

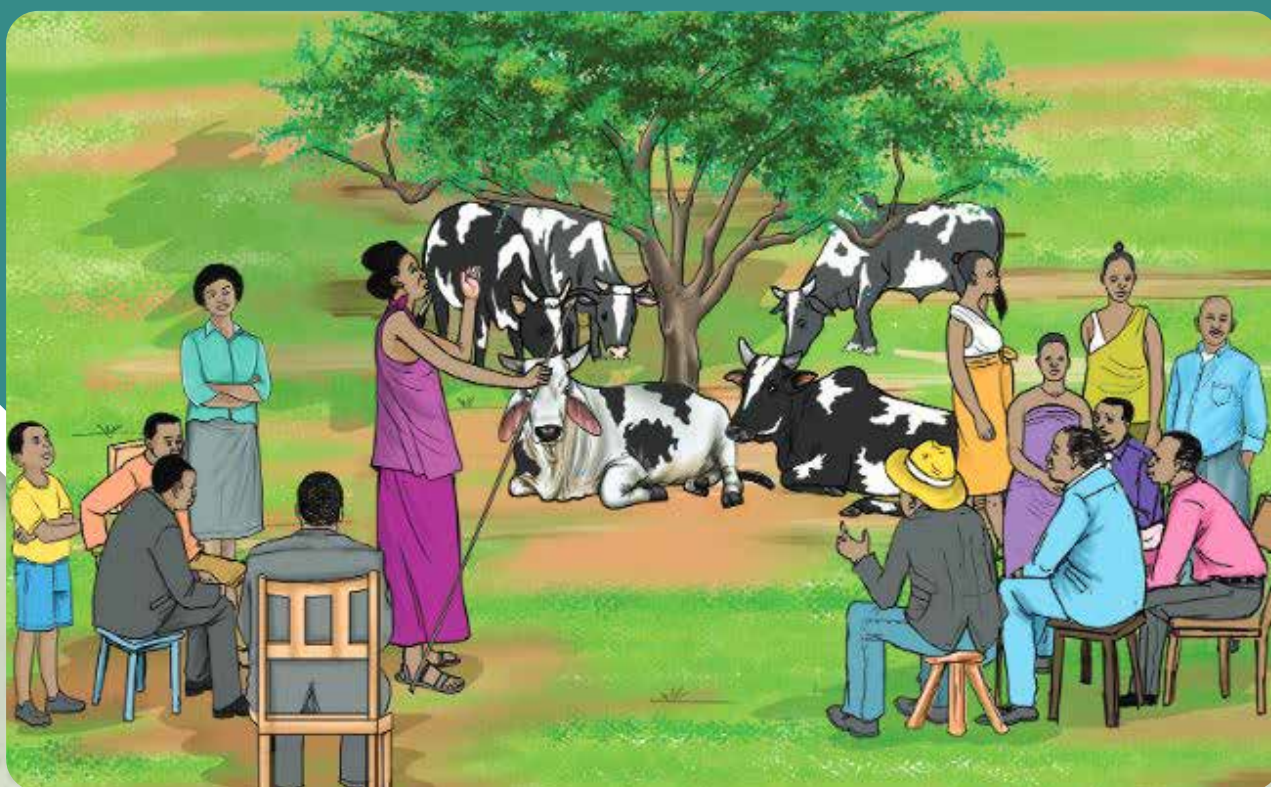


QUARTERLY

ARDHO NEWSLETTER



Amakuru y'ibikorwa by'umuryango ARDHO
MATA - NYAKANGA 2025



Strengthening local leaders and community engagement in alternative dispute resolution

**ASSOCIATION RWANDAISE POUR LA
DEFENSE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME (ARDHO)**

B.P 1868 Kigali-Rwanda Tél: +250 788351377 / + 250 788602848
E-mail: ardho1990@gmail.com | Website: www.ardhorw.org

OVERVIEW

1.

WELCOME REMARKS

PAGE 2

2.

SDC SUPPORT CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

PAGE 3

3.

ARDHO CONTINUE AWARENESS AND TRAININGS

PAGE 4

4.

GUDEMURA AMAKIMBIRANE HATISUNZWE INKIKO

PAGE 6

5.

THE ADR POLICY ORIENTATION

PAGE 7

6.

EXISTING COMMUNITY-BASED STRUCTURES

PAGE 7

7.

AMAHAME NGENDERWAHO MU GUKEMURA AMAKIMBIRANE HATISUNZWE INKIKO

PAGE 12

8.

AKAMARO KO GUKEMURA AMAKIMBIRANE HATISUNZWE INKIKO

PAGE 13

9.

COACHING COMMUNITY MEDIATION COMMITTEES

PAGE 13

10.

IMPACT OF STRENGTHENING LOCAL LEADERS AND COMMUNITY ON ADR

PAGE 14

ABAGIZE IKIPE Y'UBWANDITSI

Abatunganyije iyi nyandiko yibikorwa bya ARDHO

- ISATIBASUMBA Olivier
- NIYIRORA Pierre Celestin

Uwanononsoye ibyanditswe ISATIBASUMBA Olivier

Abajyanama b'ubwanditsi

- MUNYAGASIZA Jonas
- GAKIRE Anastase

WELCOME REMARKS FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Welcome to this edition of our newsletter, where we focus on the vital role of local leadership and community engagement in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).

In a world where sustainable peace and justice begin at the grassroots, empowering local leaders to guide communities through dialogue and understanding is more important than ever. This issue highlights efforts, insights, and success stories that show how ADR is transforming conflict resolution from the ground up.



MUNYAGASIZA Jonas

**Executive Secretary of
ARDHO**

SDC SUPPORT CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Since 1994, Rwanda looks up to its traditional homegrown governance mechanisms to improve citizens' ownership and active involvement in its transformational agenda. The decentralisation policy and other regulatory tools embody the principle of citizen-centredness and mechanisms such as Imihigo (performance contracts), citizens' assemblies and Abunzi (community mediators) all created at the local level put citizens at the centre of governance and conflict resolutions.

SDC support Local government and civil society organisations to effectively engage citizens in decision-making and deliver services in an accountable manner. It support government mechanisms for effective management and prevention of conflict at the local level are reinforced through the operationalisation of Alternative Dispute Resolution policy, with particular focus on Abunzi capacities.

