



Republic
of Rwanda

RDRC

Rwanda
Demobilisation and
Reintegration
Commission

DEMOB *RWANDA*

A Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration
Commission Quarterly Publication



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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the inaugural edition of DemobRwanda magazine for the first quarter of the fiscal year 2023-2024. We extend a warm welcome to our esteemed readers and are immensely pleased to present the highlights of our recent endeavours.

First and foremost, we wish to express our heartfelt gratitude for the invaluable feedback we have received regarding our work. Our overarching goal remains steadfast: to contribute significantly to the socio-economic empowerment of RDRC beneficiaries and to play an instrumental role in fostering peace within the Great Lakes region.

In recent months, we have had the privilege of hosting numerous distinguished visitors from around the world. These engagements have provided us with the opportunity to share our experiences and insights gleaned from our Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (DDR) programmes. Notable among these visits were delegations from Nigeria, Yemen, and Japan, all of whom were graciously hosted at our Mutobo demobilisation centre.

Our activities have been diverse and impactful. We are particularly proud to have facilitated the seamless transition of ex-combatants from the Mutobo demobilisation centre back to their respective communities. Furthermore, RDRC has diligently carried out the distribution of essential toolkits to ex-combatants from phases 69, as well as to eight civilians from phases 67 and 68.

Equally significant has been our engagement with beneficiaries upon their reintegration into their communities. Understanding their perspectives and experiences is paramount to our continued efforts.

In line with our commitment to excellence, we are pleased to announce the appointment of a new commissioner to RDRC by the Government of Rwanda. This strategic addition to our leadership team underscores our collective dedication to advancing the mission of RDRC.

As we move forward, RDRC remains unwavering in its commitment to promoting dignified livelihoods for its beneficiaries across the nation. We are dedicated to upholding our mandate with integrity and diligence.

We invite you to delve into the enriching content of this Newsletter and trust that you will find it both informative and inspiring. Here's to a compelling read and to the continued success of RDRC in the service of our communities.

Warm regards,

Local government Minister Leads Discharge Ceremony for 92 Ex-Combatants



Photo: Ex-Combatants Gather with Distinguished Guests at Mutobo Demobilisation Centre, 20th July 2023.

On the 20th of July 2023, in Musanze District, the 69th intake of 92 ex-armed group members culminated their five-month journey of rehabilitation and reintegration.

These individuals underwent an intensive program known as the pre-discharge orientation program (PDOP) at the Mutobo demobilisation centre, where they engaged in various activities including Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) studies, literacy and numeracy lessons, unity and reconciliation sessions, and patriotism exercises.

Among the 92 discharged ex-combatants, which included 20 women, were 30 former soldiers, 43 civilians, and 19 former convicts who received presidential pardons in March 2024.

The discharge ceremony, officiated by Hon. Minister of Local Government Musabyimana Jean Claude, served as a significant moment of acknowledgment and gratitude. Minister Musabyimana commended the ex-combatants for their courageous decision to surrender and reintegrate into society.

He urged them to uphold the principles of unity and resilience, emphasizing their crucial role in safeguarding Rwanda's socio-economic progress and security.

Addressing the ex-combatants directly, Minister Musabyimana encouraged them to utilise the vocational skills acquired during their rehabilitation, such as masonry, domestic electricity, crop production, hairdressing, tailoring, welding, and automobile mechanics, for national development and personal advancement.

Furthermore, Minister Musabyimana appealed to Rwandan families, communities, and society at large to extend a warm welcome and provide support to the discharged ex-combatants as they reintegrate into civilian life.

In response, the discharged ex-combatants expressed gratitude to the Rwandan government for their dignified reception, regardless of their past activities. They affirmed their readiness to reunite with their families and contribute positively to the country's development.

Notably, among the rehabilitated individuals were former members of DR Congo-based militias, including 30 voluntary returnees to Rwanda from armed groups such as the FDLR, alongside 43 civilians. Additionally, 19 individuals, including war crimes convicts like Paul Rusesabagina, received presidential pardons in March 2023.

This ceremony marks a significant step towards the reintegration and demobilisation of ex-combatants, showcasing Rwanda's commitment to peacebuilding and national unity.



The attendees at Mutobo Demobilisation Centre graciously extend their warm welcome to distinguished guests arriving for the official discharge ceremony.

Photos: Highlights of the Event at Mutobo Demobilisation Centre, July 20th, 2023



Hon. Minister MUSABYIMANA Jean Claude, accompanied by the Chairperson of RDRC Hon.NYIRAHABINEZA Valerie and former Governor NYIRARUGERO Dancille, presided over the certificate and identity card presentation ceremony to MUSONI Straton, former Deputy President of FDLR.



Hon. MUSABYIMANA Jean Claude, presided over the discharge ceremony and took the opportunity to tour the tailoring class, where beneficiaries of the Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) are enhancing their skills.



Minister MUSABYIMANA paid a visit to Mutobo Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) School, where he inspected the state-of-the-art equipment utilised by students in honing their vocational training skills.

RDRC Encourages Ex-Combatants to Drive Economic Growth at Community Level

The Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) has issued a rallying call to ex-combatants, urging them to play an active role in bolstering the national economy from within their respective communities.

