Background, context and case study: Narrative Theatre in the Ruhororo Community

Introduction

In this topical overview we provide a general description, background and context of the project of the 'Amis du Centre Ubuntu Ruhororo (ACU-Ruhororo)', or in English, 'Friends of Centre Ubuntu Ruhororo', which began in 2007 with an initial training. We also summarise social and methodological data that have been elaborated in the manual, and in the other topical overviews, and present a case study. Finally some evaluation guidelines are provided. The purpose of the case study is to be usesd as an additional training tool for committee members.

Content

1. Brief historical overview of Ruhororo community in Burundi

Map Burundi

Burundi is a small country in the Great Lakes region of East Africa. The country has suffered a long history of armed conflict and civil unrest. Since its independence from Belgium in 1960, the country has been plagued by ethnic-driven violence. This was caused by the struggle between the two main ethnic identities (Hutus (83%), Tutsis (16%) and Twa (1%)) for postcolonial control of the state. Many Burundians were therefore forced to take refuge in other parts of the country, or in neighbouring countries, such as Tanzania. It was estimated that 400,000 Burundians were killed and 800,000 forced to flee the country, while tens of thousands became internally displaced. (Wolpe, 2011). This increased as another rise in violence took place in 1993, due to a socio-political crisis in which the (democratically elected) President Ndadaye was assassinated, driving more Burundians to leave and settle in other countries.

1.1. The Ruhororo community
ACU-Ruhororo is based in the Ruhororo community in the Ngozi province, in northern Burundi. The community is composed of different ethnic groups, namely Hutus, Tutsis and, the minority, Twa (about 800 households). The largest political party in this county is the CNDD-FDD which is currently in power. All figures were obtained in February 2011, from the local Administrator.

1.2. History of violence and the current social situation
The socio-political crisis that shook Burundi for many years was the origin of many large-scale massacres, forced disappearances and executions. The Ruhororo community was not spared. The death of hundreds of thousands of people throughout the country in the last 40 years of conflicts has undoubtedly caused, amongst the population of Burundi in general and that of Ruhororo, a climate of mistrust, hatred, and exclusion between Burundians. During this time people got displaced within the country or fled into exile into neighbouring countries.

The majority of former Burundian exiles have now returned from neighbouring countries to settle once again in Burundi. These returnees are now spread across the country, including within the Ruhororo community. Most of the returnees from Tanzania are

Table ruhororo community

The Ruhororo Community	
Province	Ngozi province
Population	62,443 people 16,882 households
Area	154.1 km²
Population density	405 people/km².
Ethnic groups	Hutu, Tutsi, Twa
Religions	Catholics (80%), Protestants (17.5%) and Muslims (2.5%)

Source: local administration in Ruhororo community

Map of Burundi

Source: Ministry of home affairs

Hutus, struggling to get back their former land and propriety. Whereas those that did not flee the country, but were settled in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps under the protection of the army, were Tutsis. These camps are still operational today in Ruhororo, and have been met with uncertainty and a spirit of mistrust among the neighbouring Hutus. Some of these concerns still remain a challenge today.

The other major disturbance that prevails in many parts of the country is socio-political. In Ruhororo, as in all of the country, previous inter-ethnic conflicts have now given way to conflicts between political parties and their followers.

At the time of working on the case study below however, security levels in the Ruhororo community appeared to be relatively stable.

1.3. Current resources

The population of Ruhororo shares a relatively similar level of socio-economic status to the rest of the country and mainly survives on agricultural and pastoral activities. Local resources consist of roads, schools, health centres, nongovernmental organisations (NGO's), and markets. There are 18 primary schools, but only four secondary schools. Many students have to travel a long distance to get to school. The community has only four health centres, with the nearest being situated 6km away from most of the community households. Currently, there are no permanent facilities for providing psychosocial care, and the ACU-Ruhororo volunteers are the only people who can provide some of this care. Most of the counsellors, however, have to travel long distances (up to 20kms) to reach community members in need of their care and intervention.

