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## **BURUNDI POLICY REFORM**

### **Women's Leadership Training under Task 5.2.3: Report on August 2009 Training**

**Also included:**

**Overview of Other Conflict Management Trainings During Year 2**

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**Overview of Other Conflict Management Trainings During Year 2**

**Contract No. DFD-I-00-05-00219-00 Task Order #217**

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

## **CONTENTS**

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<b>I.</b>	<b>Overview of August Training</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>A. Context and Justification</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>B. Training Objectives</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>C. Participants</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>D. Trainers</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>E. Results</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>Training Themes</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>A. Overview of Themes</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>B. Detailed Themes and Methodology</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>Key Discussions and Lessons Learned</b>	<b>11</b>
	<b>A. Introduction</b>	<b>11</b>
	<b>B. Communication Module</b>	<b>12</b>
	<b>C. Facilitation Module</b>	<b>12</b>
	<b>D. Negotiation Module</b>	<b>13</b>
	<b>E. Mediation Module</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Participant Evaluations and Recommendations</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>Previous Conflict Resolution Trainings During Year 2</b>	<b>19</b>
	<b>A. Training Objectives</b>	<b>19</b>
	<b>B. Participants</b>	<b>19</b>
	<b>C. Trainers</b>	<b>19</b>
	<b>D. Results</b>	<b>19</b>
	<b>E. Methodology</b>	<b>20</b>
	<b>F. Themes</b>	<b>20</b>
	<b>G. Impact</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>23</b>



## **I. OVERVIEW**

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### **A. Context and Justification**

In recent years, the political process in Burundi has been characterized by stalemates and deficits of leadership at various levels. Women and men alike have lacked the training, experience and political skills to move the country forward. Women have worked to make their voices heard and generally have played a constructive albeit limited role, often as advocates of reform. Women represent an untapped resource for the country at a time when more leadership is needed at all levels, in all branches of the government, as well as in civil society.

The Burundi Policy Reform Program's second year work plan (under Task 5.2.3) set out a plan to train 160 leading female parliamentarians, lawyers, and representatives of the civil society organizations (CSOs) in conflict management and anti-corruption. In December 2008, the first training was delivered to 17 women lawyers. In March 2009 a series of six trainings in conflict management were delivered to 140 women representatives of CSOs and in May 2009 similar training was delivered to 30 women parliamentarians.

This report reviews the training delivered August 10-19, 2009 for 23 women CSO representatives in communication, facilitation, negotiation and mediation as alternative conflict resolution strategies. Although such training was not initially envisioned under Task 5.2.3, it came at the demand of the participants and as a successful continuation of the previous trainings. At the end of Task 5.2.3, the target of 160 women was surpassed, reaching a total of 210 participants.

### **B. Training Objectives**

The training had two main objectives:

- To improve participant knowledge and skill in communication, facilitation, negotiation and mediation as alternative conflict resolution strategies.
- To facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices between the participants in the field of alternative strategies for conflict resolution.

### **C. Participants**

23 women attended the 60-hour training; they were legal representatives, executives or active members of CSOs.

### **D. Trainers**

Olivia Baciu, international consultant and trainer for Partners for Democratic Change, a US-based NGO, delivered the training, building on PDC's international expertise in conflict resolution and change management processes. Juliette Kavabuha Icoyitungiye, the head of the project's Women's Leadership component, assisted, effectively combining international and local expertise for participants' benefit.

## **E. Results**

Given participant evaluations of the training and the lead trainer's analysis of the training process based on the questions raised, the intensity of the discussion, and participants' interest in sharing their experience, we can make the following observations:

- Participants ranked the training's relevance to their daily lives at 9.38 (out of 10).
- Participants developed their knowledge of strategies to deal with obstacles to interpersonal communication and increased their awareness of body language.
- Participants gained practical skills in negotiation (qualitative indicator), as they practiced and got involved actively in a negotiation exercise.
- Participants gained practical skills in mediation and knowledge of each stage of the mediation process (qualitative indicator), as they practiced group mediation with a case study.

## II. TRAINING THEMES

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### A. Overview of Themes

- Communication modules focused on strategies to deal with obstacles to interpersonal communication in different settings and on increasing awareness of the importance and power of visual elements in communication, mainly body language.
- The facilitation module focused on the role and skills of the facilitator and how to deliver effective group facilitation processes.
- The negotiation module focused on the stages of a principled negotiation how to interact with the other party in a way that does not damage the relationship yet generates solutions satisfying both parties involved.
- The mediation module allowed participants to see all the stages of a mediation process.

### B. Detailed Themes and Methodology

The training was based on modern adult learning theory combined with content based on Partners for Democratic Change's extensive experience in the field of conflict resolution over the past 20 years. The methodology emphasized participants' interaction, time for participants to share and discuss their experiences, and to go through exercises and case studies.

The debates and lessons learned for each topic are described in Section III, while the detailed training themes and methodology are described below.

