

# PeaceWays **AGLI**

Fall 2010 Volume V Issue II

## Promoting Democracy and Peace in an African Election:



**Report on the Burundi Election  
Violence Prevention Program**



The African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) of the Friends Peace Teams strengthens, supports, and promotes peace activities at the grassroots level in the Great Lakes region of Africa (Burundi, Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda). To this end, AGLI responds to requests from local religious and non-governmental organizations that focus on conflict management, peace building, trauma healing, and reconciliation. AGLI sponsors Peace Teams composed of members from local partners and the international community.

Visit AGLI's website at:  
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**PeaceWaysAGLI**

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# Editorial Comment

I was in Kenya when the 2008 post election violence erupted. I knew no Kenyan who supported the violence. At Lumakanda Church, a preacher said that no good Quaker, no good Christian would attack, loot, set houses on fire, steal animals, and kill people. On the first Sunday after the violence began, I suggested that we, as Lumakanda Church, should visit the internally displaced people who were living at the Lumakanda Primary School. There was an enthusiastic reception. A committee was quickly formed and in a few days visiting and relief activities began.

I realized that the violence started in and continued because decent citizens were caught unawares. As individuals they had no idea of how they could respond so they felt helpless. A violent minority was therefore able to take over the situation and impose their solution of driving out the Kikuyu they didn't like.

AGLI, as a member of the Quaker Peace Network-Africa (see page 4), had long ago learned that elections, rather than being a time of assessment, change and optimism, were in this region of Africa, a time of fear, unrest, and violence. On page 14 you can see my analysis of elections in the region where essentially the ruling party always wins. When this happens, violence is the remaining method of regime change.

With this in mind, I worked with Adrien Niyongabo and Florence Ntakarutimana of the Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) program in Burundi; Andrew Peterson, then an AGLI extended service volunteer in Burundi; and AGLI grant writer, Tommy Zarembka to develop the **Burundi Election Violence Prevention Program**. With a grant from the United States Institute of Peace, this project began in May 2009 and ends in October 2010. This issue of PeaceWays-AGLI reports on this exciting, innovative project. From what we have learned, AGLI hopes to implement a larger election prevention project in Kenya for the upcoming 2012 elections. In both cases we are attempting to learn how to prevent election violence at the grassroots level by organizing the community prior to the election to observe and react to possible violence before it destroys the community.

*David Zarembka*  
AGLI Coordinator

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The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Institute of Peace.

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## New AGLI Coordinator—Central Africa



David Bucura

As the first step towards the retirement of AGLI's founding Coordinator, David Zarembka, the AGLI Working Group has appointed David Bucura (boo-CHUR-ah) to become the part-time AGLI Coordinator for Central Africa. Bucura (to keep these Davids separate, people in the Great Lakes region use the second name) will support and monitor the AGLI programs in Rwanda, Burundi, and eastern Congo. These include HROC-Rwanda, HROC-Burundi, the Kamenge Clinic, HROC-North Kivu, the Rwandan Scholarship Program, workcamps, and any other AGLI supported activities. He is currently Coordinator of the Transformative Mediation Program, a joint project of AGLI and CAPI (see page 19).

Bucura was formerly General Superintendent of Rwanda Yearly Meeting of Friends and the first AVP Coordinator in Rwanda. In 2006 he went to Kenya where he earned a Masters degree at the Nairobi International School of Theology in Leadership Studies. He is currently pastor of Gasharu Friends Church in Kigali. He was just appointed Clerk of Friends World Committee for Consultation – Africa Section and is a member of FWCC's Central Executive Committee. He is married to Rachel Bugenimana and they have three children.

## Quaker Peace Network-Africa (QPN-Africa)

**People always ask if the various Quaker peace organizations in Africa interact. Do they overlap and step on each other's toes?**

**The answer is:  
Quaker Peace  
Network – Africa.**

The first continent-wide meeting of Quaker Peace Network-Africa was held in Bujumbura, Burundi during September 2002 through the initiative of David Niyonzima, then General Secretary of Burundi Yearly Meeting, and David Zarembka, AGLI coordinator. The gathering included Quakers from East and Central Africa, and southern and western Africa. In addition, members of Quaker policy organizations – Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) from Washington, DC, Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva and New York, the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) Africa program, and Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW) from London – sent representatives.

Every one and a half to two years, Quaker Peace Network-Africa gatherings have been held regularly with approximately fifty Quakers from around the continent. The American Friends Service Committee has given grants to provide transportation for African peacemakers from the distant countries to the venue. The African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) and Change Agents for Peace, International (CAPI) have supplied

funding for East and Central Africa participants. The main Mennonite organization in the region, Mennonite Central Committee, has always been invited and attended these gatherings.

The exchange of history, programs, approaches to peace, and planning for the future has been a constant in these meetings. As the international policy organizations have attended when possible, direct, first hand grassroot-to-policy institutions has been one of the valuable aspects of QPN-Africa. In time the organization was divided into four regions – QPN-East Africa, QPN-Central Africa, QPN-West Africa, and QPN-Southern Africa. The regional groups have tried to meet locally between the continent-wide meetings.

At the second conference in 2003 in Kibuye, Rwanda, James Mageria from Kenya explained to the gathering how during the 2002 election in Kenya, the Kenyan electorate was able to successfully bring regime change to Kenya, peacefully and democratically through highly organized work by the churches and civil society in Kenya. This made the members of QPN realize that elections were one of the main causes of unrest and violence in the East and Central African countries that Quakers needed to address. As a result QPN-Africa decided to develop a program of election observing. QPN-Africa began election observing with the 2005 Burundi elections. Since that time it has observed elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2006), Rwanda (2006 and 2010), Kenya (2007 and 2010), and again during the most recent elections in Burundi (2010). In the five 2010

Burundian elections for different levels of government, QPN-Burundi had up to 278 election observers placed around the country. Most election observers are local people. There are always some international observers from the other countries to give added credibility to the observations and allows people to see how elections are conducted in other countries. The observers were given one day of training and a questionnaire to complete. After each election these were compiled into a report.

To date what QPN-Africa has learned is that election observing on the day of the election is not sufficient. Observing must begin with the voter enrollment process including the campaign period, the voting itself, the tallying of the votes, and the post election period.

Another function of QPN-Africa has been to upgrade the peacebuilding skills of those who attend the conferences. QPN-Africa has been teaching a program called Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) which enables people to analyze their peacemaking activities. The program is designed for peacemakers involved in the planning and evaluation of peace programs and those working to develop effective peacebuilding programs.

The last Africa-wide gathering was held in August 2009 in Nairobi, Kenya. The next one is planned for 2011 in Sierra Leone. 