2. Entering the community and lines of communication

Like many other communities in Burundi, Ruhororo is headed by a council and a local Administrator, who is assisted by several counsellors, a zone chief and numerous advisors. In addition to these formally elected leaders, there are other people who are influential in managing and developing the community. These include: priests, pastors, notables, Heads of

Table 1: Project summary

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Date:	May 2011
Name of organisation:	Amis du Centre Ubuntu Ruhororo (ACU-Ruhororo)/ Friends of Centre Ubuntu Ruhororo
Commencement date of organisation:	2008
Approval of the Organisation:	ACU-Ruhororo is registered on the commune level
Number of paid members:	0
Number of volunteers:	9 (4 women and 5 men)
Objective of the organisation:	To promote trauma healing and strengthen social fabric of the community
Trainings received:	• Theory of counselling and Narrative Theatre (NT)
	• Practical training in counselling and Narrative Theatre
Dates of trainings:	2007
Experience in counselling and NT:	3 years
Trainees:	Team from Centre Ubuntu mentored by Prof. Yvonne Sliep

Associations, and school principals. Nevertheless, it is the local administrator who holds the power in the community. Before any work begins within the community, negotiations with all 'gatekeepers' (leaders) have to be done. Good relationships and a shared understanding of the challenges will lead to greater ownership by the local leadership in the long term.

In 2006, the Centre Ubuntu Team completed their first community mobilisation of psychosocial programmes, using Narrative Theatre. Narrative Theatre forums are gatherings that are held with communities to raise awareness of psycho-social problems that can have negative effects on individuals, families or communities. The platform is used to stimulate local prob-

Figure1. Lines of communication in the Ruhororo community:
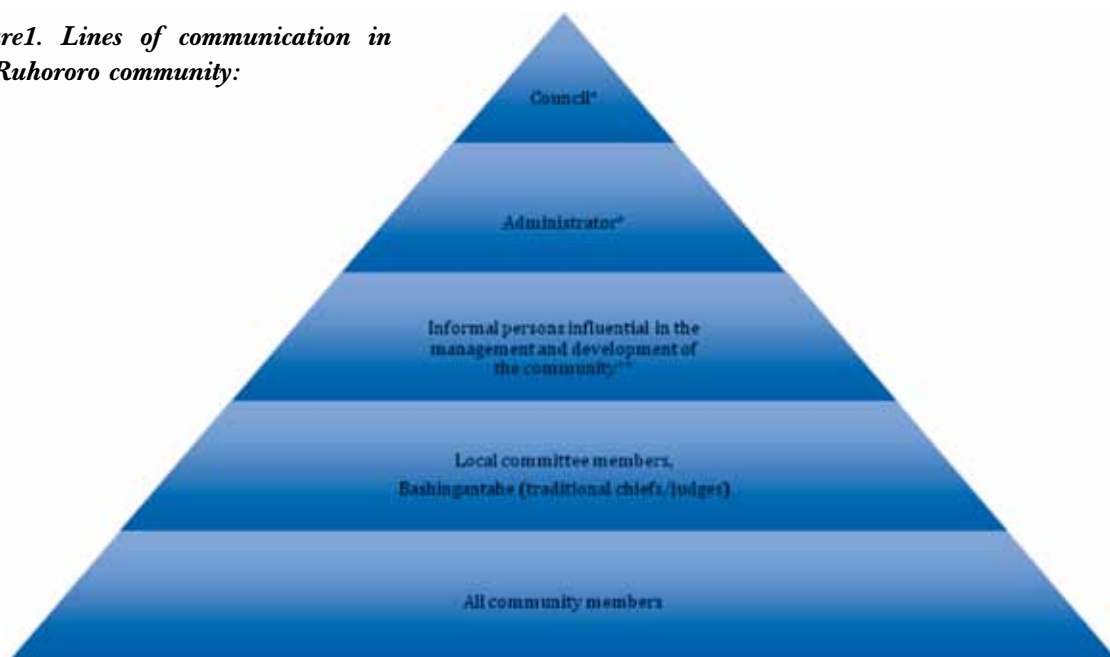
*Formally elected leaders; **psychosocial workers, priests, heads of associations, school principals. Source: local administration of Ruhororo]*

lem solving which is then translated into action by the elected committee members. Since then, they have responded to the interest of local community members, requesting to be trained in counselling and Narrative Theatre. These trainings took place in 2007 and after a period of supervised practice, in 2008, these nine local Ruhororo psychosocial workers formed their own organisation (ACU-Ruhororo) and became part of the Ubuntu Network.

