



PROTESTANT INSTITUTE OF ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES (PIASS)

**Center for Research & Action towards
Sustainable Peace & Development (CRASPD)**



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BIANNUAL WORK REPORT

(January – June 2020)

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Center for Research and Action towards Sustainable Peace and Development (CRASPD)

Huye, Rwanda

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I. INTRODUCTION

This is the biannual work report of the Center for Research and Action towards Sustainable Peace and Development (CRASPD) at the Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS), for the period from January to June 2020. Because of the outbreak of the Corona virus disease (Covid-19) in Rwanda in March 2020, several activities planned in this period were cancelled or postponed; those activities are the Trauma First Aid Training & Refresher Training for students, the Mbazi Restorative Dialogue post-circle, Study Trip organized by the Japanese development consultancy firm ICNet, AVP Facilitators Refresher Training organized by Friends Peace House in collaboration with PIASS, a Critical Thinking Facilitators' Refresher Training, and three parallel AVP Basic Level Workshops that were planned to take place simultaneously in Bujumbura, Bukavu, and Huye as part of the joint project in the GIZ Civil Peace Service Regional Program.

Content and Staff Involved

The report describes activities that have been carried out by CRASPD during the period from January to June 2020.

The staffs involved in the activities and reporting are:

- Dr. Kazuyuki Sasaki, Head of Department of Peace & Conflict Studies in the Faculty of Development Studies at PIASS and Coordinator of CRASPD
- Serge Muvunyi, Assistant Coordinator of CRASPD and graduate of Peace & Conflict Studies at PIASS
- Anne Dietrich, International Peace Advisor (IPA) of GIZ (German Development Cooperation) Civil Peace Service (CPS) based at CRASPD
- Dr. Penine Uwimbabazi, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Development Studies at PIASS and Alternatives to Violence Program (AVP) Facilitator
- Floriane Niyungeko, Local Peace Advisor (LoPA) in GIZ (German Development Cooperation) Civil Peace Service (CPS) in the capacity of Peace Program Officer at CRASPD, and graduate of the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies at PIASS

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AMI: Association Modest et Innocent

ASC: African Studies Center

AVP: Alternatives to Violence Program

CA: Conservation Agriculture

CIP: Crop Intensification Program

CNVC: Center for Nonviolent Communication

CPS: Civil Peace Service

CRASPD: Center for Research and Action towards Sustainable Peace and Development

DRC: Democratic Republic of the Congo

GIZ: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

JMSG: Japan Mission Support Group

JSPS: Japan Society for the Promotion of Science

MJCI-Shalom: Mission des Jeunes pour Christ Internationale-Shalom

NGO: Non-governmental Organizations

NVC: Nonviolent Communication

NVCT: Nonviolent Conflict Transformation

PIASS: Protestant institute of Arts and Social Studies

PPC: PIASS Peace Club

RD: Restorative Dialogue

RICA: Rwandan Institute of Conservation Agriculture

TUFS: Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

TWG: Thematic Working Groups

UNWA: Umucyo Nyanza Women Association

USA: United States of America

WS: Workshop

II. ACTIVITIES

1. Trainings and Workshops

1.1 Restorative Dialogue Refresher Training (March 12 – 13)



Participants during a restorative circle

The Refresher Training was a follow-up activity to the Restorative Dialogue Training with Duke Duchscherer—a CNVC (Center for Nonviolent Communication, <http://www.cnvc.org>) certified Trainer of Nonviolent Communication and Restorative Dialogue Facilitator—at PIASS in October 2019. Restorative Dialogue emerged from efforts of installing restorative justice after violence happened, originally from indigenous communities around the world. For them, rather than punishing perpetrators of violence, it was often more important to repair relationships in the community so that the community harmony would be restored.

Restorative Dialogue uses the technique of restorative circles as an approach to dealing with community violence. It was created by Dominic Barter when he was living and working in the favelas (slums) of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where a lot of gang violence occurs and many people are killed due to community violence every year. He developed it further, together with the people in the community, and took it to other places with the help of trainers of Nonviolent Communication.

Restorative Dialogue (RD) is usually organized in three phases: a pre-circle in which RD facilitators explore the readiness of potential participants and their understanding of the process and the roles of those involved in it, the restorative circle itself in which all concerned participate and identify restorative steps to commit to, and a post-circle in which participants review how the outcomes of the process are affecting the participants and the next steps they would like to take to restore harmony in their community.