#### B1. Introductory Session

The introduction included a presentation of learning objectives, methodology, ground rules, and agenda. A getting-acquainted session was organized for participants, who formed pairs and presented each other's name, organization, a personal quality relevant for conflict resolution and their reason for participating in the training.

The trainer presented an overview of the conflict cycle and of alternative strategies for conflict resolution, aiming to introduce the modules in communication, facilitation, negotiation and mediation and to underline to the participants the importance of identifying a conflict situation from the early signs and using the best strategies to deal with the different stages of the conflict:

- In the cycle of the conflict, *the early signs* are non-verbal, attitudes and behaviors that express parties' disagreements and frustrations. If parties are aware and recognize them, the issues can be discussed, clarified and solved. If not addressed, the tension rises and parties may express verbally their feelings and positions during *disputes*. If parties are open to hear each other and communicate effectively, the issues can be discussed, clarified and solved. If conflict is not solved, the tension may continue to rise. Communication between parties becomes more difficult. Conflict expands involving more issues and more persons or organizations, which take the side of one party or the other. Parties become *polarized*, focused on achieving their own goals, deaf and blind towards the other's goals. They may try again to solve their dispute and sit down at the negotiation table. If they fail to solve the conflict, the situation could

worsen. Parties arrive at the level of *segregation*, when communication is broken, and they cannot talk anymore to each other. In this stage, a third part intervener, called mediator, facilitator, arbitrator or judge can help solve the conflict with peaceful means. As we move from mediation toward the judicial system the chance to improve relationships is decreasing. But at least violence is not used to achieve goals. If peaceful means fail, the situation can get increasingly tense and the conflict can head towards *violent outbreak*. Extremists who are better prepared and organized to fight aggressively for their goals usually grab the leadership. Additional grievances are raised. Parties begin to view each other as less than human, thus not deserving human treatment. Dehumanization makes possible for parties to engage in violence, to hurt each other and to violate the generally accepted norms of behavior regarding one's fellow man.

- The trainer emphasized that communication, facilitation, negotiation and mediation are alternative strategies for conflict resolution based on interests, as opposed to strategies based on rights or on force. These alternative strategies therefore bring parties satisfaction as they participate in the development of solution that best respond to their interests in a way that does not damage their relationship.

The trainer ended the introductory session by inviting the participants to take part in a short exercise called 9 points. The task was to unify 9 points using four straight lines, without passing twice through the same point and without lifting the pencil from the paper. It was possible to find the solution only if participants thought more broadly, beyond the stated rules but at the same time not violating them. This exercise was an invitation to thinking creatively or “out of the box.” The exercise generated discussion and the participants and the trainer shared their experiences of real life situations that generated solutions “out of the box.” Key discussions and lessons learned are detailed on Section III.

## **B2. Communication Module**

The trainer introduced interpersonal communication as a strategy to settling conflicts peacefully and a skill that supports all other alternative strategies for conflict resolution. Anyone involved in facilitation, negotiation and mediation processes needs to master interpersonal communication by understanding thoroughly the complexity of sender – message – receiver process.

The trainer presented a recapitulation of the communication session delivered in the previous trainings: why the message loses its consistency during the communication process, what can be done to prevent such a loss, and conflicts arising from these situations. From the stage of What I would like to communicate, to What I really expressed, to What the other hears, to What the other understands, to What the other accepts, to What the other intends to answer, the original message can become distorted.

Another part of the recapitulation was the analysis of the process of opinion building and the appearance of risks of conflicts and misunderstandings. The way a person formulates his/her opinions is like climbing a ladder: the first step is gathering of information and data, the next steps are selection and interpretation of data, and the final step is formulation of opinions. The same process is happening with other people: each person climbs his ladder in the process of formulation of opinions. The most careful way to communicate our opinion is not

to make the other person jump directly on our ladder and expect him to immediately share our opinion, but to make him understand why we formulated such an opinion, by helping him descend his ladder and climb mine, going through the same process of gathering info, selection and interpretation of data, and formulation of opinions.

The trainer emphasized that the communication session in this training would build on the March training and focus on strategies to deal with the obstacles in interpersonal communication in different organizational settings and the importance of visual elements in communication, such as body language.

The trainer introduced the first exercise, adapted specifically to the leadership profile of the participants. Working in four groups, participants were invited to identify the obstacles in communication inside an organization (first group), between an organization and local authorities (second group), between an organization and central authorities (third group) and between an organization and its beneficiaries (fourth group) and then to elaborate strategies to deal with these obstacles, within a general communication strategy. Results were presented in plenary and participants had the opportunity to raise questions and to make suggestions for the work of each group. Key discussions and lessons learned are detailed on Section III.

### **B3. Facilitation Module**

The facilitation module was complex, as the process in itself is a very rigorous one, demanding specific skills for successful facilitated processes. Therefore, the trainer balanced the theoretical part with learning by doing within simulation exercises and feedback sessions in the plenary.