Since then they have been working actively in the Ruhororo community, providing psychosocial care through counselling and Narrative Theatre. Given that psychosocial workers had to travel large distances to reach all community members, the Ruhororo community elected local committee members. These committee members assist psychosocial workers and are better spread among the community, living in close contact to the population and sharing a greater understanding of all the difficulties and problems within the different areas of the community.

The Ruhororo community elected local committees after the initial NT sessions. It was not up to outside facilitators to identify who the committee members would be. Depending on the problems identified, the committee elected 'wise people' in the community that would help them to address the follow-up of the plans developed at the end of the NT session. As the committee members provided the follow-up work for the psychosocial workers of ACU-Ruhororo, they realised they needed more knowledge and skills to develop sustainable action that would lead to strengthening of the social fabric and further healing. Training of the local committee members in the five pillars discussed below, aimed to better prepare committee members for the work and serve as an inspiration to the other communities that have not yet progressed this far.

The following are quotes are from an elected committee member.
'My name is Pierre. I am a committee member. I was elected one year ago and it brings me confidence and makes me very happy. Even if I am not paid, I have a good place and am building my community.
I am aware of the training that will happen soon and feel happy about it. I will feel more mastered in the work that I will do, more of an expert.
Some skills that I feel I need now are how to resolve conflict without having to ask for help from the higher leaders. We need more information and techniques of how to help and how intervene when there is conflict.'

In Ruhororo, there are 35 local committees spread across the community. Some work very close to their homes, walking less than 3km. Committee members prefer to work as a team on cases where they have been permitted to do so. A verbal report of their activities is always provided, rather than any written reports, as they have not yet learned to write reports. A short reporting document has since been prepared to guide committee members and participants of the group to write-up an evaluation of the activities, and the effectiveness of having local committees.

During the recent elections in 2010, a new administrator was elected. Centre Ubuntu was pleased to discover the new administrator was a member of ACU-Ruhororo, which both acknowledged the importance of ACU-Ruhororo and strengthened the work. Given this situation, and the fact that all members of ACU-Ruhororo were born and living in the local community, communication and participation in the community has been very easy for ACU-Ruhororo.

3. Identified of the needs & problems covered in Narrative Theatre (NT)

All of the violent conflicts of Burundi have fuelled the pain and resentment transmitted from generation to generation. This collective, and individual memory, caused by grief and the wish to revenge, scars Burundian society. The Narrative Theatre project is used to help people understand the effects of trauma on this scale and of the behaviour problems that could be a result of the breaking down of social fabric that happens during a war situation. The majority of

Burundians, old and young, carry the psychological effects from these conflicts and the poor living conditions after the war. The different forms of behaviours and attitudes that can manifest in certain people, as a result, are often considered 'abnormal' and embarrassing in the eyes of their family.

Case Studies

Narrative Theatre was used as the main mobilising strategy in Ruhororo. Two case studies on the issues arising from the process are highlighted below.

3.1. Ligala

Common problems raised by community members during the initial community mobilisation phase of Centre Ubuntu were issues related to: polygamy, alcoholism, 'ligala' and suspicion. 'Ligala' is a local term used to describe a specific group of people, both men and women, who are most often seen sitting around chatting, either refusing to work or jobless. Although some might call these persons lazy, their idle behaviour is often the result of a sense of hopelessness after war. Concerns were raised about 'ligala' because more children were leaving school and joining these groups. The participants of the community meetings expressed their concern as those seen as suffering from ligala appeared to develop destructive behaviour. During these initial meetings, there were people present who suffered with ligala, and who tried to leave the meetings because they felt that they were being accused. The facilitators, however, ensured them that they were not accusing them, but instead, really needed their assistance and valued their input during subsequent NT sessions.

