the Genocide against Tutsi, native of Nyamasheke and Nyaruguru districts and incarcerated in Huye, Rusizi and Nyamagabe prisons, on one side and on the other side the genocide survivors from the said districts

The implementation of the project was to lead to unity and reconciliation of Rwandans through a process where perpetrators of the Genocide against the Tutsi ask for pardon to the survivors after the truth on their involvement in the genocide. For the period of its execution, the project targeted to attend to 630 people, including:

- 450 prisoners who committed genocide against the Tutsi (150 per prison)
- 90 prisoners’ family members
- 90 members of families of the victims

As the project comes to its end, a rapid evaluation has been planned to assess the project achievements, the challenges encountered, the lessons from implementation, as well as the opinions from various stakeholders that will serve for forthcoming interventions and opportunities.

This rapid assessment had following objectives:

- i) Identify the understanding of reconciliation process among beneficiaries
- ii) Describe obstacles encountered in the reconciliation process and those still to be overcome
- iii) Define appropriate strategies to be used with view to improving further interventions

The assessment was conducted by a consultant who collected information in the project documentation and interviewed various stakeholders (partners, direct and indirect beneficiaries). Thirty six (36) persons directly involved in the project were met and they are acknowledged for their availability and contribution.

The project didn't start at zero, it was founded on existing initiatives working in prisons and in the community such as the government program "Ndi Umunyarwanda" (*I am a Rwandan*), Faith based organizations programs like Prison Fellowship, Paix et Réconciliation (*Peace and Reconciliation*) by the catholic priests. However, Fondation DiDé introduced a holistic approach of simultaneously working on the different components of the equation which are: convicts, victims, families of both sides and the community.

DiDé devoted in a comprehensive teaching or education of the beneficiaries about the concept of Rehabilitative Justice for Reconciliation in Rwanda in the context of genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi. DiDé prepared the way to rehabilitation –reconciliation and reintegration to the point that perpetrators did understood clearly their role in this genocide, confessed their crimes and felt hearted free. It is after the perpetrator own healing that the process continued with connecting them with victims, families of both sides and neighbors first at prison and secondly at community level for apology and forgiveness.

At the end of the period assigned, the project experience has been remarkable as in responding effectively and efficiently to the expectations of the beneficiaries which are: inmates, victims,

families of both sides, neighbors and authorities at prison level, districts and other public partners, especially those closely related to Unity and Reconciliation area.

All planned activities were initiated and correctly carried out but some couldn't be finished due to COVID\_19 movement restrictions.

The budget was used in the approved manner and positive impact on beneficiaries is noticeable. Interviews conducted with direct and indirect beneficiaries, authorities at national, prison and district level reveal that the project has encouraged the genocide against Tutsi perpetrators incarcerated in intervention prisons at the request of sincere forgiveness, and to the victims, the project has approached them in the process of granting pardon to detainees ready prepared to ask for forgiveness.

In the 18 months that the project lasted, **130** detainees apologized to **132** victims they offended during the 1994 Tutsi genocide.

Almost **15,000** inmates in Huye, Nyamagabe and Rusizi prisons as well as **150** community members and local authorities from the districts of Nyamasheke and Nyaruguru participated in the reconciliation event organized in prisons.

In addition, during the public reconciliation event organized (outside the prison) in Nyamasheke (Bushenge site), an average of **3,000** people attended the event.

As noted earlier, because of COVID\_19, a number of inmates who were ready to apologize publically couldn't be connected to victims and families of both sides.

### **Some illustrative detailed findings of the project are:**

1. Due to group therapy, a lot of perpetrators who took part in the project have been healed, rehabilitated and ready to confess their crimes.
2. Perpetrators, who didn't recognize their crimes during gacaca, pleaded guilty and most of them acknowledged all the crimes they committed. This contributes very highly to rehabilitate also the Inyangamugayo of gacaca (and their families) who are considered by some perpetrators as the ones who put them into jail.
3. Some of the perpetrators revealed places where bodies of persons killed during the genocide against Tutsi are buried.
4. Telling the truth and confessing contributed to hoping that perpetrators, if released, will live in peace with other members of the community. This prepares well the community to acceptance of released perpetrators and living with them in concord.
5. During the public event of confessing and asking for forgiveness, as perpetrators were transported in the villages where they committed crimes, it was the occasion for them

to appreciate changes in infrastructures, on the look of people left behind and so be convinced that development in Rwanda is possible.

6. Prison's staff benefited from trainings offered and are committed to make good use of the knowledge acquired in the interest of rehabilitative Justice for Reconciliation in Rwanda.
7. Facilitators in community appreciate trainings received on how to: communicate with antagonist people, listening, respecting individual decision taking. They also appreciate the role they played/their contribution in the unity and reconciliation, hence in the development of the country.
8. The project was described by beneficiaries as a robust bridge between perpetrators, victims and community.
9. The project reaffirmed that it is better to prepare living in community to be released perpetrators while they are still in prison
10. Community facilitators reported that Covid 19 has been an obstacle because some persons they've worked with and were ready for dialogues thought they are liars.

All participants in the evaluation strongly would like to see the experience of the project (teaching and education on genocide in all its aspects and on human rights including prisoners' rights, psychologic mutual healing, importance and advantages of a genuine apologizing and those of giving forgiveness) continuing and eventually extending to the entire Rwandan prison system and the whole community. This is the main recommendation of this assessment report and partners (Rwandese Government and its partners) are encouraged to find the necessary means to react satisfactorily on it.

## **ACRONYMS**

AVEGA : Association des Veuves et Orphelins du Génocide

CNLG : Commission Nationale de Lutte contre le Génocide

DiDé : Dignité en Détention (Dignity in Detention)

DIU : Duteze Imbere Ubutabera bwunga

IEC : Information, Education, Communication

JAF : Joint Action Forum

NGO : Non Governmental Organization

NURC : National Unity and Reconciliation Commission

USAID: United States Fund for Aid

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# I. INTRODUCTION AND FRAMEWORK OF THE REHABILITATIVE JUSTICE FOR RECONCILIATION IN RWANDA PROJECT RAPID ASSESSMENT

## 1.1. General context

Didé (Dignity in Detention) is a non-governmental organization, founded in 1992 in Geneva, Switzerland, which started operating in Rwanda in 1998.

The purpose of DiDé 's action is to contribute to an environment which respects the dignity of persons incarcerated in conflict with the law, and hence deprived of their liberty, by offering them training and / or apprenticeships during their detention.

The objective of its interventions is to enable inmates:

- to accept/own their past
- to live and develop in the present
- to project oneself into the future and towards the outside world

With the agreement and involvement of the detaining authorities as a prerequisite, DiDé develops its approach by:

- direct support projects for minors or women, managed in partnership with local and / or international organizations or by its own structures.
- a mobilization of other actors, authorities, civil society, non-governmental organizations ( NGOs ) in order to cover the specific needs of minors and women and to sustain its action.

DiDé's action is long-term and tends to achieve lasting results.