The trainer introduced the facilitator as the person who helps a group to work together more effectively and to avoid conflict situations, in two distinct processes:

- **Group / team work facilitation:** A process in which a neutral person (who is accepted by all group members and has no decision making authority) helps a group to identify problems and take decisions.
- **Problem solving processes in a group**The effort of a neutral person with no decision making authority, accepted by all the group members, who helps the parties in a problem solving process to negotiate an agreement/decision by creating the appropriate framework for all to participate in discussions, analyses and decision making.

The trainer emphasized that the facilitator is supposed to help and conduct:

- **Team building process:** encouraging members to become acquainted with each other, cooperate and develop relations amongst themselves; motivating team members
- **Group communication process:** helping develop efficient communication during work meetings, helping avoid misunderstandings and conflict escalation
- **Group decision-making process:** helping build consensus throughout the process
- **Participatory planning process (group problem solving):** guiding the group to follow a logical path in problem solving – from problem identification to strategy and action plans development for the purpose of problems solving.

The trainer asked participants to identify themes of interest to practice group facilitation. The following themes were identified and prioritized: impunity (12 votes), strategies for fighting violence against women (11 votes), for or against the dowry (9 votes), social justice (7 votes), women and the 2010 elections (6 votes), corruption (5 votes), girls' inheritance rights (4 votes), women entrepreneurs (4 votes), gender equality (3 votes), environmental protection (2 votes), discrimination and political affiliation (2 votes), the women leader in her household (2 votes), religious freedom of choice in a household. Impunity of rapists and the fight against sexual violence against women were the themes selected for the simulated facilitation sessions.

For the first simulation exercise, on the theme of impunity of rapists, the task for the facilitator was to facilitate a 45 minute working session aiming to identify two strategies for fighting against the impunity of rape. For the second simulation exercise, on the theme of the fight against sexual violence against women, a pair of facilitators facilitated one-hour group work for actions to be taken to fight the sexual violence. The participants had to actively participate in the simulation and, at the same time, carefully observe the facilitator's work so that they could eventually provide feedback on the overall facilitation process.

Both simulation sessions raised a lot of interest. The trainer observed the sessions and provided feedback in the plenary session. Key debates and lessons learned are detailed at Section III.

The trainer built on participants' comments and emphasized in the wrap-up session the facilitator's skills as good speaker, listener and observer and the tools that he could use for an effective facilitation process.

#### **B4. Negotiation Module**

The trainer reintroduced to the participants the concept of principled negotiation from the Harvard Negotiation Project at Harvard Law School as a win-win process where people constructively deal with their differences by reaching an agreement that satisfies the needs of both sides. The principles are to 1) separate the people from the issues, 2) focus on interests rather than positions, and 3) generate a variety of options before settling an agreement, and 4) insist that the agreement is based on objective criteria. In the collaborative negotiation model, understanding multi-party interests is a key issue, therefore the trainer introduced the model of the "iceberg" presenting the relation between positions (the proposed solutions), which are at the top of the iceberg and visible for everybody, the interests (reasons for proposing the specific solutions), which are under the water and need to be discovered through efficient communication, and basic human needs justifying the interests and ultimately the positions. By understanding each other's interests in the conflict, the parties can change their initial position (what they want) and agree on solutions that are satisfying for both parties.

The trainer introduced the stages of a negotiation process from analysis of the problem, identification of interests, exchange with the other party on the problem(s), proposition of solutions, selection of the best solution and coming to agreement. She then facilitated a discussion on the key ingredients to consider for each stage.

The trainer introduced a negotiation exercise, presenting the case of the stolen sheep and the conflict arising between the Blue and Red Village. The trainer split the participants in two

groups, one representing each village and gave each group particular information and instructions, as follows:

*You are from the Blue Village. Last night, a sheep disappeared from the village flock. You heard a rumor that somebody from the Red Village has stolen it and you think it is true because last year a similar story happened. You, as well as the other community members, are very upset and if your blue sheep does not reappear, you want to have a meeting with Red Village representatives during which you will ask for a red sheep as compensation.*

*You are from the Red Village. You heard that a blue sheep disappeared last night from the neighboring village. You, like all Red Village members, are happy because it did not happen to the red flock, but you and your neighbors are concerned because you heard that the Blue Village intends to come and ask for a red sheep! Last year you remember that somebody from your village stole a sheep, but this doesn't mean that once again the Red inhabitants are guilty. There could be many reasons why a sheep could disappear. You intend to go to the meeting.*

Once in their group, participants were asked to go through each stage of a negotiation process. For the stage of the analysis of the problem and identification of the interests, participants worked in their big community group and clarified all the issues, so they can have a common understanding of the given situation. Starting with the following phases, they started a step by step negotiation process, until they reached an agreement. All results were presented and analysed in the plenary session. Key debates and lessons learned are detailed at Section III.