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## Witnesses of Many Changes in Our Communities

By Adrien Niyongabo, Coordinator, HROC-Burundi

*We [members of the Democracy and Peace Groups] have been so helpful to our communities. People of bad intentions stopped their doings because they knew that such acts were going to be reported and then the planners would encounter punishment. We provided information about the different elections such as dates, where polling stations were settled, who was allowed to vote, how the vote itself was organized.*

The massive destruction and killings, which hit the country from 1993 until late 2000, had left many hearts wounded. It is obvious that unhealed wounds trail behind heavy grief, mistrust, hatred. It has become almost a rule that the unhealed aggrieved person becomes the next aggressor. With elections coming in Burundi in 2010 and knowing how the 1993 post election period had been so traumatizing with the war that followed, it was more than necessary to work with communities to prevent that from happening again. It was from that perspective HROC-Burundi put together a project combining healing, conflict prevention, and election monitoring to be implemented in nine selected communities.

1993 would seem to be along ago so a wound should have healed and therefore its cause forgotten and reconciliation to have taken place. Does this assertion match with the reality on the ground?

*My two brothers were killed in 1993 and the other one who escaped just died a few years later in car accident. I then remained by myself with all that hardship in my heart! My time in this HROC workshop has taken away all the bitterness from the multitude losses I have been carrying. I feel lighter and find live meaningful.*

*Life in the refugee camp is tough. Once you return home, it is like you do not belong to your*

*community. It is unbelievable the community spirit I sensed in this workshop. I would wish to get such warm welcome back home. I want to be accepted and heard by my neighbors!*

*I have been displaced after all my relatives had been badly killed in 1995 and now I am living here in town. Each time I visit my home community, it's like I would want to kill as a revenge. But the sharing I got here tells me the beauty of forgiving. I want to take that path because it is too destructive for me to hold hatred for this long.*

Growing up in a context where you know things but can't speak about them, does not help at all with healing and reconciliation. People find it so unique to be in a Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) workshop because they go

there to listen and speak. All participate to make the workshop a success. There is no pressure at all. The safe place that is built as the workshop goes on draws up issues to the surface and folks find it very releasing to share the horrible stories they have been suppressing inside. For many participants, these workshops have been a key to getting peace with oneself, to a new relationship, to community involvement.

We noticed that people had a lot of trauma caused by their experiences in the 1993 crisis, but also the fear of what may happen if the coming elections would not go well. It is with that in mind that HROC organized the Democracy and Peace Groups for the community folks to get a place to meet and an opportunity to talk about the upcoming community elections.

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Voters being processed at the polling station

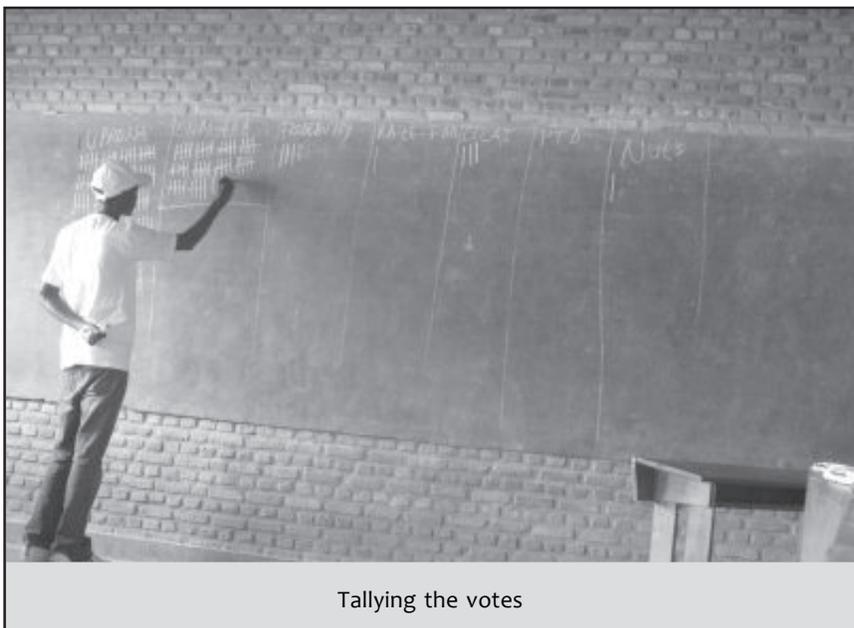
Continued from page 5

*The electoral campaign for the 2010 election was so scary and threatening. Luckily, we could talk in our Democracy and Peace Group meetings about those terrifying slogans and therefore get mutually comforted. Some of us who had begun not to sleep in our homes, got encouraged to come back and spend night under our roofs.*

Our Democracy and Peace Groups were meant to closely follow the elections and community life during the electoral process. The community HROC trained folks were asked to gather monthly, especially before each election, and share their views on the electoral process and bring up anything that might cause violence to erupt within the community due to bad elections. Each meeting was an opportunity for the community people to engage in the ongoing electoral process as they stood as peace actors and citizen reporters.

Both the election observing on the day of election and the use of text messaging (SMS) in sharing and reporting any electoral violence were revealed to be tremendously useful tools in preventing violence from happening. The presence of HROC observers ensured their communities that no electoral fraud at that polling station would pass unreported.

*People in the communities wondered at first who we were as this Democracy and Peace group practice was new as such. It was when they learned about us that they began revealing to us who was planning to destabilize the community so that we could report it. The way we handled things increased our credibility and trust as folks kept coming to us or calling us to alert any wrong*



Tallying the votes

*being planned. The result was fabulous with our SMS system.*

*We are the witnesses of many changes in our communities. A few days before the presidential elections, there was much tension. Much rumors of violence were circulating. Our role in the communities, through our Democracy and Peace group meetings, helped a lot to tranquilize people.*

However, the technology side of the work became a serious challenge for some of the HROC citizen reporters. Although they were trained in how to use cell phones, in writing and sending text messages, and making calls, still some citizen reporters struggled to use cell phones. Yet this methodology has been quite a great experiment.

With previous elections, it was not that often local grass root people were given place and time to observe elections in their communities. HROC, under the umbrella of QPN-Burundi [see page 4], offered this unique opportunity to those who were trained in its program.

*Election observing increased our visibility in the community and drew a lot of appreciation from*

*our neighbors. Many of them would never think that we were capable of such endeavor. HROC has empowered us. We demonstrated great professionalism at the polling stations that the other independent and political observers had to consult us in most of the cases.*

We are grateful to all who supported us in this project. Many of our HROC people acknowledge having grown in humility, simplicity, bravery, devotion, character and skills. This project allowed them to make a step forward in being peace actors in their communities. As our electoral slogan says, **“Peace is the Way”**. The last Burundi electoral campaign left communities and people so much divided as competing politicians wanted to get votes by any means. Democracy and Peace group meetings are therefore more than appropriate to help bring all parties to the same understanding of how the community should be run. To extend such meetings to the broader population would be much more beneficial. We have to bring communities back to unity; we are called to rebuild the social tissue. We are convinced that the good will prevail over the evil. Let’s us join hands and support Friends to be peace witnesses. 

