

## PROXIMITY JUSTICE

The concept of «proximity justice» is at the heart of our organization whose mission is to improve the accessibility and quality of justice services provided to the population and to avoid the recurrence of conflicts that undermine social cohesion and social justice and sustainable development.

### RCN J & D in Rwanda, an active partner in the justice sector ...

RCN J & D has been working to strengthen justice and local conflict prevention and resolution since 1994. In the aftermath of the genocide, RCN J & D supported the reconstruction of the Rwandan judicial system and assisted the judiciary in the resolution of genocide related cases.

Since 2006 and as part of the accompaniment of various reforms in Rwanda, our programs focus on the management of land conflicts at the local level with a particular attention on women's access to land, the strengthening proximity justice and genocide memory. RCN J & D has acquired a strong experience in this field and participates in the dissemination of good practices resulting from its reflections.

### « UBU » PROJET

#### ♦ THE CONTEXT

The national legal aid policy adopted in 2014 aims to promote access to justice for vulnerable people and to increase their awareness of their legal rights and to offer quality services to its citizens in order to achieve the basic principles of proximity justice, strengthening the technical capacities of proximity Actors. To meet these needs, RCN J & D has developed in Rwanda a 3-year project called "Ubutabera Bwegereye Umuturage (UBU acronym in Kinyarwanda)" meaning Proximity Justice in English with financial support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Rwanda.

#### ♦ OBJECTIVES OF THE UBUPROJECT ...

- Strengthen Access to Justice by increasing Justice Recipients' (especially women and vulnerable groups) knowledge of their basic rights and the functioning of the proximity justice system, allowing them to claim their rights.
- Improving the ability of Justice Providers (including state actors and CSOs) to deliver high quality justice services, to inform the population of their rights and the functioning of the justice system, and to support citizens (especially women and vulnerable groups) to exercise their rights. Public satisfaction with the services of justice providers will consequently increase.
- Build the capacity of civil society organizations in the justice sector to carry out advocacy activities in order to influence positive change in the justice system, in particular for the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, in the interest of the population (especially women and vulnerable groups). Thus, CSOs will undertake more advocacy initiatives.

#### ♦ THE EXPECTED RESULTS ARE:

- Proximity Justice Actors (PJA) are supported to deliver high quality justice services in conformity with their mandate and human rights principles.
- The PJA understand, accept and put into action their respective roles and mandates in proximity justice, and collaborate in complementary manner.
- PJAs have the necessary knowledge in order to deliver justice services in a timely, reliable, affordable and transparent manner.
- CSOs have a common understanding of the fundamental rights of the population, the justice sector, and their role in Rwandan society.
- CSOs have the necessary resources and strong structures to fulfill their mandate.
- CSOs are responsible and accountable in respect of their with their mandate and the causes they represent and defend.
- CSOs set up a network of information exchanges, reinforce the effectiveness and complementarity of their respective interventions, and undertake advocacy actions together.
- CSOs advise, express themselves and hold government

and public institutions accountable.

- Citizens have knowledge of its basic rights and the administration of proximity justice
- Citizens promote the respect of rights by playing an important role in the wider dissemination of acquired information.
- Citizens are confident that they can defend their rights and do so before appropriate judicial authorities.
- Citizens recognize the additional challenges faced by women and vulnerable or marginalized groups, and their ability to be agents of positive change.
- Citizens participate in creating more equitable conditions for women and vulnerable or marginalized groups to access justice and claiming their rights.

#### ♦ UBU PROJECT ACTIONS

- Consultation workshops between the Abunzi, Local Authorities, Judges of Primary Court and MAJ Agents,
- Visits of Abunzi work
- Workshops on the execution of decisions.
- Support in execution of judgments / decisions,
- Legal caravans tours.
- Community Dialogues
- on demand educational resources for Abunzi via Mobile phone
- CSO Paralegal Support
- JRLOS' CSOs Member meetings on their role in the Justice Sector
- JRLOS' CSOs Member Training Workshops on their role in Justice Sector
- Legal Aid
- Advocacy.

## LOCATION OF INTERVENTION

The project intervenes in 6 districts: Kicukiro (City of Kigali), Nyanza (Southern Province), Kayanza and Ngoma (Eastern Province), Rutsiro and Karongi (Western Province).

## PARTNERS

### *Institutional Partners*

- Ministry of Justice
- Local Authorities (District, Sector and Cell)



- Abunzi Committees

### *Partners members of civil society*

- ARAMA
- TUBIBE AMAHORO
- HAGURUKA



### *Other Institutions*

- VIAMO
- MASHIRIKA
- University of Sheffield



## OUR ORGANISATION

RCN Justice & Démocratie (RCN J&D) is a Belgian non-governmental organization (NGO) founded in 1994 in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide. It aims to ensure the respect of the fundamental rights of each individual, in particular the right to justice and the rights enshrined in international human rights conventions. RCN J & D has its headquarters in Brussels (Belgium). In its interventions it supports post-crisis countries and developing countries, and is currently developing programs in Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and in Morocco.



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## Rwanda

## "UBUTABERA BWEGEREYE UMUTURAGE " (UBU) PROJECT

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