In collaboration with the Rwanda Correctional Services (RCS), DiDé operates in eight (8) Rwandan prisons, namely: Nyagatare, Rwamagana, Ngoma, Bugesera, Nyarugenge, Huye, Nyamagabe, and Rusizi, where it supports most especially women and children, in the context of promoting human rights in general and for those deprived of liberty because of the sanctions they're sentenced to serve in particular.( the meaning does not come out properly)

Since March 2019, with the support of USAID, through its DUTEZE IMBERE UBUTABERA (DIU) project, the DiDé Foundation has launched a project within justice sector aiming at unity and reconciliation of Rwandans, with the purpose to reconcile perpetrators of genocide committed against Tutsi incarcerated in Huye, Nyamagabe, and Rusizi prisons, who are native

of Nyamasheke or Nyaruguru districts, with the Survivors from the above-mentioned districts, as well as the Rwandan community in general, including the families of the inmates working with the project as beneficiaries.

This project implementation is being completed with October 2020 and is assessed, by identifying the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, the direct effects and the sustainability of the results achieved.

### 1.2. Purpose of the project

The project was designed to focus on psychosocial rehabilitation of people in conflict with the law especially on psychological preparation of to-be-released prisoners and awareness raising of the community to facilitate their reintegration.

### 1.3. Geographical Scope of the project

The project was implemented in prisons and at the community level as follow:

1. Huye Prison and communities from Nyaruguru district;
2. Rusizi Prison and communities from Nyamasheke district;
3. Nyamagabe Prison and communities from Nyaruguru and Nyamasheke districts.

### 1.4. Beneficiaries

The project was planned to reach the following beneficiaries:

- ❖ Direct beneficiaries :
  - 450 prisoners (150 per prison)
  - 90 prisoners' family members
  - 90 families of victims
- ❖ Indirect beneficiaries :
  - Prison staff
  - Community members neighbouring families of prisoners that committed to ask for forgiveness

### 1.5. Project duration

The project was developed for a period of 15 months: March 2019- August 2020. But due to COVID\_19 pandemic, the implementation was extended to October, 2020.

### 1.6. Description of the project

The rehabilitative justice for reconciliation in Rwanda project is an 18 month project that takes an innovative three-fold comprehensive approach to enhancing Rwanda's criminal justice effectiveness:

First, it focuses on strengthening protection of due process rights for individuals accused of crimes;

Secondly, it aims to improve the criminal justice system's capacity to psychologically rehabilitate prisoners;

and finally it expands prisoners/community reconciliation by working before and after a prisoner's release to facilitate his/her reintegration into the community.

The project focuses on the psychosocial rehabilitation of prisoners close to the end of their sentence by providing psychological assistance for their reintegration into society. Other planned activities include the organization of reconciliation activities between detainees and victims of crime and / or members of the community of origin, including family members of detainees. The activities in question are planned for prisoners in Huye, Rusizi and Nyamagabe prisons, and for communities' members native of Nyaruguru and Nyamasheke districts.

### 1.7. Objectives of the project

It is a project developed for contributing to the Rwandans' unity and reconciliation through a process where perpetrators of the Genocide against the Tutsi ask for forgiveness to the survivors.

## II. THE RAPID ASSESSMENT

### 1. Objectives of the rapid assessment:

According to the terms of reference, the objective of the rapid assessment was to verify and evaluate the level of achievement of the project objectives by focusing on:

- The relevance of the project
- Effects of project activities
- Effectiveness and Efficiency
- The sustainability of the results achieved

These include:

- Description of the initial situation previous to the intervention of the DiDé program, with an emphasis on the beneficiaries (stakeholders) situation and the prevailing problem.

- Description of what has been done in the program, according to the chronology of events: achievements and non-achievements, approaches used, stakeholders participation, results obtained from different groups of beneficiaries, financing, difficulties encountered, delays, etc.
- Presentation of changes and results obtained through or influenced by the achievements of the DiDé program, both at the level of the various stakeholders and in the sector, in the short and medium term.
- Description of difficulties and problems encountered in the past and those still to be overcome.
- Explanation also of the reasons that led to the non-fulfillment of certain objectives
- Description of the lessons learned during the implementation of the program, thus enabling better orientation of future activities in the sector of rehabilitative and reconciliation justice.

## 2. Methodological approach

In accordance with the terms of reference, the methodological approach consisted in:

- Available documentation review
- Individual interviews with officials, actors and beneficiaries at the central level (Kigali) and in 2 prisons (Nyamagabe and Rusizi) of the project's three prisons of intervention. Due to Covid\_19 limitations, it was not possible to conduct interviews directly with beneficiaries in Huye prison; instead the guides questionnaire were sent to them, were completed and sent back to the consultant. Interviews were also held with Nyamasheke District authorities; other actors and beneficiaries on behalf of the community in Nyamasheke District, including representatives of genocide survivors, perpetrators families, community agents who played the role of facilitators (intermediaries) between perpetrators in prison and genocide against survivors in the village.
- Analysis and interpretation of data.

### 2.1. The course of the mission and problems encountered

The mission took place in four (4) different stages:

- Document review
- Development of tools for collecting and analyzing information
- Interview with partners and beneficiaries of the project
- Analysis and interpretation of data.

### *2.1.1. Documents review*

A literature review was conducted through the project conception note, the materials developed by DiDé for the projects' needs to see how they are appropriate to the projects' objectives, and the activities reports. The national unity and reconciliation guidelines were also read and documents from other partners working in the field of unity and reconciliation in Rwandan prisons.

### *2.1.2. Interview with project beneficiaries and partners*

Interviews were carried out with:

- Actors in the provision of services to genocide perpetrators incarcerated: RCS head quarter staff and that in the prisons indicated above; i.e Nyamagabe and Rusizi prisons. At the prison level, interviews have been conducted with the director and focal person of the project.

Information was also collected next to Nyamasheke District leading committee including the mayor, the vice-mayor in charge of social affairs, the vice-mayor in charge of economic development, the district executive secretary, the division manager; all met together. At that district level, interview was completed with the director in charge of good governance who is the focal point of the project.

The objective to talking to all these actors was to comprehend the context in which the project was conducted and to report on their appreciation of the project's achievements and the chances to continue the intervention.

- The direct beneficiaries: these are i) the inmates who committed genocide against Tutsi still in detention and those released, ii) the genocide survivals and the families of both sides and iii) the community around.

Three categories of inmates were interviewed: a) those who acknowledged their crimes and demanded for forgiveness, b) those still in the course of asking for pardon and the peer educators. Two (2) of each category were interviewed by prison, so a total of twelve prisoners were talked to.

For Huye prison, written information collected from two prisoners and the prison staff (director and the focal person).

In Nyamasheke district, interviews were conducted with two genocide survivals, two members of the perpetrator's family and two "facilitators" recruited and trained by DiDé.

- Partners and donors of the project, including USAID/DIU, RCS, National Commission for Unity and Reconciliation, Prison Fellowship Program, Search Common Ground and District of Nyamasheke as stated overhead.

#### *2.1.3. Analysis and interpretation of data*

Based on data collected as described above, a draft document was produced and submitted to DiDé for inputs.

The evaluation used quantitative data from different activities and financial reports (secondary sources) related to the project, as well as qualitative data from interviews with beneficiaries, diverse partners and stakeholders of the USAID/DIU project.

#### *2.1.4. Challenges encountered*

In general, the rapid assessment was conducted in good conditions and different stakeholders of the project were supportive. However, due to covid\_19 pandemic, it was not possible to meet face to face the staff and inmates of Huye District. Because of insufficient budget it was not possible to interview more people in the community. Moreover, only Nyamasheke district was visited instead of two districts in which the project worked.