## Promoting Democracy and Peace

*The material in PeaceWays-AGLI is from the evaluation report prepared by Andrew Peterson, master's degree student at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame. The full report can be found at the AGLI website: [www.aglifpt.org](http://www.aglifpt.org).*

### Background:

In June of 1993 after decades of mostly Tutsi military rule, there was the first genuine election in Burundi since independence in 1963. A Hutu, Melchior Ndadaye, was elected president. But on October 21 after less than four months in office he was assassinated by the Tutsi military. Hutu citizens began attacking Tutsi and the Tutsi military retaliated by killing Hutu. A civil war ensued. During the twelve years of civil war an estimated 300,000 Burundians were killed, another 300,000 or more fled mostly to Tanzania to Burundi's east, and large number of Tutsi entered internally displaced camps patrolled by the police and army. Finally after long, drawn-out negotiations, in 2005 an internationally sponsored election occurred and the active fighting of the Burundian civil war ended. Pierre Nkurunziza of the National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD) from the main rebel group that had been destroying Burundi for more than a decade easily won the election. This then became the Burundian ruling party.

By 2010 after five years it was time for the next election. For unknown reasons the electoral commission decided to hold five separate elections between May 21 and September 7 for different levels of government.

This series of elections led to major problems. The ruling party, CNDD-FDD, handily won the first election with 64% of the vote. But the

opposing political parties accused the ruling party of rigging the election. As a result a coalition of opposition parties decided to boycott the presidential elections. The electoral commission then decided to make that election a "yes" or "no" vote on retaining the current president. The opposition parties countered this by asking it supporters to boycott the presidential election. This raised tensions in the country. The result was 92% of the vote for Pierre Nkurunziza with 77% of the registered voters voting.

During this period over a hundred grenades were throw at crowds in the capital of Bujumbura or ruling party offices upcountry. Three of the potential presidential candidates who had boycotted the election then went into hiding or fled the country as the Government was accusing them of the grenade attacks.

Interesting enough the ethnic hostility of the previous decades between Tutsi and Hutu were not a factor in this election as most of the various opponents like Nkurunziza himself were all Hutu. By the parliamentary elections some of the political parties which had boycotted the presidential election decided to participant in the election for members of parliament. Very few of them won as the ruling party captured 81% of the votes.

Then for the indirect election of senators, each district needed to pick one Hutu and one Tutsi as senators in a method which was supposed to ensure the minority Tutsi adequate representation in the legislature.

Since the ruling party was mostly Hutu and did not have many Tutsi candidates, the former Tutsi party, UPRONA, won most of the Tutsi seats. While political parties were required to be multi-ethnic, the system that was set up froze ethnicity into the elections even after it was no longer a significant factor.

While the last local elections held on September 7 were peaceful

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*When I was a [Hutu] refugee, I came to believe that Tutsi are the enemy; and I thought this for three years. When I came back to Burundi, I still thought of Tutsi as the enemy, as those who were the cause of my suffering. Through HROC I was put directly in touch with those who had traumatized me. It was very difficult the first and second days. When I listened to people talking I focused on thinking about their ethnicity. But as we began to speak about our feelings, and I heard, for example, a Tutsi who had lost someone close to them speak positively about Hutu, I began to be opened up. The trust walk was moving – I was the one blindfolded and led by a Tutsi woman, and I was sure she would lead me into a patch of thorns or something, but instead she was quite caring. Through this I came to see the image of myself in Tutsi, and now am close friends with many Tutsi.*

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enough, the result politically has been the de facto formation of a one-party state. Already a number of assassinations have occurred and there is fear that Burundi is slipping back into civil war. In particular, losing presidential candidate, Agathon Rwaso from the National Liberation Forces (FNL) which just ended its armed rebellion in April 2009, is rumored to have returned to the bush to form a new rebel movement.

### **The Burundi Election Violence Prevention Program:**

The African Great Lakes Initiative received a grant from the United States Institute of Peace to conduct an eighteen month long program to prevent election violence in nine

communities in four provinces. These communities were selected because they had experience significant violence during the twelve year civil war. The project began with a series of Healing and Rebuilding Our Community three day workshops (see [www.aglifpt.org/Program/hroc](http://www.aglifpt.org/Program/hroc)) with four in each community, follow-up days, and a community celebration. The 720 participants in these workshops were then organized into eighteen Democracy and Peace Groups, two in each community.

As the elections approached, 120 of these participants joined the Quaker Peace Network as election observers. In an innovative add-on

project, 160 participants were trained as citizen reporters. These were given cell phones and airtime to report election problems or lack of problems in their communities. Messages to the Call-In Center could then be re-broadcast to all the cell phone holders in any one community. The intent was that if something arose in a community the citizen reporters and members of the Democracy and Peace Groups could intercede by observing as a group any events that were taking place.

An evaluation of the program was conducted by Andrew Peterson, a former extended service volunteer with AGLI in the HROC program in Burundi.

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## **2011 AGLI Workcamps**

**BURUNDI and RWANDA**

**June 25 to July 30, 2011**

### **Burundi Workcamp – Kamenge**

*Host Partner:* Friends Women's Association (FWA) – see: [www.aglifpt.org/Program/fwa.htm](http://www.aglifpt.org/Program/fwa.htm)

*Location:* Kamenge, Burundi – A poor community on the outskirts of Bujumbura

*Objective:* The Workcamp Peace Team will work at the FWA's Kamenge Clinic which primarily serves HIV+ women and their children. Details are being finalized. We expect the team will build a security wall around the plot behind the clinic which is where there will be a dormitory for patients so that, in due time, the Clinic can become a full hospital. Take an online tour of the clinic at: [www.fwaburundi.com](http://www.fwaburundi.com)

*Housing:* Workcampers will stay in an apartment at the Friends Center in downtown Bujumbura.

### **Rwanda Workcamp – Gisenyi**

*Host Partner:* Gisenyi Friends Church

*Location:* Gisenyi, Rwanda. On the northern edge of Lake Kivu, west of Kigali, just across the border from Goma, Congo.

*Objective:* The 2010 Workcamp Peace Team began construction of a conference hall. The team will work toward completing that project.

*Housing:* Workcampers will stay with local families

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see the AGLI webpage: [www.aglifpt.org/Program/workcamps](http://www.aglifpt.org/Program/workcamps)

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## HROC Workshops

A three-part series of trainings and activities that progressively build on the experience of participants were held in each of the nine communities. Training began with a three-day Basic HROC Workshop to begin the process of trauma healing and reconciliation for participants; each series included a diverse group of twenty. Subsequently, the participants took part in a follow-up workshop that introduced the goals of the election violence prevention program. This was followed by a one-day celebration to engage the wider community in the program and raise awareness that there was a group of people working to prevent violence during the election process. The following comments from different HROC program participants include personal change, domestic issues, ethnic division, and influence on government and other leaders.

