

PeaceWays **AGLI**

Fall 2011 Volume VI Issue II

**Let Us All Together
Be Happy Under One Roof**



**The Power of Healing and
Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC)**



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.

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www.aglifpt.org

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PeaceWaysAGLI

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Editorial Comment

In 1998 when I first approached East and Central African Quakers about peace work, I was told that trauma healing was essential. At that time, I was ready to introduce Alternatives to Violence (AVP), mediation, non-violent direct action, even Bible-based peacemaking, but I knew nothing about trauma healing and had little idea where to get help. But “ask and you shall find” I soon came upon numerous people who could guide this program including John Calvi, Ute Caspers, Carolyn Keys, Carl Stauffer, Cece Yocum, and the Quaker Peace Centre in Capetown, South Africa. In the last thirteen years, I have, of course, learned much about trauma and recovery.

AGLI's most popular issue of PeaceWays-AGLI is the Fall 2007 issue, “Now I Am Human: Testimonies from the Healing Companions Program in Rwanda and Burundi,” written by Bethany Mahler, Florence Ntakarutimana, and Adrien Niyongabo. I have had to reprint it and AGLI is now running out of the one thousand reprinted copies. Since HROC has developed in the last four years, this issue of PeaceWay-AGLI, “Let Us All Together Be Happy Under One Roof: The Power of Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities,” is its replacement.

This August, the Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) (pronounced HE-rock) program held its first International Training for HROC facilitators. Twenty-four participants from six countries participated. My report on this training starts on page 5.

It is important to realize how far the HROC program has come since 2003 when it was first developed in Rwanda. I have, therefore, included Adrien Niyongabo's report on the first twenty-five HROC workshops conducted after a one month trauma healing training. I have also included an adaptation describing the HROC program from my book, *A Peace of Africa*. A review of the book by Lisa Steward as published in *Quaker Life* can be found on page 13.

AGLI has found that one of the most effective methods of conveying the effect of HROC on its participants is to have members of the audience each read a quote from a HROC participant. At the end of the workshop, there is a time for testimonies. Also during the follow-up day a month or two later, participants frequently relate what they have done as part of the healing process since the first workshop. I have selected some of the most interesting of these testimonies, which can be found from pages 9 to 12. A very moving presentation can be made by just copying these testimonies and having people read them one by one. For a brief time, then the reader is in the “shoes” of those who have gone through horrible times, but are on the healing path. 

David Zarembka
AGLI Coordinator

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2012 Workcamps BURUNDI, KENYA & RWANDA

Saturday, June 23 to Saturday, July 28

1) Burundi Workcamp – Mutaho

Host Partner: REMA

Location: Mutaho, Burundi - Northeast of Bujumbura near Gitega, the second largest city in Burundi

Objective: The Workcamp Peace Team will build guest rooms for the Mutaho Women's Group Center

Housing: Workcampers will stay with local host families

2) 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: Workcampers will finish work on the offices/bathroom for the Gisenyi Peace Center

Housing: Workcampers will stay in the Peace Center dormitory

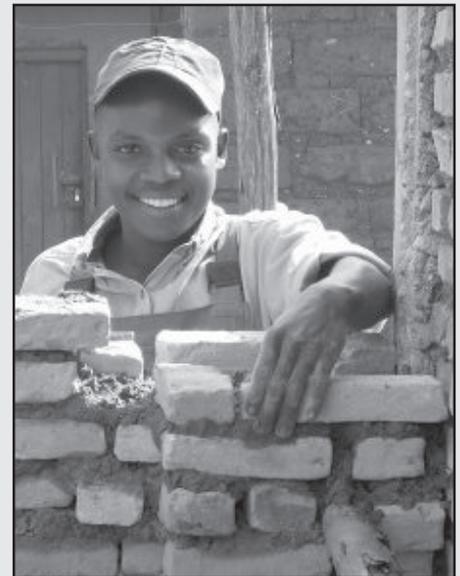
3) Kenya Workcamp – Lugari

Host Partner: Lugari Yearly Meeting

Location: A former 350 acre Farmers Training Center near Pan Paper in Lugari District, close to the Uganda border with Kenya with a perfect view of Mt Elgon

Objective: Workcampers will rehabilitate one or more dilapidated buildings by cleaning, painting, and minor repairs

Housing: Workcampers will stay at the site; much like camping



Contact Dawn Rubbert via dawn@aglifpt.org or go www.aglifpt.org

Front
Cover

Participants are given paper and tape to build a shelter that they have to get into during a flood to teach cooperation and simplicity in doing with what you have. Picture by Elsie Okpu.

The Development of Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC)

By David Zarembka, AGLI Coordinator

(adapted from *A Peace of Africa*, pages 164 to 184)

Origins of HROC

In September 2002, David Bucura, then General Secretary of Rwanda Yearly Meeting, asked me to bring trauma healing to Rwanda. In January 2003 with financial support from the American Friends Service Committee, AGLI held a one-month seminar in Kigali. We brought Adrien Niyongabo from Burundi and Carolyn Keys, now back in the United States after spending more than two years developing a trauma healing program in Burundi, to spearhead the training. From this training, the twenty participants developed the initial version of the three-day Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) workshop. Then, over the next four months, the participants conducted twenty-five experimental workshops in Rwanda and the program was born. (See page 7, "Report on the First HROC Workshops.")



Participants and trainers of the trauma healing workshop that developed HROC

Adrien Niyongabo returned to Burundi to duplicate the new HROC program he had helped develop in Rwanda. There were still gaps in the program. We needed to develop the methodology to train HROC facilitators who could continue the work in their local communities. We soon began calling these individuals "healing companions." In the AVP program, on which HROC is modeled, there is a three-tier process for a person to become a facilitator. First, the person takes a basic three-day workshop, followed by an advanced three-day workshop, and lastly a three-day training for facilitators' workshop. They then serve as apprentice facilitators for up to five workshops as they gained sufficient experience to be an AVP facilitator. We realized that to become a HROC facilitator was much more difficult than becoming an AVP facilitator because the deep emotions caused by trauma is much more complex than teaching the simpler conflict resolution skills of AVP. As a result, the HROC training that facilitators received is two weeks long, followed by apprentice workshops, and then an additional one-week follow-up training where the new facilitators can discuss their experiences.