#### *2.1.5. Draft report of findings*

Based on the information collected as described above, a draft document was written and submitted to DiDé for inputs and observations and presented to a capitalization meeting with all stakeholders before producing the final report of the assessment.

The assessment mostly focused on qualitative data collection techniques. These were supplemented by relevant quantitative data from secondary sources, including information from DiDé different activities reports.

### **3. Evaluation of the project**

#### **3.1. Relevance**

The project relevance is underlined firstly by the go-ahead and close collaboration in its implementation by the accurate authorities that are mainly the RCS and the Districts. RCS approved the collaboration and eased the right of entry in prisons. Choice of prisons of

implementation was done in collaboration with Unity and reconciliation authorities. The project was carried out in prisons where there are many genocide perpetrators and where there are not much partners in that field. At the district level, when they brought on the table this project, DiDé was agreed as member of Nyaruguru and Nyamasheke Joint Action Forums (JAF). This means that DiDé was approved as a close partner in development of these districts, despite a narrow budget allocated to the project as this was stressed one of the district authorities during the assessment. Since the project answered to objectives to be achieved in the pillar of good governance, in an important area of unity and reconciliation in Rwanda, it was applauded in the JAF.

The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) also welcomed the project that responds strongly to its mission.

Briefly, wholly actors and beneficiaries of USAID/DIU project point out the great importance and highly welcome this project.

According to the inmates and the prison staff supervising them, the district authorities and all the people who participated can testify about the project results. They point out that it contributed greatly to the rehabilitation of genocide perpetrators who pleaded guilty and called for forgiveness. Indeed, through training received on the comprehensive definition of genocide, the advantages of acknowledging, regretting and requesting for pardon, the group therapy with the support of peer educators and the DiDé psychologist supervision...the perpetrator understands very well her/his crime and responsibility in committing genocide against Tutsi; she/he feels a psycho-mental relief for herself/himself and can easily confess her/his crime in front of the victims, into the face of her/his family and the whole community. This resulted in relieving the genocide victims who learnt the uncut truth from the mouth of the perpetrator but also the inmates' own family who often picks up the whole truth on the crimes committed only at that occasion. Facilitating physical meetings between perpetrators and victims with the families of both sides first inside the prison and after outside the prison (in the village where the crime has been committed and where live families of both sides) allow the inmate to recover taste for life and free himself from the consequences of genocide. Those consequences are mainly being rejected or not feeling (fully) reintegrated in the community once released. There is also the challenging cohabitation of the perpetrator's family and that of the genocide victims. One inmate interviewed portrayed the relevance of the project in these terms: "the project came at the right time. Before my participation in the program, I could not imagine being able to greet the person who put me in prison (i.e. the genocide survival) though she/he lives on my doorstep. Thanks to the project's teaching, I understood that I really committed genocide and

apologized for it. This relieved me and very importantly, the victim's family and mine now enjoy peacetime".

A peer educator (in Rusizi prison) added that the project demonstrated to Rwandan community that perpetrators have human rights; it showed that someone cares for them.

An authority from RCS portrayed the relevance of the project in these symbolic, but for Rwandese realities, highly significant terms: *"If you put ahead erecting physical structures before building a man's character, he may end up destroying them"*.

The executive secretary of the National and Unity Reconciliation Commission expressed the relevance of the project as follow: *"The project came to add strength on the ongoing programs, considering the existing high demand in the sector of rebuilding unity and reconciliation, a prerequisite for a sustainable development in Rwanda"*.

## 3.2. Performance

### 3.2.1. Expected outcomes of the project

The implementation of the project led to the following outcomes:

- (i) The first result concerns the acquisition of knowledge by prison staff and local authorities on legal and human rights, psychosocial rehabilitation and reintegration within communities of inmates and ex-prisoners.
- (ii) The second outcome is gaining legal and human rights education by prisoners.
- (iii) The third outcome emphasizes on psychosocial and mental health support to for to-be-released prisoners in Huye, Nyamagabe and Rusizi prisons: 150 inmates to be soon released in these prisons are better equipped to understand their past including their role in the genocide, live their present and prepare for their reintegration.
- (iv) The fourth outcome focuses on reconciliation between the genocide perpetrators incarcerated, the victims and the families of both side.
- (v) The fifth outcome centers on reintegration of to be released prisoners in the communities.
- (vi) The sixth outcome concerns coordination and follow up project activities.

To achieve these outcomes, the following activities were implemented:



- Production of IEC Material related to legal and human rights, psychological rehabilitation, reconciliation and reintegration of ex-prisoners within communities for Prison staff and local authorities;
- Organization of legal and human rights education campaigns in prisons;
- Selection and Training of peer educators to facilitate inmates education on legal and human rights aspects;
- Organization of psycho-social counseling and healing sessions for to-be-released prisoners
- Organization of reconciliation education sessions in prisons between prisoners and genocide victims/survivors in preparation of detainees' reintegration within communities;

### 3.2.2. Performance in knowledge acquisition

#### *3.2.2.1. Situation before the project*

Inmates had no tools and no social space to express their feelings or beliefs about their situation. The prison staff was not either equipped to help genocide against Tutsi perpetrators getting rehabilitated for a safe reintegration in society.

DiDé designed IEC training materials with specialists in the domain. Those materials were validated through a workshop, held on May 24, 2019, in which, participated the projects' partners representatives. Then DiDé selected peer educators in close collaboration with the prisons and delivered trainings in prisons.

#### *3.2.2.2. IEC materials developed*

For prisons' staff and local administration, DiDé developed training material on:

- i) human rights in general and prisoners' rights in particular,
- ii) prisoners' mental health,
- iii) unity and reconciliation
- iv) prisoners' reintegration of the to be soon released prisoners

-« Manuel de formation des animateurs psycho-sociaux (pairs éducateurs) sur la santé mentale du prisonnier ». It is a manual used to train peer educators to allow them helping inmates on

their psychological rehabilitation. That rehabilitation is a prerequisite to self-acceptance, repentance, reconciliation, reintegration and then development. This material is highly valued by the peer educators who use it to facilitate that process of rehabilitation for inmates. The knowledge acquired allowed them to manage even cases of inmates that were too locked on themselves.

In Nyamagabe, the peer educators interviewed mentioned a case of a person who suffered from depression (she used to walk during the night without any destination or purpose or seemed absent minded during the day) but nobody did not know that kind of disorder she suffered of. So, they used to think that her behavior was due to the non-acceptance of the sentence or other reasons. It is during group therapy that they discovered her problem. They helped her and could observe after some sessions of participating in group therapy that she enjoyed her life like others. All inmates met during the assessment interviews appreciated the psychological rehabilitation got thanks to the peer educators (using the learning from the module). The peer educators appreciate also having with them the copy of the module, which will help them continue assisting other inmates.

- A presentation on asking for and giving forgiveness (“*Gutanga -Gusaba imbabazi*”)

This presentation helped inmates incarcerated for genocide to deeply understand what means asking for forgiveness and giving it, the advantages for both sides (perpetrator and victim) and how it is a long process.

- A presentation on “*Igisobanuro cy’itsinda*” (*the detailed significance of a group*) helped the inmates to know what is a group and how it works, in order to get them ready to benefit from it the maximum possible.

