



PRISON FELLOWSHIP
RWANDA

ANNUAL 2022 REPORT



PFR ANNUAL REPORT
2022 Impact Update



ED's Foreword

2022 offered us an opportunity to provide support to vulnerable communities grappling with finding healing, achieving reintegration, dealing with a bitter and painful past, finding peace after a long time of misery, incarceration and living in a place you don't call home.

Through our programmes that were tailored to meet those specific needs we have seen transformation, readiness for healing and communities served transferring from hopelessness to a place where they are able to help themselves and others. Much as the work to accomplish remains vast, we are grateful that tremendous progress has been made with support from our partners

The need to serve hurting communities is growing given the new threats the world is facing today, the level of crime forcing parents in jail, individuals suffering from mental health breakdown, climate change triggering disasters and leaving many homeless, conflicts that displace many in and out of their countries and much more. Nevertheless, we know that with a pool of support we can tackle all of those issues.

With sincere thanks,

Bishop Deogratias Gashagaza

Executive Director

Prison Fellowship Rwanda



PFR Vision

A restored, united and resilient community for all involved and affected by the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, other crimes, and people in emergencies.

PFR Mission

Intervene in psycho-social healing, peace building, unity and reconciliation, restorative justice, spiritual resilience, legal aid and human rights promotion as well as nurturing socio- economic empowerment to vulnerable communities and people in emergency.

Our Core Values

We Value integrity and Respect.

We Value collaboration and partnership.

We value the people we serve and those we serve with.

We value Diversity and Inclusion.



About us

Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR) is a non-profit organization that works in partnership with the government of Rwanda and its relevant agencies, local and international organizations as well as UN agencies to foster interventions that support psychosocial healing, peace building and reconciliation, restorative justice, crime prevention, human rights promotion and legal aid, intervening in emergencies as well as nurturing socio-economic empowerment in Rwanda in the wake of the 1994 genocide against Tutsi and its aftermath. Since 2002, PFR activities expanded beyond prisons into communities focusing on instilling action-based psychosocial healing and practical reconciliation, reintegration of ex-prisoners into communities, fostering restorative justice among convicts of genocide and other crimes, victims/ survivors and their families; promotion of human rights and legal aid among Rwandans as well as empowering communities to improve their well-being. Prison Fellowship Rwanda was founded on 01/07/1995, affiliated to the Prison Fellowship International in 1997. It was officially registered and recognized by the ministerial order no 037/I7, of 23/10/2002, by the Ministry of Justice as a non- profit organization, published in the official gazette of the Republic of Rwanda in 2002.



Reconciliation Villages



PFR's reconciliation villages in Rwanda have become a benchmark in peace building particularly in the areas of unity, reconciliation and resilience. The community members in these reconciliation villages have proved the success of unity, reconciliation and resilience where they are now living peacefully and harmoniously.

This is vivid through their day-to-day interactions such as periodic community and family dialogues, social clubs, cultural activities, and men and women cooperatives. All of these activities have proven to be working tools to enhance cohesive communities, fostering a culture of peace and creating a space where inter-families interactions happen to create lasting bonds between parents, youth and children.

Practical reconciliation as an approach is exemplified through collective work such as farming and basket weaving which provide room for tolerance, unity and economic development which have attracted 803 national and international visitors/tourists to learn more about the best practices of healing and practical reconciliation in 2022.