The Basic HROC Workshop

In the Rwandan HROC workshops, ten of the participants are Tutsi survivors of the genocide and ten are Hutu from the families of the perpetrators or "released prisoners" who confessed to participating in the genocide. In the Burundian workshops, the Hutu and Tutsi from the two sides of the civil war are brought together. We have done a

Theoretically, the Healing and Rebuilding Our Community workshop is built on the stages of recovery from trauma as outlined in Judith Herman's book, *Trauma and Recovery* (Basic Books, 1992, 1997). "Recovery unfolds in three stages. The central task of the first stage is the establishment of safety. The central task of the second stage is remembrance and mourning. The central task of the third stage is reconnection with ordinary life. Like any abstract concept, these stages of recovery are a convenient fiction, not to be taken too literally." (page 155)

few workshops in Uganda and later we expanded the program to Kenya and North Kivu province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Although most of the people in a workshop are from the same community and in most cases know each other, they have not communicated with each other on a personal level for a decade or more. When they gather the first day each group sits apart, does not make eye contact with the others, and exhibit signs of nervousness such as remaining silent or, when speaking, talking in a hushed tone of voice. I am astounded when I think of how the three HROC facilitators are going to deal with such hostility.

Let me describe the three days of the workshop with quotes from the participants to show the effect of each session.

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First International HROC Training of Facilitators

By *David Zarembka*, AGLI Coordinator

The First International Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) Training occurred in Burundi from August 9 to 27, 2011 with twenty-four participant trainees. The diversity among the participants was exciting. They were from Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Congo (North Kivu and South Kivu), England, and the United States. Training began with participants taking part in one of four HROC basic workshops conducted in various parts of the country. International trainees were participants in the workshop so that everyone had experienced a basic HROC workshop firsthand. As happens in HROC workshops, many emotions were released and shared.

The training itself was held for the next two weeks at Burasira Seminary, a Catholic retreat center, built a long time ago by Italians. Hence, one can easily imagine being in Italy (until you eat the food). It is in a remote area and largely self-sufficient since they grow most of their own food. In order to connect with the Internet, one had to go to a particular building and climb to the second floor and face out the window for reception.



Trainers -- left to right -- Adrien Niyongabo, Theoneste Bizimana, Zawadi Nikuze, and David Bucura (participant). Missing Florence Ntakarutimana

The training was conducted by Adrien Niyongabo and Florence Ntakarutimana from Burundi, Theoneste Bizimana from Rwanda, and Zawadi Nikuze from North Kivu, Congo. These are HROC's most experienced lead facilitators. Participants were positive about the experience. Here is what Jean-Pierre Mfuni from World Relief in North Kivu, Congo, said:

As a Peacebuilding officer, this training means a lot for me. Coming from a country, which has experienced violent conflict for many years, this training has helped me to acquire more skills on how to deal with trauma and,

Comment on basic HROC workshop by Florence Ntakarutimana, HROC trainer:

I enjoyed being part of the three day basic HROC workshop in Rutana. The group went back and forth from Rutana Center to Giharo every day, a trip of one hour each way. They did not complain about the long journey on a dusty and bad road. In the workshop, all participated including the international participants were not only observing but contributed a lot to make the basic workshop a success. All the participants shared their stories and the international ones were happy to jump in quickly.

I noticed that for the first day of this workshop, the local participants were closed but, as they continued to hear international participants sharing, they became more comfortable. They said, "We were thinking it is Burundi only that needs help." The local participants began to open up more as we moved on with the workshop.

thus, how to help communities to reconcile. Before attending the training, I had organized various trainings on Conflict Resolution and Transformation, which are important in empowering communities with techniques in promoting peace, but how to deal

Outside of the workshop sessions the interaction with the local participants was amazing. I still remember the first day when we ate food with our hands as we had forgotten the forks at the Center. I asked the friends, "How is to eat with your hands?" I remember one of the international participants saying "Even in the US it happens that we eat with hands." Also, the fact that the internationals were learning some Kirundi words and trying to memorize the names of the local participants helped Burundians feel connected to the internationals. There was dancing and laughter.

At the end of the workshop, one international participant, Santa Sorenson said: I am happy I got this time to come to Africa. I told Florence when I met her in the US in 2008 that one day I will knock on her door. I am happy I could come. What I have learned from you is awesome. I give a piece of my heart to you.

with internal wounds was unknown to me. Now I am able to help communities to deal with internal wounds, which is a very important aspect to bring sustainable Peace and Reconciliation.

Continued on page 6

Joyce Victor from Seattle, WA commented:

The HROC International Training was a tremendous experience for myself and our group of participants. Most of the participants were already deeply involved in peace-building work, often under difficult and sometimes dangerous circumstances, and many had suffered trauma in their personal lives as part of living in communities traumatized by war. Our learning occurred on many levels: In order to help others we had to each assess our own experiences of trauma and to speak openly to others about our personal lives and ways in which we are working to be healed. Our exceptional trainers modeled and taught us how to lead community workshops. We learned from one another as each member of our group brought unique insights and abilities.

Of particular value to myself, as an American, was being with Africans involved in peace work and getting to see the context in which HROC works. For example, the centrality of Faith, the practice of shared prayer with song and movement and the pivotal role of churches in peace work was evident. For a person of quiet Quaker ways, this outpouring of devotional expression was a special experience I might not have had in a training in the US where Faith is often more privately expressed. There are many other things I absorbed by being in Burund. I learned the central importance of sharing food together as part of building community. I saw some of the reminders of war and atrocities - a memorial to school

Elin Henrysson, Quaker Peace and Social Witness peace worker with HROC-Burundi:

During one of our training sessions, Theoneste Bizimana quoted a saying that relates to the African philosophy of Ubuntu. He said, "I am because we are." This, to me, is where HROC finds her heartbeat. In his book No Future without Forgiveness, Desmond Tutu explains the African concept of Ubuntu as follows: "A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she

belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed."

As each group of participants goes back to their home countries and communities, some to contexts of relentless poverty and war, some to highly individualized, violent societies, I hope that we take back, not just new skills, but a sense of Ubuntu. A heart-sense that in the midst of great suffering we find healing through community with others.

A Sense That

*I am because you can accept, hold and honor my story.
I am because I can listen to, value and remember your story.
I am because you see the humanity in me and I see the good in you.
I am because I can see that you have suffered, like I have.
I am because we are.*

children burned alive and the shells of destroyed house. I witnessed the extraordinary capacity for forgiveness as well as the presence of military checkpoints and heard the stories of terrible as well as heroic deeds committed by citizens. I was able to hear about the work of other participants as well as to learn about the work of NGOs run on a shoestring and the deep desire to do good. If we had been in the US, most of our Africans participants would not have been able to afford to come to the training. Best of all, by being in Burundi, surrounded by Africans, I was able to build life-time friendships which will allow me to travel and to maintain contacts

with this special group of exceptionally warm and caring people.