### *3.2.2.3. Identifying and training peer educators*

In collaboration with the prison’s authorities, DiDé went on identifying Peer Educators among inmates. The peer educator is generally someone who already has responsibilities of leading others, especially in the existing programs of unity and reconciliation (Ndi Umunyarwanda, Interfaith initiatives on Peace and reconciliation...). The following criteria were considered in peer educators choosing:

- (1) Being literate,
- (2) Having completed three years post primary school;
- (3) Having completed secondly school or above was a benefit;
- (4) Not to be over 60 years old,

- (5) Having an open mind,
- (6) Dynamic;
- (7) Demonstrates the will to be a peer educator,
- (8) Behaves well in the correction process,
- (9) Have at least two years before completing his/her sentence.

Peer educators help (by facilitating group discussions) other prisoners who join the group therapy for asking for forgiveness.

In each of the three prisons of the project area, peer educators have been trained.

Table 1. Peer Educators trained by District

<b>District</b>	<b>Number of Peer Educators Trained</b>
Huye	30
Nyamagabe	33
Rusizi	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>

Source: DiDé, Kigali, October, 2020

#### *3.2.2.4. Identifying and training focal point at prison*

With the collaboration of the prison authority, DiDé chose focal point in each prison.

In the prison, the focal point is usually in charge of education and correction; the one whose reconciliation is under his/her responsibilities.

DiDé also trained those focal points in prisons in order to equip them to closely following the activities executed under the project.

Focal points interviewed from the three prisons where the project was implemented, declared that trainings are very useful for them, since they have other groups they usually follow and even for the routine service they give in prisons.

### 3.2.3. Rehabilitation through knowledge acquired

Prisoners indicated that DiDé delivered wide knowledge on the genocide definition, the genocide in Rwanda and in other parts of the world, the consequences of genocide including the psychological ones, the importance of unity and reconciliation for the development of the country. “This was the first time we had a comprehensive information/training (compared to Ndi Umunyarwanda teaching). Here we were taught to speak out our crimes; thanks to the knowledge acquired, everyone could identify her/his role (crime) in genocide. The training received facilitated us for a self-analysis”, specified all inmates.

Asked on the challenges encountered by the Peer Educators in helping inmates in that process, they said that depending on the personality of a person, it took a different time to self-examination and asking for pardon. For some, the enormity of genocide crime, humiliation or guiltiness felt... may lead you not to speak about and confess it. At the beginning, some inmates thought the information shared in groups was to be transmitted somewhere, but when they saw nobody taking notes, they get confidence and talked about their involvement in the genocide. They were also taught and understood that what was exchanged in groups had to remain secret, to avoid those who do not participate in the group discussions to discourage them. Another challenge is that of some inmates who believed that once they apologize they would be released and will not pay victim's properties damaged during the genocide. Peer Educators recalled them the importance and the advantages of asking for forgiveness for themselves, for the victims and the families of both sides. Another big challenge was that of some inmates who constantly claimed their innocence for which Peer Educators and the project supervisors have no answer.

Asked on the most useful part of the training, several inmates interviewed, said that it was the one that helped them to understand their role in the genocide and to accept requesting for forgiveness.

Most of the inmates interviewed say that they were full of anger and not ready to open up themselves to such rehabilitative justice for reconciliation initiative; but the training and the psychological support were such that they felt progressively released and open their hearts to reconciliation.

An inmate of Rusizi interviewed specified that the teaching received from the project made him understand that he has a great responsibility in the healing process of the victim and of

himself. He learnt that to let the victim live and to be able himself to live, he had to recognize his crime and to self-rehabilitate; so he realized he was the cure”.

Inmates interviewed underlined how much they benefited from the group therapy approach (mvura-nkuvure). The group helps you to take a decision for yourself.

Inmates expressed some obstacles in the process of pleading guilty and demanding for forgiveness:

- discouragement by other inmates,
- victims not available to give forgiveness to perpetrators ready to confess and ask for pardon,
- inmates who asked for joining the groups but were refused to, because they aren't residents of the project area (districts),
- foreigners (Congolese and Burundese incarcerated) that wish to participate into groups in order to pass on the experience in their countries once released (reported by a Rusizi inmate).

It has not always been easy to bring perpetrator accept their crimes: a peer educator told that in his group of 15 members, 2 members weren't yet ready for asking for forgiveness when they finished the training and the discussions in groups. He also reported that when a perpetrator recognized his crimes and asked for pardon it had an impact on other inmates who were part of his team while committing genocide could no more hide the truth, they just confessed and asked for forgiveness.

In general, inmates who were reconciled with themselves helped others to open up, to recognize their crimes and to request for pardon, highlighted one of the peer educators in Rusizi.

Not only inmates, prison's staff and community profited from new useful knowledge on legal and human rights training/education. One of the partners expressed that in their collaboration with DiDé in the project implementation, he better understood how important is unity and reconciliation program in the Rwandan development. He also learned that a perpetrator may suffer too from depression because of his crime and that he has to be cured before proceeding to reconciliation. He understood then how to orient their platform of community mobilisation on rehabilitative justice (*Search for Common Ground*).

A focal point stated that he benefited from the project by acquiring knowledge on genocide against Tutsi, as he was very young when it happened. He added that the knowledge he got will be useful serving other inmates.

A director of prison said that in his long experience in service with prisoners, he founds so easy to work with inmates reconciled with themselves, after following the project teachings.

### 3.2.4. Performance in reconciliation

#### *3.2.4.1. Situation before*

Before the project, according to detainees and prison's staff, inmates weren't sufficiently sensitized about accepting own crime and asking for pardon. Though other stakeholders than DiDé had previously worked on this topic of mobilizing the detainees inside prisons (like Faith based bodies and government programs such as Ndi Umunyarwanda and other civic education subjects on unity and reconciliation....), a good number of genocide perpetrators incarcerated didn't recognize their wrong doing and were still psychologically distressed.

#### *3.2.4.2. Results obtained from the project*

Peer educators and other inmates highlighted how much, after the learning on group dynamic, civic education, group therapy and discussions in groups allowed them to open up and reconcile with themselves. Other DiDé's specificity has been physical connection with the victims and prisoners' families. With other stakeholders (Faith based NGOs initiatives including Prison Fellowship), prisoners interviewed stated that some of them who had understood the importance of asking for pardon had written letters to the victims and didn't receive any response. When DiDé facilitated contacts, perpetrators were happy to ask for forgiveness and victims to give it. Physical interactions are very important, emphasised the inmates: "while confessing your crimes, the victim would say, you didn't mention this and that and you would reply, oh, I've forgotten it; thank you for recalling me"... and when the victim was satisfied as you had told the whole truth, she/he would embrace you and you would feel psychologically released". Inmates ready to confess know that if you don't deliver the whole truth to the victim, you may not obtain forgiveness and prisoners know that when victims come to the reconciliation sessions, they already know much about the prisoner role and what happened during the genocide.

Learning the truth on the crimes perpetrated and confessed in public in front of authorities (House of Justice, Prosecutor, RCS, Ibuka, AVEGA) and members of the community gave a big relief to victims.

One inmate interviewed declared: “victims didn’t believe in our intensity in confessing our crimes, recalling how we denied them before. Myself, after the reconciliation session I asked my wife and my children how they feel neighbouring the victim and they replied they live together peacefully. What ascertained it to me is that my wife came to visit me accompanied by the victim’s daughter. Later on, one of the victim’s family was incarcerated here and when I had the occasion to go out (for work) I’d bring her something she enjoyed. So we became very close helpers”.

