

# Youth for Peacebuilding in Burundi II (Y4PBB II)

## Final Report

August 1, 2017 – March 31, 2019



*A Y4PBB II beneficiary at the small business he set up with Cash-for-work income, November 2018*

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AVSI	<i>Associazione Volontari Servizio Internazionale</i> / International Volunteer Services Association
BIF	Burundi Francs
BRB	<i>Banque de la République du Burundi</i> / Burundi Central Bank
CEDAC	<i>Centre d'Encadrement et de Développement des Anciens Combattants</i> / Center for Training and Development of Ex-Combatants
CFW	Cash-for-Work
CNDD-FDD	<i>Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie-Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie</i> / National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FENACOBUR	<i>Federation Nationale des Coopes du Burundi</i> / National Federation of Coops from Burundi
FNL	<i>Front National de Libération</i>
ELEDs	Entrepreneurship Learning Exchange Day
FY	Fiscal Year
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IGAs	Income Generating Activities
JJB	<i>Jumelage Jeunesse Burundi</i> / Youth Twinning for Burundi
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MELP	Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning Plan
MUTEC	<i>Mutuelle d'Epargne et Crédit</i> / Savings and Credit Mutual
OD	Organizational Development
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
PARCEM	<i>Parole et Actions pour le Réveil des Consciences et l'Evolution des Mentalités</i> / Word and Actions for the Awakening of Consciousness and the Evolution of Mentalities
RESO	<i>Rassemblement, Echanges et Solutions entre Organisations</i> / Assembly, Exchange, and Solutions among Organizations
SOLINFO	<i>Solidarité Informatique</i>
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollars
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association
VT	Vocational Training
Y4PBB	Youth for Peacebuilding in Burundi
Y4PBB II	Youth for Peacebuilding in Burundi II

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In August 2017, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) awarded Cooperative Agreement No. AID-695-A-17-00001 to Counterpart International (Counterpart), to implement the Y4PBB II program. This program was designed as a follow-on to the Youth for Peacebuilding in Burundi (Y4PBB) program (Associate Cooperative Agreement No. AID-OAA-LA-14-00007 under the Leader with Associate Cooperative Agreement No. DFD-A-00-09-00141-00) implemented from July 2014 to July 2017. The goal of the Y4PBB II program was to lower the risk of youth participation in violence in Burundi and provide alternative long-term socio-economic opportunities for young people (ages 18 to 35-years-old) for positive civic engagement and income generation. This goal was supported by three interrelated objectives:

- 1) Build the capacity of local CSOs to empower and support youth-led, positive civic engagement;
- 2) Enhance economic incentives for youth to participate constructively in society; and
- 3) Support youth-led peacebuilding and violence prevention activities.

To achieve these objectives over the course of the Y4PBBII project, Counterpart partnered with three local partners – Jumelage Jeunesse Burundi (JJB), Parole et Actions pour le Réveil des Consciences et l'Evolution des Mentalités (PARCEM), and the Centre d'Encadrement et de Développement des Anciens Combattants (CEDAC). Through these partners, Counterpart engaged youth in meaningful activities that improved their civic engagement and expanded their personal development opportunities.

Y4PBBII activities were implemented in areas that were identified as “hotspots” of conflict prior to the 2015 elections. These areas had high incidences of violence and limited conflict prevention initiatives. These areas include 12 rural communes of the provinces of Kayanza, Ngozi, Gitega, Karuzi, Ruyigi, Rutana, and Bujumbura Mairie.

The Y4PBB II Theory of Change proposed that if youth are provided positive alternative livelihood opportunities and peacebuilding skills, and the enabling environment for economic opportunities and participation in governance, then youth, especially those in high-risk areas, will be less likely to become involved in violent conflict and can better contribute to long-term peace and stability in Burundi.

Y4PBB II strengthened the organizational capacity of its partners and, through sub-awards to the three CSO partners, aimed to:

- Support youth-led advocacy at the communal/municipal and national levels;
- Provide long-term socio-economic opportunities for youth through entrepreneurship, and vocational trainings;
- Facilitate access to startup capital (via microfinance institutions and CFW activities);
- Support youth-led grassroots dialogues and outreach activities; and
- Promote cross-learning through exchange of experiences on entrepreneurship.

Despite some challenges (discussed throughout this report), Y4PBBII achieved several outcomes.<sup>1</sup> It laid the foundation for peace as hundreds of youth gained skills and access to safe spaces to resolve conflicts and are less vulnerable to political manipulation. The advocacy platforms are committed to holding local authorities accountable and supporting young entrepreneurs. The Village Savings and Loans Associations

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<sup>1</sup> Counterpart commissioned a final external program performance evaluation to document programmatic achievements and draw lessons learned about the project's likelihood of achieving long-term positive changes in the prevention of violence among youth in Burundi to inform future programs. The findings and recommendations have been included in various sections of this final report.

(VSLA), set up by JJB, enable youth to access capital through internal lending and eventually through a JJB microfinance branch. Implementing partners now have increased capacity to access and manage additional funding to continue preventing youth involvement in violence, especially ahead of the 2020 elections.

A summary of key achievements is outlined in the table below.

*Table 1: Summary of key achievements*

<b>Advocacy Component</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 communal youth advocacy platforms implemented</li> <li>• 39 advocacy activities that resulted in:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Building of five markets;</li> <li>○ Setting up of a youth center;</li> <li>○ Stronger youth representation in local development bodies and processes; and</li> <li>○ Creating an enabling environment for youth civic participation and businesses through commitments by local authorities to offer young entrepreneurs tax breaks.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Seven national-level advocacy activities (three workshops, two press conferences, a radio show, and a radio campaign) brought the challenges faced by youth – including unfavorable repayment terms for loans, informal trade group fees, lack of transparency in recruitment, and the lack of a strong policy to support internships – to the attention of public authorities in a national-level advocacy platform.</li> <li>• Organizational Development support to Civil Society Organization (CSO) partners increased their capacity to independently implement similar peacebuilding programs with youth.</li> </ul>
<b>Economic Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 508 youth received startup capital, coaching, and trainings to help them develop the skills to set up their small business, resulting in an 88% employment rate and in a reduction of the risk of engaging in violence for 93% of participants.</li> <li>• 10 Entrepreneurship Learning Exchange Days (ELEDs) and a radio drama series boosted youth's confidence in launching their small business.</li> </ul>
<b>Conflict Resolution and Dialogue Sessions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 54 dialogue sessions engaged 1,179 participants to discuss local conflicts and commit to non-violent solutions, thereby increasing mutual understanding and tolerance for 83% of participants, therefore reducing the risk of violence.</li> <li>• In many communes, there has been an observed reduction in tensions, intimidation, provocations, and incidents of confrontation have ceased and opposing groups of young people can now meet and work together without incident.</li> <li>• Targeted theft/intimidations towards young returnees from Tanzania (in the communes in eastern Burundi) have reduced</li> <li>• Night patrols carried out by young people from the ruling political party have been suspended in some localities.</li> <li>• 15 outreach events brought together 8,600 people to strengthen social cohesion.</li> </ul>

## 2. POLITICAL CONTEXT

Burundi is a small country in the Great Lakes Region of Africa with a history of acute political instability and violent conflict. Over half of the population lives below the poverty line and more than two-thirds are under the age of 25.<sup>2</sup> With limited opportunities for sustained economic security, young people in particular are susceptible to manipulation that spurs them to participate in political violence. The 2015 presidential elections were widely protested; an attempted coup and the subsequent government response led to a humanitarian crisis with reports of human rights violations, extrajudicial killings, and the closure of civil society space. In the aftermath, the humanitarian and security situations remained tense as the situation was further complicated by malaria outbreaks, power and fuel shortages, and political disruptions. The International Criminal Court opened an investigation into crimes against humanity during the post-2015 conflict in October 2018, which prompted Burundi to withdraw from the international body two days later.

NGOs, in an increasingly shrinking space, found their activities monitored for any sentiment that could be perceived as hostile to the government. Many anti-corruption and anti-violence groups fled the country or were banned. For those that remained, the government-imposed rules and regulations that further restricted activity and impeded efficiency. For example, in 2016, Parliament passed a mandate that requires all foreign funding for local NGOs be processed through the Central bank.

Along with the challenges rooted at the national level, Y4PBB-II partners faced difficult negotiations and relations when collaborating with local administrations. In a select few cases, local officials posed extra hurdles, such as obtaining written approval from Provincial Governors. In one case, a planned dialogue was moved to a different commune after a local official attempted to change the selection process of participants to favor the incumbent political party. Local authorities also reacted negatively toward Counterpart and partner project staff after the release of an unfavorable UN human rights report. Government and local officials suspected NGO staffs of informing the international reports, promoting mistrust and lack of cooperation between the two.

Despite somewhat challenging political conditions, Y4PBB-II found its goals aligned with those of local partners, communities and fostered many allies within the government to help craft a better future for Burundi's youth.

### **Consequential challenges for Y4PBB-II included:**

#### May Constitutional Referendum

Less than one year into Y4PBB-II, anticipation of political violence grew around the constitutional referendum planned for May 17, 2018 that, if passed, would allow the incumbent president to stand for re-election. Group activities, including Y4PBB-II, were suspended on May 1<sup>st</sup> for a short time until it was confirmed that the referendum would not directly affect project activities or partners. Additionally, several beneficiaries were forced to flee temporarily, causing delays in project

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<sup>2</sup> [U.S. Agency for International Development \(2018\). \*USAID Burundi Youth Support Initiative Assessment\*.](#)

implementation. The referendum passed despite protest from opposition groups and reports of intermittent violence from human rights organizations.

### Suspension of INGOs

On September 27, 2018, the government of Burundi announced that it would suspend all international non-governmental organizations for three months, effective October 1<sup>st</sup>. In order to be reinstated, each organization had to re-register with the Ministry of Home Affairs by producing a file of requested documents to show compliance with the INGO Law of January 23, 2017. Counterpart also had to suspend subawards to its implementing partners during the period. Counterpart was re-registered on October 31, 2018 and lifted suspension of its partners on November 5, 2018.



### 3. PERFORMANCE AGAINST OBJECTIVES

#### **Objective I: Build the capacity of local CSOs to empower and support youth-led, positive civic engagement**

Despite the short three-year period of implementation, Y4PBB II laid the foundation for long-term impacts. The core of Y4PBB II implementation has been to strengthen CSO partners' organizational capacities, assist them to efficiently manage program funds, and enable them to continue implementing youth-led conflict prevention activities following the project.

#### **I.1 Organizational Development Activities and Results**

The project applied Counterpart's Organizational Development (OD) approach to build the capacity of CSO partners that engage youth. The approach started with baseline capacity assessments in FY18 Q1 which guided the development of CSOs' organizational development action plans. The assessment also identified areas for Counterpart to involve external support (details in Annex A) for program and finance management. CSO partners received support with gender and social inclusion strategies and fundraising strategies and received trainings on conflict-sensitive programming, photography, project design, and proposal development.

##### **Counterpart Organization Development Pillars**

1. Governance and Strategic Management
2. Program Management and Quality Control
3. External Relations
4. Human and Material Resources
5. Financial Sustainability
6. Accounting and Financial Management

The Y4PBB II finance team provided mentoring throughout the project with a focus on improving monthly reports and funds requests, efficient use of spending plans as a financial management tool, and guidance on developing cost-allocation policies. Tailored support was also provided, resulting in the procurement of essential equipment for JJB and PARCEM, and a training for JJB on data analysis using MS Excel. Organizational Development (OD) support was not continued with CEDAC after FY18 Q4 due to an internal organization conflict between the executive board members.

After the end of the subawards in FY19 Q2, the Y4PBB II team conducted the end line OD assessment to track progress and help CSOs identify the areas where they should continue to focus. JJB and PARCEM both experienced a slight improvement overall. JJB and PARCEM have been partners since Y4PBB and have made a significant improvement in their organizational capacity during the previous project.

- PARCEM saw its biggest improvement in Governance and Strategic Management, mainly because it renewed its governing bodies according to the new CSO law. It also improved on Program Management due to its new gender integration policy supported by Y4PBB II. Other pillars saw a slight decrease, partly due to the abrupt replacement of its finance team and challenges around the implementation of the cost allocation.
- JJB also increased its score on the Program Management pillar due to the development of a gender integration strategy and action plan, but otherwise remained at the same level along other measures. Financial sustainability is the greatest opportunity for improvement of both organizations. Fundraising and project design and proposal development trainings organized at the end of the program will help both CSOs to diversify their funding and attract new donors in the coming months to address this gap. The transfer of assets at the end of the program – laptops and furniture



to PARCEM, as well as a scanner, vehicle, and motorbike for JJB – will also improve their implementation capacity and competitiveness when submitting bids on proposals.

The program's Final Evaluation found that Counterpart contributed to its partners' growth, particularly in financial management, program planning and implementation, and reporting capacities. According to this Final Evaluation report, partners also perceive that the program increased their credibility with potential donors, local authorities, and community members.

Despite the success of Y4PBB II, the unresolved political conflict and shrinking political space continue to put youth at risk of being manipulated into violence during the upcoming electoral process. The program's focus on organizational development has been essential for local civil society organizations to build the resources and tools necessary to continue implementing the integrated approach that Y4PBB II has proven successful: teaching youth tools for non-violent conflict resolution and offering them opportunities to resolve conflict non-violently, while decreasing risk factors that make them vulnerable to manipulation, including unemployment. These CSO's will continue the work of Y4PBB II to ensure a better future for Burundi through promoting the welfare of its youth.