## **B5. Mediation Module**

The trainer reviewed the mediation module, which was introduced as a structured negotiation process facilitated by the mediator and an alternative strategy for conflict resolution. A mediator assists those involved in conflict to break the cycle of blame and stop fighting with each other, help them communicate better, help them identify their needs and work together to develop a solution that meets those needs. Unlike a judge or an arbitrator, the mediator does not make decisions for the parties involved and does not assign blame or fault. The final solutions to the conflict always belong to the parties involved. The mediator's job is to get the parties to agree to mediation, to create an appropriate climate by the set up of the room and of behavior ground rules, to find out what happened, listening carefully to each party, to encourage parties to carefully listen to each other, talk one at a time, and help them understand the perspective of the other, to help parties identify their needs and find solutions that work for all sides.

The trainer introduced an exercise on multi party mediation, based on a case study called the Summerhouse, which presented a post-war conflict situation between the communities of Pears and Grapes over the use and rehabilitation of a public school with international and local funds.

*Summerhouse is a city of 18 000 inhabitants in the southern part of Wonderland. There was a war in Wonderland between Pear and Grape people. The city suffered serious damages during the war, the population of the city decreased because of the high number of casualties and temporary migration. After the war the distribution of population is the following: 50% Pear, 40% Grape, 10% Apple and other groups.*

*After the war, the international community supported many Grape families who did not want to return to their original localities to settle down in Summerhouse. As the result of the war the city is now highly segregated along group lines and the existing infrastructure is unevenly distributed among the Grape and Pear neighborhoods. The river Swift cuts through the city: on the left bank Pear people live and on the right bank the Grapes. The Apples and the other groups live scattered around the neighborhoods.*

*Due to the war most public buildings were damaged. Five years after the war, the city's infrastructure and public utilities are still under reconstruction or are waiting for the reconstruction to begin. Before the war the city had two primary schools and one high school. After the war there is now only one functioning school building, situated on the left side of the river, in the Pear part of the town. The school is providing both primary and high school education in the languages of the Pear and Grape people for the children of all communities. Pear children are attending the school in the morning and the Grape children in the afternoon. Most children from Apple and the other groups are attending the Pear language education, with some special classes. Despite sharing the same building, the two education programs have separate management and teaching staff.*

*In recent years, the school building has become gradually overcrowded and overused. Parents and teachers have repeatedly complained about the conditions and pressured the municipality to reconstruct the building and reopen another school building. The local government council was reluctant to address this request due to the serious deficit in the municipal budget and other non-educational priorities.*

*Recently a group of local councilors representing the Grape community successfully applied to an International Development Organization (IDO) for funds to cover the costs of the renovation and modernization of the former high school building located within the Grape neighborhood, on the right side of the Swift river. As a condition for their support IDO requested that the municipality commits to cover 10% of the project budget. These 10% costs represent 20% of the municipality annual budget. The local council has to approve this budget. As the results of last elections the Municipal Council achieved a slight Pear majority.*

*In the last Council meeting the reconstruction project, approved by IDO, was presented to the Municipal Council by the Grape councilors. They explained that as a solution to the poor conditions and over population in the only functioning school, the Grape kids would be moved in the reconstructed school. In that way they explained, more space would be available for the Pear kids in the first school. They asked the Council to support their project and approve the 10% of the project costs to be covered by the municipal budget.*

*Pear members of the council promptly turned down the project in a heated debate, on the grounds that the expenditure from the public budget will not benefit the Pear community in an equal way. They claimed that the renewed building will provide much better learning environment and facilities for the Grape children, whereas their children will remain in the old and unequipped school building. Moreover, they said, due to the limited resources and other priorities of the municipality, they cannot expect similar support for their own school in the near future, if they commit now this money from the public budget.*

*Grape representatives insisted on having their project approved as it is, because before the war they did not have their own school and is based on their initiative that IDO committed 90% of the budget for this project. They added that they would welcome any pupil from Pear community in their school, if they accept to study in the Grape language.*

*The Pears, in turn, insisted that the school reconstruction funds should be distributed in an equal way, even though such distribution would not facilitate the proper reconstruction of the new school and would barely cover the costs of the basic renovation of their own building.*

*They argued that the reconstruction of the Grape school would create new inequalities not only between the Grape and Pear communities, but would equally disadvantage the Apples and the other groups whose pupils have been attending the Pear education.*

*The Council Meeting ended without any positive solution. The Municipality is in danger of losing the IDO support, if Pear and Grape councilors do not reach an agreement.*

Participants formed two groups representing the Pear and the Grape people, receiving confidential instructions for preparing their participation in the mediation process. Juliette Kavabuha, the head of the women's leadership component, played the role of the mediator, following instructions for each stage of the mediation process, which are detailed below.