Reconciliation Villages hosted countries



Uganda 6 Visitors



Norway 15 Visitors



São Tomé and Príncipe
14 Visitors



USA 625 visitors



UK 100 visitors



RWANDA 7 visitors



Nigeria 7 Visitors



Kenya 9 Visitors



Barbados 10 Visitors



Tanzania 3 Visitors

9 visitors from
other countries

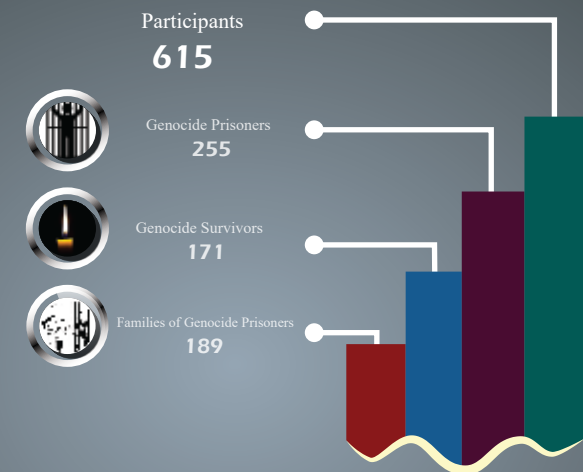
Restorative Justice



Prison Fellowship Rwanda with funds from UNDP Rwanda runs a project titled ‘strengthening the rule of law in Rwanda: Justice, peace, and security for people.’ It is an initiative that supports members of the community affected by the genocide and inmates who took part in the genocide to seek for repentance and forgiveness when they personally write confession letters to prison authorities disclosing their role during 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.

This project has provided a space for social healing while addressing mental health related issues through psychotherapy sessions to promote mental health well-being among participants. It has together Genocide survivors, perpetrators and their families for community healing events that paved a way for readiness to repentance and forgiveness.

In 2022, about 615 beneficiaries including 255 genocide ex-prisoners, 171 genocide survivors and 189 families of genocide ex-prisoners in Nyamagabe district and Nyamagabe prison have come together, by the help of facilitators and created an atmosphere of understanding to learn, share their stories and finding solace in the collective healing experience.







Socio-therapy



For the last four years, Prison Fellowship Rwanda in partnership with Community Based Socio-therapy (CBS), EAR Byumba Diocese, funded by Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands has been implementing the project entitled “Intergenerational healing and community reconciliation for sustainable peace-Mvurankuvure”. The project implementation focused on three main outcomes: Psycho social reintegration of prisoners, raising awareness of local leaders and teachers on reconciliation as well as intergenerational legacies of the genocide. The targeted group was comprised of families of genocide survivors, ex-prisoners and youth descendants. During 2022, Socio-therapy groups sessions were conducted: 30 groups in Nyamagabe, 42 groups in Muhanga and 45 groups in Nyanza district. In prisons, there are 6 groups in Huye prison and 6 groups in Muhanga prison. 1755 participants graduated from community groups and 180 participants from Prisons. In a bid of sustaining social cohesion, healing and livelihood 54 groups have been economically supported. As a result, there is an increased level of healing and social cohesion among socio-therapy graduates, an increased level of awareness among local leaders in regard with the impact of Socio-therapy in the process of psychosocial reintegration, healing and socio-economic development.

Summary of Achievements

		EKN Mvura Nkuvure Project	
		Districts Muhanga, Nyanza, Nyamagabe	
		Youth	Total
688	882	222	1,792
		Youth	Total
227	30	115	372
		EKN Mvura Nkuvure Project	
		Districts Muhanga & Huye	

Total Number of Participants in Mvurankuvure

(UNDP) Project **2,164**



Success story

“I was born after the genocide against Tusti in 2004. My Mother is a survivor. I began hating Hutus when I asked my mother about those who killed her family members. Later in life when my mother married a hutu husband and had children, it became so hard to have them as my siblings; our house got divided, tutsi at one side and hutu on the other and we could neither eat, hang-out, or sleep together until I was introduced to socio-therapy healing group where my whole life took another turn. Today we are one family.”