The main problem of the training was that one person from South Kivu did not know English. Other participants had said that they would translate for her, but this did not work out well so she missed a good deal of the more difficult aspects of the training. The Kenyans complained that there was not enough ugali, a corn meal mush that is the staple food in Kenya, while some Americans complained that the food was the same every day – long ago I realized that the ability to have different foods each day is a luxury.

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Report on the First Basic HROC Workshops in Rwanda (April to July 2003)

By *Adrien Niyongabo*, Coordinator, HROC-Burundi

After the one-month trauma healing training held at the Friends Women's Garden Center in Kigali, Rwanda, on March 28, 2003, a meeting to plan further activities was held. To that end, fifteen trauma healers met with David Bucura (Legal Representative of Rwanda Yearly Meeting), Marcelin Sizeli (Clerk of Rwanda Yearly Meeting), David Zarembka and Cecelia Yocum (from AGLI), and Adrien Niyongabo (from Burundi Yearly Meeting). In that meeting, four full time staff members and an Executive Committee of seven people were chosen for HROC. Also, a three-month program, focused primarily on conducting twenty-six three-day trauma healing workshops, was set up and I was appointed as the coordinator for that program. The activities started on April 24 and ended on July 24. Let us have a look on what happened in between.

There were twenty-five three-day trauma healing workshops held in nine of the twelve provinces of Rwanda. Four hundred and ninety people - interested, active men and women, struggling with their heavy traumas - were trained. Those who attended these workshops, essentially composed by young adults, came from different backgrounds: genocide survivors, released prisoners, Twa, and community, church, and local association leaders.

In each workshop, several key topics areas were covered - understanding trauma, including trauma definitions, causes and symptoms; effects of trauma on a person; listening skills, understanding loss and grief, dealing with anger; and trust and mistrust. These modules were set up with the

help of Cecilia Yocum from AGLI. Small group discussions were also included to provide participants with an opportunity for deep sharing. Also some "lite and livelies" were provided in the workshops. Through the schedule was very tight, facilitators were able to attend a three-day in-service training session under the leadership of David Cimborra from Biola University in La Mirada, California. We also had two days of group clinical supervision.

Healing and Rebuilding Our Community (HROC) facilitators were blessed to meet with very enthusiastic audiences in each of the places where the workshops were held. The primary message was helping participants to understand that trauma is not a shameful word or name. Neither are traumatized persons. Respect was given to whoever was in the room. Information was shared with simplicity and no ambiguity. Connection was established among the entire group, laughing together and being mutually supportive of crying. New ways to restore hope were sought. All were overjoyed to see how these simple trauma healing modules, used by non-professional trauma healing workers, have impacted and enriched lives and have thereby started a path to healing. It has been clear that these workshops were highly appreciated by the participants as their specific needs were effectively responded to. As comments

demonstrate, participants did not hide their satisfaction about getting skills that helped them to better understand what they have been going through and how to deal with its consequences:

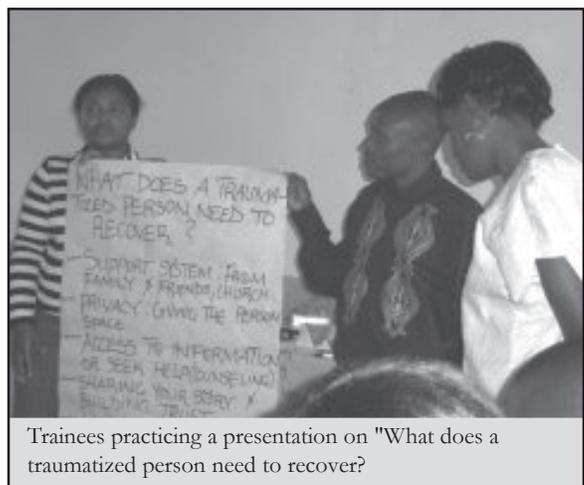
•I didn't realize that I was traumatized. I was surprised to find myself with many of these trauma symptoms you told us. Thank you so much for helping me to know what I am suffering from.

•In this workshop, I have discovered that there are many kinds of trauma. Before, I was thinking that only having lost family members is traumatizing, But now, I have see that the wrongdoer can be traumatized by the horrible things she/he did.

•Being in the group, where you talk about your stories, is comforting. Hearing someone else's story, you could realize that you are not alone in the struggle. And when it came to telling others about your story, it was like some thing heavy was pulled out from the heart and you felt happy.

•We were forgotten and marginalized for years and years. I am thankful, not only me but

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Trainees practicing a presentation on "What does a traumatized person need to recover?"

Second and Third International Training For Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (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.

Objective: To bring together up to twenty-four participants to conduct a professional training for the participants to become facilitators of the Healing and Rebuilding Our Community program.

Second HROC International Training in the United States

Dates: June 17th to 30th, 2012

Location: Stony Point Conference Center,
Stony Point, New York 10980

Language of instruction: English

Cost: \$1700 per person. Participants are strongly urged to attend a basic HROC workshop before attending the training. Email dave@aglifpt.org for schedule of workshops in the United States.

Deadline for application: May 15, 2012 or until full.

Third HROC International Training in Rwanda

Dates: July 29th to August 18th, 2012

Location: Gisenyi, Rwanda

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

Cost: \$800 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.

Deadline for application: June 20, 2012 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 the basic training.

**For further information and an application contact:
David Zarembka, AGLI Coordinator. Email: dave@aglifpt.org.**



Trainers and participants of First HROC International Training in Burundi, August 2011

HROC Participant Testimonies

Burundi Tutsi Participant:

HROC was an incredible force for me. At first, I thought I was just a bother to people and I just wanted to stay at home all the time. I never thought people would listen to what I had to say. I lived here but I didn't have friends, even in the camp [of internally-displaced Tutsi]. It was during the HROC workshops that I first saw people really could listen to what I had to say. Even more surprising was when everyone in the workshop cried with me when I shared all the bad things that I happened. After that, they became my friends and I visit them often. We created a friendship and it makes me happy to be recognized by my group. I feel like a new person, very useful to my family and to the community. I thank very warmly the people responsible for HROC who thought of coming here and inviting me. It is an immense blessing that I have received.