## I.2 Communal-level youth-led advocacy

Youth advocacy platforms created through the project provided youth valuable opportunities to inform public policies affecting their communes through peaceful, non-violent civic outlets. Each advocacy platform was composed of 12 youth residing in the commune who met monthly after an initial training to identify the priorities of youth in their commune, design an advocacy plan, implement an advocacy campaigns, and follow-up on commitments.

### i. Establishment of communal/municipal youth advocacy network

PARCEM launched 13 communal youth advocacy platforms to operationalize advocacy efforts addressing youth's needs. Counterpart and its partners identified 156 youth (see text box for criteria) from the previous Y4PBB project to be part of the 13 platforms – including representatives from peace committees, loan recipients, vocational training (VT) beneficiaries, job fair attendees, and dialogue participants, as well as other youth leaders. In all engaged communes, gender balance, diversity of social groups (displaced, repatriates, ex-combatants, etc.), and political affiliations were taken into consideration during the selection process. Ultimately, among the 156 platform members, 70 members (45%) are female while 86 members (55%) are male.

#### **Selection criteria for advocacy network members:**

- Be a beneficiary of Y4PBB (8 per platform) or a young local leader (4 per platform);
- For Y4PBB beneficiaries: be a positive model (be an active member of the peace committees, have developed a successful income generating activities (IGA) after VT training, have repaid your loan on time, have acted for peace after participating in dialogues, etc.);
- Have an interest in advocacy and be aware of youth issues (established through an interview process); and
- Be motivated and available.

### ii. Training of a communal youth advocacy networks in advocacy strategies and leadership principles

In October 2017, Counterpart funded a training for the PARCEM focal points on leadership and advocacy techniques to enable them to transfer the skills and tools necessary to the platforms in their respective communes. The trainings, held in December 2017, were meant to enable participants to better understand leadership values and advocacy techniques. Through supervised visits, Y4PBB II discovered that the advocacy trainings in some communes did not deliver the expected results - mainly because the trainers lacked training experience and conducted the trainings in French and Kirundi. Many participants were not fluent in French. With technical assistance from the Y4PBB II team, PARCEM decided to offer a follow-on training for the youth advocacy platforms to ensure effective advocacy plans were built for the success of the project. These trainings took place in February and March 2018 and resulted in the selection of three priority advocacy themes. The themes were then presented to other youth in the communes to ensure an inclusive and dynamic plan was developed.

### iii. Community consultation sessions and selection of advocacy themes

The advocacy platforms organized included two community consultation sessions with youth in their communes. The first series of larger consultations were meant to present the platforms to the community, hear from youth about the main issues they face, validate the advocacy themes chosen by the platforms, and further enrich them. These consultations took place in April and June 2018 and were a critical step in identifying priorities for the youth. Eighty-eight individuals selected to represent the communes' youth were invited to attend each of the larger consultations. This cohort was composed of 20 representatives from development associations, 20 representatives from political parties, 30 youth from religious groups, 10 representatives from cultural groups, and eight youth members of the local administration. A total of 1,304 participants attended; 42% were female and 58% were male.



*The Rango Youth Advocacy Platform presents itself to the participants during the community consultation, June 2018*

*Table 2: Attendance to community consultations*

Commune	Female participants	Male participants	Total participants
Muhanga	32	68	100
Ruhororo	23	77	100
Giharo	37	63	100
Ntahangwa	53	51	104
Mutaho	38	62	100
Bugendana	45	55	100
Gatara	43	57	100
Tangara	34	66	100
Kinyinya	39	61	100
Gisuru	75	25	100
Rango	44	56	100
Gihogazi	39	61	100
Buhiga	47	53	100

<b>TOTAL</b>	549	755	1,304
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Monitoring visits after the first series of community consultations in April revealed certain areas for improvement:

- Community consultations were led by PARCEM staff instead of by the youth platforms, deviating from the program's approach of supporting and working through youth platform members to ensure ownership of the process; and
- Pre-selected advocacy themes were not directly validated by youth.

Based on the findings of the monitoring visits, the Y4PBB II team held meetings with PARCEM to review the consultation format and to ensure a youth-oriented format for the youth advocacy platforms. After this adaptation, there was marked improvement in the subsequent consultations held in June with clear ownership of the process by the platforms and the validation of the themes. This series of consultations identified common themes and issues across communes:

- Addressing barriers for youth to establish profitable businesses: for example, requesting tax breaks for young startup entrepreneurs and the administration's support to reduce the informal fees requested by trade groups; and Supporting youth's civic engagement and developing their potential through the construction or improvement of youth centers, the inclusion of youth priorities in the communal budget, and improving youth's representation in the Community Development Committees.

The second series of community consultations took place in July 2018, after the youth communal advocacy platforms had drafted their advocacy plans to further develop the details, including the best allies<sup>3</sup>, targets<sup>4</sup>, and activities to be included. For these smaller consultations, 336 youth were invited (28 participants per commune), and they focused on potential allies for the selected topics.

#### iv. **Development of advocacy plans and communal-level campaigns**

During late June and July 2018, during several working sessions the platforms, with the support of the PARCEM and CEDAC communal focal points developed one plan for each of the three selected themes. These plans have helped the advocacy platforms work in a structured manner and improved their chance of success.

Communal-level advocacy campaigns were then conducted from August to November 2018. A total of 39 activities were organized by the communal youth advocacy platforms, including mini-workshops, meetings with different local authorities, letters, a radio show, community work, cultural days, and football matches, to draw the attention of targeted audiences to the aspirations of youth and barriers to their development (see Attachment B for the list of activities). Whether in meetings with select authorities or in the outreach activities, all were occasions for the youth advocacy networks, the targets, and allies to discuss the advocacy topics related to youth employment and entrepreneurship. The objectives of the activities were two-fold:

1. Convince the targets and allies of the problem raised by the youth at the communal level; and
2. Obtain credible agreements from the targets to act upon youth requests.

In response to the campaigns, communal administrative authorities made commitments to address youth's concerns. Examples of changes include:

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<sup>3</sup>Individuals or organizations who can help reach the advocacy objectives.

<sup>4</sup>Those who need to be convinced to bring the desired change.

- In Muhanga, a youth center was created and equipped following the youth platform's advocacy efforts.
- In Rango, youth were elected to the village development committees at 42% after sustained sensitizations efforts towards local leaders.
- In Ruhororo, Mutaho, Tangara, and Gisuru, the communal advocacy networks were invited to participate alongside other partners in the Communal Development Plan planning session and managed to integrate some of their priorities.
- In Kinyinya, five community markets were set up to help youth find a market spot and sell their goods or services.
- Most administrations supported tax breaks for young startup entrepreneurs. Degrees of support ranged from indefinite tax breaks for young entrepreneurs to only two-to-three months. Other officials mentioned that tax breaks will be granted to registered IGAs at the communal level. Most administration representatives promised to bring the topic to the communal council for approval.
- In Gatara and Ruhororo, communal administration authorities agreed to fund the youth projects proposed by youth in associations.

To ensure sustainability, in some communes including Muhanga, Gihogazi, Bugendana, and Ntahangwa, the members of the platforms plan to create youth associations to continue advocating for youth needs and aspirations in their respective communes. They will be able to continue advocating with the local authorities to increase accountability.

### 1.3 National-level youth-led advocacy

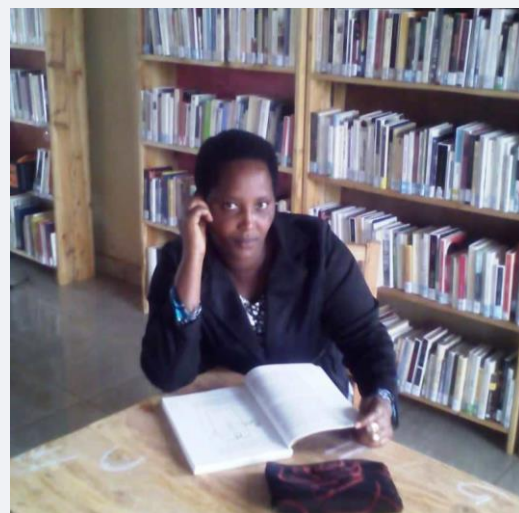
#### *Establishment of the national-level advocacy platform*



*Development of an advocacy plan by the Giharo youth advocacy platform, June 2018*



*Workshop to advocate for tax breaks, Gisuru, September 2018*



*KAMIKAZI Floride, member of the Muhanga youth advocacy platform reading in the new Muhanga Youth*



Many issues faced by youth at the communal level are related to policies or laws that are formulated at the national level. To bridge this gap, Y4PBB II helped establish an advocacy network at the national level. This network provided youth with a collective voice and highlighted the most important issues affecting youth around the country in relation to employment and civic participation.

Y4PBB II selected 3 youth from each communal platform that had demonstrated potential to represent their communities. Of the 39 members selected for the national platform, 15 are female and 24 are male.

**National-level youth advocacy platform member selection criteria**

1. Be a community leader
2. Be available and motivated
3. Have a good understanding of advocacy techniques
4. Literate in Kirundi; with additional capabilities in French, preferred.

**i. *Development of advocacy plans and advocacy campaigns at the national level***

PARCEM organized a working session of a youth-inclusive national-level advocacy platform in Bujumbura from August 8-9, 2018. It brought together the 39 youth members of the platform under the leadership of the PARCEM Project Coordinator to prioritize and select advocacy issues, establish thematic sub-groups (considering socio-political diversity and gender in groups), write short position papers, and draft advocacy plans. The two days brought lively discussions and debate with active participation of all involved.

Each of the three thematic groups then had a one-day meeting in August and September to refine their position papers and their advocacy plans. During the monitoring process, Y4PBB II identified incoherence between the position papers and advocacy plans. There was a lack of understanding of the specific context around each issue, unclear advocacy objectives, and activities that were unlikely to reach targets. Counterpart applied adaptive management good practices, and with coaching from Y4PBB II staff, improvements in the contextualization and coherence of the position papers and plans were finalized.



*Thematic group from the national-level platform in a meeting to refine their advocacy plan, August 2018*

The suspension of INGOs in October 2018 interrupted the advocacy activities timeline, but the advocacy campaign was able to start by mid-November. Over a one-month period, seven activities were implemented: two press conferences, one radio spot, three workshops, and one radio show to raise awareness on the youth priority issues identified in the Bujumbura conference. Youth demanded transparency, a national policy on youth internship that includes incentives for the public and private sector to expand career development opportunities for youth, the suspension or regulation of informal trade fees, better terms for microcredits issued to young startup entrepreneurs, and more opportunities where youth can express their concerns to elected officials (see Annex B for details on activities).

A dozen local media representatives (radio, print media, and online press) attended the press conferences and they were covered by regional online press as well. This wide range of coverage, largely positive, emboldened youth to continue their advocacy work as they say their communities mobilize around issues central to their livelihood. The effective implementation of activities and extensive media coverage ensured that the public and relevant community stakeholders/organizations (ministries, banks, etc.) joined in the discussion. Some of issues raised had not been featured as prominently, including the informal taxes which constitute a significant obstacle to small startup entrepreneurs. A wide range of individual, from government and local officials to community leaders committed to implementing the recommendations.



*Youth-led press conference as part of the national advocacy campaign on transparency in recruitment in December 2018.*

*"It is a miracle for me to be in front of the parliamentary commission leaders. I did not think we would have such interesting promises. If authorities are ready to listen to our grievances, it would be a foolish act to resort to violence when we claim our rights."*

**-Jean De Dieu Ndabiteze**, member of the national youth advocacy platform

Through the advocacy component, youth learned that they can express their needs and realize change without resorting to violence. Local authorities engaged in the project also learned that youth have integral contributions to make and that they are committed to the development of their community. This advocacy exercise has built trust between communities and leaders and paved the road for more inclusive local governance that is responsive to the needs of youth.

*"The problem of informal fees is a sensitive issue, especially since small business groups have established them as another source of income. This is the source of unfair competition and youth who aspire to business are stifled in their first steps towards self-employment. This practice goes against not only the National Employment Policy, but also against the National Youth Policy, and commercial ones. I understand that we need to work together for these fees to be regulated or simply removed."*

**-Adviser of the Ministry of Youth**, Posts and Information Technologies, during the workshop on informal trade group fees organized by the national platform

## **Objective 2: Enhance economic incentives for youth to participate constructively in society**

Y4PBB II, through its partner JJB, has provided 508 youth with both the skills in entrepreneurship and start-up resources (startup capital via microfinance or CFW, and startup kits) to allow them to develop and implement their own Income-Generating Activities (IGAs). Financial autonomy and an occupation, coupled with sensitizations on conflict resolution and social cohesion, has led to a decrease in the risk of engaging in violence for 93% beneficiaries<sup>5</sup>.

### **2.1 Microfinance component**

To support at-risk youth access to loans, Y4PBB II has started a loan and guarantee fund to cover high-risk loans to youth through the partnership with *Mutuelled'Epargne et Crédit* (MUTEC) and *Federation Nationale des Coopecs du Burundi's* (FENACOBU).

<sup>5</sup> Comparing the baseline and end-line survey for a sample of livelihoods beneficiaries (see indicator 1 in the PITT).