More information on Restorative Dialogue can be found at: <https://www.restorativecircles.org>, or <https://restorativejusticeontherise.org/dominic-barter-of-restorative-circles/> and <http://www.restorativecircles.org/systems-and-facilitation>.

During the Refresher Training, the participants shared experiences of having used different techniques of Restorative Dialogue; reviewed the content of pre-circles, facilitators' pre-circles, restorative circles and post-circles; and reviewed the 'live' Restorative Dialogue that had been taking place in November 2019 in a community near Huye under Duke's supervision.

The focus was much on practice: We practiced in pairs, in triads and in larger groups, as well as in a full circle. Developing the program over the course of two days, re-adjusting the program according to present needs and different participants facilitating various sessions ensured that everyone actively participated and brought immense learning opportunities to everyone. We certainly did not manage to do the perfect 'restorative circle', but we supported each other on our journey of learning the practical steps to develop the following skills: 1) listening to each other; 2) giving and receiving support to hear what a painful, scary or sad experience means to one; and 3) acknowledging our parts in what happened and our agency to contribute to our healing in a community.

An interesting exchange unfolded about the 'live' Restorative Dialogue that had been conducted in November in collaboration with Association Modeste et Innocent (AMI). Forty local community members participated, half of them victims of Genocide crimes, and the other half people who had been in prison under charges of having committed Genocide crimes in the same community. One participant questioned whether the participants took part on a voluntary basis and voiced concerns that the sharing of painful truths and feelings of pain and suffering would bring back traumatic experiences and lead to emotional crises that could not be well-handled by a Restorative Dialogue team.

The team responded that the two groups had been prepared and informed about their choices separately and reassured that their participation was voluntary. When participants were overcome by emotions, two volunteers from the Mental Health Dignity Foundation, who were members of the team, took care of them and supported them to reconnect.

1.2 Alternatives to Violence Program (AVP)

AVP Basic WS (March 2 – 4, 2020)



Participants during the concentric circle exercise

CRASPD held an AVP Basic Level Workshop on March 2-4, with 20 participants from different countries (Burundi, DR Congo, Germany, Japan, Rwanda, and USA) and from different departments and faculties of PIASS, as well as organizations from Burundi, DRC, and Rwanda.

As usual, the workshop covered the four pillars of AVP: Affirmation, Communication, Cooperation, and Conflict Resolution. We also explored the notion of Transforming Power by using experience-based learning through practical exercises, sharing of each other's experiences, brainstorming and discussing, and role playing. Two 'open questions' that had been collected during the three workshop days generated impressive responses from the group on the last day:

One question was: "In which phase of a conflict can the mechanisms of Alternatives to Violence play a big role?" The response was that AVP can be useful in all phases, as it allows us to express needs and wants for change in a peaceful way. However, it was found that during the escalation of a conflict towards (more harmful) violence, AVP can prove to be more significant than in other phases.

Another question was: "Can AVP be applied to 'unforgiveable crimes/ crimes against humanity'?" One participant responded that "AVP is focusing more on preventing such violence", and another added that "all levels are interconnected, and it starts with me and what I am doing if such crimes happen or not". Yet another mentioned that "even after a judgment through the law may be passed, forgiveness can still happen, and both victim and perpetrator are still human beings".

1.3 Nonviolent Communication (NVC) Trainings and Seminars

NVC Practice Group

CRASPD held a Nonviolent Communication practice session on February 3, where we mainly worked on how to deal with the “enemy image”. The next one was planned for March 18, but it was cancelled because at that time, it was the beginning of a lockdown in Rwanda and gatherings were not allowed then.

1.4 Trauma First Aid Training - Preparations

Online NVCT Briefing on (Zoom June 18 – 19, 2020)

The Nonviolent Conflict Transformation (NVCT) Briefing is pre-training for future student Trauma First Aid trainees; it equips them with terms, concepts and understanding of conflict, violence, trauma and the link between those concepts. This preparatory briefing is conducted because most of the students invited for the Trauma First Aid Training in collaboration with the PIASS Peace Club are either first year students of the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies or students from other Departments who are not yet familiar with these terms and concepts.