Rwandan Tutsi survivor:

Before we [survivors and released prisoners] could not even talk to each other or sit next to each other, but after the workshop we could talk. The one who killed my family asked for forgiveness, explained what he did and accepted it. It was not easy for me to forgive him, but I did and little by little he became close to me. And then, the killers told us where the bodies of our lost family members were, and then we could go find the remains and bury them properly. After HROC, I found out where my sisters were and buried them, and many others were found.

Burundian Tutsi participant:

During the crisis, Hutus took me from home and brought me down here to hang me on that big tree you are seeing outside. I thank so much those Hutus for when we got here, they told me to run away. And then they started to shout loudly as if I am shouting for being killed. They told their friends that they killed me already and that the screaming they heard was from me. I am thankful to them so much. They saved my life. One of them is here. (They hugged each other.)

Rwandan Tutsi survivor:

Before the workshop, I didn't think I could ever forgive the killers, but when one of the released prisoners told the whole truth in the workshop I was able to forgive and gained many things. The killers asked for forgiveness, they got down on their knees and asked God, the government, and the survivors for forgiveness. . . Many of my friends in the workshop forgave the killers. My anger has diminished. When I have drinks, I share them with the killers. . . I remember the trust walk when the person who killed my family was my partner. [During the genocide, she witnessed this man kill her two brothers with a machete and her younger sister with a spear.] I was shaking before because my partner was a known killer and very strong. I thought he might throw me down, but he also had fear and he took me gently, kindly. I asked him 'Will you lead me in peace?' After



Small group discussion at a basic HROC workshop

the trust walk with him, I felt it was not good to stay in my grief and had no fear against him.

Rwandan Hutu released prisoner:

Prison, it was bad, beyond understanding. You could not sleep lying down, there was only room to sit; many died from disease. Even sometimes there was no water, and once I went four days without food. . . I realized I had many symptoms along with the others who had been in prison. When I remembered sleeping among the dead in prison, it made me want to be alone and not speak. Even though I was released, I still felt imprisoned and didn't trust others. . . I was only doing my thing, I could not talk to people about my problems. I thought I could only live with prisoners. But after the

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workshop I felt free in my heart, it let me release my fears and helped me to form relationships with survivors... even if I have a conflict with someone, it no longer destroys the relationship

Rwandan Hutu released prisoner:

We were led in wonderful discussions where we learned about things that wounded us, shared our burdens, and so on. I discovered that it is when you sit with someone and share with him that you understand that the person is not garbage. Once you have stored sweet words in your heart, they stick there and they help you to eliminate the bitterness. It is amusing to see how people in the community started trusting me. They often come to me asking for advice in the conflicts they may have because they are, for sure, witnesses of the goodness that is within me. I want to keep being the model in my neighborhood. I committed myself in assisting those in conflicts for I know what prison is like and I would never wish that any one else would live what I lived there. It is woeful!!!



Practice HROC workshop at international training

Burundian Tutsi woman married to a Hutu man:

I am deeply thankful to the person who started these workshops. Things were going from bad to worse if it were not for the HROC workshop I attended. I had begun to see images and hear voices like what I lived through during the war. It was like a movie! Then I even started to consider my husband as an animal. It was hard for me to live with him. HROC gave me a relief! It was hard for my husband to believe it. He is now convinced that it is real.

When the war took place, I was pregnant. One month later, I went to hospital for delivery but my child died just after birth. There was no need for me to stay in the hospital for nobody from home could come and visit me. I chose to return home though I had not started feeling well. When Hutu begun lynching Tutsi in our community, all my in-laws left me and some of them would have been happy seeing me dead. We were in very difficult relationship, my husband and me. He gave himself pleasure to beat me so often. My children and one of my brothers-in-law were the only ones who understood my sorrows and comforted me... Listen, I remained alone in my community as a Tutsi; all the others were killed! Being able to share with those I met in HROC workshop tremendously helped me. I have been able to let it go. I have no more flashbacks; neither nightmares. Helped by my children, we worked on issues with my in-laws. My mother-in-law is now my mum. We got reconciled.

Burundian Tutsi survivor:

Before I attended the HROC workshop, I considered life like a burden: worthless. I was every time thinking how I could revenge the killing of my husband and relatives. During the war, the Hutu killers came and selected all males in my in-law family. Afterwards they came asking for money and used the threat of rape. We then moved to the IDP camp with our children. Life is not easy here. Well, I do not know how I got invited to a HROC workshop. Surprisingly, I met some of my former neighbors there. It was not that easy after roughly ten years of separation. I was too suspicious. The openness and compassion I saw in everyone in the workshop touched me. I then slowly began to accept that Hutu did suffer also during those days! I have decided to join a traditional dancing group; something which is unbelievable for Tutsi here in the IDP because there are Hutu in the group. Those women and girls have greatly helped me to bind my wounds. I feel different now. I am very proud of it. It is so sweet to hear folks saying that my face has changed from looking foggy to joyful. It is like I am a symbol of change! The cohabitation with Hutu in the community has improved as well. They now watch over my crops so that nobody will destroy them. I am sure that I would return as soon as I am able to have my house built. I am confident that life in the community is possible.

Husband of Rwandan Tutsi participant:

It was not like this before. Now, I have a loving wife. The killers come and visit her, and she talks to them

“ I have become conscious that bribe is one of the roots of the mistrust tree. And I have uprooted it. ”

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and doesn't flee. She does not have so many flashbacks and can sleep better. Before she was easily angered and we fought, but since the workshop it has diminished... My wife told me the workshops were good and diminish trauma. I feel changes in my soul, because I had bad ideas and I learned from my wife what they really were.

Male workshop participant:

I would have been the big loser if death had taken me away before having attended this HROC workshop. I had seen how happy are those who came from these workshops you are organizing and I wondered what they were given. I was overloaded with my bad feelings and this workshop has been an opportunity for me to put down some of them. More, I had been quarreling with my wife and many times I used violence over her. Thank God that I have learned how I can manage my anger. I am ready to change and bring peace in my family.

Female workshop participant:

After the workshop that I attended, I wished that my husband would get this extraordinary chance too. Fortunately, God answered my prayers! He participated in the last one you conducted. My home has become a paradise! Before we attended these workshops, my husband was always furious. He was treating us as slaves. My home was a hell. Since he had participated in the HROC

workshop, he has now time for the children and me. When he comes from work, he greets us, tells us how things have been for him and asks us how we have been doing too (what he never did before). Now he consults me before making any decision. You understand that there is a reason for me to be this joyful woman.