Societal Healing



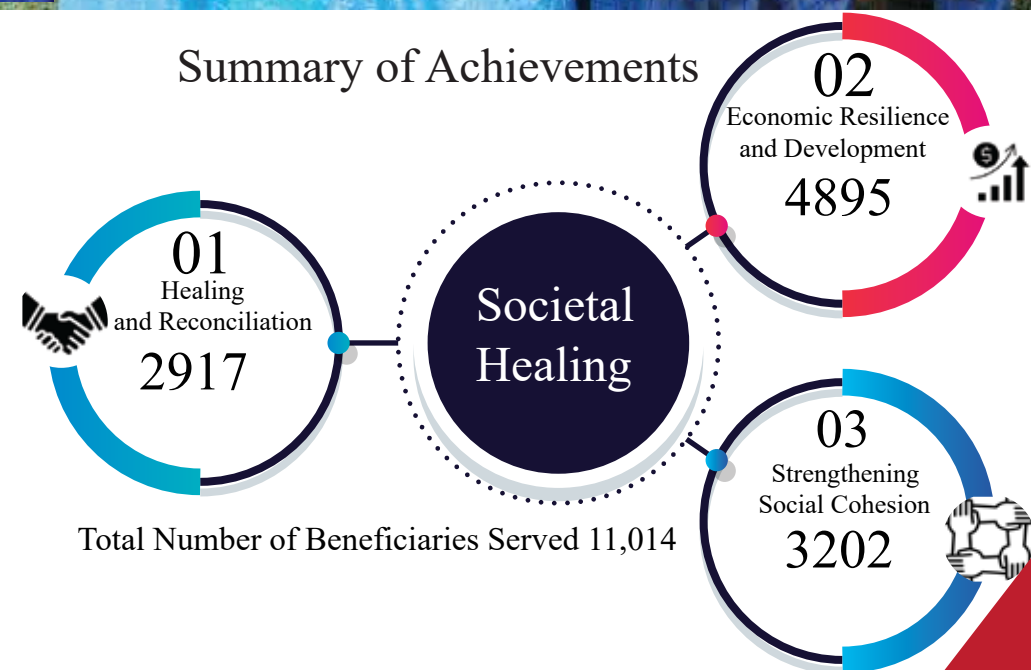
The project entitled "Reinforcing community capacity for social cohesion and reconciliation through Societal Trauma Healing" has the objective of reinforcing social cohesion and sustainable peace through scaling up of evidence-based community societal healing.

During the course of 2022, Societal healing programme has reached over 6119 beneficiaries through community-based healing spaces that brought together groups of Genocide perpetrators, survivors and youth descendants to foster mutual healing. The ultimate goal of sociotherapy addressed collective wounds, heal fractured relationships, restore social cohesion, and pave the way for socio-economic collaboration. The healing dialogue process created conditions in which people told the truth, restored relationships and trust, forgave, and promoted reconciliation and social cohesion.

31 Sociotherapy groups from Bugesera district have been supported for helping them to keep improving their social-cohesion and livelihood initiatives. Working together in livelihood initiatives have helped group members having access to basic needs and opportunities to thrive a sense of identification and belonging.

The programme has assisted 140 youth from low-income families in learning hands-on skills in trades such as tailoring, hairdressing, masonry, and welding, as well as assisting them in starting their own businesses. Working together helped them continue a mutual healing journey, rebuild trust and social cohesion.

Summary of Achievements



Advancing Human Right in Rwanda (AHRR)



Success Story

“ When a 24-year-old man was wrongfully charged with defilement and sentenced to life, he sank in deep shame and depression and would say he killed his mother instead; when paired with a facilitator who walked him through mental health and legal process in a social healing group, as a result, he become more balanced and released from mental health issues.”

In April 2022, Prison Fellowship Rwanda in consortium with the Rwanda Bridge to Justice (RBJ), Initiatives for Peace and Human Rights (IPeace) and International Bridge to Justice (IBJ) funded by European Union is implementing a project entitled “Advancing Human Right in Rwanda” with objective of Expanding holistic legal and rehabilitative protection to communities at risk of torture, arbitrary detention and other forms of abuse.

Introduction of the project to 6 prisons facilities Nyagatare, Rwamagana, Nyarugenge, Huye, Nyamagabe and Musanze

Drafting and adopted Psycho-education manual

Psycho education provided to 150 peer educators from 6 prisons, comprised of 94 from the surrounding community and 56 prisoners