The overall goal of this programme is to increase the capability of local government and civil society organisations in citizen-centred governance and in alternative conflict-resolution for improved citizen participation, service delivery, accountability and social cohesion.

Results from previous phases:

- ✔ Civil Society Organization (CSO) partners supported 370,970 citizens, including 188,951 women (50.9%), who participated in local planning and accountability processes. 85% (1,237) of the priorities issued were retained by the authorities for implementation
- ✔ Up to 90 cases of revisions to decisions, plans, budgets, etc. were noted as a result of the advocacy work of the CSOs supported
- ✔ Recognition of the project 'Community Score Card' approach in the national planning guidelines issued by the ministry of finance
- ✔ Adoption of a national Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) policy by the government
- ✔ Mediation skills of Abunzi (mediation committees) strengthened: 2,469 conflicts resolved by mediation, 348 gacaca judgments executed in 7 districts
- ✔ Strengthened Sector coordination, definition of common sector priorities (including citizen participation), adoption of a manual, creation and operationalization of respective working groups
- ✔ Especially SDC support ARDHO in Strengthening local leaders and community engagement in Alternative Dispute Resolution and family conflicts resolution in NYARUGENGE, MUSANZE and RUBAVU District.



Photo: The Executive Secretary of Rugerero Sector, Program Manager of ARDHO and SDC delegation during a coaching session with mediation committee on ADR Policy and new family law at Rugerero Sector, Rubavu District on 17 July 2025.

The ADR provides all ADR mechanisms such as mediation, conciliation, negotiation, plea-bargaining, arbitration, providing them with the necessary tools and environment to manage and resolve conflicts outside of the formal court system. It will offer a range of ADR services for civil, commercial, labor, and administrative cases. This approach fosters quicker resolutions and promotes reconciliation, relationship-building, and social cohesion within communities.

ADR is a quicker, more cost-effective method of resolving disputes that preserves relationships and strengthens communities. It aligns perfectly with our broader goals of sustainable peace and development. "The mediation process allowed me to resolve a debt dispute with my neighbour without the emotional toll and financial burden of court proceedings. It's a solution that brings peace," shared a Kigali resident. According to the Chief Justice Dr. Faustin Ntezilyayo during the official inauguration of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Center in Kigali in August 2024, he shared that over 2,300 civil cases were settled through mediation in courts of law last year, with an impressive 13,000 criminal cases resolved through plea-bargaining.

These outcomes represent not just numbers but lives positively impacted by a justice system that is increasingly responsive and efficient. He added that in only 38 cases that were settled in court mediation, they had all together a value of over 7 billion Rwandan Francs, and these cases were settled in a span of not more than 3 weeks at most, which in the ordinary process would have taken close to 5 years clogged in court dockets.

ARDHO CONTINUE AWARENESS AND TRAININGS FOCUSSING ON ADR AND FAMILY LAW

From April to July 2025, ARDHO continued trainings, awareness and legal education in Nyarugenge, Musanze and Rubavu District. The presentation of ARDHO focused on the implementation of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).

On 17 June 2025, with the support of SDC, ARDHO in partnership with Nyarugenge District officially launched the Legal Aid Week in Kimisagara Sector with the theme "Working together for citizen-centered justice". In community assembly we did legal education focusing on family law and ADR policy. The discussion emphasized on the immediate benefits of ADR in resolving conflicts efficiently and amicably, reducing the burden on the formal judicial system. Participants highlighted successful case studies and outlined actionable steps for enhancing community awareness and training the citizen to facilitate ADR processes effectively. The session concluded with a commitment to promote ADR as a viable option for dispute resolution throughout the Area.

We also focused on the new provisions of the Law n° 71/2024 governing persons and family. This law aims to enhance the protection of individuals' rights and improve family welfare within the community. During the community dialogue, ARDHO representatives emphasized key provisions of the law, including measures against domestic violence, the importance of gender equality, and the rights of children, matrimonial regime, succession, donation, and Divorce. Local leaders and citizen actively participated in discussions, expressing their commitment to implementing the law effectively and ensuring that the community is aware of its provisions and will take initiative of protect and fulfil and have also the obligation to respect and stand up for human rights of others.



DEA of Nyarugenge, DDEA, DPC and Twice DDCI during the launching of legal aid week and legal education on ADR Policy and new family law at Kimisagara Sector, Nyarugenge District on 17 June 2025.



Executive Secretary and Programs Manager of ARDHO during the launching of legal aid week and legal education on ADR Policy and new family law at Kimisagara Sector, Nyarugenge District on 17 June 2025.



Citizen during the legal aid week and legal education on ADR Policy and new family law at Kimisagara Sector, Nyarugenge on 17 June 2025.



Expert in mediation supporting ARDHO during legal education on ADR Policy and new family law at Nyakabanda Sector, Nyarugenge District on 3 June 2025.

In Rubavu District, the activities of ARDHO focused on awareness to citizen and training of local leaders. On May 02, 2025, ARDHO conducted training of ES of Sectors in Rubavu District, Gisenyi at Peace View Hotel. The presentation of ARDHO focused on the implementation of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). The participants were the Executive Secretaries of Sectors. The discussion emphasized the immediate benefits of ADR in resolving conflicts efficiently and amicably.



GATAREBE Gaetan, Expert in mediation explaining the importance of ADR during a community assembly in Rugerero Sector, Rubavu District on 15 April 2025.



ES of sectors in Rubavu District during capacity Building of the community based mediation groups in charge of ADR in sectors on ADR Policy and new family law on 02 May 2025.

On May 13, 2025, ARDHO conducted a legal education during citizen community dialogue in Rubavu District, Gisenyi Sector, Bugoyi Cell. We discussed about the main causes of conflicts identified include poverty, lack of knowledge of the law, there are still many families living in illegal marriage, there is still gender-based violence, property-based violence where we see disagreements on the management of family assets; Disputes over land and other family assets, expropriation of property from a family member, division between family members for the purpose of depriving some of the property, illegal succession, other forms of violence including the spouse abandonment, gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, adultery, illegal drugs and alcohol, legal alcohol in excess also one of the causes of drunkards to commit crimes which include assault and battery, sexual violence, Harassment and intimidation, physical harm, and property refusal and deprivation of basic family rights.