Although the problem of ligala may have started as an effect of trauma, it has created a chain of additional problems afterwards. Before the war, it was uncommon to see people sitting around, doing nothing. People used to be spread all over the commune, occupied with their farming and other work. Following the war, many people were forced to live in displacement camps that were often situated near the roads and provided with support from various organisations. In addition to their loss of inner energy, people began to get used to staying in their camps, without any responsibility to work and simply, becoming more dependent. As previously mentioned, this problem slowly turned into the gathering of many groups and the initiation of problem behaviours; such as drinking, using drugs and furthermore, committing crimes and acting violently. This example demonstrates how problems can develop over time, and that a problem that was once an effect of war is now the cause of many other serious problems. It is therefore important to understand the relationship between problems and their possible causes, to manage any related issues.

Like all NT sessions, this issue of ligala was addressed by identifying the multiple causes of the problem (e.g., hopelessness, lack of job, ease of making money, feelings of group connectedness, and a dependency syndrome) and raising awareness of the many consequences of the problem. Lastly, community members shared what the strengths of their community were, and possible solutions. Their solutions consisted of a need for Centre Ubuntu to continue to run NT sessions on this topic, and for the community (parents, teachers, priests, pastors and other community leaders) to work together to raise the awareness and do follow-up.

After several NT sessions concentrating on this issue specifically, behavioural habits seem to have changed. Husbands are now helping their wives at work, and more children are staying in school, as a result of the greater understanding of the consequences of ligala.

3.2. Suspicion

Another significant and recurrent problem voiced as a concern was the lasting suspicion between the two ethnic groups: Hutus and Tutsis. Tutsis have been living in IDP camps since 1993, and have expressed the concern that the Hutus do not want them to be re-integrated. During our first meetings, most of the people who attended were Hutus; there were hardly any Tutsis. We later found out that they had been afraid to come. Perhaps some of the Tutsis feared going back to their old homes and villages because of what had happened during the war, as well as all the memories that it would bring back. Even though the Hutu neighbours that have remained were not necessarily involved in the violence against Tutsis, the Tutsis refused to go back to their former homes and place of their trauma.

In recent years, however, there has been a notable decrease in the level of mistrust, discrimination and hatred among the different ethnic groups in this community. Although Tutsis continue to live in their IDP camps, their Hutu neighbours would actually prefer to see them move back into their former homes, and revive new and more solid relationships together. This improvement has been partly due to a long and committed process of intervention by Centre Ubuntu, begun in 2006. After the initial community mobilisation by Centre Ubuntu, psychosocial workers and

local committees, elected by the community, have started to work together with all ethnicities, demonstrating greater trust and further promoting the strengthening of the social fabric of their community. Below is an example of how NT was used to address the problem of mistrust and suspicion in the community. 'Externalising' is a concept that is based on the premise the person is not the problem, the problem is the problem. The aim of externalising practices is therefore to enable people to realise that they and the problem are not the same thing. When this is applied successfully people build a different relationship with the problem and move away from shaming and blaming each other to finding solutions together.

To date, efforts continue to address any concerns between the different ethnic groups, and encourage social reconciliation.

An example of using of *externalisation* to rebuild trust

The character is **Mr Suspicion** (raised by participants to be the main problem).

The psychosocial worker takes the role of suspicion as participants ask their questions.

Q: Mr Suspicion, can you tell us what makes you happy in your life?
A: Good question! I really enjoy seeing people suffering, killing each other and fleeing their country because of political issues. I am also very happy when people are drinking separately because of their political views…I am very glad when community resources are not shared equally, and it is a pleasure to see innocent people being jailed because of their ideas.

Q: Mr Suspicion, can you tell us what makes you unhappy in your life?
A: Yeah; I am unhappy when people have good relationships with their neighbours. My heart is broken when I see different ethnic/political/social groups of people living together happily and peacefully. I am depressed when I see different people working together, in spite of their political differences.

Q: Mr Suspicion, can you tell us who your friends are?
A: My best friends are the people who never think about others, the people who think that life is limited to them only. My preferred friends are those who are always teaching hatred and revenge among people. I really appreciate those people who think their ethnic or political group is more important than others.