Workshop participant:

The skills that I got in the workshop that I attended have enabled me to be compassionate in helping others. A few days ago, on the queue at the hospital waiting for our turn, I saw a woman sitting under a banana tree, crying and saying things like a crazy person. I immediately went to her, sat beside and holding her in my arms. She kept on crying! After a while, she stopped crying and looked at me very surprised. I told her that I felt pity to see her alone. I asked her what happened and she revealed to me that her child had passed away. I listened to her and we finally sent somebody to go and call her husband. This was a great experience for me. I could not accept that I would have been empowered to that level.

Burundian traditional judge:

I am a "wise man" who helps adjudicate local cases. I used to ask for bribe to one of the two parties in conflict so that I may give him or her favor. Just after the last day of the workshop I attended, one woman came to me with money in hands. Trying to hand it to me, she said that she wants me to help her

to win the case opposing her to her neighbors. I listened to her and when she was done, I quietly told her that I could not touch her money. Instead, I suggested that she could go and meet the one with whom she in conflict and try to talk about the issue. Two days later, she came back happy for they were able to resolve the issue by themselves. Another man came with the same intention but still I refused the bribe. I told him that I am no longer the same person they used to see. HROC has changed me! I am happy that people in my community know that I have abandoned that worthless habit and that they can unify by themselves. Thanks for the HROC workshop because I have got light and courage. I have become conscious that bribe is one of the roots of mistrust tree. And I have up-rooted it!

Burundian Young Tutsi Participant:

I am a Tutsi living in the IDP camp. I was around ten when the war reached our area. I remember that day when Hutu beat my young brother to death. My mum asked our Hutu neighbor to escort her so that she could take my brother to the hospital. Pitilessly, he told her "Don't you know where you have buried your husband? Take him there too!" Hopelessly, my mum and I went to the hospital but my brother died in mum's arms before we could reach the hospital. We turned back and took the trail to the cemetery. Only two of us, two females, buried my brother. This

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would never have happened before the war. After we were done, we went home crying.

Since that time, I considered the Hutu man as a monster as well as his wife and children as we say in Kirundi “the mouse’s baby is victim of his mum’s hate.” After the HROC workshop I attended, I used to sit and meditate. One day, I decided to rebuild the destroyed relationship with that family. Unfortunately, the man had died. Still, I went to his daughter, who is almost my age, and told her my sad story. I openly told her that this was the only reason that I hated them. She was very sorry to hear what her father did to us. In tears, she humbly asked if I would be eager to forgive her father though he had died, her family and her too! I responded to her that that was my aim for coming and talking to her. We are now friends, real friends. I have forgiven! Without HROC workshop skills, especially the tree of trust, I am not sure if I would have come to that decision.

Burundian Hutu woman married to a Tutsi. According to the custom in the region, the child takes the ethnicity of the father so her children are considered Tutsi even though she is a Hutu: When the war was hot and we were fleeing in the bushes, a Hutu woman told me: “Why are you still tying that evil child on your back, meaning that the child whose father is a Tutsi is an evil. Take him down and throw him away!” Did she forget that he was my child? Did she mean that my loving husband was an evil? Since that time, I decided not to be with that woman

and have been holding such hate, anger against her. But, this workshop taught me how to let it go. I want to meet with the woman and tell her how what she said wounded me and that I have been able to forgive.”

North Kivu participant: Forgiveness was not in my vocabulary. If you offend me, I will keep it and sometimes I used to write it in a certain book for reference. I never thought of others when I do offend them. When we did the mistrust tree, I realized how I am filled with hatred, anger and pride. I realized what kind of fruits I am producing especially in my family. There are people who offended me when I was not yet married.

Now I have three children and I keep on talking about it. Maybe my children have heard me talk evil about those people and they will also hate them because of me. My first step is to burn the record book. If someone offends me, it’s better to talk to the person. And she may, in her turn after realizing her fault, ask for forgiveness. Even if she doesn’t ask for forgiveness, it’s ok because I will have done my part.

Burundi youth participant: I used to be a thief. I would break down my neighbor’s doors and steal all their possessions without pity. I do not know how I was invited by the H R O C

person to attend a HROC workshop in my community. But truly, since the end of the second day, a very deep change happened in me. It was then that I came to realize that I had been making my neighbors’ lives miserable and tough. I had been traumatizing them so terribly. I decided, then and there, to stop breaking into peoples’ homes. For the moment, not many people believe that I have become this truly new person, except my old friends. But I am committed to showing them my new face. With time, they will trust me. I have started warning my community any time I hear that my old friends were planning some robberies. I want to be a tree of trust. I feel free and joyful.

Burundi Tutsi participant: 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. 🌍



Small group discussion at a basic HROC workshop

Book Review:

A Peace of Africa: Reflections on Life in the Great Lakes Region

By David Zarembka

Madera Press, 2011, 322 pp., \$25

Review by: Lisa Stewart, Lake Worth, Florida

This particular American Quaker, David Zarembka, is in a unique position to write a primer for *wazungu* (Swahili for “white people” or “foreigners”). It is the real deal. After having lived and worked in Kenya for nearly 20 years, Zarembka has been able to write a clear picture of the political, social and economic landscape — the exotic and the highs and lows. So often we extend the assistance we think is needed but our good intentions amount to nothing because we are so ignorant of the culture into which we are insinuating ourselves. *A Peace of Africa* is a must-read for anyone, particularly Quakers, planning to work, volunteer or visit in East Africa.