Photo: Citizen during community dialogue at Bugoyi Cell, Gisenyi Sector, District of Rubavu during citizen community dialogue on ADR Policy and new family law on 13 May 2025.

Redaction team

GUKEMURA AMAKIMBIRANE HATISUNZWE INKIKO, UMWIMERERE W'ABANYARWANDA

Uburyo bwo gukemura amakimbirane hatisunzwe inkiko (ADR) ni umwimerere w'Abanyarwanda tuvoma mu muco n'amateka byacu. Ni uburyo bwagiye bukoreshwa mu bihe bitandukanye kugeza no ku bihe bikomeye bya nyuma ya Jenoside aho hifashishijwe Gacaca nk'ubutabera bwunga.

Usibye no kuba ari ihame riri mu Itegeko Nshinga rya Repubulika y'u Rwanda ko ari ngombwa gushaka buri gihe umuti w'ibibazo binyuze mu nzira y'ibiganiro n'ubwumvikane busesuye, gushyiraho Politiki y'igihugu yo gukemura amakimbirane hatisunzwe inkiko bigaragara no muri gahunda yo kwihutisha iterambere - NST 2 mu nkingi yayo ya mbere y'ingenzi yerekeye imiyoborere igamije kwimakaza uburyo bwo gukemura amakimbirane hatisunzwe inkiko, guteza imbere umuco wo gukemurira amakimbirane mu miryango no gukemura amakimbirane mu bwumvikane.

Ikipe y'Ubwanditsi

THE ADR POLICY ORIENTATION

The vision of Rwanda's ADR policy is: "A united, reconciled, inclusive, and problem-solving society where citizens participate actively in resolving their own disputes and addressing harm and crime under the supervision and with the support of institutions having dispute resolution and the enforcement of the resolution's outcomes under their mandate."

The main objective of this Policy is to provide the necessary guidance for the creation of an effective, accessible and coordinated state of the art ADR system, rooted in Rwanda's tradition, values and national objectives and integrated with the court system. Without sacrificing accountability, punishment or deterrence, the thorough integration of ADR into Rwanda's justice system will strike the right balance between the court system and ADR, while creating a justice system that is flexible and reflective of societal values.

In addition to the general objective, this Policy has following specific objectives:

1. Strengthen the institutional and regulatory framework for ADR services.
2. Establish a well-structured ADR system that draws on existing resources as much as possible.
3. Create an enabling legal environment.
4. Enhance local capacity in mediation and restorative justice processes.
5. Ensure that through awareness programs, ADR benefits and opportunities are known, understood, owned and used by
6. Rwandan citizens irrespective of their social or economic setting.

Redaction team

EXISTING COMMUNITY-BASED STRUCTURES OF ADR AND THEIR MODUS OPERANDI

According to the assessment done by Haguruka Organization in 2021 called "ADR Community led assessment", the findings revealed that beyond formal ADR initiatives established by law, such as Abunzi and Arbitration, there are many informal, effective ADR mechanisms at the national and grassroots level. Informal mechanisms developed out of group interest or as a result of civil society organizations' interventions.

A. Existing government-led ADR structures

1. Abunzi:

The Abunzi mediation is part of the Rwandan justice system and it is recognized under the law No 37/2016 OF 08/09/2016 Determining Organization, Jurisdiction, Competence and Functioning of Abunzi Committees. The structure operates at cell level, and sector level at appeal. It is composed of seven people elected by citizens at each level. The competence of Abunzi is limited to civil disputes of value not exceeding three million (3, 000, 000) Rwf for movable and immovable property and breach of contract. They are also competent for family disputes except those related to civil status. The process of the Abunzi Committee is a hybrid process combining a phase where the panel assists parties to settle their disputes and a phase where the Abunzi panel deliberates on the case and comes up with a decision when the parties failed to reach their own agreement on the settlement of their disputes. The decision of Abunzi is subject to appeal.

2. MAJ: "Maison d'Acces a la Justice"

"MAJ" is recognized under the Prime Minister's Order N° 239/03 of 08/12/2016 determining the mission, functions, organizational structure and summary of job positions, salaries and fringe benefits for employees of the ministry of justice/office of the attorney General (MINIJUST). Initiated in 2007, the structure operates at the district level. MAJ serves as the first point of orientation with legal aid service for Rwandans. MAJ mainly provides legal information/education as well as legal advice. MAJ staff helps citizens settle their disputes through dialogue, but have no guidelines for the process of mediation used to help parties in dispute reach a settlement.

3. Inshuti z'Umuryango (IZU)

IZU is a community-based structure recognized by the Ministerial order of January 2016 establishing and determining the functioning of Inshuti z'Umuryango. It comprises two people i.e. one male and one female deployed in every village. The structure operates at the village level. The structure has a representative at cell, sector and district levels. IZU uses the approach of home visits to discuss with households' members on different topics relating to child protection and peaceful cohabitation of couples. They specifically intervene in families with conflicts by visiting them and acts as facilitators of parties in conflicts to discuss on the issues and reach amicable resolution.

4. Umugoroba w'Imiryango

The structure is recognized under the Ministerial order of September 2020 governing organization and functioning of Umugoroba w'Imiryango. Umugoroba w'Imiryango is a village based forum that brings together (men, women and youth) residing in the same village. The forum is governed by the committee of 5 people elected by the village general assembly.

The forum convenes once in a month mainly on the 3rd week of the month and has below objectives:

- a. To promote relationship and social welfare of family members.
- b. prepare couples who would wish to join marriage
- c. prevention of crimes and conflicts in families and resolve conflicts where they exist
- d. promote child upbringing and protect children against abusive practices and promote gender equality and complementarity.

The designed topic of interest surrounding the stated objectives is discussed during the session and later whoever has an issue can raise it for attention. Art 27 of guidelines determining the functioning of the forum stipulates that "executive committee shall select a group of people with integrity who will visit, discuss and resolve conflicts in families for the purpose of adhering to principles of secrecy"

5. National Women Council (NWC)

Recognized under the law N°02/2011 of 10/02/2011 determining the responsibilities, organization and functioning of the National Women's Council, the National Women Council has committees at all levels of administration in the country. The committee is composed of 7 people.