The mediator role developed a list of rules of behavior for participants in the meeting and built agreement for the meeting agenda and process:

1. Plenary presentations, no discussions are allowed (15 minutes). Each group has 15 minutes to discuss and assign a representative to describe the situation from their point of view. No interruption are allowed, the facilitator should emphasize on how important is to listen to each other perceptions and concerns.
2. Group work (20 minutes). Each group makes a list of the other group's concerns, as they understood them from their presentation. That does not mean they agree with them but that they understood them.
3. Plenary presentations, discussions are allowed in order to clarify (20 minutes). Each group presents the list and the others listen and supplement or acknowledge that their concerns have been understood.
4. Group work (30 minutes). Facilitator asks each group to go back and answer the following two questions: (1) What do we want from the other group so that our concerns are addressed and we arrive at an agreement? (2) What do we want to offer to the other group to address their concerns?
5. Plenary presentation, no discussions are allowed (10 minutes). Each group presents in plenary two lists of answers to the two questions. They exchange the list of "wants" from the other group without any discussion.
6. Group work (20 minutes). Facilitator asks each group to go back, study the list received from the other group, and respond to each request with one of the following:
  - Yes, we can do what you asked for....
  - Yes, we can do only if...
  - No, we can not do because...
7. Plenary presentations, discussions are allowed (30 minutes). Groups present in plenary and discussions are allowed to generate the agreement between the two groups that will address both parties' concerns.

At the end of the simulation, the trainer opened the session for questions in the plenary and provided feedback on what happened during the mediation. Key debates and lessons learned on these issues are detailed at Section III.

The training ended with the evaluation of the program, through written evaluation forms.

### III. KEY DISCUSSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

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#### A. Introductory Session

- *What does “thinking out of the box” mean?* The exercise 9 points generated vivid discussions on the concept of thinking creatively or out of box, as none of the participants got even close to the correct solution. The participants’ approach was to stay with the stated rules, while the solution was easy to find if someone had dared to go beyond the rules, without breaking them, by unifying the 9 points through 4 lines exceeding the framework of the 9 points, thus gaining a new space for maneuver and making possible the whole exercise. The trainer explained that the human mind is set to apply things already known and from here the need to train yourself towards a new attitude which would make you to think and to search continuously for solutions and alternatives which are not so visible at a first analysis and maybe never identified before. The best example of thinking “out of the box” in the framework of the training is the case of the alternative strategies for conflict resolution, which came out as an innovative alternative to an overloaded judiciary system, which was imposing solutions to the parties in long and expensive legal processes. The trainer also explained that this attitude is particularly important in the area of development, where the challenges are high and particular development cases demand solutions never tailored before.
- *Sharing of experiences and best practices on thinking “out of the box.”* When it came to sharing of good practices of innovative and creative attitudes towards problem solving and conflict resolution situations, participants had difficulty identifying such situations, as they admitted that the general attitude was to adapt solutions already implemented in similar cases. Juliette Kavabuha gave a very good local example of thinking creatively and “out of the box”: within the framework of a workshop on sexual violences against women, the participants identified an innovative way for the women to organize themselves and fight against such violences. At the level of colline, each woman would wear a little whistle and in case of a potential attack, she would use it to call the other women to help her and to scare the attacker. The trainer gave another example: in Australia, the level of car accidents caused by male youngsters and high speed increased a lot in recent years. All campaigns against high speed failed to produce any visible results. One advertising company produced a video clip broadcasted in television which showed how a male youngster was driving a car with high speed, very proud of himself, while the girls on the side road looked at him, starting laughing and making visible signs indicating that bigger the speed, smaller his masculinity. The advertisement had a tremendous impact among youngsters, as it touched and put under discussion the very essence of their virility. Participants agreed that the perspective of thinking creatively and being always in search for solutions beyond conventional thinking and beyond what has been already implemented has the advantage of tailoring your answers to the development challenges that best answer the local context and parties involved. Thinking “out of the box’ was one of the concepts participants most appreciated during the whole training.

## **B. Communication Module**

- The exercise for identifying the obstacles in communication in different organizational settings and the strategies which best answer these obstacles raised a lot of interest among the participants.
- The group working on obstacles and strategies within an organization provided the most comprehensive list, tackling issues like the importance of leadership that supports open and efficient communication, the importance of training the staff in communication, of having in place the culture of feedback and follow-up as main ingredients for a sound communication strategy and of regular staff meetings. Participants shared their organizational experiences. The trainer emphasized that almost every problem, conflict and misunderstanding has at its most basic level an interpersonal communication problem. Sound interpersonal communication within an organization comes from the culture of that organization, in the sum of the norms, values, and habits shared by the staff, a culture that must be nurtured carefully all the time. Feedback must be used regularly. Participants expressed interest in learning techniques for providing feedback, so the trainer introduced feedback in the facilitation module, namely how to give it in a way that the other person is listening, learning from it and deciding to improve.