## MUTEC

The previous project Youth for Peacebuilding in Burundi (Y4PBB) had contracted MUTEC to issue the credit for beneficiaries of Bujumbura. Y4PBB II has contracted this microfinance to recover loans issued to 40 Y4PBB beneficiaries during FY18 Q1 and Q2. The agreement with MUTEC was closed in April 2018 and funds returned as per table 3 below.

*Table 3: Final reconciliation with MUTEC*

Description	Amount (BIF)
A. Amount issued as loans	24,460,000
B. Amount (principal) repaid by beneficiaries	5,030,945
C. Defaulted principal	19,429,055
1. Counterpart's share of defaulted principal (97%)	18,846,183
2. MUTEC's share of defaulted capital (3%)	582,872
D. Interest paid by beneficiaries	408,705
E. Amount due to Counterpart (B+C2)	5,613,817
F. Amount previously repaid by MUTEC to Counterpart	4,333,300
G. Remaining amount returned to Counterpart in April 2018 (E-F)	1,280,517

## FENACOBU

Microfinance activities were implemented in partnership with FENACOBU through a contract signed in August 2017 to recover loans from the Y4PBB project and issue new loans under Y4PBB II. There was a delay in the issuance of the loans due to challenging negotiations with FENACOBU management. In early Q3, however, Y4PBB II found an equitable agreement and the contract was amended on May 11, 2018. This ensured that FENACOBU could start to issue loans in collaboration with JJB. This delay meant that the loan period was reduced to a maximum of six months and the timing was no longer suitable for some activities, which decreased the number of beneficiaries interested in taking a loan. However, to mitigate this challenge in July 2018 Y4PBB II received approval from USAID to maximize the use of the credit fund, by issuing loans to the microfinance beneficiaries of Y4PBB who had repaid their previous loans on time and manifested the interest. The repayment period ended in December 2018 and the agreement with FENACOBU was closed in February 2019, when Counterpart received 112,189,708 BIF in reimbursements. Lessons learned on the microfinance component are detailed in Section 5 below.

*"At the beginning of the project I had no commitment to entrepreneurship and peace building in my community. I was really good for nothing. But finally, I accessed knowledge that awakened me to invest in income generating activities. I learned a lot and now I am devoted to building peace in my community."*  
- Dieudonne Nahayo, loan recipient, Gisuru commune, December 2018

## 2.2 Training in entrepreneurship and facilitating access to capital through microfinance

Building on the success of Y4PBB, JJB facilitated access to the microfinance for youth from the 12 rural communes along with entrepreneurship training. 293 at-risk youth received a loan along with the training and the resulting employment rate of the beneficiaries of microfinance component was the highest at 90.6%<sup>6</sup>. The Final Evaluation affirmed that keeping youth out of idleness was a key factor behind preventing youth's involvement in violence. The report noted as youth became better able to support themselves and their families, they were less vulnerable to resorting to violence.

<sup>6</sup> See PITT indicator 6 disaggregation.



JJB identified a total of 550 beneficiaries eligible to receive loans from FENACOBUR. The beneficiaries were divided into three groups:

- 240 models from the Y4PBB Phase 1 project who did not receive a loan during phase 2 (30 beneficiaries from each of the eight original communes);
- The 150 VT beneficiaries from Y4PBB Phase 2 (between 37 and 38 individuals from each of the four additional communes); and
- 160 new beneficiaries (40 beneficiaries from each of the four additional communes).

A committee composed of the JJB coach and the PARCEM focal point, assisted by a representative of the local administration, pre-selected 60 youth in each commune. A second committee, composed of a JJB representative and a Counterpart-Burundi staff member, selected 40 beneficiaries, considering gender quotas (minimum 30% women) and prioritizing the 18-25 age group.

### ***Training of beneficiaries in entrepreneurship***

Out of the 550 beneficiaries eligible to receive a microloan, 538 (including 246 females and 292 males) were trained on how to develop a business plan and set up and manage an IGA during two or three-day trainings held in FY18 Q1. This training covered the following themes: definition of key concepts (income-generating activities, business plan, depreciation of assets, financing plan, projected operating account, costs fixation); the creation process of income-generating activities and its management; project idea, identification of an income generating activity; environmental analysis; business plan development; and tools for managing an income-generating activity. These trainings gave participants the skills to develop strong business plans to support their loan requests and develop profitable sustainable businesses. It also increased the youth confidence and improve their marketing skills.

### ***Facilitating access to capital through microfinance***

Following the entrepreneurship trainings, JJB coaches supported youth to develop their business plans. Twenty-five youth decided not to request a loan because they had found employment, had moved, or were simply not interested. The remaining 513 beneficiaries (237 females and 276 males) submitted their loan request to FENACOBUR in FY18 Q2.



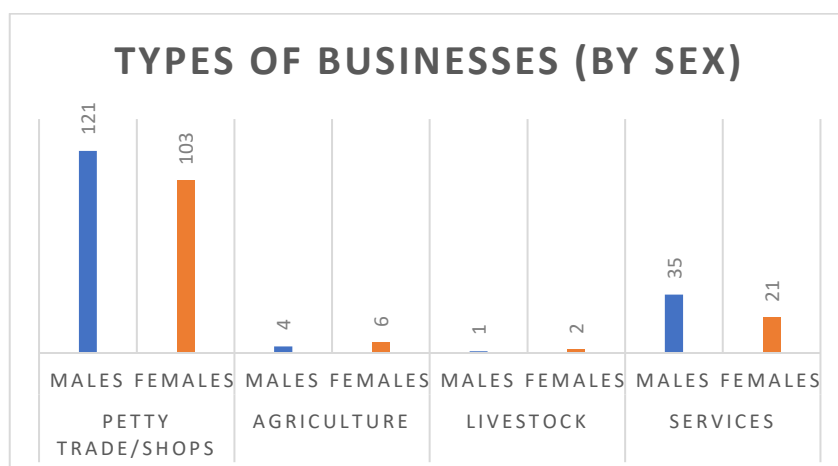
*Philbert Niyonzima, microloan beneficiary in the shop he opened with his loan, Ruhororo commune, June 2018*

In FY18 Q3, after signature of the contract modification, the FENACOBUR agents held meetings with beneficiaries to brief them on the loan and repayment process and visited potential beneficiaries to assess their existing business or talk with families and neighbors on the true situation of the beneficiary. From late May to late June 2018, a total of 255 beneficiaries (146 males and 109 females) received loans worth 96,503,500 BIF to launch businesses such as livestock trading, the sale of food items (mainly rice, tomatoes, potatoes, beans, meat, and fruits), small restaurants, shoe shops, second-hand clothes shops, veterinary products shop, motorbike or vehicle spare parts shops, hairdressing salons,

carpenters, welders, tailors, motorbike and bicycle taxis, the fabrication of cement pieces for home building, potato culture, second-hand bicycle business, the sale of mobile phone recharge cards, and mobile

money transfer services. As mentioned above, in July 2018 the credit fund was opened to Y4PBB beneficiaries so that an additional 38 beneficiaries (16 males and 22 females) received loans to support their existing businesses, and they too have received coaching. All in all, 293 beneficiaries (162 males and 131 females) in 12 rural communes have received loans and started or expanded their business. Graph 1 below shows that petty trade or small shops is the type of business favored by loan recipients.

*Graph 1: Types of businesses started by microloan beneficiaries, by sex*



Throughout FY18, the JJB coaches in each commune offered guidance to beneficiaries during the startup phase. They encouraged them to use the tools they learned during trainings, such as basic accounting journals. In FY19 Q1, JJB organized a series of one-day refresher trainings on entrepreneurship for 290 participants (162 males and 128 females), teaching them how to increase their profit margins and ensure timely repayment of loans. The trainer facilitated refresher sessions on IGA concepts: business plan, market study, financing plan, the amortization of assets and amortization of credit. Participants engaged in practical business plan development exercises, as well as exercises on management tools for IGAs. Other sessions offered participants the opportunity to share challenges their businesses face. Common challenges included low demand, lack of trustworthy suppliers, thefts, and debts to clients who remain unpaid. Based on the shared challenges, the consultant conducted exercises leading them to organize their businesses with the "Business Games" tool. Youth entrepreneurs were able to set up management tools that closely tracked their IGAs' finances.

The tailored training and coaching efforts were an important factor in the high rate of loan repayment (85% - see table 4 below for details). The strong collaboration with local authorities was another success factor and a main element behind wide variances between communes (as low as 50% in Gatara and as high as 99% in Mutaho). The quality of coaching and discouragements to repay by some spoilers also contributed to the variance. Applying good practices of Collaboration, Learning, and Adaptation (CLA), JJB organized a successful coordination meeting to discuss the challenge of non-reimbursement with the JJB and Y4PBB II teams as well as the FENACOBU credit manager, credit agents, and communal administration representatives. The participants discussed the objective of the project through livelihood activities and the expected contributions of the local authorities in safeguarding the credit fund. The communal administrators agreed to accompany JJB coaches in awareness sensitization around loan reimbursement by beneficiaries. The main reasons for defaulted payments include: beneficiaries that left the commune, delays in repayments due to sickness – which required payments for medical bills - or other events (e.g. house destroyed in floods), mis-use of loan funds (e.g. weddings), failure of IGAs to generate profits (some due to unfavorable climate for agricultural businesses ventures), and refusal of beneficiaries to repay loans.

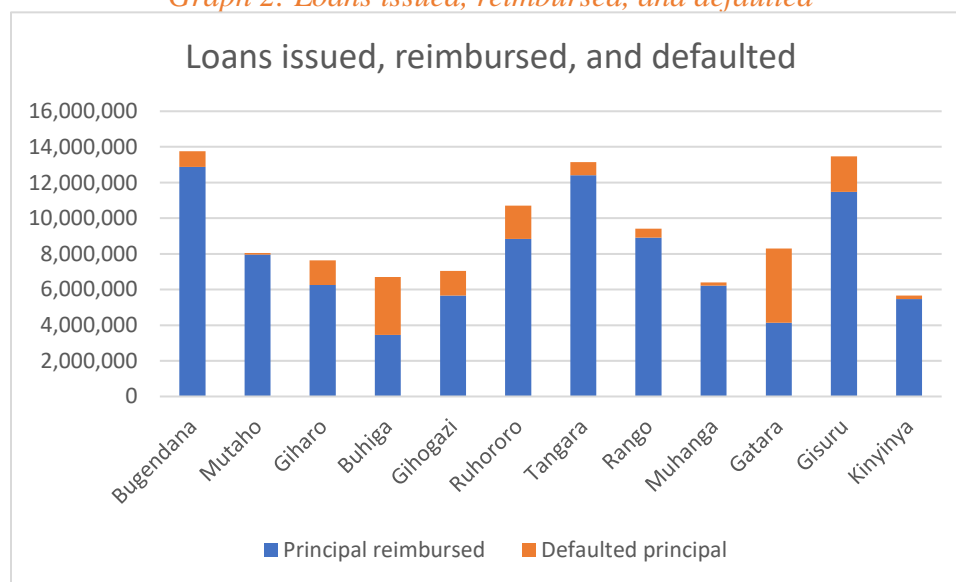
While some of these challenges program staff cannot mediate such as beneficiaries migrating out of the area of project implementation, moving forward Counterpart hopes to integrate more robust controls and trainings to ensure all beneficiaries succeed in generating successful startup businesses.

*Table 4: Loans issued and repayment rate as of December 31, 2018*

Commune	A. Loan received	B. Projected interest	C. Principal reimbursed	D. Interest reimbursed	E. Remaining capital (A-C)	F. Remaining interests (B-D)	G. Reimbursement rate (%)
Bugendana	13,750,000	1,650,000	12,871,941	1,575,808	878,059	74,192	94
Mutaho	8,050,000	824,000	7,950,389	822,000	99,611	2,000	99
Giharo	7,644,000	917,280	6,251,307	735,825	1,392,693	181,455	82
Buhiga	6,685,000	786,200	3,454,526	414,960	3,240,474	331,240	52
Gihogazi	7,050,000	810,000	5,656,591	725,857	1,393,409	84,143	80
Ruhororo	10,700,000	1,208,000	8,843,964	1,038,366	1,856,036	169,634	83
Tangara	13,150,000	1,578,000	12,403,316	1,524,653	746,684	53,347	94
Rango	9,410,000	1,129,200	8,901,975	1,089,812	508,025	39,388	95
Muhanga	6,400,00	728,000	6,215,440	752,000	184,560	0	97
Gatara	8,299,000	958,880	4,127,612	550,553	4,171,388	408,327	50
Gisuru	13,474,000	1,616,880	11,481,887	1,427,362	1,992,113	189,518	85
Kinyinya	5,655,000	602,600	5,471,819	582,668	183,181	19,932	97
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>110,267,000</b>	<b>12,809,040</b>	<b>93,630,767</b>	<b>11,239,864</b>	<b>16,646,233</b>	<b>1,553,176</b>	<b>85</b>

\*Color code: Green = good (90% or above); Yellow = average (80-90%); Red = poor (below 80%)

*Graph 2: Loans issued, reimbursed, and defaulted*



### ***Training for Village Savings and Loans Association's leadership***

Towards the end of FY18, JJB took the initiative to support beneficiaries who were eligible to receive microfinance credit in forming Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs). The same was proposed to beneficiaries of CFW and VT. VSLAs are group of 20-30 people who meet weekly to pool their savings and issue each other loans – a proven methodology that not only boosts financial autonomy of beneficiaries, but also reinforces governance principles by fostering a sense of community welfare and communal benefit. This allows those who benefited from a loan to continue growing their business and those who did not obtain a loan with FENACOBUR were able to start up a small IGA, thanks to the microloan received from their VSLAs. Moreover, they serve as a platform for youth from diverse backgrounds to meet, discuss, and find solutions to issues in the communities. Regular meetings create communication bridges which strengthen social cohesion. With VSLAs, every members' success is to the group's advantage: good business gives a member the ability to repay their loan and contributes to the growth of the group. This creates a network of support that is mutually reinforcing in the community.