The council is a forum for advocacy and social mobilization on issues affecting women in order to build their capacity and ensure their participation in the development of the country in general, and the development of women in particular.

The main responsibilities include a) to gather and analyze ideas of women; build their capacity; sensitize women to participate in the country's development programmes; advocate for gender equality; and serious issues affecting the development and the rights of women. It deals with issues of GBV and works closely with Umugoroba w'Imiryango and Inteko z'Abaturage to advance the cause of women. On different occasion, members of the National Women Council intervene in disputes resolution on conflicts involving families.

6. Inteko z'abaturage

Inteko z'abaturage or citizens' general assemblies in English are governed by the Ministerial order of December 2019 facilitating local government to resolve citizens' complaints/problems. It operates at the cell level. It doesn't have a committee. The Executive Secretary of the cell or other superior leaders present moderates the sessions. Inteko z'Abaturage convenes twice in a week mainly on Tuesday and Friday during afternoon hours. They bring together all citizens/residents of the cell.

Other participants include:

- a. All village leaders,
- b. Cell leaders,
- c. Cell leaders,
- d. Cell leaders,
- e. Other leaders from sector, district, Province or national level,
- f. Representatives of other organs operating in the cell, and security organs.

During the forum the citizens discusses issues pertaining to development of the cell and solve the citizen grievances or conflicts in collective orientation or effort of all participants present. The parties in conflict may present their disputes in front of participants and participants analyze the case and take consensual decision on how the case can be resolved and only leaders present help reach and document the conclusion.

Other participants include:

The forum is recognized under the Instructions no 02/2019 of 26/02/2019 governing the functioning of unity and reconciliation in district. The forum is composed of 16 people at sector level and 15 at sector level who come from key diverse structures operating at the local level as stipulated in the guidelines governing forum. The forum is mandated to promote the culture of peace, and solidarity. These clubs mobilize people on the unity and reconciliation, engage in the commemoration of genocide against the Tutsis as well as serving as bridge that unites genocide survivors and perpetrators.

The forum brings together genocide perpetrators and genocide survivors through healing sessions designed to promote unity and reconciliation as well as encouraging the perpetrators to pay back properties abused during the genocide. This approach has been successful at serving the goals of restorative justice and ADR in general that is, of restoring constructive relationships that create safety, understanding and peace.

8. Isibo

The structure has been recently established and there are no guidelines GOVERNING it so far. It is composed of 15 to 20 families and is ruled by three people i.e. the chairperson in charge of coordination and 2 vice-chairpersons: one in charge of child-protection and another in charge of GBV. It has overall mandate identifying issues of families that including issues that need advocacy, students that are not going to school as well as mobilizing people on government programs.

Isibo's chairperson (Mutwarasibo) compiles reports and submits them to the village leader for attention and advocacy to the next level. Isibo can be an effective structure due to its small and manageable size. It plays the role of mediating citizens on minor issues raised out of disagreement and it is currently serving as primary reliable and supportive organ.

9. Igiti cy'ibisubizo

Translated in English as "the tree of answers", the initiative is piloted by the District Authorities in Ngoma District. It puts together all actors involved in resolving citizen complaints in the District. It consists of sessions of key stakeholders to receive and address citizen grievances. Sessions are held under a tree where the Mayor sits, surrounded by other staff responsible for resolving citizens' complaints such as MAJ officers, Good governance officers, RIB, Police, Land officer and representatives of working in access to justice.

It was called the tree of answers simply because whoever brings in the case gets immediately the answer because all organs in charge of resolving issues are present. The practice has been institutionalized to the extent that citizens know when, where and at what time they can bring the issue to responsible people. Citizens don't come to knock on offices asking appointment with the mayor because they know that every Thursday at the designated place, the mayor and other officials will be present.

10. Wiwusenya Turahari

This is initiative started in Sake sector, in Ngoma district to address the issue of family conflicts. It is a structure made of a group of 6 people: 3 men and 3 women elected by citizens on the basis of integrity and leaving in families free from conflicts.

Those people intervene mainly in families with conflicts and serve as strong mediators to contribute to social cohesion at the community level. According to district authorities the program is very successful and the district is planning to rollout the initiative to all sectors of district.

11. Bamaso program

This approach was initiated by Kagarama sector, in Kicukiro district as a sustainable way of addressing citizen's issues, where all structures that deal with citizen issues i.e. Abunzi, IZU, Village leaders jointly work together in synergy to address citizens' complaints together to avoid duplication and confusion of citizens who may be given different information and to avoid citizens burden of losing time in going around to reach different organs.

B. ADR led by nongovernment organizations

1. Haguruka

The organization uses the approach of couples dialogues by bringing together couples living in conflicts and assisting them in dispute resolution through a transformative approach. This proximity approach is key for creating an environment that is conducive to the prevention of GBV. Picking successful examples of healthy couple relationships from the neighborhood to accelerate mindset set change to favor gender equality and better lifestyles. Community-based facilitators contribute to the durability of interventions. Additional best practices include training a critical mass of community volunteers for the facilitation of dialogue sessions, regular coordination meetings of information with local authorities.

Furthermore, with the Haguruka legal aid centers, legal officers that provide mediation services as a form of legal service delivery, a mediator (Legal Officer) brings two parties in a conflict together to assist them to reach the common ground mostly in family matters.

2. Never Again Rwanda

The organization uses healing sessions facilitated by people of integrity (Inyangamugayo) who get training from Never Again Rwanda on mediation techniques in order to promote reconciliation between genocide perpetrators and survivors. The goal of this approach is to empower citizens with non-violent means of resolving conflict, build trust and promote trauma healing and genocide prevention. Never Again Rwanda provides training in dialogue facilitation skills and peace education, and spaces for peaceful dialogue are supported.

3. RWAMREC

The Organization uses the approach of engaging men as potential partners in building peaceful families. RWAMREC selects those families in conflict and form groups and supports them using **“the journeys of transformation model”** to address conflicts related to gender based violence between couples through creating a space for self-reflection, interactive discussion and honest sharing of feelings, ideas, and beliefs in efforts for challenging violent behaviors and practices in families and communities. The organization supports and promotes partnerships and collaborations among men and women gender-based violence prevention strategies and working very closely with local leaders and other key stakeholders involved.