An inmate reported that the victim to whom he confessed his crime not only forgave him, but also told him he won’t make him reimburse the property destroyed (house burnt).

Inmates have learnt and experienced during the reconciliation events that the reconciliation can’t be effective if the whole truth is not told. Knowing the truth is an important precondition to victims for forgiving perpetrators.

Victims/survivals played a big role in relaxing the perpetrators. Some victims have even forgiven the perpetrators before they asked for it, declared one facilitator (Umuhuza) in Nyamasheke. In fact, for some survivals, the perpetrators took too long to demand for pardon. As victims had understood they have to be healed so to be able to continue life, they have freed their hearts and pardoned the perpetrators.

Even though inmates stated that, in most of the cases, survivals forgave them without difficulties- as soon as victims were told the whole truth- representatives of victims interviewed in Nyamasheke reported that it is not so easy to forgive. It is a long process, you have to think deeply about it, they added. One survival gave the example of her big sister who lost her husband and all her ten (10) children. She emphasized that you can’t talk to her about forgiving perpetrator of that level of atrocities. In such case, families of victims and those of perpetrators live like antagonists. But for herself (the interviewed), she thanks DiDé that came near them, and conducted trainings on the matter of forgiving. Women in Nyamasheke were approached in groups, she added. On the contrary, the man (survival) interviewed didn’t participate into groups, so that he couldn’t be approached by that channel. However an “Umuhuza” (facilitator trained by DiDé) came at his home and spoke about the perpetrator who asked him for forgiveness. The fact that Umuhuza had walked all the way to his home to explain the importance of forgiving moved him. So he decided to go to prison to meet the perpetrator in order to signify him that he’d already forgiven him. He thought the perpetrator needed that face to face to hear he was pardoned from the survival himself. He found that the perpetrator had prepared him a gift. This victim underlined that other ways to ask him for forgiveness (like

writing letters, initiative of the perpetrator's family to see him) wouldn't have succeeded. Only DiDé's approach was suitable for him.

Both victims recognized that it requires substantial work and persistence from Umuhuza to convince victims to give pardon. So, for those who are deeply affected by the genocide against Tutsi, you have to let them enough time to go into the process. Often, perpetrators operated in groups; you need each of all them to confess personally his crime. When a perpetrator pleads guilty from the bottom of her/his heart, at the end she/he is pardoned, said the victims' representatives. They highlighted that the perpetrators who asked them for pardon are better than the neighbors who are not true with them. This kind of declaration of guilt spoken specifically to the right victim is different from the confession made during Gacaca that was addressed to "the Rwandan community"; this kind of confession aimed just to seek for release, stated on survival interviewed.

For victims, another advantage of confessing is that you may be told where the bodies of your member's family are hidden so that you can bury them in dignity.

One of the victims representatives pointed out that even if one victim, strongly affected by the genocide, may not be able to forgive; the unity and reconciliation program have to be sustained to bring together families and build the future of the country.

So, the process has to be continued and supported as a representative of IBUKA reported: we've been informed that some perpetrators who had expressed the will to confess their crimes withdrew their decision at the last minute.

A district authority thanked for the project that contributed to improve the level of understanding the imperious necessity of unity and reconciliation, passing through confessing ones crimes and asking for forgiveness at one hand, and giving pardon at the other hand. He observed a multiply effect from those who apologized and obtained forgiveness. The success of this action of reconciliation convinced some other prisoners who were still hesitant to ask for forgiveness.

But some perpetrators prefer to wait and see advantages of such process.

Some partners of the project underlined the good idea this project was implemented in the prison for women. They stated that when women understand their crimes, they show bottomless feelings when they ask for forgiveness and go deep in details reporting their bad behavior. It hits especially their children.



The connecting event organized in the community contributed greatly to the rehabilitation of the prisoner. Some of inmates reported how they enjoyed lot of valuable gifts received from the victims that they brought and consumed in the prison. They also enjoyed having travelled to their residence village, having greeted family members and neighbours and admired economic and social progress made during their absence.

The perpetrator is not only reconciled with the victim but also with his own family when the later learn the truth during the public confession. In several cases, the family, especially children are unaware of the crimes committed by their parents and believe the last are innocent; which make them getting angry against the victim.

Also, perpetrators, who didn't recognize their crimes during gacaca and who acknowledged all the crimes they committed through the project contribute highly to rehabilitate the Inyangamugayo of gacaca (and their families) who are considered by some perpetrators as the ones who put them into jail (*stated the E.S. of NURC*).

In the 18 months that the project went on, **130** detainees apologized to **132** victims they offended during the 1994 Tutsi genocide.

Almost **15,000** inmates in Huye, Nyamagabe and Rusizi prisons as well as **150** community members and local authorities from the districts of Nyamasheke and Nyaruguru participated in the reconciliation event organized in prisons.

In addition, during the public reconciliation in Nyamasheke (Bushenge site), an average of **3,000** people attended the event.

But, one can note other results not completed because of Covid \_19 pandemic and the project closing.

- ❖ In Nyamagabe prison, **16** inmates are ready to ask for forgiveness.
- ❖ The following number of prisoners are still waiting to be transported for apologizing in the place of crime:

Table 2. Inmates still waiting for apologizing on the place of crime by District

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF INMATES
Huye	34
Nyamagabe	13
Rusizi	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52</b>

Source: DiDé, Kigali, October, 2020

These prisoners have completed the process of accepting their responsibilities in the genocide against Tutsi and are ready to confess in front of the survivals.

Lets' point out one expectation raised by the project success in rehabilitation, reconciliation and reintegration: some of the prisoners that still have to stay for long in jail, excited by the experience of forgiving at a high level by the victims, expressed the wish that government should reduce their sentence as they confess and apologize.

### 3.2.5. Performance in reintegration

#### *3.2.5.1. Situation before*

Inmates, local authorities and members of community interviewed reported that it was not so easy for released perpetrators to live in harmony with survivals and the members of the community. Some ex-prisoners even couldn't live peacefully with their own families.

Before the project experience, inmates interviewed revealed that some released prisoners had to move from their residence to places like Kigali or Nyagatare where they were unknown, because they couldn't afford live in the victim's surroundings. Victims could be afraid they may be again smashed by the ex-prisoner or the released prisoner may be arrogant in front of the victim accusing her/him for having imprisoned her/him. This would keep up a climate of non-cooperation, unconstructive for the development of the whole community. One inmate reported the case of a prisoner released who came back into prison because he couldn't live serenely with the victim.

### *3.2.5.2. Results obtained from the project*

For the reintegration phase, at the end of the process above of introspection and self-acceptation that make you ready for apologizing, DiDé did it into two (2) steps:

- i) inviting victims and the perpetrators families in the prison where the inmate confesses publically ones crimes and ask for forgiveness. After listening to the prisoner's declaration of guilt, the victim of genocide when satisfied could give pardon;
- ii) bringing the perpetrators in the place of genocide crime where victims and their families if any, families of the prisoner and the people in the village gather to hear the perpetrator confess publically her/his crimes.

The living together of families (victim's and perpetrator's) after confessing and receiving forgiveness is one of the best results of the project identified unanimously by inmates, victims and members of the community. This is also DiDé's result and of other stakeholders that prepared the community to forgive and to live in concord with perpetrators once they have accomplished their sentence.