Counterpart organized reinforcement training for the management committees of the VSLAs. The main topics included the general introduction of VSLA approach, the main management principles under which VSLA functions, the objective of VSLA, and its steps. This training emphasized concepts such as loans, good practices, and regulations related to saving/shares, and the security of the Association's funds.



*Simulation on the purchase of shares during the VSLA training*

The training supports the correct use of the VSLA methodology by the groups, maximizing their capacity to issue sustainable loans to members. The increase in participants' test scores by an average of 27 percentage points (from 59% on the pre-test to 86% on the post-test) attests to the gain in knowledge of VSLA principles and methodologies thanks to the training.

*"We are in this training to learn together and correct things we did that is not aligned to the NaweNuze (VSLA) methodology. It will allow us to improve the functioning of the groups because before this training we were committing some errors, out of ignorance."*

*-A coach from Ntahangwa commune*

### ***Transfer of the microcredit fund to JJB***

On March 6, 2019, USAID approved the transfer of the microcredit fund to JJB. A letter of agreement was then signed on March 28 between Counterpart and JJB, outlining the conditions for the use of this fund, with *Solidarites Informatique* (SOLINFO) – a partner of JJB – as a witness to this agreement. JJB will use the fund to issue loans to the VSLAs set up during the project through its own microfinance institution, *JJB Twiyunge*. This is a key element to ensure the sustainability of the project's achievements, not only maintaining access to capital for Y4PBB II beneficiaries but also providing opportunities to more youth in the future.

Y4PBB II supported JJB through the process of registering a microfinance group of the 4th category (as per the Banque de la République du Burundi (BRB)'s *Règlement no. 001/2018 relatif aux activités de microfinance*, Article 2) by providing the technical support for the finalization of the documents required to be submitted to BRB. JJB's registration request was submitted on March 6, 2019 and granted on April 19, 2019. The Microcredit Fund was transferred to JJB in May 2019.

## 2.3 Organizing cash for work to facilitate access to start-up capital in Bujumbura Mairie

Considering the challenges and lessons learned with microfinance in Bujumbura Mairie during Y4PBB, Counterpart adapted its approach and provided at-risk youth access to startup capital through cash-for-work (CFW) programming – an approach that was proven successful with 83% of participants managing to set up their small business. This methodology not only offered privileged access to a variety of trainings but also allowed frequent contact between youth, thereby reinforcing social cohesion.

### *Organizing cash for work activities*

JJB organized CFW activities, such as clearing roads and road-side gutters, for 40 days. 160 at-risk youth were selected by a selection committee (composed of JJB and Counterpart staff, assisted by local government officials) using criteria of residence (in one of the four target urban zones), age (18-35 years-old with a focus on 18-25), unemployment, education and vulnerability (returnee, displaced, etc.). The CFW activities took place in FY18 Q2 and Q3, and after each work session, youth received trainings in business plan development and IGA management techniques, in addition to sensitizations on conflict prevention (see table 5 for the days worked each month). A total of 156 beneficiaries (77 females and 79 males, out of an expected 160) regularly participated in the CFW and received a startup capital (5,000 BIF per day work, so up to 200,000 BIF each) to invest in small businesses.



CFW activity (clearing of a road side gutter) in Kamenge Zone

Table 5: Number of days worked in each zone

Zone	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Total
Kinama	2	11	10	9	8	0	40
Kamenge	1	8	10	11	8	2	40
Buterere	2	11	10	8	9	0	40
Cibitoke	1	7	10	11	10	1	40

*"I am an ex-combatant from FNL. Then in 2015, the protesters forced me to work with them. I was tired. I am proud to be part of this project that brings youth from all sides together. Now, I have hope that someday Burundi will live in peace. With the sensitization sessions, on our minds are appeased; they helped us feel free, discuss the conflicts we face, reinforce social cohesion and also our self-esteem. I didn't think I could achieve something. But now I have a project, I will start an egg business."*

**-Binfilis Ntiranyuhura**, CFW participant, Ntahagwa commune



### *Supporting the development of small businesses*

Throughout FY18 Q3, JJB coaches supported the CFW participants to develop business plans and maximize the chances that youth would use their payment for productive use. The coaches supported participants to effectively set up their business and provided intensive coaching of the CFW beneficiaries to improve IGA management. The coaching offered included regular monitoring of the implementation of the IGA, financial education and support to identify challenges and solutions. Beneficiaries who had not yet implemented their IGA were supported in redesigning their business and launching the IGA. With the continued support from JJB coaches, a total of 129 beneficiaries (65 females and 64 males), set up their income-generating activities (on a total of 156 CFW participants, representing 83% of beneficiaries – see table 6 below).



*Bushobozi Anitha working at the small business they started with their income from CFW and the coaching of JJB, September 2018*

*"I participated in the protection of my neighborhood, Kamenge, during the 2015 crisis. I was selected for the project, worked the 40 days and received 200,000 BIF which I invested in a small restaurant. I make on average 6,000 BIF (USD 3.40) of profit per day that allows me to cover for the basic needs of my wife and two children. I also learned conflict resolution skills and advised a neighbor who wanted to divorce his wife. This project gave me the capacity to be useful to myself, my family and my community, and to build peace."*

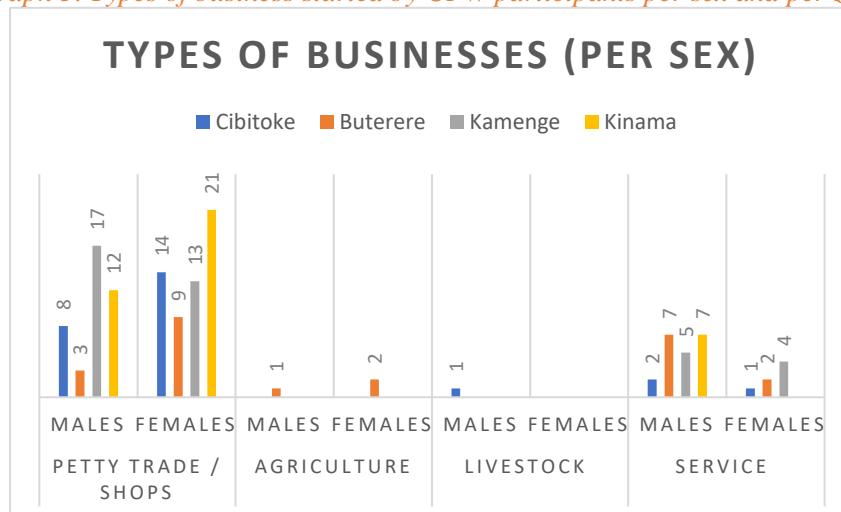
**Butare Belami**, 29-year-old CFW participant from Kamenge

*Table 6. CFW beneficiaries with a functioning IGA by December 31, 2018*

<b>CFW beneficiaries with functioning IGAs</b>			
<b>Zone</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Kinama</b>	17	18	35
<b>Buterere</b>	14	15	29
<b>Kamenge</b>	21	17	38
<b>Cibitoke</b>	12	15	27
	<b>64</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>Total CFW participants</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>156</b>
<b>Percent of CFW participants who started a business</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>83%</b>

Similar to microfinance beneficiaries, most IGAs set up by CFW participants are small shops or petty trading (shoes, soap, clothes, plastic bags, flour, porridge flour, avocados, hot-pepper oil, vegetables, fruits, *ndagala* (fish), beans, rice, tomatoes, tires, clothing, palm oil, local beverages), as well as service-based businesses (restaurant, the sale of phone credit units, hairdresser, and bicycle-taxi).

Graph 3. Types of business started by CFW participants per sex and per zone



## 2.4 Organize vocational training for graduates in the “école fondamentale” in Bujumbura Mairie

Due to the skills gained from the vocational training and to the startup kits provided by the program, 50 out of the 59 participants of this component were able to launch a small business (85% employment rate). These youths were previously out of school, with no employment skills, and mostly unoccupied, making them vulnerable to recruitment by violent actors as well as sexual exploitation.

### Selection of beneficiaries

JJB, with Y4PBB II’s technical assistance, identified the vocational training beneficiaries. The selection criteria included youth who: (1) completed the ninth grade but failed the state test (therefore, not being able to move on to the tenth grade) and who could not join any vocational training centers; (2) live in the Buterere, Cibitoke, Kamenge, and Kinama areas; (3) aged from 18 to 35 years-old (with an emphasis on the 18 to 25 age group); and (4) who are socio-economically vulnerable.

### Vocational Training (VT)

Counterpart used a participatory approach to determine the curricula for vocational training. Y4PBB II engaged youth, training centers in Bujumbura Mairie, and other organizations implementing similar activities, and opted to provide two types of vocational training: processing in-demand goods (soapmaking and food transformation), as well as mechanics, a course that was in high demand from beneficiaries. The vocational training was provided by three centers with which JJB signed contracts: *Ecole Technique Secondaire Kamenge* for automobile mechanics, *Centre National de Technologie Agro Alimentaire* for agro-food processing, and *Centre de Formation Professionnelle Kinama* for soapmaking. Throughout the training, JJB coaches followed-up with the beneficiaries to provide coaching and mentorship support.



Soap-processing students learn about packaging, June 2018



The table below summarizes the main training topics in each section, cumulating 450 hours per course.

*Table 6: Beneficiaries of VT and training topics in the 3 VT centers*

VT Center	Course	Participants			Topics taught from March-July 2018
		F	M	T	
<b>Centre Nationale de Technologie Agro Agroalimentaire</b>	Agro-food processing	16	2	18	Hygiene in food transformation Preparation of whole flour (pre-treatment, selection, washing, drying) Production of concentrated juice from passion fruit Fabrication of different concentrated mixed juices: mixed beet juice, mixed juice orange, passion and pineapple Processing flour from cassava, high quality flour Fabrication of doughnuts from the cassava flour Preparation of strawberry jam
<b>Centre de Formation Professionnelle Kinama</b>	Soap processing	16	4	20	Introduction: origin of soap Safety and security Different kinds of soap and their use Core module on the preparation of caustic soda. Training courses and practices on manufacturing: Basic soap Blue soap Omo-type soap Beauty soap (with fragrance) Packaging Visit of 4 soap production units
<b>Ecole Technique Secondaire de Kamenge</b>	Vehicle mechanics	0	21	21	Rules of the workshop Introduction to the car industry Safety and security Introduction to basic tools, equipment, reference manuals Introduction to measuring tools and diagnostic equipment The brake system Suspension Electricity (car battery, charging circuit, starting circuit, lighting circuit) Motor Cooling system Lubrication system Internship at Better Motor Garage

### *Supporting the development of small businesses*

JJB organized a three-day training in entrepreneurship in June 2018 to complement the technical skills taught at the VT centers. Participant assessments indicate that the most rewarding aspect of the training was when students learned to develop a business plan using table-top exercises. They also learned basic business management skills such as accounting, stock management, and marketing, as well as the basics about requesting and repayment of a loan (if they want a larger capital in the future to further grow their trade). Many students particularly appreciated the marketing module based on the “4Ps” approach (product, price, place and promotion), which they felt will help them increase their sales. Ninety-eight percent of

beneficiaries declared that the training was very useful. Moreover, the pre/post-test scores showed an improvement of 36% in the entrepreneurship knowledge of students.



*Distribution of startup kits to graduates from the soap processing course, August 2018*

group kits to set up these production units which continue to function. The soapmaking students formed four groups and received group kits required to produce soap, which they currently sell. While the starter kits were effective in starting up income generating activity, participants needed additional materials and support to scale the operations to meet client demands. Another lesson learned was that additional market research was necessary to assess market demand for some of these products. In addition cold chain shipping and food preservation were key challenges. For example, soy milk was sold fresh, not bottled, so they only produced based on orders given. Quarter 1 focused on tailored coaching of the beneficiaries to address these challenges. To increase profits, beneficiaries were also tutored on how to market their business and gain more customers. While the vocational training was successful in providing at-risk youth with skills and an income generating opportunities, which boosted their social status and reduced their risk of getting involved in violence, the income earned to date by participants is minimal. The lessons learned sections explores possible reasons and recommendations.

Startup kits were distributed during graduation ceremonies held at the end of July and beginning of August 2018. Mechanics students opted for individual kits with basic tools to start small vehicle repair service points. However, in the end, most decided to join existing garages as assistants.