4. TUBIBE AMAHORO

The organization also uses the Journeys of transformation (Urugendo rugana ku mpinduka) model, paralegals, and safe spaces for mediation and conflict resolution. Tubibe Amahoro organization continuously follows up on the progress of conflicts resolution at household levels, in close collaboration with trained couples. Tubibe Amahoro also assists other couples with high conflict levels to settle and regulate their conflicts via dialogues and experience sharing. They use also anti-corruption justice and information centers(AJICS) to advise victims on legal matters as well as fighting against the corruption.

5. ALERT INTERNATIONAL

The organization’s mission is to promote unity and reconciliation between perpetrators of the genocide and survivors. They engage each party separately in a journey of healing and bring both parties together later for interactions. The journey is made of intense training and mentorship sessions on unity and reconciliation. Parties reconcile through a process of forgiveness and they become partners. They end up becoming champions who mobilize their peers who haven’t yet make a step towards reconciliation.

6. Community Based So cio-therapy-Mvura nkuvure

The organization focuses on healing, unity and reconciliation, integration and empowerment respectively. They use mvura nkuvure approach. The approach consists of identifying genocide survivors and perpetrators and works with each party separately for a given period. Later on, the organization brings the parties together to start a joint journey around reconciliation and peaceful cohabitation. Participants in the process meet in regular sessions facilitated by trained community facilitators. As an outcome, issues that took years to be resolved are handled in this process; Genocide perpetrators confess, pay back properties they had refused to return before, and they give information on where unfound bodies of the genocide victims are; survivors forgive perpetrators and they even decide to surrender their properties to be reimbursed by perpetrators. All parties join each other in groups and embark on point income generating activities.

7. TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL RWANDA

The organization uses (ALACS Approach) which is advocacy and legal advice centers. They advocate for the victims combined with advising them on legal matters. **ALACS** help to ensure that government institutions receive more detailed and elaborated complaints, making their investigation work easier. They use members of citizen Concerns committees based in the community responsible for tracking and reporting injustice cases to articulate information related to corruption for response.

8. ARDHO

ARDHO use the methodology of raising awareness of local leaders, citizen and families with conflict by using the Human rights and legal education, interactions with citizen during community assembly and organise community dialogues to invite the local authorities for more participation and engagement. The organisation also use some technics by training and coaching conflict mediation committees that will contribute to changes in attitudes and behaviours of citizen and develops knowledge and skills that contribute to prevent and resolve family conflicts.

We use Community legal education/Outreach using available spaces like Citizen community meetings at sector level working directly with Citizen complaints staff, and other public community meetings with MAJ Coordinators for providing necessary information on the ADR policy and continue to provide legal aid focusing on ADR policy with the collaboration of the Districts via Unit of Good Governance in the program **"Muturage wirengana hari Ubuyobozi"**.

This strategy enables citizen to learn about alternative dispute resolution (ADR) methods like mediation, conciliation and arbitration, which frequently result in quicker solutions than traditional court procedures, by offering public legal advice. This focus on alternative dispute resolution (ADR) not only reduces the workload for judges but also fosters community cohesion by promoting communication, and amicable resolution of conflicts. Communities that have easy access to ADR mechanisms are better able to resolve disputes amicably and early on, building stronger bonds and mutual understanding and good relation rather than conflict.

C. Faith based organizations involved in ADR

Catholic Church of Rwanda

The church has established ADR organ called (Commission for Peace and Justice) responsible for promoting peace and justice using mediation approach. The organ is established at all levels from the lower level: basic church called Umuryango-Remezo to the diocese. Selected volunteers are trained on relevant laws and mediation techniques and they get in conflict resolution and do counseling for couples in troubles and in awareness raising on peace and justice. The organ aims to promote justice, peace, and reconciliation in the tradition of Catholic social doctrine and helps enforce human rights.

2. Eglise Presbyterienne au Rwanda

In the efforts to promote unity and reconciliation the church established **"URUMURI club"** composed of genocide perpetrators and genocide survivors who reconciled. The church intervenes in education and communication on unity and reconciliation in the community using testimonies. The church also supports schools to form clubs called **"Peace Keepers"** in charge of mediation and train them. The church initiated Urumuli club that uses dialogues to handle issues among people and do different tours testifying on what happened and the need for reconciliation. They offer trainings for students called "peace keepers" deployed in schools. The church uses a **"conflict tree"** and **"cure-d'ame"** (gutega amatwi) as tools/techniques for mediation. The club offers pre-nuptial counseling (Inyigisho z'umubano) and trains pastors on how to do pre-nuptial counseling. It also provides advices to married couples (Ishuri ry'umuryango).

3. The Pentecostal Church of Rwanda (ADEPR)

The church has a healing and reconciliation unit that plays a role in uniting genocide perpetrators and survivors, prepares healing sessions with genocide survivors to welcome and live with genocide perpetrators who have completed their sentence of imprisonment. They also train genocide perpetrators on how to live with others in the society. They give cows (Kuremera) to the released person who will in return give the calf to the survivor. This strengthens relationships between genocide survivors and perpetrators. ADEPR has pastors who are in charge of resolving domestic conflicts and has committees in charge of conflict resolution among men, women and youth. Pastors' wives and overall body of conflict resolution called the CEA are also involved in mediation and dispute resolution in the church.

4. Rwanda Muslim Community (RMC) – Islam Rwanda

It has a department in charge of conflict resolution and justice from the mosque level to the national level. RMC institutionalize dialogues on **‘family without conflicts’** that are conducted every two months as well as specific dialogues for new married couples on how they should handle family issues. They offer training to members of family conflict resolution team. They are also involved in resolving conflicts on land and succession. They use AMI approach called Amataba y’Amahoro whereby one group of 16 perpetrators come from the pick of a hill (akanunga k’ubugome-killers) and survivors stand from the valley signified as area of grief (igikombe cy’amaganya-survivors) and meet in the middle called “amataba” in Kinyarwanda where they start fruitful discussions on reconciliation.