This year, the NVCT Briefing was done online because registered participants (all PIASS students from two Faculties: Education and Development Studies) were in different parts of Rwanda due to the COVID-19-related closure of schools and universities until at least September 2020. CRASPD conducted the NVCT Briefing in collaboration with the PIASS Peace Club who conducted a survey with potential participants ahead of the training. This helped us to find out who among those who had expressed interest was available and would be able to join the training online. One of the trainers of the Trauma First Aid Training joined parts of the briefing and contributed from time to time.

Seventeen out of 18 registered participants joined the training on the morning of June 18 (9:00 am – 1:00 pm) and the afternoon of June 19 (2:00 pm – 5:00 pm) on Zoom and WhatsApp. It was facilitated by Anne Dietrich and Floriane Niyungeko – both staff of CRASPD at PIASS.

Usually, the students who participate in the Trauma First Aid Training would form teams to support relatives and friends of those who had been killed at PIASS (formerly the Faculty of Protestant Theology) during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi and who regularly suffer from emotional crises during the annual Genocide Commemoration event at PIASS. However, due to the fact that all

academic institutions, including PIASS, were closed in the reporting period, we consulted with the Trauma First Aid Trainers to prepare for some parts of the training to be done online, but since no Commemoration event was taking place at PIASS, we decided to postpone the training to 2021. (The commemoration of the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi this year was done on a limited scale for COVID-19 prevention, and thus no event could take place at PIASS.)

2. Research Project on Resource Management and Development

The research project on “Resource Management and Development in Rural Rwanda” is an ongoing project carried out as part of a three-year (April 2018 – March 2021) international joint research “Resource Management and Political Power in Rural Africa” funded by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS). Having Prof. Shinichi Takeuchi, the Director of African Studies Center (ASC, <http://www.tufs.ac.jp/asc/english/>) at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (TUFS), as its principal project leader, the JSPS-funded project brought together researchers from TUFS and seven universities in five African countries. The JSPS-funded project aims to publish two books as the final result of the three-year research project.

2.1 Field Research on Conservation Agriculture by Smallholder Farmers in Rwanda

As participants of the joint research project, Kazuyuki Sasaki and Serge Muvunyi, the Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator of CRASPD respectively, completed their first phase of field research on Conservation Agriculture (CA) by smallholder farmers in Rwanda in the first week of February 2020. In recognizing the significance of CA for resolving food insecurity issues experienced by smallholder farmers in the face of increasing climate variability in Rwanda, the field research was conducted from September 2019 to February 2020 to construct a case study of smallholder CA farmers who are participants in CA focused food security projects implemented by three NGOs, CA-focused food security project implemented by three NGOs, namely, Association des Eglise Baptistes au Rwanda (Association of Baptist Churches in Rwanda), Friends Peace House (FPH), and MJCI-Shalom (Mission des Jeunes pour Christ Internationale-Shalom), in the eastern and southern provinces of Rwanda.

The case study addressed two primary questions:

- To what extent and in what particular form has CA been adopted by smallholder farmers in

the study areas?

- What are, from the perspective of CA farmers, the major constraints to adopting and scaling-up CA, specifically in the context of smallholder farming in Rwanda?

Our fieldwork yielded eight themes as its major findings that smallholder CA farmers in the study areas perceived as significant factors in preventing CA from being more widely adopted and scaled up in the context of smallholder farming in Rwanda. The first six themes are closely linked to smallholder farmers' limited access to agricultural resources and services that are necessary for productive CA. The last two themes stem from the government program for agricultural intensification and commercialization under the Crop Intensification Program (CIP), which considerably limits farmers' choice regarding the farming system and methods they may adopt.

The major findings of the case study were presented as a paper during the Joint Seminar on Resource Management and Development organized by PIASS /CRASPD and ASC of TUFS on February 18-19, 2020. The central argument of the paper is “that the government and other organizations concerned with the agricultural sector should allocate considerable resources to address the constraints smallholder farmers face due to their limited access to agricultural resources and services necessary for productive CA. It goes on to emphasize the necessity of addressing the constraints stemming from government policies so that continuous effort will be made, both in policy making and implementation, to give smallholder farmers greater space and increased support for experimenting, adopting, and expanding a farming system with greater productivity and climate resilience in years to come” (excerpt from the paper presented by Sasaki and Muvunyi).

2.2 Joint Seminar on Resource Management and Development



Participants of the seminar (group photo)

On February 18–19, the Joint Seminar on Resource Management and Development was organized by PIASS /CRASPD and ASC of TUFSS at the PIASS Huye campus. The seminar involved 26 researchers from Japan, Rwanda, Ghana, Cameroon, South Africa, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo who presented papers and 15 other participants from PIASS, University of Rwanda and various government institutions.