### Personal change:

*One person advised me to spend my time making bricks rather than participating in HROC activities, but I said to them, "I will have bricks but no peace." Now they call me "HROC" rather than "Alfred", which I accept. I am proud of the work I am doing for peace.*

*I am originally from Ngozi province, and I had a house there that I didn't have much need for after I moved [to the Ruhororo internally-displaced persons camp for Tutsi]. I knew a Hutu was in need of a house, but of course I wasn't ready to just give it away. But later I began to think about the teachings of HROC and I*

*decided to give him my house in Ngozi. Now we are like family, and occasionally when I come to visit in Ngozi I stay with him at my old house.*

*I used to be someone who just stayed at home all the time, except going to church. Now because of HROC I go out and participate in my community. Because of my trauma, I did not want to participate in any associations, but now I do. Seeing this change, people started asking what political party I had joined, but I told them I hadn't joined any political party and it was just work with independent organizations.*

*One Tutsi civil servant said, "I love your HROC program. I have lived 37 years with wounds to my heart, and you were the first to touch the problem. It helped to*

*relieve the burden I felt, like a heavy rock on my heart."*

### Domestic issues:

*It helped me personally because it helped me to understand the needs of the orphan children I adopted and how to help them heal. In particular I liked the stages of trauma. Now when one of the girls in my house, or my husband, gets mad, I realize it might be from trauma.*

*It is like I have become a doctor without many years in school. At first I thought HROC trainers were crazy, telling us to revisit the difficult times and memories. Afterwards, I cried, and it was a good cry. I realize it helped me, and now I know better how to work with my husband.*



QPN election observers, Josephine Nizigama and Desire Nduwimana

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*The program is very beneficial for families, which can be changed dramatically if they participate. For example, for women whose husbands no longer commit domestic rape.*

### **Ethnic division:**

*During the community celebration a number of people shared their testimony of how HROC had changed them and helped them to transform themselves and overcome ethnic divisions.*

*HROC allowed me to feel forgiveness and tolerance in my heart and to see with one love all the people regardless of ethnicity or political affiliation.*

*HROC helped create a friendship between churches. Normally Pentecostals refuse to go into other churches and to let others enter their church, but through the workshops, this practice was abandoned.*

*HROC helped me to discover my new family – Hutu, Tutsi and Twa all together.*

### **Influence on government and other leaders:**

*Various government officials and a Catholic priest took note that I was participating in the program and asked me by what credentials I had to take part. And in general people came to see me more as a leader in the community.*

*On the community celebration day there was a Twa person there [a third small, marginalized group], who said that it was the first time that they had eaten a meal together with an administrator.*

*During the community celebration, a local government*

*official asked why the project was training small everyday people and not leaders like himself.*

### **Democracy and Peace Groups**

After the end of the HROC cycle of activities, Democracy and Peace Groups were formed to serve as the basis for observing the elections and preventing election violence in their local community. The intent was to have a cohesive group of people who were well known to each other as the basic social structure to observe and prevent violence in the local community. As part of their participation in the Democracy and Peace group, some of the members were assigned as election observers and others as citizen reporters. These activities are described in the next sections.

### **Community fears:**

People were generally fearful as evidenced by the extent to which they listened attentively to the radio in case an urgent message was broadcast and by the fact that when people heard a rumor they began to pack their belongings in preparation to flee. Mistrust and misunderstanding was caused by people being from different political parties. This can lead people to leave a bar when others arrive and even to divorce or loss of employment.

Grenade attacks, rumors of people possessing arms, and arrests of militants/armed members of political parties increased community fears.

Rumors can have harmful effects; even when false. Some believed that these rumors were part of an intentional campaign of political intimidation. One rumor that circulated was that if people did not go to vote, they would not have their electoral cards stamped and this

would be used as a basis to deny them social services such as access to the hospital. One person reported a rumor that if the UPRONA political party did not receive enough votes in the legislative election, they would stage a coup d'état. (UPRONA was the Tutsi party of the former Tutsi military presidents.)

### **Democracy and Peace group responses:**

*We discussed the question of what is democracy...Here democracy [i.e. the elections] can kill, it can destroy a family...Democracy is still young in our country, and so we focused on questions of how we can promote democracy in our community.*

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One of the people whose house was burned participated in the HROC workshop. After calling in the problem, we were encouraged to go to the site where it happened and help the victim. When the victim promised to seek revenge, we urged him to seek nonviolent solutions, for example by pointing out that he might in the process hurt an innocent person and merely start a vicious cycle. It is more important to act cautiously and have those truly responsible brought to justice. After his house was burned he went to live with his mother in a simple straw hut. We kept up with him, and some of us donated things to help him out. I gave him two pieces of clothing myself. We were afraid he would become angry and commit violence in revenge, but he has remained peaceful.

In the past the Quaker Peace Network-Africa has realized that too many people concentrate on the voting process itself by poll watching on the day of the election, but neglect all the activities during the enrollment of voters, the election campaigning period and the post election period of potential violence. So QPN-Burundi has decided to observe throughout the entire process. QPN-Burundi had 35 observers during the two weeks of voter enrollment in February.

I met with over 20 of these observers. They were not confident that the election was going smoothly. They observed many incidences of fraud. These included people registering more than once, underage children being enrolled as voters, buying of voter identification documents, under-registering of female voters, the spreading of rumors – the best one I heard was that if people

registered to vote the country would be hit by an earthquake like Haiti and all the houses would be destroyed. It was also observed that election enrollment offices were hard to find, the ruling political party took the enrollment books home at night adding unauthorized names to the polling list, and other similar misdeeds.

In a number of cases the observers reported the misdeeds to the Burundi National Independent Electoral Commission and the Commission did respond by investigating and correcting the fraudulent practices. But how many occurrences of fraud were not caught by election observers? In order to win, every political party must seek whatever unfair advantages it can get; otherwise its opponents will win. Will these numerous frauds cancel each other out? Can there be a “free and fair” election when there is substantial

grassroots fraud? I think that the answer is “no” because the ruling party, through its control of the organs of government, has much more power to instigate fraud than any of the other political parties. I was told that one of the “tricks” of the out-of-power political parties is to accuse the ruling party of fraud at every instance to build up the case that the ruling party is “stealing” the election. But is this a “trick” or is it true? The conventional wisdom is that the ruling party, if it lost, would not be willing to go back into the bush to start another civil war because they have become too used to the good life brought by governing the country. But this same statement can be used to indicate that the ruling party will do everything possible to win re-election.