The mediators give them (perpetrators and survivors) the chance to list what each group thinks about the other group, then they exchange papers. Each group learns about what the other group thinks about them. They finally proceed to the step of shaking hands which is **“Amaboko mahire”**, finally they end up by admitting that what brings them together is greater than their differences. After parties are united, they make contracts of good neighborhood. RMC conduct reconciliation dialogues in prisons to impact the attitudes and frustrations of prisoners.

5. Prison Fellowship (PFR)

PFR uses the approach of conducting community dialogues and mediation meetings with all prisoners especially genocide perpetrators to help them accept that they have committed genocide and seek for forgiveness from survivors. PFR also prepares the community to receive genocide perpetrators after completing their punishment. The focus is put on building trust between two parties, the perpetrator and the survivor (uwishe n’uwiciwe). A prisoner who is convinced, writes a letter seeking for forgiveness from the victim. In such a case, PFR facilitates a physical meeting and moderates the session to reach common ground. It also conducts psychosocial community group healing. Those who have walked the journey of unity and reconciliation stay in village of unity and reconciliation (Imidugudu y’ubumwe n’ubwiyunge).

6. Anglican Church of Rwanda

The church has conflict resolution organs from the lowest level to the highest level of the church structure. They use the word of God as conflict resolution approach to win the hearts and convince parties in conflicts to change their minds. The church has organs responsible of settling disputes called **Mothers Union, Fathers Union** and **Youth union**. The organs organize initiatives that aim to unify families in conflicts in particular and build families centered on Christ. Those initiatives include ‘but are not limited to home visits to families with issues.

Redaction team

AMAHAME NGENDERWAHO MU GUKEMURA AMAKIMBIRANE HATISUNZWE INKIKO

Mu kugera ku ntego z’iyi politiki hari amahame ngenderwaho ari yo:

- **Gukemura amakimbirane hatisunzwe inkiko bigomba kuba umuco n’ibikorwa by’abaturage ubwabo:** Iyi Politiki igamije kwagura uburyo bwo gukemura amakimbirane hatisunzwe inkiko bukoreshwa n’abaturage (mu miryango, aho bakorera akazi cyangwa ibikorwa byabo bya buri muni). Muri rusange, ibi ni uburyo bwo kwagura imbumbabitekerezo y’Abunzi ku bundi bwoko bw’amahuriro y’abaturage no kwagura ububasha bwa Komite z’Abunzi. Ibi bikaba bijyanye n’ihame ryo kubaka ubushobozi bw’abaturage mu kwishakamo ibisubizo birambye.
- **Gukemura amakimbirane hatisunzwe inkiko byubakirwa ku byifuzo n’inyungu by’abafitanye ikibazo:** Ikigamijwe ni uko hashyirwaho uburyo bwo kumvikanisha impande zifitanye amakimbirane binyuze mu nzira z’ibiganiro, byibanda ku byifuzo n’inyungu n’uburenganzira by’impande zifitanye amakimbirane.
- **Kwitabaza gukemura amakimbirane hatisunzwe inkiko bikorwa ku bushake:** Ihame ry’ibanze ry’ubuhuza n’ubutabera nsanasano ni uko bugibwamo ku bushake. Umuntu ashobora gusabwa kwitabira ubwo buryo, ariko abantu bireba bashishikarizwa kwifatira ibyemezo, harimo no gukomeza cyangwa guhagarika iyo nzira. Bwa nyuma, abitabiriye inzira y’ubuhuza ni bo bifatira icyemezo ku biva muri icyo gikorwa; ubwumvikane bugomba gukorwa ku bushake kugira ngo bugire agaciro.
- **Kugira ibanga:** Ihame ni uko ibiganiro mu buhuza bigomba gukorwa mu ibanga, ni ngombwa kumva ko mu bintu byose bikorwa mu buryo bwa ADR bifatwa nk’ibanga. Nta kintu na kimwe mu bikorerwa mu bwunzi kigomba kugezwa mu rukiko kandi nta mwunzi ushobora guhatirwa gutanga ubuhamya ku byabereye mu gikorwa cy’ubwunzi.

- **Gukorerwa mu rubuga rutekanye:** Ihame ni uko amakimbirane akemurirwa ahantu hatekanye, abafitanye amakimbirane bizeye ibanga ry'ibyo bavuga n'abo babwira kandi ntawe uhejwe cyangwa ngo atotezwe. Ibi bibabashoboza kuganira batiziga maze bakagera ku gisubizo cy'ukuri ari na cyo kizahura umubano wabo wari wazambye.
- **Kwita ku ihungabana:** Ihungabana rishobora kuba icyarimwe impamvu n'ingaruka z'amakimbirane cyangwa ikorwa ry'ibyaha kandi ibyo ni ko bigenda uko ibisekuru bigenda bikurikirana. Uburyo bwo gukemura amakimbirane hatisunzwe inkiko mu Rwanda bugomba kwita ku ihungabana kugirango ritabuza abantu kwitabira ibikorwa byabwo no kubibyaza umusaruro, hagamijwe no gukumira ko hari umuntu wakongera guhura n'ihungabana cyangwa se kurihererekanya ibisekuru ku bindi rigasa n'irihindutse karande.
- **Kuba uburyo buboneye, buhuza ibikorwa, kandi bwubakiye ku nzego z'ubumenyi bw'ingeri zinyuranye:** Hazakoreshwa uburyo bunyuranye kandi bwubahirije amategeko hagendewe ku bibazo bisuzumwa kandi butanga umusaruro.
- **Kugira ibiganiro bihoraho by'abafatanyabikorwa:** Ibiganiro ni bwo buryo bukoreshwa muri Politiki yo Gukemura amakimbirane hatisunzwe inkiko. Ibiganiro rero bizakomeza hagati y'abafatanyabikorwa n'abagenerewabikorwa hagamijwe gukomeza kugera ku buryo buhamye bwo gukemura amakimbirane hatisunzwe inkiko.