Identifying mentors has been a challenge, and with support from JJB coaches, 12 youth (from a total of 21 mechanics graduates) have found a placement. The food-transformation graduates participated in one of two groups: one produced soybean milk and donuts that include soy flour, and the other produced mixed flour. They received



*Food transformation graduate selling mixed flour, September 2018.*

*"The 2015 crisis deepened the misery of our families, and I fell into despair because of the uncertainty of my future after I failed at the national test of the 9th grade. Then I was trained in soap processing with Y4PBB II and set up a production unit with my colleagues – this changed our lives. Even though I am a single parent, I can now meet my family's basic needs. I can pay medical fees and the school fees for my son. With the personal skills and other peace consolidation themes in which I was trained, I can positively respond to different solicitations and live peacefully in my community."*

**-Evelyne NSHIMIRIMANA**, 22-year-old VT graduate from Cibitoke commune

### ***Sensitization sessions***

Y4PBB II has contributed to the transformation of livelihoods beneficiaries into peace activists. Throughout the program, JJB delivered bi-weekly sensitization sessions on conflict resolution and social cohesion to the microloan component beneficiaries in all the communes of the project, as well as vocational training beneficiaries, to reinforce the beneficiaries' ability to resist violence and prevent conflicts (the CFW beneficiaries received these sessions after their work). The themes discussed include: causes and consequences of conflict, rumor management, the steps for conflict resolution, conflict analysis tools, human rights (in a social cohesion approach), non-violent communication as a tool for social cohesion, the prevention of gender-based violence, values of unity in the Burundian culture, the consequences of conflict and weak social cohesion, and the role of youth to support social cohesion. Beneficiaries used these teachings to resolve conflicts in their communities and shared these messages with other youth. For example, beneficiaries contributed to peacebuilding by preparing short plays to sensitize other youth in their community, which they have played mainly on market days. Another example is that just before the tense May 2018 referendum period, beneficiaries developed a communiqué supporting social cohesion and unity, which was read in church in the Mutaho commune.

*"The skills in non-violent conflict resolution have been helpful for my community: on January 28, a conflict aroused between two soccer teams (one from the IDP site and the other from the countryside) in Mutaho during an under-20-years-old provincial championship match, in relation to the age of the players on one team. I was able to handle it peacefully and put an end to it for the benefit of both teams, using the techniques I had learned. Today, I am so well trusted that I have been appointed the referee to follow up these teams wherever they shall go. I express my heartfelt thanks to JJB and CPI together."*

-Youth from Mutaho

*"I used to be supported as a child even if I had the energy to work and earn a living. With the project I received training in entrepreneurship and I exploited this opportunity to access a loan of 400,000 BIF that I invested in the trade of cassava and beans. I repaid the loan promptly and even started raising goats. Before the project, I used to spread rumors that disturbed my community, but I have stopped this behavior and now advise youth to put an end to their bad behaviors too."*

-Richard NDAYIHIMBAZE, 25-year-old returnee from Gisuru

### ***Review Meetings***

As part of Counterpart's applied CLA approach, JJB held coordination review meetings approximately every two months with its 14 coaches and central staff. These meetings focused on challenges, solutions, and best practices for working with the beneficiaries, as well as planning for the coming up period. These bi-monthly meetings were a new approach for JJB and they were implemented at the recommendation of Y4PBB II to facilitate remote, adaptive management. Overall these meetings were essential to more effective loan repayment and fostered more collaboration among coaches.

## 2.5 Radio drama on entrepreneurship and round table

To capitalize on the benefits realized from the entrepreneurship training for the program participants, Y4PBB II produced a radio drama series to teach basic entrepreneurship skills to a large audience. The six-show series was produced by Population Media Center based on modules developed by Africa Startup, an INGO specializing in entrepreneurship, and broadcast on five radio stations (Radio-Television Nationale du Burundi, Isanganiro, Rema FM, Colombe FM, and Humuriza FM) throughout March 2019. The series concluded with a round table discussion on youth entrepreneurship with entrepreneurs calling in with testimonies on how they managed to overcome challenges. The radio series not only taught basic skills to youth but motivated them to overcome their fears and to try setting up their small business.



*Radio Round Table on youth entrepreneurship*

*"This show helped us a lot on how we can cope with life hardness and which decision to make. Many of us have illusions that we will be employed in the public sector and we keep on waiting. We need to wake up and not lose time."*

**-Young listener**

## **Six-show Radio Series**

### **Sola's entrepreneurship journey**

**Episode 1:** Sola, who just lost her mother, needs to provide for her sisters, and is encouraged by Eric to pursue entrepreneurship and set up a small business.

**Episode 2:** Sola's donut production goes to waste because she could not find clients. It's an occasion for Sola to learn about market assessment. She needs to find something to differentiate her donuts from those of her competitors. A friend suggests she can produce a new kind of donuts with eggs.

**Episode 3:** Sola's egg donuts are a success. She increases her sales through marketing techniques. At the end, her donuts are so popular that she cannot meet demand and wonders how she can grow her business.

**Episode 4:** Sola learns about how to implement a good accounting system and makes use of sales techniques to increase her revenues. She ends up exhausted and starts thinking about how she can recruit other youth to help her in running her business.

**Episode 5:** Sola teams up with Eric to grow her business and hire employees. Some steal from her and she learns to be more careful. She also puts into practice recommendations to separate her money into capital, savings, and funds for daily use to ensure good financial management.

**Episode 6:** Eric and Sola want to grow their business further and bid to become a bread supplier for schools. They must open a bank account and pay taxes. The series ends on a small celebration that Sola's young employees organize to thank her for having pulled them out of the '*ligala*' and offered them jobs.

## **Objective 3: Support youth-led peacebuilding and violence prevention activities**

The 48 dialogue sessions organized by CEDAC contributed significantly to reducing violence and conflict. In many communes, tensions, intimidation, provocations, and incidents of confrontation have ceased; opposing groups of young people can now meet and work together without incidents; systematic theft/intimidations towards young returnees from Tanzania (eastern Burundi communes) have ceased; and night rounds of young people from the ruling political party have been suspended in some localities.

### ***Selection and training of dialogue facilitators***

Local youth leaders co-facilitated local youth dialogues with the support of CEDAC and Y4PBB II staff. The local committees, comprised of the CEDAC focal point, the PARCEM focal point, and a representative from the administration, selected the 24 facilitators – two from each commune. In the original communes (Gatara, Muhanga, Ruhororo, Mutaho, Buhiga, Gihogazi, Giharo, and Kinyinya), the dialogue facilitators were chosen from among the members of the peace committees that were set up during Y4PBB. In the additional communes (Bugendana, Gisuru, Tangara, and Rango), the facilitators were chosen from the members of the newly established advocacy platforms. The aim was to have one female and one male facilitator in each commune and for the facilitators to be of different ethnicities and political allegiances. Because it was not always possible to select a pair of facilitators that met the criteria, as was the case in six communes, a third facilitator was selected.



The CEDAC Project Coordinator trained the facilitators in Gitega to ensure they had the required skills to facilitate the dialogue sessions. There were 24 facilitators, 12 CEDAC focal points, and 12 PARCEM focal points in attendance, 17 of whom were female and 31 of whom were male. The training focused on interests-based negotiation techniques and how to facilitate a dialogue session. In addition to presentations, participants took part in group work and roleplays (dialogue simulation). The pre- and post-test average scores comparisons showed a 36% increase in the knowledge of the participants, increasing from 53% to 72%.



*Training of facilitators, Gitega, January 2018*

### 3.1 Organizing local dialogue sessions

The 48 dialogue sessions organized by CEDAC with Y4PBB II technical support engaged 930 participants (72 % males and 28% females), providing a space for diverse youth to meet, express their concerns on conflict and violence in their community, and commit to finding solutions. CEDAC organized the first series of dialogues in anticipation of the contentious referendum of May 2018 to build tolerance and resolve local issues.

The second series provided youth an opportunity to address some of the aftermath of the referendum. The goal was to address the intimidation and beatings of those who had supported the “no” vote, and more generally to bridge the gap between “yes” and “no” camps on the referendum. Importantly, this second series was intergenerational. It involved key leaders above 35-years-old to address issues that youth identified as being the responsibility of older generations. This approach was necessary to ensure decision-maker buy-in of session outcomes.

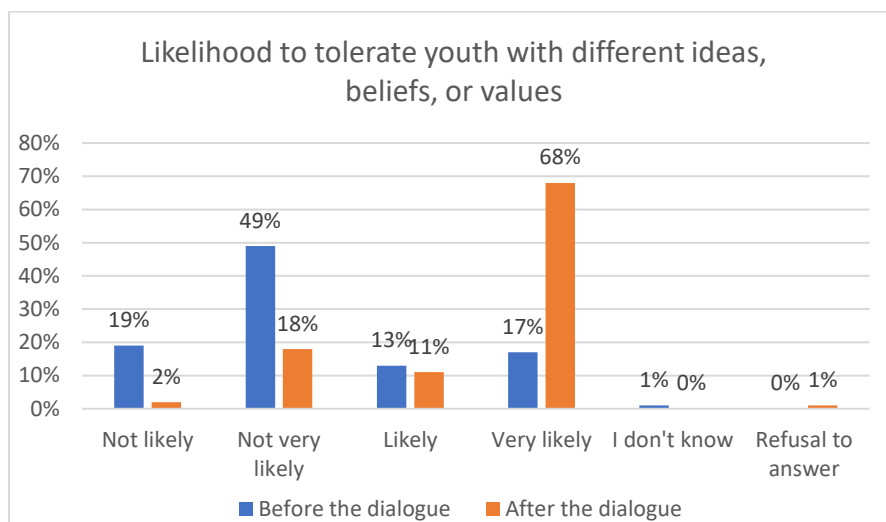
A third and fourth series addressed remaining issues in the commune, often localized conflicts. 83% of dialogue session attendees indicated that the sessions gave them a new perspective that led to increased mutual understanding and tolerance– which establish the foundation for non-violent social cohesion<sup>7</sup>. The final evaluation indicates that initially only 30% of respondents were likely to tolerate youth with different values, beliefs, or ideas before participating, but the proportion increased to 79% following their experience.

Commune	Sexe		Total participants
	Masculin	Féminin	
Gisuru	70	27	97
Kinyinya	70	30	100
Giharo	58	15	73
Gihogazi	55	25	80
Bugendana	47	29	76
Ruhororo	56	21	78
Muhanga	55	24	79
Mutaho	56	22	78
Rango	55	22	77
Buhiga	65	11	75
Tangara	56	22	78
Gatara	31	8	39
<b>Total participants</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>930</b>
<b>Pourcentage</b>	<b>72,4 %</b>	<b>27,6 %</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Figure 1 participants in local dialogue sessions*

<sup>7</sup> See PITT Indicator 12.

Graph 4: Change in tolerance levels before and after the dialogues



The project also increased opposition-aligned youth engagement in community development activities. In communes where steps were taken to ensure all citizens felt included, an increase in participation of members of opposition parties was observed. The sessions that focused on specific conflicts generally succeeded in supporting a non-violent resolution. One example is the issue surrounding motorbike taxis in Buhiga. The Motorbike Taxi Association leader in Buhiga, stated that *“when there are security problems, I now intervene alongside Viator, the representative of the motorbike taxis from Amizeroy’Abarundi, to resolve the situation - this was not possible before the dialogue session.”*

Generally, the dialogues contributed to reducing risks of violence by resolving local conflicts and reducing verbal provocations that could spark violence. They did so by creating bridges of communications between the two sides and encouraging youth to resolve conflicts non-violently and avoid the cycle of revenge. This is illustrated by the evaluation of the dialogue sessions where 73% of respondents declared that there was a high or moderate risk of parties in conflict engaging in violence before the dialogue session compared to 35% afterwards.



Local Youth Dialogue session, Bugendana commune, September 2018

*“An Imbonerakure who had the habit of ransoming returnees from Tanzania was denounced to the leaders of CNDD-FDD and he was sanctioned. This is the result of the previous dialogue session.”*

- Participant to a dialogue, Kinyinya



## Organizing outreach activities

CEDAC organized 12 outreach activities, primarily community development work or football matches, that brought together dialogue session participants and the general public to reinforce social cohesion and live the commitments that resulted from the dialogues. Local administration representatives and party leaders powerfully stood together to share messages of peace and cohesion, and the dialogue participants appreciated the occasion to meet again and strengthen relationships. The Final Evaluation highlighted how these symbolic events where politically-opposed youth played sports on the same team was an important opportunity for the community to witness this reconciliation. See details of the activity in table 7 below:

### Scaffolding Concepts: A Promising Practice in Peacebuilding

Counterpart utilized a scaffolding approach to fostering positive behavior changes, whereby community dialogues, peace messaging, and reconciliation initiatives are progressively implemented to ultimately enable diverse stakeholders to participate in social cohesion activities such as cash for work-based community development or football matches for youth enabled community participants.