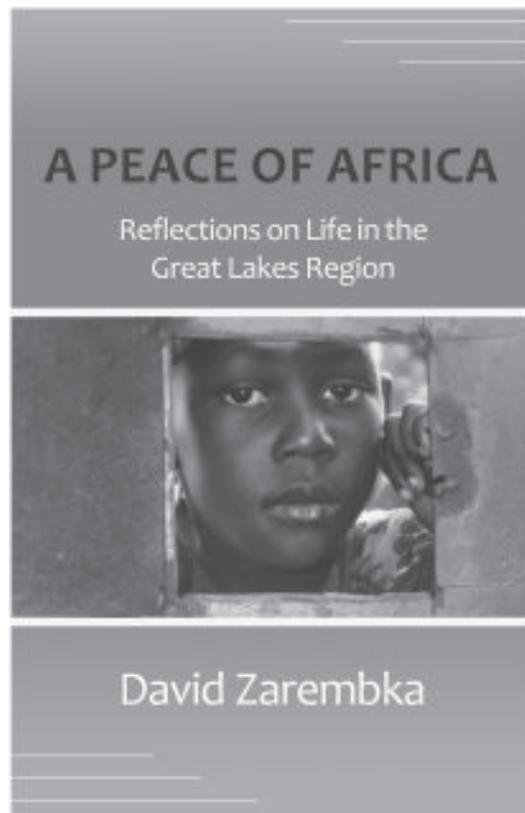
The legacy of colonialism today still affects almost all aspects of African life. Zarembka describes the significance and origins of tribalism and land divisions that actually created “ethnic states” that today are a root cause of so much corruption and violence. Because Friends United Meeting was heavily involved with humanitarian relief during and after the 2008 post-election violence, we Friends should be particularly interested in learning more about why the violence targeted those that it did. After having led Friends Peace Teams in East Africa for so many years, Zarembka has been able to draw parallels to Europe, including the Third Reich. His theories about why some multi-ethnic countries survive and some do not are compelling.

In addition to sharing facts and figures, the author takes us on a moral/spiritual journey as he describes his work establishing the African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) for Friends Peace Teams. Included are many personal vignettes that help the reader understand how AGLI has been able to build a Peace Center in Kenya and establish throughout East Africa teams that teach the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) and Healing Relationships in Our Communities (HROC). Their work and Zarembka’s commitment is impressive. The reader is confronted with the horrors of ethnic cleansing as well as the many successes healing the victims as well as their attackers. The author’s experiences leave many questions for missionaries. Clearly, *A Peace of Africa* would be an excellent selection for a book discussion group.

North American Friends who are led to work with farming projects in Kenya will be particularly interested in the extensive data about agriculture and rearing animals. Friends who are on finance committees need David’s insight into the wide differences that exist between how Westerners and Africans think about money. American educators have little to no

idea how different attitudes and practices in Africa are compared to those in the west. Even something like corruption, that we assume is frowned upon, is looked at through an entirely different lens in Africa. It was appalling to learn how much money the United States and other governments donate but how little they actually “do.”

The lasting impression the reader is left with is David Zarembka’s commitment to the Quaker Testimonies of Peace, Simplicity, Equality and Integrity. These values permeate his life, his work and this book.



To order a copy: visit www.davidzarembka.com

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

* Become a regular monthly or quarterly donor. Contact 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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The most important aspect of the first day is to develop a secure environment where everyone feels free to talk and respected by the others. This may be the first time since the genocide or other traumatic event that this has happened.

The agenda on the first day includes understanding psycho-social trauma - a new concept for most participants - causes and symptoms of trauma, small group discussion on "the effects of trauma on you." The concept of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) postulates that people who experience traumatic events can have considerable psychology damage even if physically they have not been harmed. Throughout the day, Tutsi and Hutu participants are randomly combined in small groups. Later the small groups share their insights. The day ends with a relaxation exercise to calm people before they return to their homes and families for the night.

Myself, as well as my neighbors, have lost many relatives and the situation we are in is unbearable. But I discovered that the main issue is that we have been keeping all inside us. We did not want to tell God, neither our friends about them. Grief can destroy one's life and body. We now find new skills. God and friends can comfort me.

The second day begins with learning good listening skills, followed by learning the stages of grief and loss. The grief session, what we would call a guided meditation, is one of the most difficult sessions of the workshop. Many participants end up crying for their lost loved ones and their previous life. Constructive and destructive ways of dealing with

anger are presented in the afternoon.

Having participated in this workshop, it has lifted me to another stage of understanding. I have a neighbor with whom I am in conflict. I discovered how I have been acting under my anger. Now I am ready to meet with him and tell him that I have acted wrongly. I will ask for forgiveness. Yes, I have been an evildoer.

On the third day, the trees of mistrust and trust are introduced. This is an apt analogy for the African rural setting. The participants list the roots, branches, and fruits (with fruits such as retaliation, revenge, and capital punishment) of mistrust on a drawing of a tree. They conclude by uprooting that tree. Next, they discuss the roots and fruits of trust, eventually concluding that the bad roots need to be replaced with good roots which then yield good fruits (rehabilitation, resurrection).

When we talked about the mistrust trees, participants expressed how the mistrust tree is real in their hearts and the consequences of such evil. They openly manifested their willingness to uproot that mistrust tree because it is the origin of all horrible times they passed through for generations.

We have to plant the trust tree in our hearts so that every Rwandan can eat its delicious fruits.

The afternoon of the third day is a "trust walk" where each participant is blindfolded and led around by another participant and then the roles are reversed.

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It was very touching, inspiring, full of love to see how survivors and ex-prisoners were holding each other [in the trust walk] and carefully they walked together.

By the end of these workshops, people, who only three days before would have stayed out in the pouring rain rather than seek shelter with their opponents, and who would have refused to ask for water when thirsty for fear of being poisoned, now leave talking, laughing, and inviting each other over for dinner.

I am very happy to see that the person who had the courage to hide my husband and myself when the killers were looking and following us is now with me in this room. We need to accept that there are trustworthy persons within each ethnic group although we passed through horrible periods.

At the end of a workshop, a number of things should happen. Participants should have a good understanding of psycho-social trauma, ability in identifying it in themselves and others, and some basic skills to work with traumatized individuals. The participants should have reconnected with members of the “enemy” side and re-asserted their common humanity. This should then bring about changes in their behavior as they reconnect with family, neighbors, and “the other” with a positive, empathetic, loving attitude.

After the Basic Workshop

We soon realized that one three-day workshop was not sufficient for the healing of a person, let alone a society. The facilitators could not conduct an emotional, liberating workshop and then just walk away never to be heard from again. Our first strategy was to have a follow-up day one or more months after the original workshop. During the follow

up, people shared how the original workshop affected their everyday existence.

When we introduced AVP in Rwanda in 2001, we made the mistake of having a few workshops all over the country. This resulted in having no discernable community effect. We realized that rather than hold one workshop in a community, we needed to offer five workshops to include about one hundred or more people. With HROC, we have continued to focus on the communities where we began and then sometimes expanding to neighboring communities. This would create a large enough group of trained persons in the community so that they could provide on-going support for each other.