Ikiye y'Ubwanditsi

AKAMARO KO GUKEMURA AMAKIMBIRANE HATISUNZWE INKIKO

Ku bafitanye amakimbirane:

- i. Bigarura imibanire myiza kuko abagiranye amakimbirane bagira uruhare mu kwishakira igisubizo,
- ii. icyemezo gifatwa mu nyungu z'impande zose zirebwa n'amakimbirane,
- iii. Haboneka igisubizo mu buryo bwihuse, burambye kandi cyafashwe mu bwisanzure,
- iv. Ni igisubizo kibungabunga ubuzima bw'umuntu kuko ikibazo kiba cyakemuwe mu ibanga ugereranyije no mu nkiko,
- v. Kudasesagura umutungo bitewe no gusiragira mu manza,
- vi. Ibyo impande zose zemeranyijwe biroroha kubishyira mu bikorwa

Kuri sosiyete:

- Iyo gukemura amakimbirane hatisunzwe inkiko bihindutse umuco bituma sosiyeti ibaho neza ndetse n'amakimbirane akagenda agabanuka.
- Kuri sosiyeti nyarwanda ubu buryo bwo gukemura amakimbirane butuma habaho imibanire myiza mu muryango inyangano n'ihohoterwa bikagabanuka ku buryo bugaragara.

Ikiye y'Ubwanditsi

AFTER AWARENESS AND TRAINING OF LEADERS AND THE COMMUNITY, ARDHO IS COACHING COMMUNITY MEDIATION COMMITTEES

From 14 to 17, July 2025, ARDHO started sessions of Coaching community mediation groups in charge of ADR in Rubavu District, Rugerero Sector. The presentation of ARDHO focused on the implementation of Project named Strengthening local leaders and community engagement in Alternative Dispute Resolution and family conflicts resolution in the framework of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) policy.

During the Session, participated the delegation from Swiss Development Cooperation Agency-SDC from Zimbabwe and Rwanda. Local leaders and citizen actively participated in discussions, expressing their commitment to implementing the law effectively and ensuring that the community is aware of its provisions and will take initiative of protect and fulfil and have also the obligation to respect and stand up for the implementation of ADR Policy instead submitting claims to the courts.



The Executive Secretary of Rugerero Sector, Program Manager of ARDHO and SDC delegation during a coaching session with mediation committee on ADR Policy and new family law at Rugerero Sector, Rubavu District on 17 July 2025.



The SDC delegation and Citizen during a coaching session with mediation committee on ADR Policy and new family law at Rugerero Sector, Rubavu District on 17 July 2025.

The Executive Secretary welcoming guests during a coaching session with mediation committee on ADR Policy and new family law at Rugerero Sector, Rubavu District on 17 July 2025.

Redaction team

IMPACT OF STRENGTHENING LOCAL LEADERS AND COMMUNITY ON ADR

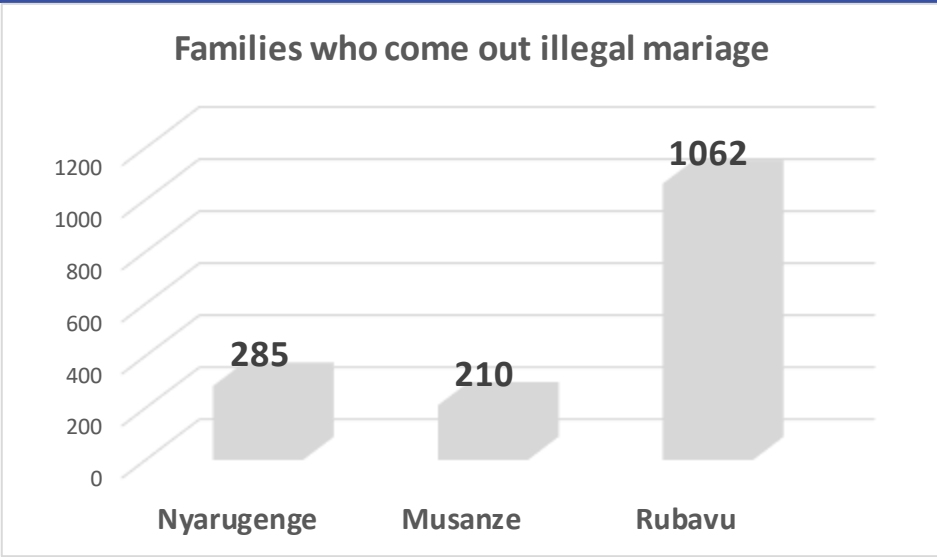
The project enables citizen to learn about alternative dispute resolution (ADR) which frequently result in quicker solutions than traditional court procedures. This focus on ADR not only reduces the workload of cases in courts but also fosters community cohesion by promoting peaceful and amicable resolution of conflicts. Communities that have easy access to legal advice are better able to resolve disputes amicably and early on, building stronger bonds and mutual understanding and good relation rather than conflict. By advocating for the use of ADR, providing training and mobilising citizen to use this mechanism, and directly assisting individuals in need, ARDHO is not only supporting the government's efforts but also fostering a more peaceful equitable and accessible justice for all Rwandans. Recent statistics from the project underscore the growing influence of ADR methods in the tree district of operation.

In the tree districts Nyarugenge, Rubavu, and Musanze where the project is implemented, citizen took a problem-solving approach to justice anchored on community participation in a variety of dispute resolution forums. Citizens resolved conflicts of all kinds into families, in the neighbourhood and sometimes before leaders at different levels of the administration, in a manner that safeguards peace, rebuilds relationship and consolidates social cohesion and ARDHO encouraging parties in dispute to try to reach an amicable settlement.