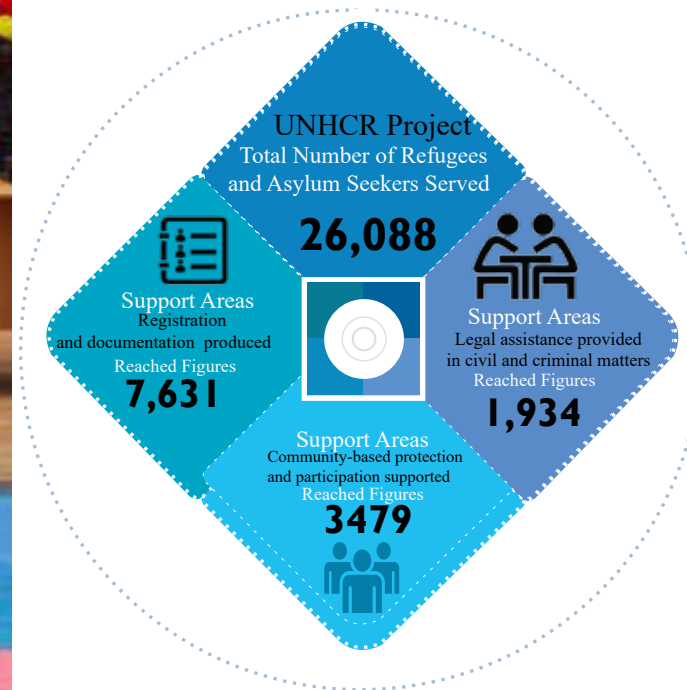
Among 150 trained peer educators, 36 of them were assigned as socio-therapists made of 18 prisoners and 18 from the surrounding community who conduct diagnosis to prisoners with trauma to go for psycho-social healing groups.

So far, 150 participants are participating in Psycho-social healing sessions.)

A Radio broadcast awareness at Isango star radio was conducted by PFR where Mental health and legal aid experts/practitioners have discussed mental health problems; its current situation in Rwanda; availability of mental health services versus its utilization. UPR recommendations regarding mental health and imprisonment system in Rwanda. Then after they have elaborated the Contribution of PFR in prisons on Psycho social support and approach used. The result for this radio broadcast helped around 600000 people from the community to gain knowledge on mental health issues with information on the available services.



Summary of Achievements



Community Based protection and Legal assistance to Refugees and Asylum seekers

In 2022, Prison Fellowship Rwanda is implementing the project of Community-based protection and Legal assistance in refugee camps, urban areas (Kigali and Huye) and ETM Gashora. As a community-based protection partner, in the period of 2022 our efforts have focused on engaging and empowering the refugee community. Therefore, 61 awareness campaigns were conducted to refugees and Asylum seekers about Covid-19 vaccination and prevention measure, and on other issues that affect refugees and Asylum seekers with the aim of mitigating them, preventing crimes, family conflicts and antisocial behaviors, and to ensure participation and engagement of people we serve in all activities and strengthen their ownership with ensuring peace and security through the management of Community-Based Policing team.

Beyond community-based protection we facilitated asylum seekers to seek asylum through asylum application writing, accompaniment and advocacy, we provided legal representation to asylum seekers during RSD interviews, we provided legal assistance in criminal and civil matters (legal education and awareness and mediation, advice, referral, etc.) to 3781 refugees and asylum seekers as well as ensuring that 1012 new-borns were legally registered.

Furthermore, we closely work with the initiated group of refugee youth volunteers who are helping their fellow community members to be aware of different available services and encourage their fellow youth to avoid the prohibited acts which may lead them to courts of law. We also received people we serve complaints and made advocacy on different issues and contacted relevant partners for needed services.

In 2022 From September up to December we implemented the Project of Digital Career Counsellors whereby the project focus was to empower refugees mainly youths in innovative ways to help them access wage-earning opportunities in refugee camps and urban areas.

The Child's Journey

Summary of Achievements



Total Number of Children Served 8,773

Since 2015, Prison Fellowship Rwanda is in partnership with Prison Fellowship International to provide assistance to children of prisoners in Rwanda under the program called “The Child’s Journey (TCJ)” it aims at intervening when a parent is incarcerated by providing services and activities which meet the four most vital needs namely health, education, child protection, and spiritual growth for the duration of their parent’s incarceration.