We also found that, after completing the workshops and follow-up days, a public presentation was effective. The participants from all the workshops plus invited guests such as the local administrators, religious leaders, and other notables would gather for a day of celebration. This would include singing and dancing, poetry reading, testimonies from participants, and the usual speech making by the notables. In Burundi, where drumming corps are the national “sport,” there is a drumming group to perform vigorously including not only drumming, but also dancing and singing. The events end with a simple lunch together. The common meal is an important aspect of the peacebuilding. For some reason, Africans have a great fear of being poisoned. If a person gets an intestinal disease, some one is suspected of having poisoned the person. Consequently people are unwilling to eat with those they consider their “enemy.” Therefore, the sharing of a meal together becomes a visible sign of reconciliation. Surprisingly, we have

found that this tactic does not work in Kenya because the Kenyans are not satisfied with anything less than a major feast including the slaughter of a bull. Since this is not an efficient use of our scarce resources, we do not have community celebrations in Kenya.

Our next step was to encourage the trainees to form a group, which they frequently call an “association.” These groups usually select one Tutsi and one Hutu as chairperson and vice chairperson. Some groups still meet regularly, while others naturally fall by the wayside. Their purpose is to continue the healing that has occurred in the workshop, follow-up day, and community celebration and become a force for reconciliation in the community. Some of the “graduates” of the workshops use their newfound insights to help others recover from trauma. This is usually their children, spouse, close family members, and neighbors.

I remember at one of the first community celebrations we held in Ruyigi in Burundi, one of the participants gave this testimony. A female participant commented on how there was a mother in her community who was continually beating her ten year old daughter because she was acting “strange.” The participants worked with this mother and made her realize that the daughter was showing the signs of trauma and that beating her would only make her worse. As she counseled this woman, the mother changed her behavior towards her daughter.

As the years have passed by, HROC did not want to neglect those with whom we began the program. As a result, an advanced HROC workshop was developed and is now offered a year or more after the first

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cycle of basic workshop, follow-up, and community celebration has been completed.

There are also two special groups that have experienced the trauma like everyone else but also have additional traumas. The first are HIV+ women. Usually they have had terrible experiences during the conflicts, but also have to deal with the stigma of being HIV+. Until recently these women would die quickly, but with the introduction of anti-retro viral drugs, many are living much longer. But they face extreme discrimination and, when they show visible signs of the disease, they are ostracized by the community - from their family, from their housing, from their occupation if they have one, and shunned by the society. Therefore their trauma is not in the past, but in process. An additional part of the workshop is living successfully while HIV+. After taking part in these workshops, the women have frequently developed support groups.

The second group is the Twa who are the third “ethnic” group in Rwanda and Burundi. The Twa, who make up less than 1% of the population, suffer from severe discrimination. They are marginalized by both the Hutu and Tutsi because they lived in the forest, hunted wild animals, buried the dead, made clay pots, and were the jesters. As a result, they have additional traumas.

When we work with the Twa community, we begin with all Twa participants in the HROC workshops since they do not feel free to talk if Hutu or Tutsi are present. In Rwanda, after the initial

all-Twa basic workshops, HROC follows up with an advanced HROC workshops including half Twa and half Tutsi/Hutu participants. We have found that not all of our Rwandan facilitators can conduct the Twa workshops because some cannot hide their disdain for the Twa, but we do have one excellent Twa facilitator who helps considerably in these workshops.

Under normal circumstances, Twa will not even come to a workshop when invited or to a meeting when called by the government. Our success in getting them to attend is a great accomplishment for which we have been commended by local officials.

Conclusion

I am frequently asked how the HROC program can work when it can affect only a small group of participants and is not the “magic bullet” that will solve the problems in the region. Most “magic bullets” are top-down answers where people think that some possible resolution to the problems can come from the government, the United Nations, NGOs, or the international community.

I, on the contrary, am a grassroots person. For me, what is important is what happens between two individuals or small groups of people. If a man attends a HROC workshop and stops beating his wife and children, that is huge! If two neighbors who are at loggerheads can solve the issues between them, that is important. If “enemies” can

stop avoiding each other because of mutual suspicion and can learn to re-engage, that also is of utmost significance.

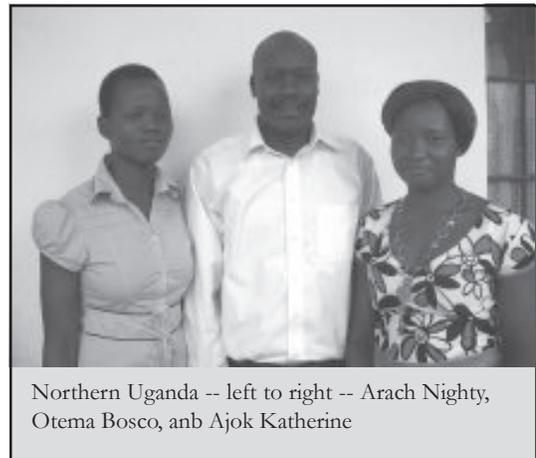
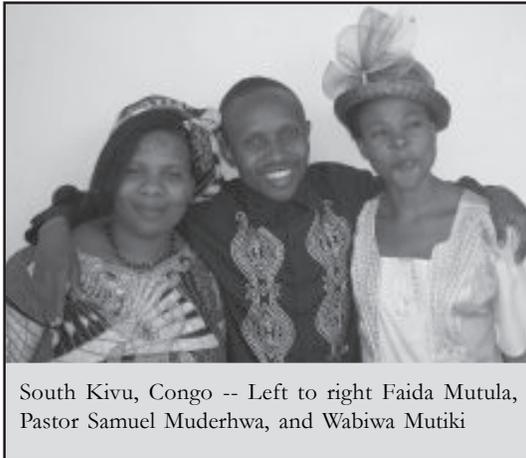
It is also very difficult to quantify the results of these workshops. If you asked the question, “Have you stopped beating your wife or child?” how does one validate the answer? As a result, the major NGOs and funding organizations have been reluctant to finance programs like the HROC workshop. This leads to a more basic question, “How do you change people’s attitudes?” Our response in the HROC workshops is to tap that inner good within everyone, to have confidence that people can, on their own volition, change for the better, and to expect divergent results from the workshop.