Table 7: Outreach Activities per commune

Commune	Date	Activity	Approximate number of participants
Gisuru	July 7, 2018	Community development work, and football match	300
Giharo	July 14, 2018	Community development work, and football match	600
Muhanga	August 18, 2018	Football match	600
Kinyinya	August 25, 2018	Community development work, and football match	400
Mutaho	September 22, 2018	Football match	600
Rango	November 19, 2018	Football match	350
Ruhororo	November 23, 2018	Community development work, and football match	600
Bugendana	November 24, 2018	Community development work, and football match	400
Gihogazi	December 02, 2018 December 30, 2018	Football matches	500+800=1300
Buhiga	December 29, 2018	Community development work, and football match	200
Tangara	January 13, 2019	Football match	1850
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12 events</b>		<b>7,200</b>



Football match in Giharo (players on the left and participants on the right), July 2018

## Additional dialogues and outreach activities to support the reintegration of youth returnees

Following requests from the local administration to help address conflicts linked to the mass repatriation in Gisuru, Giharo, and Kinyinya, in FY19 Q2 the Y4PBB II team initiated six additional dialogue sessions to enhance the social

*The outreach event offered an opportunity to support the reintegration of returnees, Giharo, Feb 23, 2019*

reintegration of returnees. These brought together 290 participants (191 males and 99 females - returnees, host community members, religious leaders, and local elected officials) to discuss the attitudes and behaviors that enhance effective and efficient reintegration of returnees. These activities were an opportunity for participants to discuss conflicts that pushed the returnees to seek asylum, as well as current conflicts or situations that cause youth to seek asylum. Moreover, the Y4PBB II facilitator trained participants on the strategies to prevent violence that cause youth to seek asylum. The participants also identified mechanisms to further reinforce the social cohesion between returnees and host communities. Following these dialogues, of the observance of harassment and abuse (especially theft) aimed at returnees have significantly decreased.



Based on the successful model of the CEDAC outreach events, Y4PBB II organized community events in these three communes to strengthen social cohesion, convening 1,400 participants. In each commune, Y4PBB II organized a football match and community celebration which was an opportunity for the local administrative authorities to speak publicly in support of the reintegration of returnees. A true reintegration of returnees in the community will prevent conflicts and heal a divide that could otherwise be used by peace spoilers to manipulate communities before the upcoming 2020 elections.

### 3.2. Entrepreneurship Learning Exchange Days (ELEDs)

At the end of Q1 of FY18, JJB organized ELED sessions from December 26-29, 2017 in the four additional communes (Gisuru, Bugendana, Tangara, and Rango) for the new entrepreneurship beneficiaries. These ELEDs brought together young entrepreneurs who had developed their projects through microloans received through Counterpart's previous Burundi program (Y4PBB Phase 2). Additionally, 278 Y4PBB II microloan candidates (145 males and 133 females) participated. Former loan recipients shared their challenges and lessons learned from their business-building and microcredit experiences with the eligible loan candidates.



ELED in Bugendana, December 27, 2017

One important lesson shared was the need to monitor the loans and spending according to the plan. Former loan recipients also highlighted their personal growth and that through the creation of their own businesses they learned customer care skills.

*"I could not personally imagine that a person could apply for a credit and reimburse it without any problem. I have been thinking that only state officials can request and repay the credits. After hearing that the other young people have managed to grow with the credits received, I am then confident that I will be able to repay the credit according to the agreed terms."*

-NKURIKIYE Ménédore, participant to an ELED, Rango

Towards the end of the project, JJB wanted to offer another opportunity for beneficiaries to hear from successful youth entrepreneurs about the reasons behind their successes and the advice they have for other youth entrepreneurs. Therefore, they organized a second round of ELEDs for the four additional communes of Tangara, Bugendana, Rango, and Gisuru, which engaged 319 youth participants (150 females and 169 males).

Beneficiaries from the Ntakangwa commune - CFW and VT participants who were in the startup phase of their business - were given the same opportunity to learn from seasoned youth entrepreneurs with ELEDs on December 13-14, 2018. 146 youth (89 females and 57 males) attended. Participants greatly appreciated this activity and stated how they will now have examples that will guide their steps for the good management of their IGA. The testimonies from the youth entrepreneurs also reduced beneficiaries' fear of loans, as they saw that with strong management, a credit can turn a small business into a profitable one. These participants will in turn become role models, inspiring other at-risk youth in their communities.

## 4. MONITORING & EVALUATION

Throughout the program period, the program collected output data through (a) partners' reports, (b) field visit reports by Counterpart M&E personnel, and (c) volunteer consultants at the field level. Participant data sheets and activity reports were used for the activities implemented directly by Counterpart.

Y4PBB II regularly organized trainings or workshops with CSO partners to support stronger Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning throughout the program.

**Training on Monitoring & Evaluation Principles and Tools:** On December 11-12, 2017, the Y4PBB II Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer conducted a training on "Monitoring & Evaluation Principles and Tools" aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Y4PBB II partner CSO's M&E Officers and Program Officers (one from each organization). Two Counterpart Burundi staff and a Counterpart intern also attended for a total of nine participants (five males and four females). The overall goal of the training was to strengthen the understanding and utilization of the M&E tools available through the program as well as improve the quality of partner reports by integrating the achieved versus expected and any unexpected (unplanned) achievements of the project, and train them on basic M&E principles.

**Workshop on the integration of the Y4PBB lessons learned into Y4PBB II programming:** On February 22, 2018, 11 staff (4 females and 7 males) from Counterpart and the three CSO partner organizations participated in a meeting to review the various lessons learned identified by the evaluation of the first phase of the program (Y4PBB) and discuss how they are being considered in this follow-on Y4PBB II project. First, the main lessons learned from the Y4PBB project were presented by the DCOP, followed by a participatory discussion on how they are considered in Y4PBB II. The occasion was taken to discuss some changes to be integrated in view of the recent conflict sensitivity/do no harm training. Finally, current challenges in implementation were discussed and strategies to address them identified. Fortunately, the workshop concluded by acknowledging that most Y4PBB lessons learned had already been integrated into the new project, thereby setting up the Y4PBB II for success.

**Workshop on the Y4PBB II theory of change and stronger integration of activities:** On August 7, 2018, the COP facilitated a workshop with the project coordinators of the CSO partners and Y4PBB II program staff (for a total of 9 participants, including 2 females and 7 males) to review the Y4PBB II Theory of Change and how activities 1) fit in this Theory of Change and 2) interact with each other. Participants

confirmed the Theory of Change remains valid and identified ways to better integrate activities between partners for a stronger impact. The M&E officer then offered a short training on the identification and collection of interesting testimonies and case studies that speak to the program's results within its Theory of Change.

**Debriefing on the Final Program Evaluation:** On March 18, 2019, the program organized a debriefing session by the Final Evaluation team to present the main findings of the Y4PBB II evaluation to partners, staff and USAID (7 participants, including 2 females and 5 males). It was an important learning opportunity, reflecting on success factors as well as elements that would need to be modified for greater impact.

Attachment 1 provides a summary of the quantifiable evidence of the success of these interventions and approaches with detailed categorization of the beneficiaries throughout the program period.

## 5. CHALLENGES, REFLECTIONS, AND LESSONS LEARNED

### Program Challenges

Y4PBB II faced several primary challenges: cooperation with local implementing partners, decisions from the Government of Burundi and the local administration, and contracting challenges with microfinance institutions.

#### a) Cooperation with local implementing partners

**Challenging collaboration with sub-grantee affecting advocacy activities:** The sub-grantee program/activity descriptions did not prescribe all steps for each activity as a deliberate way to allow activities to be adapted to changing contexts and to encourage coordination with other partners. However, this posed an issue with PARCEM, who did not wish to implement activities in close coordination with the Y4PBB II team and occasionally deviated from the intended project approach. PARCEM had challenges properly planning and implementing preparatory and advocacy activities, and Y4PBB II's actions were limited due to subaward clauses. Accumulated delays meant that the implementation of the communal advocacy campaigns was shortened into a 1.5-month period and the national campaign shortened into a one-month period. There was also no time before the end of the project for follow-up. This time constraint negatively affected the support and monitoring, resulting in lower-impact activities. The lack of time for follow-up with primary targets of the national-level activities limited the impact of the campaign and sustainability of engagements. While the advocacy campaigns engaged the primary beneficiaries, there were limited long-term impacts by the end of the program. In the future, subawards will include a detailed program description that creates clear opportunities for collaboration and flexibility of activities *without* affecting overall project implementation. Key activities might have to be implemented directly by the program to ensure equality. In addition, Counterpart will conduct Complexity-Aware Monitoring Evaluation and Learning training for its field team and partners during the program start-up to ensure the program team understands the importance of adaptive implementation.

**Disputed leadership of CEDAC:** On May 25, 2018, the Y4PBB II program received a letter stating that a General Assembly held on May 15 changed the legal representative and Board of CEDAC. Eric Niragira, the Executive Director and legal representative, rejected this claim. The dispute was brought to the attention of the Ministry of Interior who rendered a decision on September 17, 2019, asking Eric Niragira to hold a consensual General Assembly within two weeks. After delays, a consensual General Assembly was finally



held at the end of February 2019. During this period, Y4PBB II followed the Ministry of Interior's guidance to continue considering Eric Niragira as the legal representative until the dispute is settled and an official recognition (*prised'acte*) is issued by the Ministry. In view of the heightened risks, Counterpart adopted additional risk mitigation measures, including bi-weekly funds transfers, heightened monitoring of financial documents, and the monitoring of each activity implemented by CEDAC. The technical staff of CEDAC remained outside of the dispute so the project activities continued to be implemented with a limited impact on the program.

## **b) Decisions from governmental authorities**

**Suspension of all INGOs by the Government of Burundi:** On September 27, 2018, the National Security Council suspended all INGOs in Burundi for a three-month period, effective October 1, stating that the suspension was intended to ensure that INGOs were compliant with the INGO Law of January 23, 2017. The Government requested INGOs to re-register with the Ministry of Home Affairs by submitting four documents (Registration with the Ministry of External Relations, an engagement to respect banking laws, updated implementation protocols with the technical ministries, and a three-year plan to meet the staffing quotas as per the INGO Law). Counterpart immediately started working on producing the required documents and obtaining its renewed implementation protocol with the Ministry of Youth and submitted its file on October 25, 2018. Counterpart was re-registered within a week, on October 31, 2018. During this suspension period, Y4PBB II also had to suspend the subawards to its three implementing partners, and the suspension was lifted on November 5, 2018.

Because of this lost month of operational time, it was no longer possible for Y4PBB II CSO partners to complete the planned activities by the end of November and for the program to close by January 31, 2019. On November 15, 2018, Counterpart submitted to USAID a request for a no-cost extension until March 31, 2019. Y4PBB II also extended the period of performance for the subawards to partners until December 15, 2018 for PARCEM, December 31, 2018 for JJB, and January 15, 2019 for CEDAC, so that they could complete the implementation of planned activities. CEDAC had to finish activities on a voluntary basis as their operational budget had run out.

A one-month gap in the support by JJB coaches to microfinance beneficiaries also negatively impacted reimbursements. The suspension delayed the implementation of some of the refresher trainings in IGA management, reducing the time beneficiaries had to implement the learning geared to boost their profitability and capacity to reimburse loans in a timely manner. In addition, a rumor circulated among beneficiaries that due to the "closure" of INGOs, loans did not have to be reimbursed. JJB coaches worked voluntarily to counter this rumor which could have had disastrous effects on repayments.

In the end, the impact on the quality of implementation was minimal.

**Referendum period delaying activities:** A constitutional referendum was held on May 17, 2018. Most group activities were suspended from May 1 to shortly after the referendum as a security precaution and because the local administrations in many of the program's communes of intervention requested a temporary halt. This period was used for planning purposes and internal trainings. Fortunately, there were no incidents that directly affected Y4PBB II project activities or partners, though it created a slight delay in the implementation of activities.

**Local administration delaying or refusing some activities:** Overall the collaboration between Y4PBB II and its partners with the administration has been very positive. But in some cases, the local administrators posed extra hurdles, such as requiring written authorization from Provincial Governors, or in occasional

cases, requested bribes. For example, in September 2018, the administrator of Gatara commune wanted to impose her participant selection approach for the remaining two local youth dialogues. She recommended that participants be “representative of Parliament” in terms of political party membership, instead of 50% representation from the party of power and 50% from the opposition party, which was Y4PBB II’s approach. Despite the CEDAC project coordinator and the Y4PBB II Field Supervisor meeting with her to discuss this issue, she did not change her position. Y4PBB II and CEDAC decided to cancel these dialogues and hold them in other communes where additional dialogues would be useful. Another example is the suspension of the outreach event organized by CEDAC in Tangara commune. Someone in the crowd had been feeding false information to higher authorities on the activity stating that the activity was glorifying the *Front National de Liberation* (FNL) supporters because the football players were primarily opposition supporters. But CEDAC had correctly followed the Tangara Administrator’s advice to use existing zonal football teams for the match. CEDAC and the Y4PBB II DCOP consulted with relevant parties. Local authorities subsequently accepted the activity, which successfully took place at the start of January 2019.

### **c) Managing microfinance contracts**

**Challenging contract negotiations:** Counterpart realized that loan periods of only six months do not provide beneficiaries with adequate time to launch businesses and then reimburse the capital that was loaned to them. Despite Counterpart’s best efforts, contract negotiations with FENACOBUR took longer than expected, meaning that the total loan period was limited to six months. This delay decreased the number of beneficiaries applying for loans. The short loan period may also have decreased repayment rates and negatively affected the sustainability of beneficiaries’ businesses. To mitigate this, JJB intensified coaching and follow-up to boost the profitability of businesses and sought to strengthen the involvement of the administration to support repayment. The microfinance component was successful in supporting job creation, but the Final Evaluation noted the issue of the short duration of loans.