## **C. Facilitation Module**

- Among the alternative strategies for conflict resolution, facilitation was the least known as process, thus the high interest of the participants in the module and their request to have a follow-up training of facilitators program.
- The two simulation cases brought lessons about the facilitator role, skills and techniques, emphasizing the importance of a well prepared facilitation session, how a team of facilitators should work together, how to manage the group dynamics and potential conflicts, how to facilitate decision making, how to deal with difficult behaviors, and how to deal with group diversity.
- The feedback sessions generated a lot of interest also because the trainer introduced feedback as technique and participants learned about how to reflect on somebody's work so that the person receiving the feedback is willing to listen to you and to your recommendations and to improve on specific issues.
- The participants were very interested about the issue of the neutrality of facilitator: is this one just facilitating or he/she can intervene as an expert in discussions? The trainer explained that the classical approach was to have a facilitator who would not intervene with suggestions/recommendations in the work of the group. Recent approaches indicate that facilitator could give his expert opinion if the group accepts this. On both situations, is important that the group agrees prior the beginning of the facilitation process on the exact role of the facilitator. Generally is accepted that the facilitator should not interfere in the group's final decision.
- The module was well received by the participants. One participant, who was the facilitator of the first simulation and a consultant in her professional life, admitted that

she finds facilitation a very challenging process because of its rigor and complexity and she realized that she needs more training before attempting real life facilitation.

- In one of the simulation sessions, participants had to identify certain strategies, which proved to be quite a difficult task, because of the limited skills and understanding of the strategic planning processes. This fact will be reflected in the recommendations section.

#### **D. Negotiation Module**

- Although the case of the stolen sheep and the conflict arising between the Red and Blue Villages didn't have complex data, the exercise itself proved how difficult it is to follow a rigorous negotiation process based on a collaborative approach in the search for common interests. The results of the exercise indicate different agreements, depending on the negotiators' willingness to search for the real problem, to listen to the other party and to find a common way to solve the conflict, as both communities were neighboring communities, facing common problems in the present and in the future.
- The first stages of the negotiation process, namely the analysis of the problems and identification of each community interests proved to be the most challenging, as the participants ignored the multiple possible causes for why and who could have stolen the sheep, and the underlying interest of their community in this particular conflict. The plenary analysis of the negotiation process indicated a poor problem analysis and narrowed interests. The trainer made the problem analysis for each community, demonstrating that even in apparently simple and clear situations, the problems can be more complex than they appear to be. The sheep disappeared because it was stolen by one of the red community members, or it was lost because of the negligence of the shepherd (from here another problem could be a bad security system of the community flock), or it was stolen by one member of the Blue community (who took advantage of the fact that last year the sheep was indeed stolen by the red community and so no one would suspect him), or it was stolen by a third community member (let's say the Greens), or it was stolen by a person who was just passing by the Blue community. Participants acknowledged the importance of the problem analysis and the trainer emphasized once more that in real life situation negotiators devote a lot of time to analysis and understanding the problems, so they can shape sustainable solutions. The identification of interests proved to be difficult for the participants, as they identified short term and narrowed interests, like getting back the sheep. In fact, in real life situations considering neighboring communities that share a lot of common economic, social, environmental interests, the conflict must be managed in a way that finds a solution to the problem and it does not hurt the relationship between the two communities.
- For the stage exchanging with the other party our understanding of the problems, the trainer emphasized that it is normal to have different perspectives on the same situation, thus the importance of clarifying with the other party the different perceptions. A good negotiator would put himself in the other party's shoes and, above all, would not make assumptions based on his own fears of what might have happened and would not blame the other party for his problems. The trainer told the story of a man and a woman who met in a bar late at night. After a couple of minutes'

conversation, the man offered to the woman a lift to bring her home. She accepted. The man started driving on dark and unknown streets, telling to the woman that this was a shortcut. The trainer asked what was the end of the story? The participants answered immediately that considering the story's details, the woman was raped by the man or even worse, she was killed. The trainer continued the story, which was a true story from a British newspaper, saying that the man was right, the unknown and dark street was a shortcut and the woman got home earlier. This example is a perfect example of how the human mind projects its own experiences and fears to simplify the analysis and understanding of new situations. In the case of the stolen sheep, the tendency was to assume, without further analysis, that the other village stole the sheep, because of the story in the preceding year.

- Participants discussed the criteria for choosing the best solution, if several alternatives are available. The trainer gave an example of several objective criteria that can be used in such circumstances: scientific judgments, professional standards, efficiency, costs, moral standards, tradition, and precedents. The trainer emphasized that it is important to find criteria which are outside the control and influence of the parties involved, to prove the objectivity of the choice.
- Participants wrote negotiation agreements and the trainer commented on the importance of relevant details in such an accord, which would recognize the efforts made by the parties, acknowledge the progress made and each party's contribution, and which would state clear terms for implementation of the accord.
- The participants were interested to know how to deal with high emotions in a negotiation process. Negotiation is a highly emotional process since each party fights to meet his interests. The trainer said the unanimously agreed strategy in this case is to acknowledge the emotions (in yourself and in other party too), to express them or to encourage the other party to express them and not to react to hot and high emotions.

## **F. Mediation Module**

- Participants found the case study and the simulation of a mediation process a powerful learning tool, as they had the chance to participate in the preparation of each stage of the mediation, to watch their colleagues performing their roles as representatives of the both communities and to see what a mediator should do for an effective mediation.
- The initial stages of the mediation process proved to be challenging for the participants who played the role of the representatives of both communities. It was challenging to keep in mind the mandate you received from your own community, to listen at the same time to other party's concerns and to understand them in order to better reflect them back to your own community, and above all not to directly address the solution, but to have the patience to discover the other's perspective. Participants' reflections highlighted the complexity of the mediation process and the trainer emphasized the complex role of a mediator, who needs to listen and to analyze, to speak, to keep the process on the right track, to manage the potential conflicts and to create a trusting atmosphere for finding a commonly agreeable solution.