David Zarembka, February 2010

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*In our Democracy and Peace group, we start by discussing recent events that have been taking place – such as the elections and other local events. We also discussed the teachings from earlier in the program, such as the mock election role play that we did in the follow up day. As it turned out, the elections were just like what happened in our role play – with one of the parties contesting the outcome.*

*In the Democracy and Peace Groups, we discussed problems in the community, such as conflicts between political party members. For example, there was a confrontation between members of different political parties, where one accused the other of*

*witchcraft causing her to pass the due date of her child. I asked a Catholic priest to speak with her to ask her not to accuse the other of witchcraft and the conflict ended.*

*I'm sure if I hadn't taken part in HROC I would have been involved in one of the political parties and I would have wanted vengeance after the house of a party member was burned.*

#### **Election Observing:**

*Members of the opposition accused me of complicity with the rigging of elections. They said, “You were there while they stole the election”. I told them it was not stolen, at least not at the*

*polling station where I observed, but they did not accept this result. They said I was just lying.*

One hundred and twenty participants from the Democracy and Peace Groups were selected to participate as official election observers registered with the National Independent Electoral Commission. They were selected by program facilitators based on their aptitude for observing and engaging in the project as well as to balance gender, ethnic and regional criteria. These participants received training on election observing and the signed a code of conduct for observers.

There were 35 observers during the voter registration process and a high of 278 observers for the presidential

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election. Reports were collected from these observers, based on a standardized questionnaire of 40 and then later 45 questions. These results were compiled into a report, *Evaluation Report for the Burundi Election Violence Prevention Program*, that was published on the AGLI web (available at: [www.quaker.org/peace-network](http://www.quaker.org/peace-network)).

The HROC staff considered holding a press conference after the first communal elections to disseminate these results more widely; instead the decision was made to produce a final report at the end of the elections rather than jeopardize future election observations. The atmosphere was extremely tense following the declaration by a coalition of opposition groups that the communal election had been rigged and their decision to boycott subsequent elections. The HROC decision was reconsidered for the legislative elections, the rationale being that the need to share the perspective brought by observers outweighed the possible threat to the program. Thus, on July 23, 2010, a press conference was held to share a preliminary report on the election. The analysis was carried on the radio and television stations that day.

HROC staff also met with the staff of the National Independent Electoral Commission to urge resolution of technical irregularities in upcoming elections. While the Commission was sympathetic to the concerns, they lacked funds to provide additional training to polling station staff, and in the subsequent election the same irregularities were observed again.

On a local level, the impact of the project was evident. Some reported that just the presence of election

observers calmed the population who came to vote and may also have deterred irregularities from occurring. Furthermore, serving as observers also changed the status of some participants who gained respect within their communities – being now seen as leaders and people who might be credible mediators of conflict. Finally, through interactions with staff at the polling stations and the National Independent Electoral Commission, the observing program worked in numerous small ways to promote more careful and effective election processes and served as an alternative third perspective between the Electoral Commission and the political parties.

### Citizen Reporters

While not part of the original proposal and based in part on the example set by the use of cell phones in Kenya in response to the 2008 post election violence, staff decided that the program would benefit from taking advantage of recently developed technologies for networking via cell phones. The program staff decided to make use of FrontlineSMS, which is an open-source software program that allows people to send a single text message that is then rebroadcast to other members of a pre-defined set of users. In this case those users were citizen reporters who were part of the Democracy and Peace Groups as well as HROC staff.

Various technical delays and the lack of timely funding meant that the program did not get completely up and running until late May, after the communal election had already taken place. One of the challenges was that funding was not available to purchase the phones, and collecting 42 used phones which

were donated from the UK and the US was time consuming. In early June additional funding was secured from Change Agents for Peace, International and used to buy a number of very cheap phones that provided a greater degree of standardization and allowed the inclusion of more participants.

There were 160 citizen reporters who participated in the system. They were organized into nine groups, one for each community, as well as groups for HROC facilitators and staff. Training for the citizen reporters – to explain the basics of how to use the cell phones, how the phones would be used to promote the goals of the project, and how the phones would function with the FrontlineSMS system – were held in each of the nine communities. The skill level of the participants varied, ranging from people who were already familiar with using phones and sending text messages to people who had never used a phone, were barely literate, and had difficulty seeing the letters on the buttons and pressing the small buttons. Another minor challenge was that the FrontlineSMS system was occasionally overwhelmed with test messages, particularly on Election Day, which occasionally created delays.

Based on the record of the texts that were sent between June 25, 2010 and July 24, 2010, there were 735 text messages received from participants; about 12 messages per day. These were then re-distributed, and the system sent out 7,449 messages; about 124 per day.

The most frequent messages were those reassuring people that things were calm, followed by messages reporting incidents such as grenade attacks, arrests, or other concerns.

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During the election, text messages were used to reassure people that things were going safely, particularly during the presidential election when people were expecting grenade attacks on polling stations. They were also used to share ideas with observers about possible irregularities for which they should be alert.

Examples of messages:

- [sent to the Mutaho group] A grenade was heard in Ngungu, 4<sup>th</sup> of July at 2 a.m. A family was at home where it exploded, but no one was killed..

- [sent to the Buterere group] People are quite calm in general, but there are some opposition party members who have decided not to sleep at their home because they fear that someone will come and capture them there.

- We are hearing a lot of gunfire right now in Kamesa quarter..

- [sent to Nyangungu group during the Presidential election] Here in Mutaho – security was good, many people came in early. Now it’s basically over and people are coming in one-by-one.

One particularly interesting series of text messages were explained by a participant during the evaluation interviews:

*On the eve of the presidential elections, everything was very tense, the bars were all closed, and the police were on high alert. Then I heard that three people were arrested that evening who we knew were not actually engaged in illegal activities. I texted [another member of the Democracy and Peace Group, a Tutsi who lives*

*in the internally displaced persons camp], who agreed to follow up on the case with the police. From there, the two of us communicated by cell phones to coordinate our efforts to speak with various local officials and administrators. Eventually we heard from the Commune administrator that they could not be released because it was too late in the evening, but that if one of us came the next morning we would see that they will be released. Later we heard from one of those arrested that one of the police officers was asking him, “Who are you that you have these administrators suddenly concerned about your status?” So it was really our coordination through the SMS network that helped these innocent people be released without harm.*

This indicates the type of coordination that was achieved through the FrontlineSMS network.

Participants suggested that there were in fact good reasons for having the option of text messaging. One advantage they mentioned was the possibility of privacy. For example, if one is witnessing an

event first-hand it may not be possible to inform others by a traditional cell-phone call since people in the vicinity might overhear and might misunderstand the reasons why other people are being alerted, putting the observer at risk.

As with other communication tools, while the FrontlineSMS network enhanced the ways people were able to work together, ultimately the effectiveness of the network was a product of more traditional skills and relationships. The ease of communicating, and the ability to do so in a discrete way may have engaged citizens who would not otherwise have played an active role. The group networks formed were functional and added to the overall program. Participants found the network useful for sharing information and keeping each other up-to-date. In this way the project set an important precedent for how similar networks might be used in the future..