Rwanda counts around 78,000 prisoners, though the number of children whose parents are incarcerated is not known, at least, the number of children whose parents are incarcerated cannot go below 35,000. The children of prisoners in Rwanda are classified in the OVC (Orphan and Vulnerable Children) category but still, their needs remain hidden and necessitates an increased physical and mental assistance. During the course of 2022, The Child’s Journey program assisted 1133 children which represents an estimate of 1.7 % of the children of prisoners in Rwanda. 99% of incarcerated parents are male which explains why the majority of these children live in impoverished conditions where the basic needs are met. When the majority of fathers who are the primary provider are absent because of incarceration, families sink into poverty. The year of 2022 marked the increment of 64% beneficiaries who received TCJ services.

973 children have received education assistance to include school fees, school material and visits to school to ensure their performance. 1133 children have received health related assistance ranging from payment of health insurance, health

Bilalo Byetu

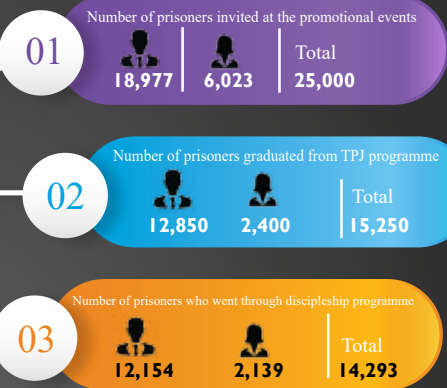


In 2022, Prison Fellowship Rwanda collaborated with Elman Peace in a pilot phasing of the project named “Psychosocial reintegration of ex-combatants, ex-prisoners, and community social cohesion in Rwanda (Bilalo Byetu).” This project has an aim of Reducing rejection and stigmatization of ex-combatants, increasing community healing and reconciliation, increasing Sustainable alternatives to violence and enhancing social cohesion, and Strengthening cross-border peace and community reintegration initiative.

Summary of Achievements

The awareness campaigns on psychosocial reintegration of ex-combatants, ex-prisoners, and community social cohesion in Rwanda were respectively carried out on 23rd and 24th of November 2022. In general, 83 people participated in the two awareness campaigns. The main topics that were discussed in the awareness sessions were: psychological wounds of the painful past including trauma, healing, restorative justice, unity and reconciliation, and the psychosocial reintegration

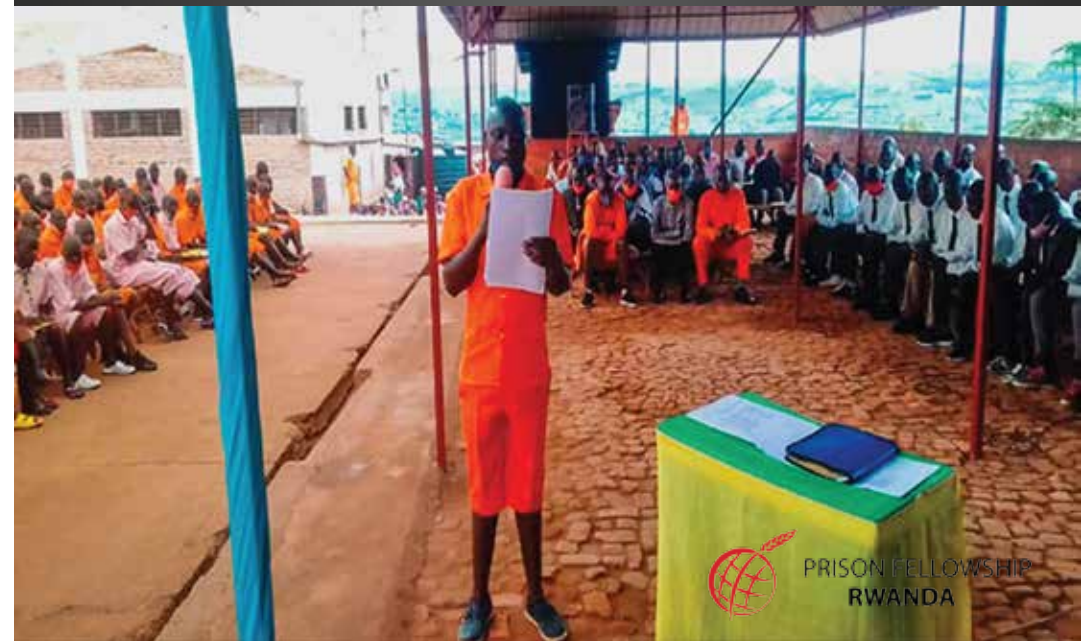




In 2022, The Prisoner's Journey's has an objective of helping prisoners to restore relationship with self and Jesus Christ.