- The participants got clarifications on which party chooses the mediator, what happens if the final agreement is not implemented as planned, if the mediator can interrupt the mediation session for objective reasons, if he can approach only one party at a time.
- The session was particularly interactive, since the participants shared in the plenary their own similar experiences with mediation processes, especially with conflicts inside married couples. Still, the major difference between the proposed process in the training and their real life experiences is that they used to practice a sort of mediation-arbitration, as they pronounced the final solution in the name of the parties.
- The most powerful lesson expressed by the participants was the value and sustainability of solutions developed and agreed to by the parties involved. Participants will start to adopt this approach in local mediation cases.



#### IV. PARTICIPANT EVALUATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Evaluations made by the participants on a scale from 1 to 10 are summarized below:

The importance and pertinence of the training topics	<b>9.33</b>
The applicability of the training knowledge in daily life	<b>9.38</b>
Degree to which the training address topics in-depth	<b>8.85</b>
Training materials	<b>9.35</b>
Agenda	<b>8.86</b>
Logistics	<b>8.76</b>
Per diem	<b>9.14</b>
Getting the participants organized	<b>9.12</b>

Trainer:

	Olivia Baciu
Knowledge in alternative strategies for conflict resolution	<b>9.36</b>
Communication and animation techniques	<b>9.14</b>
Participative methodology	<b>8.86</b>
Responses to questions	<b>9.05</b>

From the training content point of view, the applicability of the training to daily life, the importance and pertinence of the training topics, as well as the training materials got the highest marks (9.38/9.35/9.33), while the coverage in-depth of the topics and the organization of the agenda got the lowest mark (8.85/8.86), reflecting participants' recommendation to get more time to cover the alternative strategies for conflict resolution.

Participants were asked to comment more in-depth on the usefulness of the training for their career and daily life. Some of the participants' opinions are reflected below:

- *“[I realized] I didn’t know anything about communication, facilitation and all the other techniques, you managed to give to me the thirst to learn more and to practice more. Excellent 110%!”*
- *“ I understand better now the techniques in communication, negotiation and especially in mediation, which will be very useful for my relations in the family, in my neighborhood, in my organization. Also, I can better participate in the debates, as I know that I need to “listen” the others’ ideas”.*
- *“I’ve learnt how to manage [the communication process and the relations with the stakeholders] my organization. I’ve got the relevant training materials for my future trainings for the members of my organization. This training enhanced my knowledge which will help me to live peacefully in the society”.*
- *“We’ve learnt a lot of essential techniques for the daily life. We have now the desire to get more expertise in certain areas.”*
- *“I am happy to have met the other women leaders who helped me a lot to become a woman leader who knows how to communicate and to mediate. I improved a lot.”*

The participants made as well their recommendations to improve the training, which covered mainly the issue of the time allocated to the training, per diem, training certificates and materials:

- *“It would have been useful to increase the number of training days...the thirst is still there...”*
- *“To continue the training and to make an impact evaluation of the training program.”*
- *“More time for the exercises, to better understand [the content].”*
- *“Increase the per diem.”*
- *“Continue the training for a better specialization and give us attendance certificates.”*
- *“Give more exercises so each participant can practice and develop her skills”.*
- *“More trainings covering these topics”.*

## **V. PREVIOUS YEAR 2 TRAININGS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

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This section provides a synthesis of all previous Year 2 trainings on conflict resolution, as a complement to the separate reports on each training already prepared. In all, these trainings amounted to 137 hours of training.

The program's second year work plan for Task 5.2.3 outlined a program to train a total of 160 leading female parliamentarians, lawyers and representatives of civil society organizations (CSOs) in conflict management and anti-corruption. In December 2008, March and May 2009 a series of training in conflict resolution was delivered to 187 women leaders, surpassing the target.

### **A. Training Objectives**

The CSO training had three main objectives, which were to help participants:

- Become familiar with the main concepts of conflict resolution, including defining conflict, understanding the underlying causes of conflicts, tools for conflict analysis, styles and strategies in solving conflicts;
- Learn to use two foundational strategies to resolve conflicts: communication and interest-based negotiation;
- Develop a deeper understanding of leadership as a concept.

### **B. Participants**

187 women attended the series of December 2008-May 2009 Trainings. The women consisted of legal representatives, executives or active members in the civil society organizations (some were former high officials, like vice president, prime minister, department/cabinet ministers and parliamentarians), parliamentarians and lawyers.

### **C. Trainers**

Olivia Baciú, an international consultant and trainer for Partners for Democratic Change (PDC), a US-based NGO, and Juliette Kavabuha Icoyitungiye, the head of the project's women's leadership component, delivered the training on conflict resolution. The team combined international expertise in conflict resolution and change management processes with local expertise in the field of gender and conflict resolution.