### Impact

It is at the local level that the most direct and concrete impact of the program was evident. Almost all participants interviewed testified

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QPN press conference, from left, Andrew Peterson, Adrien Niyongabo, and Philippe Nakuwundi

# African Elections: Democracy or Dictatorship?

By David Zarembka, Coordinator

Elections in the United States can be annoying. Those incessant ads on TV where one decent person abuses another decent person; the simplification of complex issues into slogans; the spin, half-truths, and lies for political advantage; and the pundits contradicting each other; all this leads one to wish that the election day would come quickly. In this region of Africa – Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, and Ethiopia – elections are much more than an annoyance. Election periods are fearsome times. Intimidation, violence, government suppression of normal freedoms, and even armed conflict that leads to the destruction of the country are the results of elections.

The practice in this region is that the ruling party never loses an election. The only exception was the 2002 defeat of the KANU government in Kenya. At that time I thought that this would be a major watershed for democracy in Africa – the overthrow of a repressive regime by the ballot box. How wrong I was! This was no more than the exception that proved the rule. If the constitution of a country has term limits for president, rather than stepping down, the president changes the constitution. In 2006 President Museveni did this in Uganda. If the president actually loses, as probably happened in the 2007 Kenyan election, the president just declares that he won and is immediately sworn in again. But in most cases the president wins with 90% or more of the vote. When this happens, we should be suspicious.

The International Community – through organizations such as the European Union, the African Union, the Commonwealth, the Carter

Center, and others – sends in election observers for all elections. These observers show up a few days before the election, see that everyone lines up nicely to vote, and that the results seem to be tabulated in an organized fashion, and then may declare that the election met acceptable international standards. One problem is that these standards are extremely low. As long as people enrolled for the election had a ballot, put them in boxes in an orderly fashion, and the results were announced, the election is considered “fair”. The President and his party then continue their rule when the election was no more than a façade to hoodwink the international community into thinking that the government is legitimate. If in rare cases, the international observers declare that the election did not meet international standards, then nothing happens as the president is sworn in again, usually at a ceremony attended by the neighboring presidents who have earned their positions by the same dubious methods.

How does the ruling party always win, even if it is unpopular? There are so many ways for the ruling party to cheat that it is difficult to even list them all. Here are some very common ones:

- The ruling party uses government resources in the campaigns, thereby creating an unequal playing field for opposition candidates.
- Opposition candidates are harassed, sometimes jailed on spurious charges, their election campaigns are disrupted, and sometimes they are even assassinated.
- Popular opposition political parties are not allowed to register or, if registered, are banned.

- Client political parties of the ruling party are registered to confuse the electorate and international community into thinking that there is real opposition.

- In Kenya the most common method is to bribe voters – one of the corruption scandals was blamed on the need for the ruling party to have enough funds to win the election.

- In other countries rumors serve the same purpose. For example in Burundi, people were told that the ruling party officials were watching how they voted and if they didn't vote for the ruling party, they would not be allowed to use government services such as hospitals and schools.

- Intimidation of voters is a common practice and is not done during Election Day while the observers are watching. Rather it is done before the election when youth groups sponsored by the ruling party visit people at night in their houses and tell them to vote for the ruling party.

- Large groups of youth groups organized by the ruling party parade around the community to show force. I have seen these groups in Kenya and know how intimidating they can be.

- The electoral commission is not a neutral body but is appointed by the government; so clearly they are going to support the ruling party who has appointed them. If the voting doesn't go the way it should, then the electoral commission “cooks the books” for the ruling party – there are innumerable methods of doing this.

- Ghost voters are common. These may be people who have died or children or foreigners. In the case of Uganda there were entire polling stations that were fictitious.

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These are some of the methods that the ruling party uses to “win” an election. But do not think that the opposition political parties are innocent. They use these same techniques when they can. The contest then becomes a question of who has “stolen” the most votes. In one case in Kenya a candidate for Member of Parliament “won” by over 10,000 votes. When the courts recounted the ballots, this candidate lost by over 10,000 votes thus nullifying the election.

The African voter is well aware of all this. They realize that they are just bit players in a game of charades. As a result they have no confidence in the legitimacy of the government, even if the international community’s election observers have anointed it with their imprimatur.

The real, basic problem, though, is that citizens now have no method of creating regime change –**except resort to violence**. Every one of the governments mentioned above – Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, and Ethiopia – except Kenya, seized power through armed violence as a rebel group or, in the case of Sudan, a military coup. I have no understanding of how a rebel group which has created destruction in their home country, killed its citizens, and committed atrocities can then become the legitimate government of a country. Governments should be run by educated, skilled, competent people. Rebel soldiers and commanders are totally unqualified. If there is mismanagement in these governments, there is no need to wonder why. If a rebel leader is willing to kill his countrymen and

destroy the society and economy, when he and his party control the whole country, they will just do the same thing, but on a grander scale. This becomes a great road to riches. Elections are but a means of confirming this dictatorship. All these governments that seized power through the sword have never lost it through an election.

As the government becomes more dictatorial, more entrenched, better able to control the outcome of elections, corruption and suppression of decent people intensifies. Citizens, particularly the youth, can revolt. This is what happened in the 2008 post-election violence in Kenya. This, too, is not a constructive solution because certain ethnic groups are targeted, property destroyed, and people killed. When the masses revolt, it is not pretty.

This is not democracy. Democracy means that people have a chance to choose their government through a fair playing field for all who wish to contest. Democracy means that those same citizens can change their government when they so chose. In this region of Africa such is not the case.

What can be done? For starters, the international community has to tighten up its standards on what is considered a fair election. It cannot just observe on the voting day. Observing must include the campaign period. Has the opposition been harassed, jailed, and even assassinated? Have government resources been used to the advantage of the ruling party? Have youth groups been used to intimidate voters? Were some political parties banned from the election? Was the

tallying of the votes transparent in that the results from every polling station in the country are available for inspection? Is the electoral commission an independent body or appointed by the ruling party? Did bribery occur?

If these questions cannot be properly answered, the election must not be considered “up to international standards”. When this occurs, some consequences to those governments who have manipulated and stolen elections must take place. They should be considered illegitimate and not allowed proper standing in the international community, but considered a pariah state, losing, for example, their status and vote at the United Nations and other international organizations. Foreign aid should be curtailed; and so on.

Real reform will only occur when there is an international, independent electoral commission that will be part of the election process – not just as observers – but as part of the whole election cycle itself. Such electoral commissions should be filled with people trained and skilled in the election process; even in poor, difficult countries such Burundi or Sudan.

Modern communication technology should be used. For example, in the last referendum on the new constitution in Kenya, votes were counted at the polling station and results sent by a secured cell phones to the tallying center. The results began coming in only a few minutes after the polls closed and by 10:00 p.m. on the evening of the voting the outcome of the election was clear. 