The titles of papers presented by lecturers of the Faculty of Development Studies at PIASS during the Joint Seminar are as follows:

- “Nature Conservation Policies and Practices in Africa: Critical Analysis, Ideological Challenges and Strategic Vision for Protected Areas Sustainable Management” by Glorioso Umuziranenge & Elysée Ntiranyibagira
- “Gender Aspects of Agrarian Reform in Post Genocide Rwanda: Understanding the Benefits of Land Use Consolidation Program for Women Smallholder Farmers” by Fortunée Bayisenge
- “Constraints to the Adoption and Scaling-up of Conservation Agriculture (CA) for Smallholder Farming in Rwanda: Farmers’ Perspectives” by Kazuyuki Sasaki & Serge Muvunyi

The first paper was published in *ASC-TUFSS Working Papers 2019 “Challenges of Development and Natural Resource Governance in Africa”* edited by Dr. Yasuo Matsunaga and Prof. Shinichi Takeuchi (www.tufs.ac.jp/asc/english/activities/publications/2003WorkingPapers2019.html), whereas the second and third papers will be published in *ASC-TUFSS Working Papers Volume 1 (2021)* in February 2021.

At the conclusion of the seminar, participants of the seminar discussed the outline of the next seminar that is planned at University of Ghana in September, 2020 and future prospects of a joint research project. A brief report of the Joint Seminar can be also seen at <http://www.tufs.ac.jp/asc/english/activities//2002PIASS-TUFSSSeminarReport.html>.

3. Nyanza Peacebuilding and Livelihood Project

3.1 Tailoring Training



Member of Umucyo Nyanza during tailoring training

Since July 2018, Umucyo Nyanza Women Association has been engaged in tailoring activities in which they have made different products. The members of this group received tailoring trainings and they have produced bags of different sizes, which have been sold in Rwanda and Japan. After they have improved their skills in tailoring, they remain with the challenge of having a smaller number of sewing machines compared to their number (at that time there were seven sewing machines between the 14 women in the association). To overcome that challenge, they requested additional sewing machines so that they can be more productive in their work. They also requested additional tailoring training to learn how to make different clothes so that case they can make various products other than bags.

They addressed their request to Dr. Kazuyuki (represents the JMSG), who responded positively to that request, and subsequently in November UNWA, UNWA received seven additional sewing machines, totaling to 14 sewing machines. As far as the additional tailoring training is concerned, they have started a third training phase of six months (December 2019 – May 2020). During this training phase, members of Umucyo Nyanza will learn how to make different clothes, which will enable them to compete with other tailors. The training phase will take place on weekdays from 8am to 2pm.

After the training started, the members of UNWA found that there is a need for at least two electric sewing machines to sew the hardest edges of clothes and to make the work easier and faster. UNWA received a donation of 500 USD from Presbyterian Church USA and a donation of 37,00 JPY from Otsuma Women's University in Japan. From this donation and the contribution of UNWA, two electric

sewing machines were bought in February 2020. As of today, Umucyo Nyanza has 14 manual sewing machines and two electric (industrial and zigzag) sewing machines.

3.2 Book Cover and Accessory Production



Book-covers made by Umucyo Nyanza association

Book-cover making has been the largest income generating activity of Umucyo Nyanza. This activity is being implemented once a week (Wednesday afternoon) as a continuous activity. In the last few years, UNWA were making only two types of book covers (large and small size book covers), but a new, medium size book cover was introduced. All of the book covers are made in kitenge fabric and are being sold in Japan and Rwanda. Through these years of making book covers, the women have improved their skills and earned a significant amount of money from teaching different people who visit their workshop.

In addition to that, the women have started to make small pochos, which were sold in Japan. This new product was introduced in line with the idea of developing new products, which will allow the members of Umucyo Nyanza to receive more income from selling different products.

3.3 Effects of COVID-19 to UNWA's Activities

As the rest of the country, Umucyo Nyanza was also affected by COVID-19 in many ways. After the total lockdown was announced, Umucyo Nyanza stopped its activities and members had to stay home. During that period, their business did not operate, and thus the women had no income while having various expenses (e.g., house rent and security guard). The women faced different challenges including a lack of means (money) to feed their families as most of the members have to work in order to take care of their children.