### **D. Results**

Given participant evaluations of the training and the lead trainer's analysis of the training process based on the questions raised, the intensity of the discussion, and participants' interest in sharing their experience, we can make the following observations:

- The importance and pertinence of the training topics to Burundi's context was ranked by the participants on average at 8.84 (out of 10.00)
- The applicability of the training knowledge in daily life was ranked by the participants on average at 8.44 (out of 10.00)

- Participants' knowledge on leadership increased (qualitative indicator). The session was based on the latest field research by Harvard University. The participants discussed their own experiences in leadership, and drew lessons and key points for further ways to improve their skills and knowledge in this area.
- Participants' knowledge and understanding of conflict was increased (qualitative indicator). The group dynamic during this topic was particularly high: each participant was actively involved in exercises, plenary analyses and intense debates. The participatory methodology supported and stimulated overall participation. The wrap-up at the end of each session, which permitted final questions and clarifications, indicated high levels of understanding and improved knowledge for each specific conflict-related topic.
- Participants gained skills in using specific conflict analysis tools (qualitative indicator). This particular session was very interactive, at each stage throughout the conflict analysis. The participants worked in groups on the case study of Liberia, and then presented, avidly discussed and reached a comprehensive consensus on the overall results. The active participation during the session indicates excellent results as well as increased skills in conflict analysis tools.
- Establishment of an informal network of women leaders aiming to support the peace process in Burundi through conflict resolution strategies. The 140 participants elected 30 representatives to expand discussions around the opportunities, challenges and actions to develop a new informal network.

## **E. Methodology**

The training was based on modern adult learning theory, with its content based on Partners for Democratic Change's knowledge of conflict resolution and change management processes after 20 years of practice. The methodology emphasized participant interaction, shared discussions of experiences, exercises to increase application of skills, and practical case studies and examples.

## **F. Themes**

- "What is Conflict?" introduced several definitions of conflict, emphasizing that conflicts are neither good nor bad and are just a natural part of life, making it vitally important to understand this complex topic.
- The way we solve conflicts or the outcomes of conflicts can be good or bad. We may not be able to eliminate conflicts, but we should know how to have lively controversies instead of deadly quarrels, how to create constructive conflicts, not destructive ones.
- Our personal conflict management style often affects whether a given conflict will develop into a constructive or destructive situation. There are five styles, which are a combination of two variables: how much you fight for your interests and how much you consider the other's interests. We do not always use the same style, each is effective in specific situations.

- Conflicts have their own life cycle: they are born, they may arrive at full and intense expression and they die.
- We can use alternative resolution strategies to solve conflicts (as opposed to standard litigation and confrontation), if parties are still willing to communicate, directly or via a third, neutral person. These strategies are direct communication, negotiation, mediation, and facilitation of problem-solving processes.
- Leadership: we all have the capacity to inspire and empower others, but we must first be willing to devote ourselves to growth and development as leaders.

## **G. Impact**

16 women leaders, representing 10% of March training participants, were asked about the conflict resolution training impact on their professional and private life. Even though the period covered by this assessment was short, the results are noteworthy and reinforce the final recommendations of this report. The women's feedback mentioned:

- *Organization of a follow-up training session for 54 members of the organization*
- *Organization of a follow-up meeting with the members of the syndicate to talk with them about negotiation.*
- *Instead of going on strike to defend our rights, we changed the strategy and collaboratively and peacefully obtained an important amendment to a Governmental Act supporting the interests of our teachers.*
- *The collaboration and interests-based approach helped me to solve a conflict between the Director and the teachers of a school.*
- *I used the model of the conflict spiral, which illustrated how the conflict escalates and what strategies can be used in each life cycle of conflict, to solve a ten years old conflict between two Christian women. The same model helped me to facilitate a peaceful solution for a 7 years old conflict over land.*
- *The mediation helped me to mediate a family conflict between two neighbors.*
- *Following the communication session, I am making efforts to better listen to the member of my family*
- *Using the information I've got from the communication session, I participated effectively in the development of a questionnaire for public consultation within a communication program of the Ministry of Public Health.*
- *I facilitate the peaceful resolution of a conflict between the population and the local authorities, in the framework of a social reinsertion program in a commune.*
- *Establishment of an NGO fighting for the succession rights of the women.*



## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

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The following recommendations were made by the participants and the trainer and they are reinforced by the extraordinary impact of the previous training sessions.

- Organize mediation training for other women leaders, as mediation remains the most practiced alternative strategy for conflict resolution.
- Organize strategic planning training, as this is a milestone competence in leadership in all fields. Women representing political parties, syndicates and NGOs expressed this request.
- Organize lobbying and advocacy training to support better women leaders in their activities to influence relevant policies.
- Organize training of trainers and training of facilitators programs and develop training manuals using a common adult learning methodology. This recommendation came from participants who appreciated the methodology and expressed their willingness to pass on the know-how to their colleagues.