## Twa Growing Together Project

*As one of the group of those who have been left behind by history, I used to be in isolation. No one took care of us. We couldn't think that there could be someone thinking of us, but there are people who think of us and the difficult time we passed through. Now they know how much we are traumatized. I feel comfortable after this [HROC] workshop. I am taking the decision now of approaching other people who are not from our group and share with them what I have learned in this workshop.*

Hamissi from the Twa ethnic group

In Rwanda there is a marginalized group call the Twa. They are less than 0.5% of the population and are despised by other Rwandans and treated as 'untouchables'. Another name for them is *abasizwe inyuma n'amateka* which means "people whom history has left behind". During the 1994 genocide, some were implicated in the killings, others were killed, and many were swept up in the mass exodus to the Democratic Republic of the Congo where they were harshly treated in the refugee camps. The Twa live in isolation in their own villages; many are illiterate as they can't afford to send their children to school; they avoid contact with local or central government officials. They formerly lived in the forests as hunter-gatherers. Hunting was prohibited in the 1970s. Then in 1998 the remaining small areas of tropical forest in overpopulated Rwanda were designated as national parks and military training areas. The Twa were expelled and can no longer live there in their traditional way. They were also the potters of the country but, in an age of cheap plastic and

metal vessels, their clay pots are no longer in much demand. They have no history as cultivators, no land, and are among the most destitute and malnourished of the rural poor.

While no single event has precipitated a crisis, as the rest of Rwandan society takes steps towards improvement, the Twa are left further and further behind. The government does not recognize their particular problems and the policy of not naming groups within the Rwandan population – an attempt to see all citizens as Rwandans and not as a member of an ethnic group – means their plight cannot be publicly addressed. Amidst rapid increase in the general population, Twa numbers have fallen to around 20,000 according to fairly recent estimates from the Minority Rights Group (MRG) and Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO).

### Origins of the project

This project, funded by a grant from Quaker Peace and Social Witness of Britain Yearly Meeting, is an innovative one, bringing together the interests and expertise of Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) and Growing Together.

HROC-Rwanda did some initial work with Twa in 2008 and judged that a group of workshops conducted close together would enable the building up of a big enough group of "graduates" to have a significant effect on attitudes, encourage participation in wider Rwandan society and breaking down prejudice.

**Growing Together** is a kitchen gardening project devised by Elizabeth Cave from England, teaching sustainable organic

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Workers at the Friends School Kagarama construct the central compost basket for a keyhole garden

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methods of growing vegetables near the house and spreading information about the role of compost/humus in restoring exhausted soils and slowing erosion. “Growing together” has a double meaning. Growing food together improves nutrition, while working cooperatively provides opportunities for people and groups to grow closer together, building community cohesion. Food security is an essential component of individual well-being and thus of peaceful social relations. Acquiring the ability to provide more nutrition for one’s family builds self-esteem. Better nutrition provides a better range of micro-nutrients, leading to improved physical and mental development. People with better mental development find it easier to accept new ideas.

After Elizabeth visited Rwanda with the Friendly FolkDancers in 2008, she returned as a volunteer with the African Great Lakes Initiative. In 2009 she worked in Rwanda for four weeks in February and another four weeks in October conducting Growing Together workshops. Being open to how the work may develop, she expects to continue her involvement until the end of 2012.

During her month’s work in Rwanda in October 2009, Elizabeth suggested to Solange Maniraguha, the senior HROC facilitator in Rwanda, that there might be a possibility of combining the two types of workshops. They thought at first that a pottery project would be their goal, using a traditional occupation of the Twa to help them develop a marketable product. After further thought and discussion with Dave Zarembka, AGLI co-ordinator,



A successful sack at Byumba

it was agreed that vegetable growing would be a more appropriate practical component of the first project combining HROC and Growing Together.

Since the Twa, due to their poor status, are reluctant to come to meetings or workshops, it was decided to have initial one-day “debates” where the Twa would be allowed to give their thoughts and opinions in an accepting, positive environment. This would then be followed by basic HROC three-day workshops. When these were completed, Growing Together two-day workshops would teach vegetable gardening skills. Each of these elements has been shown to work successfully. The combination is new and the whole may be more than the sum of the parts.

With the increased self-confidence acquired during both of these workshops, Twa may lose their habitual suspicion of all authorities. They can then send their children to school, and accept help and advice

offered through Rwandan government initiatives to teach sustainable kitchen gardening throughout the country.

At the time of this writing, the four debates and ten HROC workshops have been completed. In October Elizabeth, with a Rwandan understudy who can take over the program after she leaves, will hold six two-day Growing Together workshops. Then a community celebration day will be held bringing raising the visibility of the Twa in their local communities. Lastly, follow-up days will assess the project and plan for the future. It is intended that ten Twa graduates of the HROC workshops will be paired with ten Hutu/Tutsi in 2011 for an advanced HROC workshop so that Twa can begin to feel integrated into the larger Rwandan society. Ideas for helping Twa engage in productive activities include making ceramic “refrigerators” to keep food cool and cement bio-sand water filters. We will see how way opens. 

## Ways to Give



1. Stay informed on the progress of peacebuilding in the Great Lakes region of Africa.
2. Pray for/hold in the Light the success of AGLI programs in the region.
3. Attend an AGLI presentation.
4. Coordinate an AGLI presentation for your meeting, church, and/or community.
5. Choose a specific AGLI program and actively follow its development.
6. Join an AGLI workcamp or become a short/long term team member in the region.
7. Support AGLI or a particular AGLI program with your tax-deductible donation:

\* Mail a check to Friends Peace Teams/  
AGLI, 1001 Park Avenue, St Louis, MO  
63104 USA

\* Make an on-line donation with your credit/  
debit card by visiting the AGLI website,  
[www.aglifpt.org](http://www.aglifpt.org)

\* Become a regular monthly or quarterly  
donor. Contact [tzarembka@comcast.net](mailto:tzarembka@comcast.net) for  
details.

\* Host an AGLI fundraising event.

\* Ask your meeting, church, or other  
organization to include AGLI in their annual  
budget.

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that the HROC program transformed their interpersonal relationships, helping them to deal more effectively with anger and conflict and building stronger and more positive relationships with their family members, neighbors, and associates. For the participants who were involved in Democracy and Peace Groups, election observing, and the FrontlineSMS network, the project raised their profile as peacebuilders within their communities, gave them new skills, and catapulted some people into nonpartisan civil society activity who had not been so involved previously. These peacebuilders may have had a dampening effect on conflict between members of political parties and government officials.

The adoption of citizen reporters using the FrontlineSMS system provided an innovative new example of how the technology can be used. This made the program more effective. While massive violent conflict did not break out, the responses to smaller problems during the program show that had such problems arisen the texting network would have been an important tool in directing and coordinating peacebuilding efforts to respond to violence. With respect to the national-level political dispute that was the focus of conflict during the elections, the program provided an alternative third voice to the government and political parties through its election observation reports and its dialogue with everyday citizens on a local level.

