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Youth participants of the *Dukire Tubane* Project perform a sketch about non-violence. Photo: CRS, 2018.

The Dukire Tubane Project:

STRENGTHENING SOCIAL COHESION IN BURUNDI THROUGH YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Context

With support from USAID, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) launched the *Dukire Tubane* Project (meaning *let us be healed and live together* in the Kirundi language) in September 2017. Implementing CRS' innovative people-to-people (P2P) approach to social cohesion, the project draws diverse youth from across Burundi's political, social and ethnic divides together to break down divisions by emphasizing commonalities and developing a shared vision of the future. *Dukire Tubane* is implemented in partnership with the Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace, the Diocesan Commission for Justice and Peace in Bujumbura and Bubanza, as well as HROC Burundi (Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities). With the goal of strengthening youth resilience and capacity to live in harmony, the project team works in close collaboration with local authorities including administrators and police to help shift community perceptions of youth from perpetrators of violence to peacebuilding leaders.

Burundian youth have been challenged by recurring violence, most recently during the crisis following the 2015 presidential election, straining their role within local communities and testing their resiliency. While lacking meaningful economic opportunities, many youth continue to suffer from trauma, manifesting itself in different forms amid a climate of fear and mistrust. The *Dukire Tubane* Project seeks to address youth's psycho-social wounds while helping them build trust amongst themselves and with local authorities, curbing the desire for revenge and its role in perpetuating a cycle of violence. *Dukire Tubane* youth participants are now working together with instead of against local authorities to address development challenges including youth employment.

2.5 Years

PROGRAM DURATION

\$1.6 M

TOTAL PROGRAM COST

2 Provinces

GEOGRAPHIC TARGETING:
BUJUMBURA MAIRIE and
BUBANZA PROVINCES

**15-28
Years Old**

AGE OF BURUNDIAN YOUTH
TARGETED BY THE PROJECT



Trauma Healing

Dukire Tubane employs HROC's approach to trauma healing which is designed to help people understand and recognize trauma amongst others while also learning to manage it within themselves and their communities. Recognizing that trauma healing takes time, the HROC methodology leverages community resources and focuses on peer learning. Participants first attend a three-day trauma healing workshop; then, they form *Rema Tuyage* groups (meaning *be comforted and let us dialogue* in the Kirundi language). These groups organize monthly meetings in their local communities where they teach specific trauma healing practices, invite sharing of testimonies and provide ongoing support. A cohort of specially trained community members comprise a network of *Healing Companions* who are available to provide one-on-one trauma healing services.

Social Cohesion

To strengthen horizontal social cohesion (between youth), *Dukire Tubane* uses CRS' signature approach – the 3Bs (binding, bonding and bridging) and appreciative inquiry – to engage diverse youth from different political parties, religious identities and ethnic groups. Across a series of workshops, youth start to identify commonalities and breakdown their divisions. The same approach is used to draw youth and local authorities together, engaging them in dialogue to identify shared goals for their community. To encourage youth to have a greater stake in and ownership of their community's development, the project supports youth and authorities to launch activities together which address identified needs. This helps shift the local population's perception of the role of youth. Large-scale community events are also supported by the project to widely promote non-violence.

Economic strengthening

To address the economic constraints challenging Burundian youth, CRS has also established 73 savings and internal lending community (SILC) groups. This self-sustaining approach improves the socio-economic conditions of youth by increasing their financial access to launch income-generating activities. SILC groups, which meet weekly, also serve to reinforce social cohesion long after project closure. In year three of the program, *Dukire Tubane* participants will learn how to design joint business plans, leveraging the fruits of SILC programming to collectively develop new livelihood skills.

Key results to-date:

280 youth participated in trauma healing workshops

Establishment of a network of **30** youth healing companions

180 youth and **60** local authorities participated in 3Bs/AI trainings

8 social cohesion and trauma healing celebrations reached over **2,100** community members

73 SILC groups established, engaging **1,819** youth members



A group of youth following a social cohesion workshop. Photo: CRS, 2018.

Next Steps

As *Dukire Tubane* activities continue to unfold and reach the wider population in Bujumbura and Bubanza, an additional 500 youth will be integrated into SILC groups and over 800 community members are expected to participate in community social cohesion and trauma healing celebrations. The project team will invite greater numbers of local security forces to participate in 3Bs workshops, expanding the positive image of youth amongst a wider range of stakeholders. The team will also continue to advance the project learning agenda, focusing on the particular needs of young men and women in social cohesion efforts in Burundi.