Q: Mr Suspicion, who are your enemies?
A: My enemies are all those people who are teaching or showing a good example in the community. I do not welcome the people who are building trust, reconciliation, collaboration and community development.

Q: Mr Suspicion, can you tell us which strengths can help this community to build trust among people.
A: For years, traditional leaders used to resolve conflicts between people, your ancestors were living together as brothers and sisters in spite of their differences (ethnic, political, religious and social). You have also pastors and priests who are always teaching love and peace between people. You have also different organisations working on development issues, peace and reconciliation. Finally, you have committee members who are helping the community to fight against psychosocial problems.

Q: Mr Suspicion, what can these people do to build trust in their community?
A: The leaders can show a good example. They can organise meetings where people are invited to discuss their common problems. Preachers can contribute to giving advice and teachings. Non-profit organisations can teach people about peace and reconciliation. Community members can use the teachings or advice to actively address the problem with the community.

Following the interview with **Mr Suspicion**, the facilitator asked a number of additional questions to encourage further discussion among participants. The questions touched on a range of issues concerning:

• The causes of suspicion
• How it affects individuals, families and communities
• How people behave if they are suspicous of each other for a long time
• What the warning signs that suspicion is starting to effect people

After this discussion, the focus is shifted to people's strengths. People are asked to think about their lives and come up with a range of possible, realistic solutions that can help decrease suspicion and increase

trust in their community. With a variety of solutions raised, an action plan was developed, in which the community members, address the problem. This included allocating specific roles in the action plan and taking responsibility. Also, participants were encouraged and reminded to use what they have learnt from the session, to prepare and avoid the escalation of suspicion in their communities.

4. The Five Pillars for strengthening local capacity

These are further described in chapter 4 of the manual supplement and the five Topical outlines.

The approach of strengthening social fabric and collective healing through NT emphasises a strength based approach, therefore not only working with problem stories. Both the history of how problems were overcome in the past, as well as the future communities hope to create, is held central in the story to help keep perspective and create hope and energy.

After the community mobilisation phase in Ruhororo, a meeting was held to discuss the progress seen in the different communities. Collective opinion was that building the capacity of the local communities was the main priority, in order to guarantee sustainability.

Although Centre Ubuntu has trained over 100 psychosocial workers, these psychosocial workers also work alongside the locally elected committees. The members of these committees volunteer to help with the follow-through of the activities initiated by the psychosocial workers. Questions were therefore raised in the Ubuntu Network meetings, as to what the needs of these members might be, in order for them to feel more confident in the work that they are doing, and in the expanding roles that they were assuming. It was decided that additional training was needed, particularly in the five areas listed below, identified essential to the healing and rebuilding of social fabric on a community level.

4.1. Decreasing destructive behaviours, reviving values and empowering vulnerable groups

In Ruhororo, many young girls and women have been affected by sexual violence. In order to encourage change, psychosocial workers have been trained to work on negative behaviour, such as violence, which goes against the values of the community. Clarification of values that are important, and behaviour that goes against these values, is usually done after a NT session. Through exploring the effects of negative behaviour on individuals, groups and the whole community, the problem is mapped and a solution is found collectively. For instance, behaving more in line with the Ubuntu values, by respecting individuals as they are and demonstrating self-control. Please see part 4 of supplement manual for a more in-depth discussion of values. It is important to raise awareness of sexual violence, and for local committee members to follow an agreed on set of values to encourage change. Attention also needs to be paid to lobbying and advocacy. For example, when a girl is affected by sexual violence, she has to be taken to the hospital and the local committee needs to report it to the administrator. The administrator then has to address the problem within the community. This kind of system will advocate for the wellbeing of vulnerable groups of young girls and women, and provide them with an active voice in their community.