According to DiDé's public partners interviewed (RCS and prisons, NURC, Districts), once a prisoner is psychologically rehabilitated, one can see how it is easy to proceed to her/his reintegration, including teaching her/him a trade while in prison, or initiating her/him to an economic generating activity once released in community. Reintegration is especially made easy after this project experience when you realize how perpetrators and victims accept to meet and listen to each other, apologizing for their crimes and in turn giving forgiveness.

Perpetrators are assured that when they will go back in their families and communities, they will not feel shame or humiliation since they are forgiven publically. Those who are forgiven feel free to stay in their residence.

One inmate of Rusizi prison still in the process of asking for forgiveness said: "this was the first time I see someone helping perpetrator to meet victims. I've heard that forgiven perpetrators' families live in peace with victim's families."

The perpetrator's family also often benefits from the reconciliation sessions which strengthens the living together. A member of perpetrator's family in Nyamasheke declared that : "even though my father is in prison for life, we are happy he has confessed and been pardoned; now

we live in peace with the victim's family and the whole community". He added that the project teachings should also be given to ex-prisoners who were released before this project, as some continue to be reluctant in living in harmony with survivals.

A district authority recognized that "leading unhappy people lessens the development speed you'd wish to reach. When people are rehabilitated psychologically, they have a mindset standing by for progress. The project contributed to this prerequisite of Rwandan development", he added.

The process initiated through the project is rehabilitative for the victim who, when the perpetrator makes a genuine confession and is forgiven by the victim, families of both sides and the community are rehabilitated too. Then, the reintegration is possible. All the inmates interviewed, especially those who asked for pardon and got it, stated that they felt very happy to see how they are no longer rejected and are ready to join their community and participate in its development.

As one of the partner interviewed recalled, the inmates today incarcerated for long term service are the persons who didn't accept their crimes in the "gacaca" courts. So, these prisoners are surprised by the way they are cheered in their villages when they go back there for confession. This was also testified by partners who took part in public events of asking for forgiveness.

Other positive effect due to the project concerning reintegration, in Nyamagabe prison managed for women, one authority interviewed underlined a special issue regarding women. When a woman prisoner informs her spouse that she will be soon released, the husband hurries up to take another woman. The project anticipated this need to emphasize gender education with women's partners left behind.

Gender teachings are also given to men in prison to be released to facilitate reintegration in their own household.

But some partners of this project recommend to insist on the good preparation of inmates to behave well with their families once released, so that the family isn't traumatized by the return back of its member but enjoy seeing her/him again at home.

Abahuza (facilitators) in this project played a big role in the process of connecting inmates and victims.

These are people chosen for their recognized integrity in the community. They are in charge of approaching victim's families on behalf of perpetrator asking forgiveness. They took the message of the prisoner to the victim and accompany the last in the process of forgiving. Abahuza also visit the prisoner's family apologizing and communicate them about meeting for the confession. Abahuza interviewed expressed challenges they encounter when the victim is not ready for reconciliation. In this case, they pay several visits to such family. They reported that they walk long distances to get to the target. In Nyamasheke, they are only seven (7) and they have to go very long distances. But they appreciate the role they play in that domain of the country development.

### 3.2.6. Performance in coordination and follow up of the project

At the beginning, DiDé made the necessary contacts with all partners (public and private) of the project. DiDé organized concertation with all the stakeholders, especially when developing IEC materials. Then DiDé continued with trainings (of peer educators, focal point in prison and facilitators in the community), and follow up visits in prisons and community during which DiDé's staff and especially the psychologist expert in charge of the project looked at points raised during group discussions that required clarifications, gave psychologically support to prisoners (participating in the process) in need and other form of collaboration for the best accomplishment of the project.

DiDé preserved good collaboration with all the project partners: RCS, prisons, districts, NURC, Prison Fellowship, Search for Common Ground, USAID/DIU.

The prison's authorities and focal points appreciate the excellent collaboration with DiDé in the execution of the project characterized by: respecting the time table jointly established, availing the necessary human resources and the IEC material, organizing useful trainings, conducting monitoring and evaluation followed by constructive feedback, etc...

## 4. Results from implementing the project

The implementation of the various activities of developing IEC Material related to legal and human rights, psychological rehabilitation, reconciliation and reintegration of ex-prisoners within communities for Prison staff and local authorities, Carrying out legal and human rights education campaigns in prisons, Training of peer educators and prison staff, Supervising

psycho-social counseling and healing sessions for to-be-released prisoners in Huye, Nyamagabe and Rusizi prisons, Reconciliation education sessions in prisons between prisoners and victims/survivors in preparation of detainees' reintegration within communities, Organization of reconciliation dialogues between to-be-released detainees and community members in Nyamasheke District, Coordination and follow-up of project activities give results which beneficiaries (direct and indirect) are satisfied with.

Statistics of inmates and victims who accomplished the process of apologizing and getting forgiveness, in addition to information collected particularly during interviews with inmates and project key partners, including RCS at central and in prisons level, Nyamasheke district, NURC, USAID/DIU, Prison Fellowship, Search for Common Ground and DiDé foundation, confirmed the project substantial achievement.

Knowledge provided to inmates, prison staff in charge of accompanying inmates, and to community actors has been key in perpetrators and victims rehabilitation, which facilitates reconciliation and reintegration.

Reconciliation dialogues and physical connecting of inmates, victims, families of both sides and community are fundamental in the success of the project. Several illustrative testimonies were collected during interviews realized for this rapid assessment, as stated above. One partner underlined the work done saying that the approach used by DiDé is the good one: they've built community basis; they worked on individual rehabilitation, institutional cure and community involvement in the whole process of asking for forgiveness and giving it.

But, one has to understand that the time allocated to the project and given the complexity of issue handled under the project, which is "unity and reconciliation" in the context of genocide against Tutsi, perpetrators couldn't work to attain 100% of the target. As Nyamagabe prison director said during the assessment: "accepting ones' crimes is a long way to go before stepping forward for apologizing". He estimates that 90% of inmates that went along with group therapy supported by the project have changed positively on the road to reconciliation.

In addition, the COVID\_19 pandemic was an obstacle to carry on some activities requiring physical meetings.

## 5. Effectiveness and efficiency

The project has been executed in transparency. Collaboration between partners was effective: RCS authorities at central and prison level gave all the necessary platform to carry out the work in the best conditions possible: offices or places where to conduct trainings, counseling, meetings between perpetrators, victims and their families; human resources (focal point and others) and inmates to work with. Recruitment of the project officer followed regular DiDé's procedures. Activities were carried out accordingly to the protocol signed with DIU/USAID, as confirmed by the focal point of the project at DIU/USAID.

Almost the prisoners targeted by the project, i.e. 443 persons could participate and benefit from the knowledge provided through the project, especially on the process of rehabilitation, reconciliation and reintegration.

Prison staff, district and community agents received the basic knowledge for the matter above. They all appreciate the IEC material provided that will serve even after the project.

The high proportion of inmates is satisfied in terms of rehabilitation, after acquiring the knowledge delivered by DiDé through the project.

Almost 59% (130) of targeted inmates (443) have been connected and met physically the victims for forgiveness.

Partners, including the budget provider appreciate the work done in a so short time and with a limited budget.

The budget was efficiently used; the results are abundant compared to the narrow budget available.