We conducted 2 awareness campaigns where 25000 prisoners were reached. 15250 prisoners actively attended biblical teaching groups and have graduated. Among them, 9790 have gone through the discipleship programme. As a result, this program contributed to three outcomes: discovering 'who is Jesus? Why He came? And so, what?' The work done on these outcomes contributed much to the restoration of the relationship with God and fellows including inmates, prison officials, families and victims as well. 65% of graduates joined the discipleship programme and some of them wrote confession letters aimed at meeting with the victims to tell them the truth and ask for forgiveness.

Spiritual Resilience



OUR PARTNERS



Embassy of the
Kingdom of the Netherlands





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Social Economic development

As we continue to support communities we serve for durable peace and reconciliation, it is paramount that efforts to consolidate unity, reconciliation and resilience are sealed by income generating activities to promote economic self reliance and solidify the gains registered in social cohesion.

Empowering these communities economically has demonstrated that when community members come together for a common purpose, it does not only propel success, it also cultivates the spirit of oneness, mutual help and sustained living conditions.

Intergenerational healing and community reconciliation for sustainable peace-Mvurankuvure project, Beneficiaries have formed saving and credit groups where in 2022, We supported in training 30 groups in Nyamagabe, 42 groups in Muhanga and 45 groups in Nyanza district with more and advanced financial, business and entrepreneurship skills. As a result, these groups have amplified their income generating activities by introducing new businesses like buying and selling yard, livestock and agriculture businesses.

For the promotion of networking and togetherness, The child's Journey program's beneficiaries are gathered into caregiver support groups. These groups assist caregivers not only in saving and wounds healing but also for financial development and self reliance. 554 caregivers have benefited from the 30 functional groups through handcrafting, small businesses and livestock.



In societal healing projects, Youth were empowered to have the skills and spaces to manage past trauma and develop a shared understanding for building a peaceful and inclusive future. Though, we equipped youth from 15 sectors of Bugesera district with life skills and an infrastructure to support their ability to think critically, actively participate in community life and build a common future. We supported vulnerable young people to attend TVET training, where we identified and sent 110 school dropouts to learn technical skills to increase their income and ensure their livelihood in the future. Students completed vocational trainings of their choice namely welding, sewing, hairdressing, and masonry from Africa Transformation Network, Nelson Mandela TVET and Ruhuha TVET Schools. The youth were also given start-up tools kits to support and improve their social cohesion and livelihoods.



Joint socio-economic activities that bring together the survivors and former genocide prisoners as one of the approaches of the collective healing, the program supported 31 groups graduates from Sociotherapy healing space. Graduates were trained on Business visioning, business forms, variable business planning, teamwork, problem solving and self-business governance. These collaborative livelihood initiatives have strengthened the sense of togetherness and enhanced social cohesion. 31 Sociotherapy groups that graduated in the first cohort have been supported to help them keep improving their social-cohesion and livelihood initiatives. Working together in livelihood initiatives will help group members have access to basic needs and will have an opportunity to thrive a sense of identification and belonging.



PFR's Reconciliation Villages beside being a model for unity and reconciliation to national and international level, members in these villages have advanced to a resilience phase through social and economic empowerment. Mbyo and Rweru reconciliation villages do receive hundreds of foreign guests that come to learn about the possibility of unity, reconciliation and resilience.

Subsequently these villages do attract other foreigners in the form of community-based tourism with generating income. Apart from Women having cooperatives of basket weaving, both men and women are in cooperatives of livestock and agriculture farming as well.

In 2022, these reconciliation villages received 803 foreign guests from different countries who came as peer learning groups for unity, reconciliation, resilience and community-based tourism.