Guidelines to measure if values and behavioral problems are addressed in your community can be done on a five point scale assessment to help plan the next stage of action:

1. No activity
2. Identify people who display disruptive behaviour like making use of substance abuse. Sensitise people on terms of the specific problem. Does the committee have a clear understanding of the outcome of Narrative Theatre in terms of what the problem behaviours in their community are, and what the vision is that this community has for itself. People discuss what kind of community they want in future
3. After the Narrative Theatre session people the committee members identify places and people where problematic behaviour is taking place. Either an intervention can take place at that local area, or a follow-up through home visits can be done with people who have been identified as having problems. They are following up the interventions that were generated by the community during the Narrative Theatre. This helps the community to translate the identified solutions into action.
4. The problems are being dealt with according to level of priority identified by the community. The result should be a decrease of the problematic behaviour, and a deeper understanding of how to respond to other problems in the community.
5. Evidence of increase of mutual respect in the way people are relating to each other; testimonies can be given by people in the community. The people are now living the vision they generated during their Narrative Theatre session at the onset of the work.

An example of working with the children in this community has been covered in Part 3 of the printed supplement.

4.2. Providing psychological first aid in trauma situations

In Burundi there are people with many signs of trauma. They fear returning to places that carry strong memories of a traumatic event. People also often live in bad conditions, which make it even more difficult to heal. The focus is then turned to material support, rather than counselling. Of course material support is also strongly needed, and where possible, people and communities are linked to projects that respond to structural, survival issues. Children are often affected because their parents are unable to care for them. Due to the parents' own suffering, many children are not provided with a secure attachment and experience a sense of collective trauma, due to the effects of inter-generational poverty and trauma. This indicates that trauma affects many levels of a community, and it is therefore important to encourage trauma healing within communities. It is important to note, however, that more difficult cases are best referred to expertise services, which are better prepared to deal with these kinds of issues. The focus for the committee workers is to work against behaviour that prevents healing, and to recognising symptoms of people that need to be referred. An example of the referral system for this community is given in Topical outline 2

Guidelines to measure if working with healing are being addressed in your community can also be done on a five point scale assessment:

1. No activity
2. Identify people in the community who may be suffering from symptoms due to trauma. Create a supportive environment in the community (through discussions and NT sessions).
3. Have updated maps of all the possible psychosocial referral places and people. This document should include the names and contact details of referral people; what they can expect to receive at this service, and how long it will take them to travel there.
4. Create an environment where people do not discriminate against those who show symptoms of trauma, or other mental illness, but rather provide care and support. Follow-up visits in the homes of people where someone is requiring support is carried out by committee workers .
5. Active management of people with evidence of symptoms, and evidence of referral for cases too difficult to manage on a community level.

4.3. Assisting in low level conflict resolution and mediation

In this particular community there is currently an escalation of conflict between members of different political parties. It has resulted in an increase of violent behaviour. Conflict resolution can be used to resolve problems between the parties. Through getting members together from both parties, a discussion can be held over the different problems for each group, and to look at all the possible causes. Collectively, the two groups can deliver their own solution to the conflict having opened a line of communication. This type of mediation can help reduce conflicts, before it escalates into larger conflicts that could result in more violent outbreaks (Topical outline 3).

Guidelines to measure if conflict management is being done in your community can also be done on a five point scale assessment:

1. No activity
2. Committee members have discussed with the leaders, and agreed, what kind of conflicts committee members can resolve and who they will refer to if the conflict is too big, or community members are not satisfied with the outcome.
3. The leaders have shared with the broader community what the role of the elected committee members are in relation to conflict management. People approaching committee members around local issues of conflict.
4. Small conflicts have been resolved, or bigger conflicts have been referred to another level for conflict resolution.
5. Some individuals or groups have decided to reconcile their differences and share how they have managed to this with the overall community, as well as encourage others to do the same. Regular meetings are held (at least once a month) with the representatives to review where existing conflicts are, and if there is a awareness of any new conflicts within the community.

What the members of ACU-Ruhororo had to say about their experiences

'After our training in counselling and NT we did about 35 community interactions in NT. We also did counselling sessions at the homes of traumatised people who wanted to confide in us. Concerning the plays, many local committees are interested in a follow up of the plays, and we have considered it right to follow this request and to strengthen their capacity on certain subjects. We have also

4.4. Working with local leadership and good governance

A good relationship with local leaders is very important. Governance and leadership is closely tied to teamwork and in the Ruhororo community, a team spirit has been developed. Leaders have started to work together well, as one community. Growth of community spirit and giving all community members a voice has encouraged creative leadership initiatives, such as the idea of a development project to protect the water sources underground. (Topical outline 4). Guidelines to measure progress made in relation to leadership and governance is being addressed in your community can also be assessed on a five point scale:

1. No activity.
2. Local elected committee members and wise men in the community (Abashingantahe), as well as locally elected leaders sit down together to get to know each other.
3. Each of the groups share what and how each can contribute to leading the community to become stronger. They draw up a joint programme of activities.
4. Committee members participate in these meeting, and present their point of view. They are also present the issues of vulnerable and marginalised people in the community.
5. Members of vulnerable and marginalised groups are invited to some meetings and asked for their contribution.

4.5. Strengthening individuals & groups by promoting development activities.

Increasingly, people become dependent on the support and services of NGOs and other agencies. The dependence level was high in this community, and many people did not want to work, including many young adults from the IDP camps. After the efforts of Centre Ubuntu and ACU-Ruhororo, there has been a significant decrease in the dependence syndrome. The committee members actively engaged with other role-players in the area to enhance these positive results. (Topical outline 5). Guidelines to measure if any development activities are taking place within your community can also be measured on a five point scale:

1. No activity
2. Community members sit down to discuss the importance of strengthening vulnerable and marginalised people, as well as identify who these are in their community. Also, make an assessment of the strengths and resources in their community with representatives of these groups.
3. Decisions are made regarding the project and the beneficiaries.
4. Put into practice the identified project; meet regularly to see how the project is progressing.
5. Start to set up more small committees to help with the delivery of outcomes.

5. Participants' statements

Individual community members on their experience of NT gave the following examples.

5.1. Mamerthe.

'*My name is Memarthe and my Kirundi name is Ntamwishimiro. I don't have my own story to share, but one from a family in our community.*

There is this man who already had a wife. Still, he was having sexual relationships with other women, and even took a second wife, with whom he had a child. His first wife was very angry about his bad behaviour, and this created a lot of problems in the household.

The man attended some of the initial NT meetings and during these meetings everyone discussed the "ingeso mbi" in their community, or "bad behaviours". People raised a lot of different 'ingeso mbi', but two issues were decided to be the most important problems and therefore, the priority issues to be addressed. One of these was sexual promiscuity and polygamy.

This man was there, and although no names were raised during the meetings, he felt like he was being spoken to directly. He listened to the consequences of his bad behaviour and the solutions suggested during the meetings, and went home. When he got to his house, his neighbours pointed at him, saying that 'if you don't change, we will call you 'ingeso mbi'. I think he might have felt ashamed and realised he had to change.

Since then, he has stopped beating his wife and stopped travelling with younger girls. All the neighbours have noticed that there is less fighting in the house. Slowly, slowly, it was decreasing, and now there is no fighting between him and his wife. He left the second wife and at first, he refused to register their child as his, but now he has done so and takes care of the child financially.

This change has also been good for his other children and his younger brother. He used to look after his younger brother, but because he was spending money on his bad behaviour (his relationships with so many women), his younger brother

had to leave school. Also, they [him and his first wife] have small children, who were suffering because they were often ignored. Now, they are all in school.

Before, other men avoided this man because they didn't like him. He never used to spend time with other men, but only with women. Now, he's started an association, called " Mwizero" meaning something like "Hope". It is an association that saves money as a group, and then lends money to each other when someone really needs it, like a small bank. He is doing really well and has many friends'.

5.2. Ildéphonse

'My name is Ildéphonse. Before, I used to drink a lot. When I was a young child my parents made local beer, called "urwarwa". I never used to take more than one glass. Otherwise I would feel disturbed in my mind. Feel dizzy, a spinning feeling in my head, and sometimes also vomiting.

When I started primary school, I stopped drinking because I couldn't stay focused. Then in 6th form of primary school, I left and started to drink again. I was eighteen years old. I wanted to be like my friends, who all bought alcohol.

Then when I was 25 years old I got married and didn't drink so much. I was elected to be one among the five local leaders on the hill. I was nominated fifth local leader. After our meetings as leaders the community members often offered us beer, as a token of their appreciation. I got used to it and learned to enjoy it.