**Challenging closeout:** Y4PBB II faced contract closeout challenges with MUTECH (which covered the management of 40 Y4PBB II reimbursements). Despite MUTECH’s contract stating that they should provide their final report at the start of January 2018, the report was delayed until March 2018. The final reconciliation resulted in lengthy discussions and MUTECH refused to return to Counterpart the interest repaid by beneficiaries. Considering the amount minimal, Counterpart agreed and received the principal repaid by beneficiaries and MUTECH’s share of defaulted principal. The agreement was closed in April 2018.

## **6. Reflections and Lessons Learned**

The Y4PBB II team worked with partners to identify lessons learned and reflect on the validity of the Theory of Change of the program. The program’s Final Evaluation also identified best practices and elements that should be modified for more impact, which are included below.

### **a) Program Design**

**Theory of Change achieves the targeted results:** The Final Evaluation program internal surveys and internal reflections all validated the program’s design as a successful approach to reducing the risk of youth’s involvement in violence. The program mitigated the major risks factors identified by the Final Evaluation (divisive teachings, lack of meeting spaces for youth, social injustices, and unemployment) through facilitating dialogues, sensitizations on the causes and consequences of violence conflict and non-

violent conflict resolution, support for the development of livelihoods, and offering multiple opportunities for youth with diverse backgrounds to meet. The reduction in youth's risk of participation in violence was confirmed by 97.8% of survey respondents in the Final Evaluation. A pre- and post-survey of a sample of livelihoods beneficiaries showed that 93% had reduced their risk of participating in violence. The three-pillar approach (dialogues, advocacy, and employment) was an effective design, but a stronger integration of the three components could have led to more impact. The Final Evaluation also recommended adding a psycho-social component to deal with trauma that resulted from violence.

**Program aligned with youth needs and national policies:** The Final Evaluation highlighted that the alignment of the project with the Burundi National Youth Policy and with the needs of youth facilitated the mobilization and active participation of young people and enhanced the collaboration with authorities.

**Limited program implementation period:** The Final Evaluation noted that 20 months was too short to implement so many activities and that behavior change takes more time; it recommended a minimum duration of three years.

**Geographic coverage too large:** The program was implemented in 13 communes spread over seven provinces. The Final Evaluation highlighted that caused a waste of energy which limited the results, but also made community-wide impact difficult due to the low concentration of beneficiaries in each commune.

#### **b) Program Implementation**

**Closer collaboration when preparing and implementing activities with partners:** The sub-grantee program/activity descriptions did not prescribe all steps for each activity as a deliberate way to incorporate flexibility into the grants, allow for changing contexts, and encourage coordination with other partners. However, this posed an issue with partners who did not wish to implement activities in close coordination with the Y4PBB II team and deviated from the intended project approach. It is a difficult balance between supporting the strengthening of local capacities and the country's journey to self-reliance, while ensuring the program is implemented with the highest quality and maximum impact. One recommended action is to conduct co-design sessions with partners to ensure their buy-in and ownership.

**Competent and available communal focal points/coaches are critical for a successful implementation:** A opportunity for improvement of the program was providing more comprehensive training for focal points and coaches. In some situations, there was a lack of availability, in others there was weak communication, planning, or trainings skills of the CSO partner's communal focal points or coaches. The limited presence of some JJB coaches in the commune (because some lived outside the commune) negatively affected the coaching of beneficiaries and the sensitization efforts. The poor communication of the CEDAC focal point was a factor in the Gatara administration's refusal to negotiate on the composition of attendees to the dialogues. The limited training skills of some of the PARCEM's focal points was a factor in the lower quality initial training on the advocacy platforms. CSO partners need to carefully select their focal points and if possible, these focal points should reside in the commune, have no background of conflicts with the local administration, have sufficient availability, and have strong communication, training, and facilitation skills. The budget for the salaries of or stipends provided for these focal points should be enough to ensure that the focal points have the required qualifications and expertise.

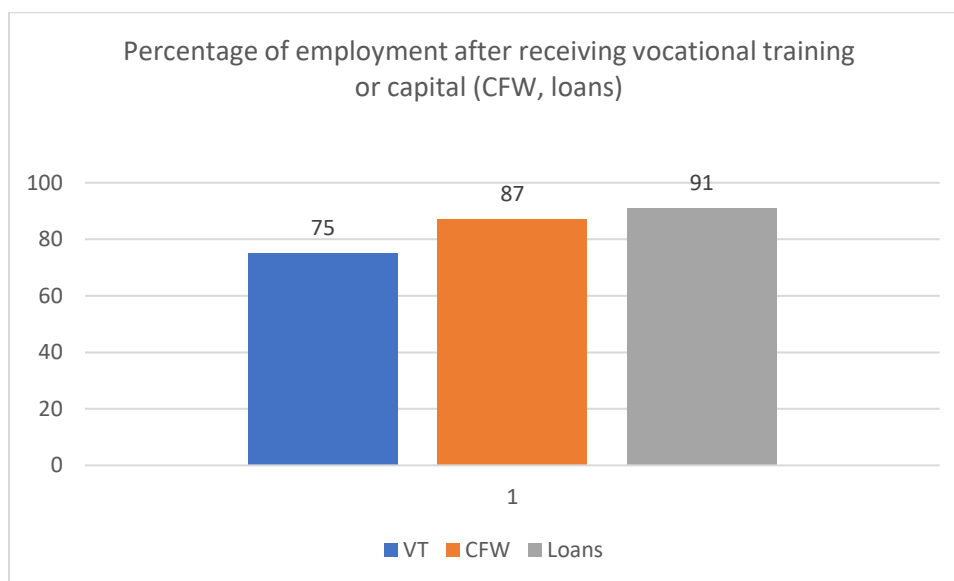
#### **Livelihoods**

**Combining training and access to capital effectively leads to youth employment:** According to an internal survey of a sample of livelihoods beneficiaries, 88% of those who benefitted from vocational training, CFW, or a loan were employed (at least 20 hours a week, three months after receiving the capital



or completing training)<sup>8</sup>. Employment rate varied between the three components: 75% of vocational training participants, 87% of CFW participants, and 91% of loan recipients (see graph 6 below). All respondents to the Final Evaluation confirmed that training and access to capital were both essential, however, they indicated that the training was the most important contributing factor in allowing them to set up their IGA (at 55%). Only 45% indicated that accessing capital was the most important contributing factor. There was a response variance as 61% of female respondents with an IGA considered access to capital as the primary supporting factor (compared to 28% only for males).

*Graph 5: Employment rates per livelihoods component*



**Keeping youth busy would be the main factor behind employment reducing involvement in violence:**

The Final Evaluation found that stakeholders and beneficiaries surveyed indicate that the most important goal of the economic activity is to provide a positive outlet for youth. Other important impacts include the acquisition of a certain level of financial autonomy and an improvement of social status (improvement of consideration in society).

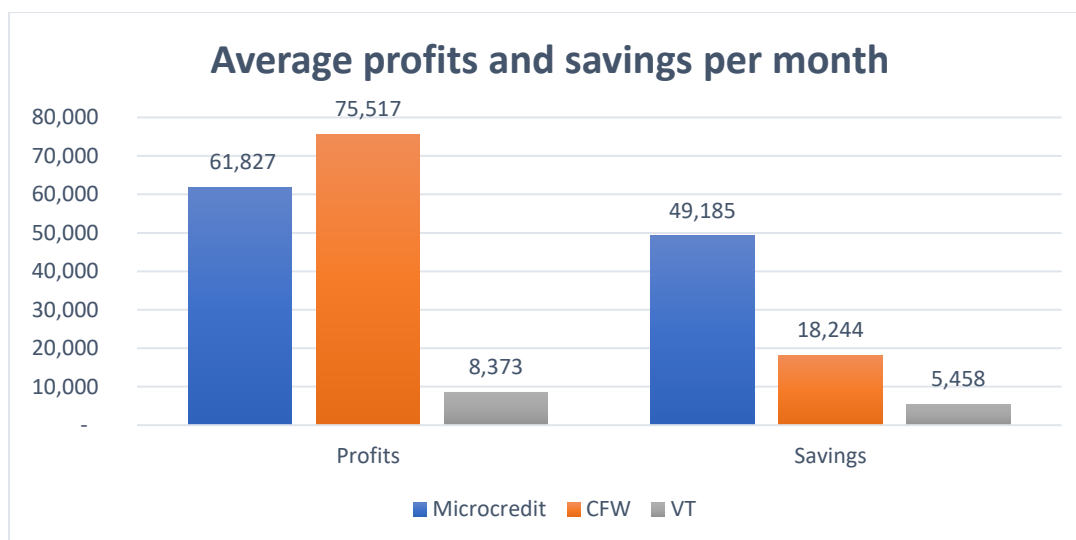
**Vocational training does not seem to directly lead to profitable businesses in the short-term, but still reduces risks for youth:**

The Final Evaluation confirmed the success of the microloans and CFW approach to allow at-risk youth to start small businesses; however, the beneficiaries from the VT component did not fare as well in terms of income and savings. The JJB and Y4PBB II teams tried to understand what factors could be at play. One factor could be that most microloans and CFW participants set up individual businesses, while most VT (from the soapmaking and food processing courses) worked in groups. The profits of the soap production or food transformation units are an acceptable level, however when it is shared between five or 10 members, it becomes insignificant. To date, the groups do not have enough capital to produce on a larger scale and/or do not have access to a market to sell a larger production, but this might improve over time. Another factor could be the lack of access to startup capital (in cash) outside of the startup kits. For instance, some mechanic graduates wanted to start up a small repair point on the street but lacked the funds to pay the informal trade group fees (“*amaheray’imbuga*”) to start a small business. They

<sup>8</sup> See PITT Indicator 6.

therefore joined existing garages but can only work as assistants, where they receive minimal pay. This issue of “*amaheray'imbuga*” is a significant obstacle for youth businesses and was taken on as an advocacy topic for both the national and communal-level campaigns. Some beneficiaries were unable to join a garage and remain unemployed.

*Graph 6. Average profits and savings per month per project component*



Overall, multiple testimonies from the VT participants highlight the benefits of the project despite the limited income so far. They mentioned how running a small business boosted their self-esteem and respect from their families and communities, including better marriage prospects for young women. They developed a solidarity network with their colleagues in the courses and friendships developed across social/ethnic groups barriers. Keeping youth engaged in productive outlets helps them avoid actions that negatively impact their livelihoods, including drug use, violence, etc. In conclusion, a future project should aim to include access to startup capital in cash for vocational training beneficiaries and limit the size of groups for IGAs. Advocacy must continue to remove the informal trade fees, regulate, or reduce them.

**A grace period to start reimbursing loans and longer loan periods are required to maximize business growth and sustainability:** Despite the realization that six-month loans were not ideal to develop profitable and sustainable businesses with the Y4PBB project, Y4PBB II was not able to offer loan recipients longer reimbursement periods due to challenging negotiations with FENACOBUR. This program again confirmed that a period of only six-month poses a real challenge for startup entrepreneurs. This is exacerbated by the fact that they have not received a grace period and had to start reimbursements after a month, when they had barely set up their business and started to attract clients. Some beneficiaries were able to make the reimbursement using the profits generated, but for many, they had to use their capital, which then limited further profits. The issue of the informal trade fees (“*amaheray'imbuga*”) became an obstacle because, in many cases, a significant share of the capital was used to cover these fees with no productive use. Longer reimbursement periods with a grace period at the beginning would help beneficiaries develop stronger and more sustainable and profitable businesses. It should be noted that the microloan approach was nevertheless successful in allowing youth to create or grow their businesses and increase their income.

## **Dialogue sessions**

**The dialogue sessions were successful in reducing violence:** The Final Evaluation confirmed that local dialogue sessions, which brought politically-opposed youth together to raise their concerns and commit to solutions, were successful in reducing suspicion, tensions, intimidation, injustices, and conflict in communities. It was the component of the project with the most impact on reducing violence. It was also the least-funded component, meaning it was a highly efficient activity for violence reduction. An internal survey also confirmed the dialogue sessions have increased the mutual understanding and tolerance for 83% of participants. The dialogues tripled the percentage of participants who are now often able to understand the positions or opinions of opposing group members during discussions (from 19% at baseline to 64% at end line). 91% of respondents confirmed tolerance between youth in their commune increased after the dialogue.

**The duration of the dialogue sessions was too short:** Due to budgetary constraints, dialogue sessions were limited to half a day each. But in view of the complexity of the subjects discussed, full days (or even multiple days) might have brought stronger results. Future projects should plan for longer dialogue sessions where possible.

**Involving the decision-makers in dialogue sessions would maximize impact and sustainability:** Even though the dialogue sessions were excellent opportunities for youth to discuss and improve their mutual understanding with many positive results, in some cases the impact has been somewhat limited by the absence of the non-youth leaders, who often are the real decision-makers and/or give instructions to youth. The project had planned that one series of dialogues would be intergenerational, so CEDAC used the intergenerational dialogue to involve the non-youth leaders in the second series of dialogues, which were in some instances more fruitful. The project was able to adapt its approach within the program description to face this challenge. In a future project, even though youth are the target groups, similar activities should plan the involvement of non-youth leaders or build in more flexibility to allow their participation if required. The Final Evaluation also recommended this, as well as involving influential leaders residing outside of the communes (e.g. presidents of communal councils). More generally, some questions remained unanswered because, despite the willingness of youth to change, their leader did not change their position, including sometimes local administrators. Activities that target these leaders to steer them away from manipulating youth need to be organized in conjunction with youth programs.

