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المنظمة العالمية للحركة الكشفية

Amahoro Amani - DVD highlights project's success

Author: Vanessa Von der Muhll

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One of the huge projects set up by the Amahoro

Amahoro project- a joint World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) initiative of promoting Peace in the Great Lakes region of Central Africa.

A DVD has been created featuring highlights of the first two years of the project. The eight-minute film, which has been broadcast on national TV in Burundi, Rwanda and DRC, examines nature and objectives of the project and shows young people participating in actions in the name of peace.

Over a two-year period the project mobilised people between the ages of 15 and 25 engaging them in the process of peace building in Rwanda, Burundi and the provinces of North and South Kivu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

More than 21,000 Scouts, Guides and volunteers from those countries, plus other associations in Africa and Europe, began working in October 2005 to bring people together to help end the ethnic violence that has devastated the region during the past decade.

‘The project was a concrete response to the reality of the region,’ says Nadine Kaze, International Commissioner of the Association Des Guides Du Burundi. ‘It was necessary to find a way for people of different tribes and nations to get to know each other, if they know each other, they will see how they are alike, and hopefully all the bad stuff will stop.’

As such a large percentage of the population of the region is under the age of 30, it was important that young people play a key role in the project, which is where the Scouts and Guides came in. 420 of them, young men and women aged between 15 and 25 from the seven Great Lakes associations, were trained for, and ran all of the activities. They have been trained as community mediators, and work to combat ethnic prejudice, manage conflicts without violence and train others to do the same.

One of the highlights of the project was the Peace Caravans in July 2007. More than 250 young Burundians, Congolese, and Rwandans travelled across the Great Lakes, sharing messages of peace and running activities with local communities and war victims. By the time the Peace Caravan has reached Bungere Hill in Burundi, another 750 young people had joined in.

When the Caravan stopped, the International Peace Gathering kicked off. The walkers were joined by Scouts and Guides from around the Region as well as Europe to celebrate and evaluate the work of the Community Mediators and Peace Agents. The gathering featured lots of festivities, discussions and debates, as well as a Global Development Village where young people could participate in workshops.

The project Amahoro Amani has evolved into what will be a longer running project with several phases. ‘Peace is a continuous need,’ says Gilbert Mussumba, project director of Amahoro Amani. ‘That’s why we are going to continue the remarkable actions of the Community Mediators in favour of peace building.’

The DVD is available in English and French. You can get your own copy by emailing amahoro.amani@yahoo.fr

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Article contributed by Paola Cervo & WAGGGS Communications Team.