Apart from the physical consequences, I also used to fight with my wife when I was drunk, or afterwards. She used to call people to come and give me advice. They came twice to inform me, and also advise my wife.

Once the alcohol finished in me [he became more sober], I began to think that all the problems were because of the alcohol. Realising this, I tried to stick with just one bottle. I used to think that, "I'll be out of 'Ubuntu' value, if I don't limit the alcohol".

Because of NT, when they talk about good and bad behaviour: the consequences of bad behaviour and the honour you feel from behaving well, I wanted to drink less. The consequence of my drinking was that I was also being discriminated against.

It helped that I lacked money, because I also felt the pressure of my family's poverty and the need to save my money and not spend it on alcohol. Even if I were to get a lot of money now, I can't drink so much because of my family. It can lead to family poverty or family violence, and quarrels between my wife and my children. I have three children, the oldest will go to school this year.

Before, I used to be at the bar and get drunk. I would realise that I had to pay for my family's food, but I was too late, I had used up all of the money.

So when I get the urge, I try to avoid bars and people who drink a lot. I try to look for other things to do, like my farming. I am a cultivator and am a part of an association that helps raise livestock, like goats. Now, my family has been able to save money more easily and we always have enough seeds to plant our next harvest. We have enough food and school fees because I don't waste my money anymore'.

The examples given illustrate how NT can be used to name and understand problems. It allows people to see the problem as something external from themselves, and yet something that they can control and have the power to resolve. No one is to be blamed for the problems, but responsibility for the behaviour is not removed. Instead, the whole community is asked to work together to decrease the problem, making it more approachable for everyone. Narrative Theatre also provides a deeper look at the causes and consequences of the problem. It helps people to see things from a range of different perspectives and different levels, such as from an individual, family or community level, and give marginalised groups a voice. It can also help participants realize the risks involved with certain bad habits and behaviours.

Identification of the local resources, and any solutions raised by the community themselves, can help in all cases of conflict, and during any problem solving and decision making process. This ensures the use of local wisdoms and resources, which makes it more feasible to translate into sustainable behavioural change and sustained action.

The Ruhororo community is a good example for the whole Ngozi province, and could serve as an inspiration for others. Even other problems, existing or new, can now be worked through effectively and without much difficulty when the psychosocial methods continue to be used.

6. Future Directions

In the course of our psychosocial activities, some difficulties were identified that need to be addressed in the near future, and they are discussed below.

Firstly, in relation to counselling: the people of Ruhororo are not in the habit of confiding their pain or suffering to anyone. The numbers of those seeking psychological help is therefore marginal. Raising more awareness of the importance of seeking psychological help is therefore urgently needed, and may encourage more psychological help seeking in the future.

Secondly, in relation to the psychosocial plays, some leaders do not always invite the community to come and participate en masse, which then leads to occasions when no or few participants show up. It is therefore important that leaders are reminded of the importance of diverse community participation, and encourage them to invite more community members.

Other observations made, still need to be addressed, like getting men to participate more actively in all the activities. One way forward may be to work with two smaller groups, rather than one large group, to encourage more participation. In addition, when more youth participate, there appears to be less activity in general. Although there could be a range of different reasons and causes for these observations, it would be helpful to explore these issues with the groups themselves, as it might provide fruitful ideas on obtaining the greatest participation, regardless of age or gender. Also, continual and follow-up research is recommended for the future.

Another important goal for the future is addressing the need for a clear referral system. A better understanding of where people can be referred to if the care required is more serious. Although these have been mapped, they are not used actively enough. This is something that the Ubuntu Network hopes to investigate further and stimulate for all the communities in the future.

In the more immediate future, however, ACU-Ruhororo will begin training their local committee members in basic psychosocial skills, focusing on the areas of the five pillars discussed earlier. In addition to this, ACU-Ruhororo will begin their new environmental project, protecting the ground water of their region. Some of the success stories of this community include: rebuilding a bridge without help from outside and the succesful running of a pineapple plantation project.

Reference

Wolpe, H. (2011) Making peace after genocide: Anatomy of the Burundi process. United States Institute of Peace, Peaceworks No. 70.