## 6. Budget implementation

At the initiation of the project in 2019, the total budget was fixed at **105,996,750 Frw** . At end of September 2020, almost 90% of the budget has been consumed as shown in the table 3. below. Behind administrative expenses, "Reconciliation education and dialogue events at prison and community levels" share the highest amount; followed by trainings of prison peer educators and community facilitators, Communication and Counseling sessions. The budget was put in long-lasting activities of Rehabilitative Justice for Reconciliation in Rwanda.

But as stated above, needs in this area are still many, beginning with prisoners that already participated in the project activities who couldn't finish the course and those in other prisons who heard about importance and advantages of acknowledging one's crimes, apologizing and getting pardoned.

Table 3. Budget implementation

	<b>Fixed amount awarded (FAA)</b>	<b>105 996 750</b>
	<b>Receipt/ 30.09.2020</b>	<b>94 996 260</b>

### **Expenses Summary**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Budget lines</b>	<b>Amount Spent Frw</b>
1	Counselling sessions	14 013 495
2	Reconciliation education and dialogue events/ at prison and community levels	17 950 680
3	Communication and best practices/ visibility actions	14 550 750
4	Trainings and seminars/ (training of prison peer educators and community facilitators; meeting with local authorities)	16 062 900
5	Production of testimonies booklet/ Inmates testimonies	2 440 000
6	Office running costs(Staff salaries, office rent, office supplies & Telecommunication and IT)	29 426 983
	<b>Total spent</b>	<b>94 444 808</b>

### **7. General appreciation of the project's results:**

-All the persons interviewed thank DiDé for having facilitated dialogues between victims, perpetrators, families of both sides and community. This required a lot of resources, for example to move inmates and victims from and to Nyamagabe prison and Nyamasheke district which are very distant as the director of Nyamagabe prison highlighted.

-Inmates say that adding to other stakeholders initiatives (Public, Faith based organizations through Ndi Umunyarwanda, Peace and reconciliation programs, etc.), DiDé “put a stop (final)”, i.e. DiDé did the finishing work, the conclusion of the long process of rehabilitation



and reconciliation. This was facilitated by the well trained Peer Educators in prison and in community and the support offered to facilitate dialogues between perpetrators and victims.

-The prison's authorities from the central (RCS) to the regional ones (prisons) thank DiDé for having given valuable trainings, using qualified human resources and committed to their mission, developed and availed appropriate IEC materials to prisons, provided for prisoners' welfare (lunch during trainings).

DiDé is appreciated for respecting the time table established in collaboration of partners, for the close follow up of activities implementation,

-District authorities thank DiDé for intervening in an important and sensitive area of Unity and reconciliation; with a limited budget DiDé carried out various essential activities, they're collaborative at all stages. One authority portrayed the exceptional work done saying that he couldn't even think they would convey perpetrators to confession (knowing some of them who committed atrocities that they denied since the beginning); but with an appropriate framework, perpetrators came progressively to confess all the truth.

DiDé thanks RCS and prisons authorities for facilitating the collaborative work with inmates at prison and community level.

DiDé also thanks the districts authorities for mobilizing communities involved in the activity i.e: victims, perpetrator's families to meet in prison; organizations concerned by the rehabilitative justice such as IBUKA (Organization serving the genocide against Tutsi survivals), CNLG, population at large in the community for public confession at the place of crime; district for contributing to: i) public information, education and communication during the events and transport of its employees appointed to the project activity.

## 8. Challenges noted in the project implementation

The short time allocated to the project and was disturbed by the COVIC\_19 pandemic did not allow:

- To connect physically all inmates who confessed their crimes to victims;
- To guarantee if perpetrators were deeply sincere in asking for forgiveness/to assess the real motivations of demanding pardon;
- To overcome the resistance on both sides: perpetrators to plead guilty for their crimes and the victim to digest the confession and be ready to forgiveness.

*The project generated or highlighted new necessities such as:*

- The need for training nurses in charge of psychological support in prisons;
- The need to extend the Rehabilitative Justice for Reconciliation in Rwanda project experience in all prisons and communities of Rwanda.
- Prison's staff used in the project wishes more support such as laptop. They also recommend extending trainings to all prison's staff to facilitate serving prisoners in the line of the "Rehabilitative Justice for Reconciliation" concept in the time due.

## 9. Lessons learned

The main lessons learnt from implementation of the project in three (3) prisons and the community are:

- i) The project was a response to several prisoners who had benefited from a number of activities aimed to unity and reconciliation such as "Ndi Umunyarwanda" but needed additional tangible experience to make a finishing step in that process of peaceful living together.
- ii) The project implementation showed that there is a lot to do in terms of rehabilitation and reintegration by healing the perpetrators, the victims and their respective families, publically connecting them and prepare the whole community to living with them (or their families) peacefully (released or not).
- iii) Therapeutic groups led by inmates themselves helped them to feel relax. In a short time, a number of them began to confess and ask for forgiveness: 166 (or 37%) (*upon 443 for the whole project of 18 months*) of them did it in a period of seven (7) months, between June - December 2019.
- iv) Perpetrators could tell the truth including revealing where the bodies of killed victims of genocide are buried, which is one of the big sorrows constantly expressed especially by survivals.
- v) The project demonstrated once more that genocide survivors have a tremendous courage to forgive. This helps them rehabilitate their life. They just emphasized that they need the whole truth and apology from the bottom of the heart.
- vi) But adequate efforts have to be put on educating the victims that are requested to give forgiveness and the whole community as it is done for the prisoners.

vii) It appears preferably to prepare reintegration into community of the to be released perpetrators while they are still in prison.

## 10. Sustainability

DiDé has prepared a part of the sustainability by training the peer educators, the prison staff and the community. Inmates Peer Educators interviewed comforted that they will continue group facilitation for rehabilitative justice though some of them will lack the material support they were used to receive.

RCS reassures that the activity of training and educating inmates will continue through the groups therapy initiated by DiDé and/or through Ndi Umunyarwanda or Unity and reconciliation clubs already functioning in the prison.

Nyamasheke District authorities and other government partners of the project (mainly RCS, prisons and NURC) declared that they will continue in the line of the project even though some aspects like organizing dialogues and physical contacts between perpetrators and victims require plentiful financial means. But they will try to apply what they learned through DiDé's implementation of the project. The government may also seek for new donors to permit the sustainability of Rehabilitative Justice for Reconciliation project in Rwanda achievements all over the country.

## 11. Conclusion

The Rehabilitative Justice for Reconciliation in Rwanda project contributed greatly to the rehabilitation of prisoners who participated in the teachings the mutual healing, since they understood their crimes and finished the necessary steps towards asking for forgiveness. It also contributed to the victims' rehabilitation that was told the truth in the public by the perpetrators themselves on the crimes committed during the genocide against Tutsi. When a genuine apology was made and the perpetrator forgiven, the results of the rapid assessment show that it ended in a great reconciliation between the perpetrator, the victim and the families of both sides. Such rehabilitation and reconciliation prepare to the ultimate objective of the process which is reintegration and living together peacefully in the community for a released prisoner. The pacific cohabitation is also enjoyed by the family staying in the village of the forgiven perpetrator while he still completes her/his sentence.