**The approach of using local youth as dialogue facilitators showed its limits:** The program sought to maximize the involvement of model youth from the program (from the peace committees or the advocacy platform) as peace actors by training them to become facilitators for the youth dialogue. While in some communes these youths were able to successfully facilitate the dialogues, in most communes, they have required constant support from either the CEDAC Project Coordinator or Y4PBB II program staff. Indeed, the issues discussed are generally very sensitive, and dialogues involved key leaders in the commune and local administration representatives on whom previously vulnerable youth have limited influence. The CEDAC and Y4PBB II team analyzed that in most cases, higher-level facilitators from outside the commune would have been best placed to lead the dialogues. Future project should plan similar dialogues to be led by outside experts and co-facilitated with youth.

## **Advocacy**

**While important in itself, the advocacy component seems to have had the least impact on violence prevention:** In the Final Evaluation, only 10% of survey respondents considered advocacy as the most effective component in reducing the risks of violence (compared to 44% for livelihoods activities and 42%

for dialogues), and in focus group discussions, advocacy also ranked last. Moreover, an internal survey found no improvement in the perception of effectiveness of non-violent civic engagement among advocacy platform members (the program assumed that if a person perceives non-violent civic engagement has greater effectiveness then s/he will be more likely to pursue non-violent than violent civic engagement). However this might partly be due to (i) the implementing challenges (misunderstandings between PARCEM and the Y4PBB II team, rushed implementation of the campaigns in the final months of the award, the choice of activity which was not the most appropriate to obtain results, etc.) as highlighted in the final evaluation, and (ii) the socio-political context which is not favorable to youth's civic engagement, as noted by the consultant who supported the internal survey.

**While successful in obtaining commitments, the advocacy component led to limited tangible changes:**

Most advocacy activities implemented were successful in obtaining commitments from primary targets – to offer tax breaks to young entrepreneurs, reduce or remove informal trade group fees, or set up youth centers, but to date, few have been implemented. It might be a question of time; unfortunately for a wide variety of reasons, delays in implementation meant that the advocacy campaigns were pushed in the last three to four months of the subaward, leaving limited time for continued engagement with authorities about the realization of the promises.

**Organizational Development**

**Counterpart's organizational development support strengthened the implementing partners:** The Final Evaluation confirmed that the partner CSOs saw their capacity increased due to the rigor of Counterpart's processes, financial coaching, and various trainings (gender, fundraising, etc.). As per Counterpart's assessment tools, while the increase in score was limited during Y4PBB II, the capacity of partners had been significantly increased in Y4PBB.

**Ensuring partners send specialized staff to technical trainings:** Partners did not always send staff with sufficient experience or with the technical backgrounds that aligned with the technical trainings facilitated by Counterpart. For example, during a fundraising strategy and proposal development training, partners sent volunteers or board members. As a result of the new knowledge or skills therefore did not translate to significant organization development changes.

## **7. SUSTAINABILITY**

The sustainability of Y4PBB II impact and achievements is challenged by the current political and economic state of Burundi, where civil society faces continuing governmental roadblocks and restrictions. As a result, civil society and youth organizations will remain in need of support in order to strengthen their role in maintaining social cohesion and peace through intensive and focused programs addressing the issues of economic engagement, peace building, and civic engagement.

**Solidarity/internal loans groups are recommended to strengthen program's achievements and achieve wider impact:** To strengthen the achievements of the program, offer continued support to beneficiaries, and maintain social cohesion, JJB set up VSLAs which also act as "solidarity groups". These groups have already allowed beneficiaries who were eligible for a microloan in the microfinance component of the program, but for various reasons did not get one (they decided not to apply because of the short time available or their request was not accepted by FENACOBUR for instance), to obtain small loans and use the entrepreneurship skills gained through the program to set up a small business. The VSLA groups also motivated the livelihoods beneficiaries who did not obtain a loan from FENACOBUR to continue attending

the sensitization sessions on conflict prevention, which often took place after the VSLA session. It is in those groups that beneficiaries often committed to share the learning with the community through small plays during market days or community development works. As much as possible, the VSLA approach (or similar) should be integrated into youth and livelihoods programs. The methodology, however, requires at least 24 months of implementation, meaning that it could not be fully integrated in the Y4PBB II design. The Final Evaluation also recommended internal loaning groups as a way to move the effects of the livelihood's component from the individual level to the community level.

**Mechanisms to follow up on the commitments obtained through dialogue sessions or advocacy would maximize sustainability:** While some of the communal advocacy platforms have decided to form local associations, and follow-up committees were set up spontaneously after some of the dialogue sessions, the program design did not include the creation of formal mechanisms to follow on commitments obtained during dialogues and advocacy campaigns. The main reason is the lack of funding for such mechanisms after the program ends as participants typically expect transport costs at minimum to continue meeting as a formal committee.



## Annex I – Success story

### Fostering an Environment for Peace and Prosperity

Since Burundi's transition to democracy in 2005, its political environment has seen steady deterioration. Matters of political exclusion, economic marginalization, land and resource competition, poor governance, and political and judicial impunity culminated in 2015's electoral crisis. Stoked by intimidation and violence, these factors continue to drive lingering conflict and instability, which could lead to further escalation around the 2020 electoral process and could increase the risk of youth participation in violence.

To address this growing risk, Counterpart implemented a series of activities under the Youth for Peacebuilding in Burundi II (Y4PBB II) program, which serves to improve the livelihood and peacebuilding skills of the country's youth and their enabling environments. The ultimate goal of these activities is to mitigate the risk of youth becoming involved in conflict and instead help them to contribute to peace and stability in Burundi. This 18-month program worked to: (1) build the capacity of local civil society organizations (CSOs) to support youth-led, positive civic engagement; (2) enhance economic incentives for youth to participate constructively in society; and (3) support youth-led peacebuilding and violence-prevention activities.

Integrated activities were implemented directly and through three partners – *Jumelage Jeunesse Burundi* (JJB), *Parole et Actions pour le Réveil des Consciences et l'Evolution des Mentalités* (PARCEM), and the *Centre d'Encadrement et de Développement des Anciens Combattants* (CEDAC) – offered youth positive alternatives for advocating for changes and resolving conflicts in a non-violent manner, as well as offering positive income generating opportunities.

At the project's closing ceremony, Ms. Frediane Hakizimana, an early participant of Y4PBB II and its predecessor Y4PBB, gave an account of how the programs helped her in a time she was most in need. After discovering that she was pregnant at 18, she was forced to drop out of school and find work to support her soon to be born baby. After struggling for several months to find sustainable work, she enrolled in the cash for work initiative during phase 1 of the project. By the close of the first phase, she was able to save enough funds to start a small farming business. During the second phase of the program, Ms. Frediane was identified as a model for success and was included as one of the follow-on beneficiaries. On May 2, 2018, she was issued a microfinance loan of 200,000 Burundian francs, which she used to open a small cafeteria in her native village and staffed with two employees of her own. Today, at age 25, Ms. Frediane is a successful business owner and can fully provide for her family. She now employs other community members, ensuring continued spillover success of the project as other



*"I was able to change my life and I am an advocate for youth-at-risk." – Frediane Hakizimana*

community members benefit from her business through both service and livelihood opportunities. This is but just one account of over 500 youth beneficiaries that the program has supported to set up income generating activities or gain employment. These activities and sustained employment ensure that youth have less incentive to engage in violent alternatives, actively promoting peace in Burundi.

In addition to providing economic opportunities, the program also focused on reconnecting youth from different political affiliations and building peace amongst communities after the political crisis of 2015. Through community dialogues, nearly 1,200 youth were able to find common ground on contentious issues that historically had incited violence. They were also able to jointly identify key issues that were affecting them in their communities, as well as develop and implement advocacy strategies.

Ms. Frediane Hakizimana's story, and others like hers, is a testament to the significant impact that programs like Y4PBB II could have in Burundi. Mr. Bienvenu Irakoze Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Youth, said that, "The success of the program is obvious. We need this program to continue longer and reach more youth. We ask other partners to use it as a model for supporting Burundian youth."



*Mr. Bienvenu Irakoze, Permanent Secretary  
at the Ministry of Youth*

## ANNEX 2: Activities implemented as part of the national-level advocacy campaign

Objectives / Themes	Activities implemented	Date	Immediate Results
<b>Equal opportunity and transparency in recruitment</b>	1. Youth-led press conference 2. Broadcasting of an awareness spot in French and Kirundi	11/23/2018 11/27-30 2018	Problems related to lack of transparency in recruitment have been known to the public; and Young people's aspirations for transparency in recruitment were expressed.
<b>Policy on internships with incentives for both public and private sectors</b>	3. Youth-led press conference 4. Broadcasting of a radio show	11/28/2018 12/15/2018	The aspirations of young people requesting a policy regulating internships with incentives for both public and private employers, as well as an increase in the budget allocated to internships, were expressed; and The primary target (Ministry of Youth, Posts and information Technologies) who participated in the radio program promised to plead for the increase of the budget allocated to the internship to recruit more young trainees per year.
<b>Definitive suspension of informal trade group fees or set up a law governing these fees</b>	5. A conference (exchange-debate)	04/12/2018	The primary targets (Youth Ministry, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of the Public Service) represented by their respective advisors, committed to advocate for the regulation of these fees so that the members of the group benefit in the long term and so that it doesn't represent such an obstacle to business startup.
<b>Advocate for a three-month grace period before starting reimbursements for young people who have taken out loans for self-development projects</b>	6. A workshop with banks and relevant Ministries	12/12/2018	The bank representatives confirmed that they are ready to work on finding a solution to the problem.
<b>Advocate for more frequent meetings between youth and Members of Parliament</b>	7. A mini-sensitization workshop with MPs was organized	12/13/2018	The parliamentarians present committed to supporting youth in their projects and to organize meetings for them. They invited young people to also visit parliamentarians during their parliamentary sessions.

### Annex 3 : Final reconciliation with FENACOBUR

1053-Y4PBB	
Description	Amount (BIF)
A. Value of loans issued until Dec 31, 2018	81,685,164
B. Value of loans (capital) recovered until Dec 31, 2018	70,467,057
C. Value of loans (capital) delayed until Dec 31, 2018	11,218,107
1. Counterpart's share of defaulted capital (Guarantee Fund) (80%)	8,974,486
2. FENACOBUR's share of defaulted capital(20%)	2,243,621
D. Interests paid by beneficiaries	8,823,220
<b>E. Total amount due to Counterpart (E= B + C2)</b>	<b>72,710,678</b>
<b>F. Amount transferred toY4PBB II loan fund</b>	<b>73,910,734</b>
<b>G. Amount to be reimbursed to Counterpart for Y4PBB</b>	<b>-1,200,056</b>
1079-Y4PBB II	
H. Value of loans issued until Dec 31, 2018	110,267,000
I. Value of loans (capital) recovered until Dec 31, 2018	94,093,810
J. Value of loans (capital) delayed until Dec 31, 2018	16,173,190
1. Value of loans (capital) delayed until Dec 31, 2018 for the communes Buhiga (+coopec Karusi) and Gisuru	5,222,587
2. Counterpart's share of defaulted capital for the communes Buhiga and Gisuru	4,961,458
3. FENACOBUR's share of defaulted capital for the communes Buhiga and Gisuru	261,129
4. Value of loans (capital) delayed until Dec 31, 2018 for the 10 other communes	10,950,603
5. Counterpart's share of defaulted capital for the 10 other communes	8,760,482
6. FENACOBUR's share of defaulted capital for the 10 other communes	2,190,121
K. Interests paid by beneficiaries	11,260,007
<b>L. Amount owed to Counterpart forY4PBB II (L= I + J3+J6+K)</b>	<b>107,805,067</b>
<b>M. 3% interest on the credit fund</b>	<b>5,584,697</b>
<b>N. Grand total repaid to Counterpart</b>	<b>112,189,708</b>

## Annex 4: OD activities for each partner

Partner	OD capacity achievement	Time of execution (FY18)				FY19	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
JJB	Organizational Development Capacity Assessment	x					x
	Identification of OD priorities	x					
	Development of CSO gender and social inclusion integration policy and action plans	x					
	Training of staff in data analysis (M&E) using MS Excel			x			
	Conflict sensitivity training	x					
	Better equip the JJB office through the purchase of laptops and furniture			x			
	Improve the office safety through the purchase of a fire extinguisher			x			
	Strengthen capacity of accountant in finance management through continuous coaching	x	x	x	x	x	
	Capacity building on fundraising and project design				x	x	
	Training on photography as a project communication tool			x			
	Development of cost allocation policy			x	x		
PARCEM	Organizational Development Capacity Assessment	x					x
	Identification of OD priorities	x					
	Development of CSO gender and social inclusion integration policy and action plans	x					
	Strengthen capacity of accountant in finance management through continuous coaching	x	x	x	x	x	
	Conflict sensitivity training	x					
	Procurement of office equipment		x				
	Capacity building on fundraising and project design				x	x	
	Training on photography as a project communication tool			x			
	Development of cost allocation policy			x	x		
CEDAC	Organizational Development Capacity Assessment	x					
	Identification of OD priorities	x	x				
	Development of CSO gender and social inclusion integration policy and action plans	x					
	Strengthen capacity of Accountant in finance management through continuous coaching	x	x	x			
	Conflict sensitivity training	x					



**Attachment A – Performance Indicator Tracking Table**  
**Attachment B – Summary of communal-level advocacy activities**