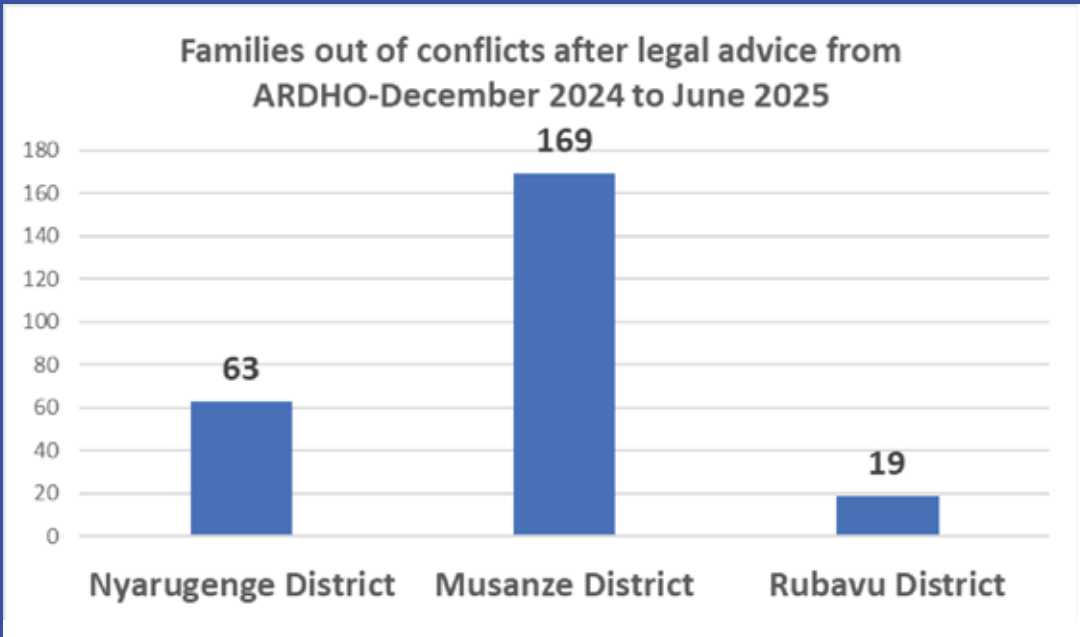
For the period of December 2024 to June 2025, the changes continued to be observed within families, where families that had come out of conflicts were awarded as a significant recognition in front of the community. Additionally, families that had been cohabiting without legal marriage were formally married in accordance with the law — with 1,064 families in Rubavu, 285 in Nyarugenge, and 210 in Musanze, particularly in the sectors of Muko and Nyange.



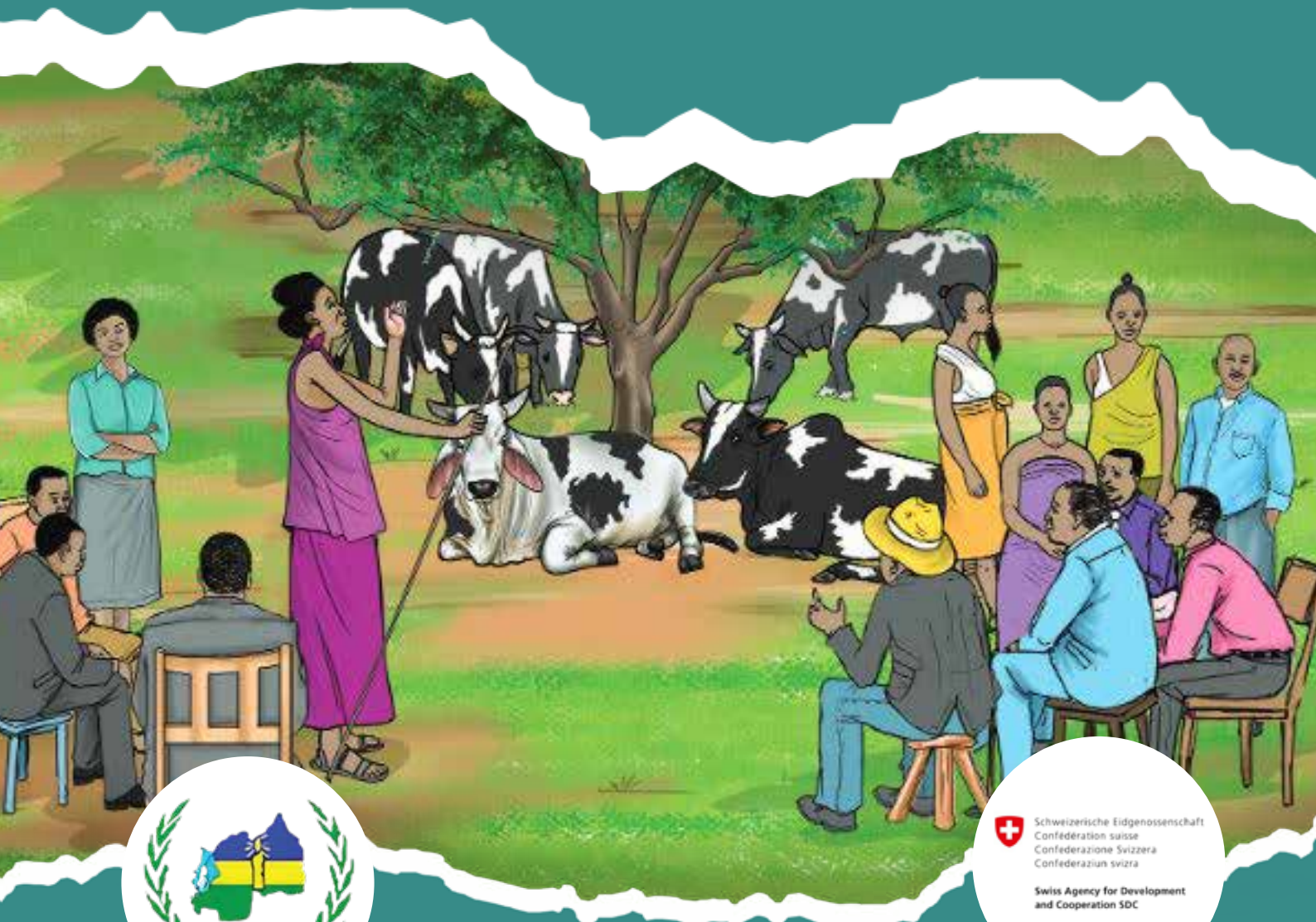
A family from Musanze District receiving award by ARDHO and security organs for being out of conflicts on 8 March 2025 during the celebration of women's day



These efforts help citizens prevent family conflicts, combat gender-based violence in their families, and remove barriers that hinder development. They also promote unity and the building of a capable and peaceful family.



The number of families documented out of conflicts after legal advice and mediation by committees at sector level is 251.



**ASSOCIATION RWANDAISE POUR LA
DEFENSE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME (ARDHO)**



B.P 1868 Kigali-Rwanda Tél: +250 788351377 / + 250 788602848
E-mail: ardho1990@gmail.com | Website: www.ardhorw.org