The implementation of the project was made possible by the availability of funds granted by USAID/DIU and their correct allocation in accordance with the terms of protocol between DiDé and USAID/DIU. However, it is important to note that, the closing of the project leaves a resources gap, especially in relation to facilitate dialogues between inmates, victims, families of both sides and the community. In fact, it is this approach specificity of connecting all actors in the process of unity and reconciliation that led to exceptional good outcomes in a short time. Partners in this key sector of development in Rwanda are solicited to continue supporting the program, as it has demonstrated amazing results.

## 12. Recommendations

Following the analysis of the results achieved by DIU project, given the importance of “Unity and Reconciliation” in the reconstruction of Rwanda, taking into accounts all activities already undertaken at the 3 prisons where DIU was implemented, considering that all perpetrators in the Rwandan detention centers and communities all around the country need such accompaniment, it is important to formulate the following recommendations to:

- The Ministry of Justice: to mobilize its partners for the extension of the activities of training/educating inmates and the community and put the necessary means in place for physical connecting of victims, perpetrators and their respective families and the community.
- The Ministry of Justice, and its partners mainly NURC should produce radio broadcast mobilization on rehabilitative justice, using “abahuza” (as they demonstrated their strength in this project) in the community in order to sustain the process of unity and reconciliation as an important condition for long lasting development in Rwanda.
- The Ministry of Justice and its partners mainly CNLG should develop and include in the education sessions and public mobilization a learning material to fight the genocide negations’. It is not rare to hear prisoners during the genocide commemoration period saying “noneho ntutuzabakira” (*this time –of commemoration-we won’t be rid of the survivors*).
- The Ministry of Local Governance (local entities) should follow up of ex- prisoners reintegrated into the community to ensure that they are socially reintegrated and live harmoniously in peace with other members of the community.

- The Ministry of Local Governance (local entities) in partnership with the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion should follow up of children aged three (3) and separated from their mothers imprisoned after a period of breastfeeding

Ensure that mothers separated from their children who have been weaned for several years (in the 2000s) and who are still in prison are aware of the information of their children. It helps to rehabilitate mothers still in prison and to boost the process of reconciliation of mothers made safe by knowing the status of their children.

- The Government and partners: Integrate DIU project activities in all programs of Unity and reconciliation; especially “Preparing inmates to be released for their reintegration in the community” and “Accompanying as it should be the survivals in the process of forgiving genocide perpetrators”.
- The Government and partners should, for the sustainability of Unity and Reconciliation initiatives, strengthen the socio - economic support for the genocide survivals with more customized livelihood.
- Local entities and all partners of Unity and reconciliation program should work together to care about all the beneficiaries: survivals, released prisoners, the community that welcome an ex-prisoner
- Local government and inmate’s family should know who will be released, when, what are the basics needs (transport fees, clothes to put on once get out of the prison) she/he needs to get home. This would contribution to their safe reintegration. Families of prisoner’s origin should be prepared to visit and support the inmates for these essentials and discharge RCS/prisons for this responsibility of assisting the released prisoners for these items. In this perspective, the family and the community have to keep connections with the detainees; this contributes to their self-acceptance and reintegration.
- RCS, should extend the knowledge and experience gained through the project, to other prisoners (those accused of communal law offences).
- RCS and Districts should Organize joint meetings between peer educators in prisons and those (abahuza) in community for exchange of experience.
- DiDé/any partner like DiDé should Organize a Training of a good number of Trainers to facilitate the sustainability and train all the prison’s staff to accelerate the spread of “Rehabilitative Justice” concept.

- DiDé/any other partner like DiDé should assess if the IEC material developed for the community is suitable.
- DiDé/any other partner like DiDé should multiply and improve trainings in community as it is done in prisons.

### 13. Annexes

Table 3. Planned activities - realized activities

PLANNED ACTIVITY	REALIZED	COMMENTS
Develop Information, Education, Communication (IEC) material related to legal and human rights, psychological rehabilitation, reconciliation and reintegration of prisoners and ex-prisoners within communities for Prison staff and local authorities	Yes	<p>Distributed as follow:</p> <p><b>(1)2000 Flayers</b> distributed to different authorities, leaders and beneficiaries including: those of Nyamasheke district authorities <b>(200)</b>, Nyaruguru district authorities <b>(200)</b></p> <p>Community members in Nyamasheke district (Bushenge sector): (500)  Huye prison: (300)  Nyamagabe prison: (300)  Rusizi prison: (300)  Others : (200)</p> <p>(2) 200 posters used:  Nyamasheke district: 30  Nyaruguru district : 30  Huye prison: 20  Nyamagabe prison: 20  Rusizi prison : 20  Posters used in different reconciliation events: 40</p>

		Banners: 11 used in different events including: 10 used in reconciliation events and the one used in validation meeting of IEC material
Carry out legal and human rights education campaigns in prisons	Yes	# of sessions: # participants:
Selection and Training of peer educators	Yes	# peer educators: 90 # training sessions: 3 # participants: 90
Psycho-social counseling and healing sessions for to-be-released prisoners	Yes	# participants: 437 ( 150 in Huye prison, 137 in Nyamagabe prison and 150 in Rusizi prison)
Reconciliation education sessions in prisons between prisoners and victims/survivors in preparation of detainees' reintegration within communities.	Yes	# participants: inmates: 130, genocide survivors: 132 prisoners' family members: 94
Coordination and follow-up of project activities	Yes	Regular activities

Table 4. Approaching Prisoners, Victims & Prisoners' family members from October 10 to December 19, 2019

Date	Prison	District	Beneficiaries		
			Prisoners	Victims	Prisoners' family members
10/10/2019	Nyamagabe	Nyamasheke	19	18	21

24/10/2019	Huye	Nyaruguru	11	11	8
31/10/2019	Rusizi	Nyamasheke	23	23	18
21/10/2019	Nyamagabe	Nyaruguru	19	19	10
26/11/2019	Rusizi	Nyaruguru	5	9	4
28/11/2019	Rusizi	Nyamasheke	17	21	15
17/12/2019	Huye	Nyaruguru	23	15	11
19/12/2019	Nyamagabe	Nyamasheke	13	16	7
<b>Total</b>			<b>130</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>94</b>

Table 5. List of persons met

INSTITUTION/ACTOR	PERSON'S QUALIFICATION	NUMBER
RCS	CSP Mrs KUBWIMANA Thérèse, Commissioner in charge of Doctrines and Ethics	1
NURC	Executive Secretary	1
USAID/DIU	Project focal point, Specialist in Gender and Social Inclusion	1
	Officer in charge of Community Access to Justice	1
Prison Fellowship	Coordinator of reconciliation program	1
Search for Common Ground	Officer in charge of Mobilisation	1
Nyamagabe Prison	Director	1
	Inspector of Police in charge of ... -the project focal point	1
	Inmates who requested for pardon (2) and those who didn't yet (2) and peer educators (2)	6
Rusizi Prison	Director	1
	Inspector of Police in charge of Education - the project focal point	1



	Inmates who requested for pardon (2) and those who didn't yet (2) and peer educators (2)	6
Nyamasheke District	Mayor, Vice Mayor in charge of social affairs, Vice Mayor in charge of economic development, District executive secretary, Division manager, Director in charge of good governance,	6
	Officer in charge of Itorero, Representative of IBUKA, Representative of AVEGA,	3
	Genocide survivors (2), Inmate family members (2), Released prisoner (1)	5
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>36</b>

## Contact

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