Lastly, there is a lesson that can apply to all of us as this participant from North Kivu noted:

There is one exercise we did of remembering someone who did something good to you and give thanks to that person. Through others’ sharing I realized how many times I have been ungrateful, how many times I take things for granted, thinking they are minor, therefore no need to say, “Thank you.” From now on, I have decided to be grateful. 🌍

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I attended the last day of the training and led the discussion on the way forward for each group – Kenya, South Kivu, North Kivu, northern Uganda, and the United States. The next step in the process is for the newly trained facilitators to apprentice in a number of HROC workshops with an experienced HROC trainer guiding them. Here are the plans from the various groups:



Bukavu, South Kivu, Congo - These three participants do peacemaking work in Bukavu (the main city of South Kivu) and some nearby communities. They are not well funded so they will have to do workshops that are low budget with the participants perhaps bringing their own food for lunch. The HROC program in Burundi will be able to mentor these new apprentice facilitators.

Gulu, Northern Uganda - In this area impacted by the brutal Lord's Resistance Army, trauma is especially high. Quaker Peace and Social Witness in England had been working with a group in this area called Empowering Hands for a number of years. Three members of Empowering Hands attended and, if they can get support for the apprentice workshops, the HROC program can send mentors for the workshops.



Goma, North Kivu, Congo - The three participants were from World Relief and their leader, quoted above, is an experienced AVP facilitator, which is how he learned about the program. Their new fiscal year begins on October 1, 2011 and they plan on conducting their apprentice workshops then with help from Theoneste in Rwanda and Zawadi in Goma. Their major peacemaking activities take place north of Goma in a place called Rutshuru, an area where conflict was intense and HROC-North Kivu has only held one workshop.

Kenya - Two participants were from Nairobi, where Theoneste has already introduced the HROC program. One is the coordinator of the program who had never taken the training; the second is an HIV+ woman who wants to use HROC with those who are HIV+. Since the program is ongoing, there should be no problem developing apprentice workshops. HROC has also been introduced in western Kenya, but one of the two main facilitators obtained a job in Nairobi and a second was hospitalized for over a month and is still recovering. Consequently there is a need for additional people who could become lead HROC facilitators.

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United States -- left to right -- Teresa Tyson, Joyce Victor, Elsie Okpu, Ann Swoyer, Bill Jacobsen, Santa Sorenson, Ram Bhagat, Amy Cox, and Naweza Muderhwa

United States - There were nine participants from the United States; three came from the Richmond (VA) Peace Center; and another three came from Arcadia University near Philadelphia. The final three participants were from various places.

Richmond, VA - Two experienced AVP facilitators from the Richmond Peace Center had taken the HROC manual off the AGLI webpage and begun conducting HROC trainings with a peace building organization for African immigrants from seventeen different countries. Since they have already conducted some workshops, they are geared up to do more with African immigrants. I find the international aspect of this African organization to be unusual; as is their realization that African immigrants have experienced considerable trauma – usually in the country where they originated - and definitely in their entry into American society, which, I am sorry to say, is not always very eager to welcome them.

I am Pastor Marcel from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I have work for World Relief since 2001. During the war, I lost my young brother who was killed by unknown armed people. I love very much my brother because he resembled me. It was difficult for people to distinguish him from me. Since that time I didn't have any opportunity to speak about that. It was a wound, a burden in me, but I was able to share about this for the first time during this HROC basic workshops in Rutana, Burundi. I felt released by sharing about that traumatic event.

Pastor Marcel, Goma, North Kivu, Congo

I traveled seven thousand miles in my journey towards peacemaking. Even though there is enormous need close to home, it was very valuable for me to spend an extended period in an environment that was hugely unfamiliar. This helped me to see the common humanity of people around the globe, which includes people in my own neighborhood. I know I won't fully appreciate what I have learned here [in Burundi] until I return home and our experiences settle into my mind and heart. But I am sure I am forever changed. Every American should experience Africa or other developing countries. Many of us simply don't understand how difficult life is for an enormous part of our world population. It will give me a new appreciation of diversity, difference, and of the service I am expected to embody and practice as a global citizen.

Anne Swoyer, Philadelphia, PA

Philadelphia, PA - The three participants connected to Arcadia University know each other well (two are married to each other) and already have plans to conduct apprentice workshops. They indicated numerous sub-groups in America that could use the training, including the prisons where AVP is established. One of the members is involved in peace work in Northern Ireland and, when she is fully trained, would like to introduce the program there. Her comment was that during the ten years of “peace” in Northern Ireland the peace has been kept by building more and higher walls and fences between the groups – hardly what we would consider peace.

We are hoping that the participants will conduct at least four apprentice workshops in the next six months. If the trainees do their “homework” of four apprentice workshops, we will offer the follow-up one-week training at the Gisenyi Peace Center in Rwanda, perhaps in February 2012. The lead facilitators will be available as mentors with Theoneste coming to the United States in October 2011 after the AVP International Gathering in Guatemala to mentor the newly trained facilitators. In my recent three-month tour in the United States, I found extensive interest in HROC training for the American context. We are also planning to hold the Second HROC International Training in the United States from June 13th to 30th, 2012 at the Stony Point Conference Center north of New York City. In August 2012, we plan to hold the Third HROC International Training in Gisenyi, Rwanda. We are in the process of working out the details. If you are interested in either one of these trainings, please contact me at dave@aglifpt.org.

HROC's Philosophy

Healing and Rebuilding our Communities (HROC) is based on an underlying philosophy and a set of key principles listed below:

Principle #1: In every person, there is something that is good.

Principle #2: Each person and society has the inner capacity to heal, and an inherent intuition of how to recover from trauma. Sometimes the wounds are so profound that people or communities need support to reencounter that inner capacity.

Principle #3: Both victims and perpetrators of violence can experience trauma and its after-effects.

Principle #4: Healing from trauma requires that a person's inner good and wisdom is sought and shared with others. It is through this effort that trust can begin to be restored.

Principle #5: When violence has been experienced at both a personal level, and a community level, efforts to heal and rebuild the country must also happen at both the individual and community level.

Principle #6: Individuals healing from trauma and building peace between groups is deeply connected. It is not possible to do one without the other. Therefore, trauma recovery and peace building efforts must happen simultaneously.

HROC's approach to learning grows directly from these six underlying principles. HROC workshops rely on participants' own experiences of violence, trauma, and healing to provide the backbone of curriculum content. Rather than provide multiple didactic lectures, HROC facilitators invite participants to discover their own existing knowledge and their own inner wisdom about how to heal and how to help others. This approach builds a strong sense of community among group members, instills a new confidence in a wounded self, and ensures that the lessons learned are steeped in the context of the particular conflict and the post-conflict recovery process. The fact that the program relies on eliciting actual experiences enhances its adaptability to varying contexts and cultures.