### Way Forward

The Democracy and Peace Groups are continuing with each one deciding how they can engage their community in the continued pursuit of peace, even if the national situation deteriorates.

AGLI plans to use what we have learned for the coming August 2012 elections in Kenya. The project will be done in partnership with the Friends Church Peace Teams (FCPT). AGLI is proposing the **Comprehensive 2012 Election Violence Prevent Project for Turbo Division, Rift Valley, Kenya**. In this division which had over 15% of its population or more than 20,000 people displaced during the 2008 post election violence, AGLI and FCPT are planning an extensive program with youth, government sponsored peace committees, and the Turbo Inter-religious Peace Task Force which has already been formed. 

AGLI's webpage:

David Zarembka's email:

Dawn Rubbert's email:

[www.aglifpt.org](http://www.aglifpt.org)

[dave@aglifpt.org](mailto:dave@aglifpt.org)

[dawn@aglifpt.org](mailto:dawn@aglifpt.org)

## AGLI's Partners:

As you can see below, peace work in the region is intertwined with all the various Quaker organizations. This illustrates the fact that they all work together and complement each other. We don't need to step on each others toes because there is so much peace work to be done in the region that we could use 100 more Quaker organizations to help out!

### **Change Agents for Peace, International (CAPI):**

This organization began in 1998 when the small number of Quakers in Norway submitted a proposal to the Norwegian Government for peace work in the Great Lakes region of Africa. It has been funded yearly ever since and is AGLI's sister organization in the region. In 2006, a decision was made to move the organization, as an international organization, to Nairobi, Kenya, where it adopted its current name. This was a clever move since they could now accept donations and grants from anywhere in the world for projects in any of the counties they work in.

AGLI has partnered with CAPI in a number of endeavors. The biggest and most successful one has been the Transformative Mediation Program (see below). AGLI and CAPI have also worked together in the Quaker Peace Network-Africa (see page 4). Both are also members of Friends Church Peace Teams (see below).

### **Transformative Mediation in Kenya:**

In 2006 Judy Friesem and Kim Bush introduced mediation in Nairobi and Western Province, Kenya. The following year George Brose did follow-up training sessions. The project lapsed with the 2008 post election violence. The program re-

started this September. Theoneste Bizimana from Rwanda and Samuel Kamanzi from North Kivu trained 45 participants in Nairobi and 31 in western Kenya. The new apprentice mediators have been asked to conduct at least five mediations each by January 2011 when there will be follow-up training. Two days after the end of the September training in western Kenya, some of the new mediators were at a meeting and were already discussing mediations that they had done over the weekend!

### **Friends Church Peace Teams (FCPT):**

During the 2008 post election violence in Kenya, Friends Yearly Meetings and organizations met in late January to discuss the violence in the country. At this conference the Friends Church Peace Teams (FCPT) was formed. AGLI coordinator, David Zarembka, and his wife, Gladys Kamonya, were placed on the Executive Committee of the new organization. Later David was appointed Chairman of the Counseling Coordinating Committee. During the following months FCPT did significant peacemaking work in the Turbo Division of Uasin Gishu District where there was considerable destruction and 15% of the population had been forced into internally displaced camps. In May of this year FCPT hired Getry Agizah as its fulltime coordinator.

Recently Friends Church Peace Teams organized the Friends Churches to have a day of prayer on the Sunday before the August 4 vote on the constitutional referendum. On voting day in western Kenya FCPT as part of the Quaker Peace Network organized fifty election observers. On Sunday, September 19, FCPT is asking all

the Friends churches in Kenya to join in the World Council of Churches celebration of the International Day of Peace and to collect an offering for the peace work of FCPT.

### **Turning the Tide (TTT):**

Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW), the activist arm of Britain Yearly Meeting, has developed a program called Turning the Tide. This program teaches non-violent direct action to those who wish to change the world in a positive direction, non-violently. Their webpage explains:

*This work is about using the power of nonviolence to 'turn the tide' of injustice, oppression and disempowerment and to build an inclusive, sustainable and fair world. We seek to improve people's knowledge about nonviolence and their ability to use the tools and techniques it offers to take practical, effective steps towards that goal of a just and peaceful world.*

In December 2009, Steve Whiting, the coordinator of Turning the Tide, and Laura Shipler Chico, Program Manager, Peacebuilding in East Africa, and former AGLI Extended Service Volunteer in Rwanda, conducted a three-day teaser workshop for 20 people in western Kenya. The Turning the Tide program was enthusiastically received and QPSW is working with CAPI to begin an extensive TTT program in Kenya. The program has hired Bernard Lisamadi Agona as its Field Coordinator. A two week training course is being organized by Friends Church Peace Teams to develop local TTT trainers for Kenya. 

# FIRST INTERNATIONAL TRAINING FOR HEALING AND REBUILDING OUR COMMUNITY (HROC) FACILITATORS

The African Great Lakes Initiative of the Friends Peace Teams will conduct a seminar to train facilitators in the Healing and Rebuilding Our Community program developed in Rwanda and Burundi for psycho-social healing of individuals and society after deadly conflict. To learn more about the program please visit:

[www.aglifpt.org/Program/hroc.htm](http://www.aglifpt.org/Program/hroc.htm).

**Dates:** August 9 to 27, 2011

**Location:** Burundi

**Objective:** To bring together up to twenty-five participants from various countries throughout the world in order to conduct a professional training for the participants to become facilitators of the Healing and Rebuilding Our Community program.

**Lead Trainers:** Adrien Niyongabo, Coordinator, HROC-Burundi; Theoneste Bizimana, Coordinator, HROC-Rwanda; Zawadi Nikuze, Coordinator, HROC-North Kivu, DRC; Florence Ntakutimana, Program Manager, HROC-Burundi

**Language of instruction:** English, but translators will be available if needed.

By the end of the HROC training, the participant

- will be able to facilitate a three day basic HROC workshop.
- will have a basic understanding of personal and community trauma and how they interact in situations of violent conflict
- will be able to lead small and large group discussions, role plays, guided meditation, and light and livelies.
- will be able to understand and respond to trauma and its symptoms and effects on individuals.
- will be able to work with family, friends, and neighbors on methods to heal the local community's trauma.
- will be able recognized as a peace leader in the home community with specialize skills.

**Cost:** \$600 per person including in-country travel, food, accommodation, and training costs.

Items that are not included are international travel, visa fees, personal expenses, and cost of translator if needed.

**Deadline for application:** June 10, 2011 or until full.

**Follow-up:** Experienced HROC facilitators will be available to travel internationally to help mentor the new HROC facilitators in their home country. Cost to be determined.

**Second one-week HROC training:** To be determined at end of basic training.

**For further information and an application contact:**

David Zarembka, AGLI Coordinator

Email: [dave@aglifpt.org](mailto:dave@aglifpt.org)

Phone in Kenya: 254 726 590 783

Phone in the United States: 240/543-1172