One of the biggest worries was that nobody knew when the lockdown would be lifted. There were in such a situation for almost three months (the end of March to the beginning of June). To cope with this situation, the committee of Umucyo Nyanza decided to take part of the savings and share that with members. This was done twice (April and May), and each member received forty thousand francs (40,000frws). This money helped the members of Umucyo during that critical situation, and they expressed that they did not suffer as much as they would have if that money was not given.

4. Support to PIASS Peace Club

Peace Club Planning Processes (Jan 21, 2020)



Planning session of Peace Club

CRASPD supported the PIASS Peace Club (PPC) Committee to plan for 2020 with a planning meeting on January 21. Of the activities planned during this meeting, at least a few could take place in spite of the COVID crisis: Two monitoring and exchange visits to two Peace Clubs that PPC had helped at the Buhimba School and at the PIASS Karongi Campus and a media training were conducted in February. The PPC theater group showed a play on Valentine’s Day, and on International Women’s Day, PPC screened the film “Pray the Devil Back to Hell”, a film about the story of the Liberian women whose campaigns, nonviolently and with a lot of resilience and courage, pushed the civil war to an end and prompted then president Charles Taylor to escape into exile.

After the screening, we had a very emotional and interesting exchange with our students from different countries in the region, as well as some other visitors from the University of Rwanda and volunteers. The moderator of the session, one of our students from DR Congo, admitted that he had been moved to tears when first watching the film.

5. Other Activities

Office meetings (every two weeks)

The CRASPD team meets every two weeks. Following the COVID-19 lockdown, those meetings were held online every week. They helped the team to keep updated about each other's situation and mental wellbeing during the lockdown period and to update one another about work-related online activities

III. COLLABORATION WITH PARTNERS AND NETWORKING EFFORTS

1. Volunteers and Interns

In the period from January to June, CRASPD had one intern, Margaret Bundy, a Fulbright scholar who was awarded an English Teaching Assistant grant to Rwanda. She is a lecturer in the English department and works with students in the Writing Center. She was an alternate for a Fulbright grant to Bosnia and Herzegovina last year.

2. Activities in collaboration with GIZ CPS

2.1 Development of GIZ CPS Regional Program



Staff of partner organizations during the presentation

GIZ Civil Peace Service, a program that supports the activities of CRASPD under a partnership with

PIASS, has been working in Rwanda since 2001 and in Burundi since 2009. A new phase of the program formally began in January 2019, combining the existing programs in Burundi and Rwanda with interventions in the East of the DRC within a single integrated regional program: The Burundian partner organizations that had been ‘remotely’ supported by GIZ CPS Rwanda since 2016 due to the political and security difficulties there and the Rwandan partner organizations were now joined by four new partner organizations from South and North Kivu in the East of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Starting from this year, GIZ CPS, as a regional program, was planning to subsidize regional projects that are planned and implemented by thematic working groups. After some preliminary meetings and workshops for shaping this new regional GIZ CPS program, its program logic, M & E system and steering structure, the first ‘Professional Group Meeting’ was held in Kigali in mid-February 2020. For the first time, the four Thematic Working Groups (TWG), all consisting of partner organizations from each of the three countries, met and started working together on joint projects. PIASS is part of the TWG ‘Nonviolent Conflict Transformation and Community Dialogue’ alongside one Burundian and two Congolese organizations. Most of the TWG communication takes place online, which is often a challenge because of difficulties of internet access and other technical problems.

IV. OUTLOOK

In the second half of 2020, CRASPD is planning to conduct the following activities:

- Several AVP Workshops and one AVP Training of Facilitators
- Mbazi Restorative Dialogue – Post-Circle
- AVP Facilitators’ Refresher Training by Friends Peace House
- Critical Thinking Facilitators’ Refresher Training and Discussions fostering Critical Thinking
- Trainings and workshops on nonviolent conflict transformation in cooperation with different organizations in the region
- Several Umucyo Nyanza Women’s Association and Cooperative activities
- Support for PIASS Peace Club planning processes and activities
- Peace & Development Seminars

- CRASPD Fundraising training (with support from GIZ CPS)
- *Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities Workshops (upon request)*
- *Workshops and trainings on Nonviolent Communication (upon request)*
- *Trainings in Conflict Sensitive Programming (upon request)*