This appeal came to the forefront during the official distribution ceremony of toolkits to 100 former armed group members, comprising 92 individuals discharged from phase 69 and eight from phases 67 and 68. The event, held at the Mutobo Demobilisation Centre on September 28, 2023, marked a pivotal moment in their journey towards civilian life.

Equipped with a diverse array of skills ranging from masonry to crop production, ex-combatants received comprehensive training aimed at preparing them for successful reintegration into society.

RDRC Chairperson Valerie NYIRAHABINEZA underscored the significance of these toolkits as supplementary resources to empower them in transforming their lives, supporting their families, and contributing to the nation's prosperity.

"We cannot underestimate the value of these toolkits, procured with government funds. They serve as vital assets alongside the skills acquired here, fostering self-development, familial welfare, and national progress," affirmed Chairperson NYIRAHABINEZA.

Highlighting the collaborative efforts between RDRC and its partners, particularly in the NST1, she emphasized the importance of providing ex-combatants with Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) skills. Acknowledging the Ministry of Education's steadfast support through institutions such as the Mutobo TVET School,



Chairperson NYIRAHABINEZA reiterated RDRC's commitment to facilitating a smooth transition to civilian life and ensuring beneficiaries' access to quality vocational training and certification.

Maj Gen. (demob.) Felicien NSANZUBUKIRE, speaking on behalf of his fellow ex-combatants, expressed profound gratitude to President Paul Kagame, RDRC authorities, and stakeholders for their unwavering support throughout the training process.

"We pledge to utilise these tools responsibly, fostering our reintegration into our communities, supporting our families, and contributing to our country's development," affirmed NSANZUBUKIRE.

Each ex-combatant received a toolkit tailored to their specific training, comprising essential tools aligned with their respective skill sets to facilitate job creation and sustainable income generation.

As RDRC continues its mission, over 80,000 beneficiaries have successfully reintegrated into their communities, with more than 13,600 individuals acquiring TVET skills under the commission's auspices, underscoring its unwavering commitment to fostering lasting socio-economic empowerment.

Additional Images of the event



Staff Sergeant (Demob) Anne Marie Nizane, positioned on the right, is in receipt of the toolkits.



Mrs. MUKASHYAKA Saverina, granted clemency by His Excellency Paul KAGAME, is in receipt of the toolkits at Mutobo DC.



It proved to be an exceptional occasion as beneficiaries of the RDRC expressed profound delight upon receiving the toolkits, poised to facilitate their employment prospects or enable them to embark upon entrepreneurial ventures.

Yemeni Delegates Gain Insight into Rwanda's Peace-Building Efforts

On September 8, 2023, a delegation from the Republic of Yemen embarked on a visit to Rwanda's RDRRC's Mutobo demobilisation centre as part of a broader study tour aimed at understanding Rwanda's Demobilisation and Reintegration processes.

The purpose of their visit was to glean insights into Rwanda's remarkable strides in fostering Peace, Unity, and Resilience within its borders and across the Great Lakes Region.

Led by team leader Muhamad Al, the Yemeni delegation expressed their eagerness to learn from Rwanda's experiences in peace-building and reconciliation. Muhamad underscored the importance of the visit, noting that previous delegations had provided positive feedback regarding the benefits and lessons gained from Rwanda's approach.

"The insights we gained were profound," stated Al. "We observed a notable change in the mindset of participants. As a result, our delegation engaged in discussions on potential collaborations, exploring ways to enhance our own experiences by involving senior leadership from the Republic of Yemen in similar visits to Rwanda."

He continued, "We learned a great deal, and were deeply touched and inspired by what we witnessed. Our delegation was particularly impressed by the hope instilled and the tangible vision of a brighter future for a nation, as demonstrated by the journey taken by the Rwandan people."

Reflecting on their discussions, Al emphasised the delegation's belief that Rwanda's achievements in peace and reconciliation transcend national boundaries.



The Yemeni delegates in a group photo with RDRRC Officials.

"The success achieved by the people of Rwanda is not solely for their nation but serves as a beacon of hope for humanity, demonstrating the possibility of achieving peace and reconciliation even in the most challenging circumstances," he stressed.

The visit to Rwanda's Mutobo demobilisation centre served as a testament to the transformative power of peace-building efforts, leaving the Yemeni delegation inspired and with a renewed commitment to fostering similar initiatives in their own country and beyond.



The Yemeni delegates were listening to the presentation.

Japanese Students Visit Mutobo Demobilisation Centre

In a bid to deepen their understanding of Rwanda's journey towards sustainable peace and security, a delegation of nine Japanese students, accompanied by their coordinator, recently visited the Mutobo Demobilisation Centre.

The visit, hosted by the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) on August 29, 2023, aimed to shed light on the pivotal role played by the RDRC in fostering peace not only within Rwanda but also across the Great Lakes region.

Led by the Centre Manager of Mutobo DC, Retired Colonel Cyprien Mudeyi, the guests were given a comprehensive overview of the centre's mandate since its establishment in 2001.

Mudeyi highlighted the RDRC's multifaceted approach, which includes the demobilisation of armed groups of Rwandan origin and the provision of socio-economic reintegration support, with a particular emphasis on vulnerable groups such as women, children, and disabled ex-combatants.

Speaking on the significance of the centre's mission, Mudeyi underscored Rwanda's commitment to unity and reconciliation following the tragic events of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. He emphasised the government's holistic approach to reintegrating ex-combatants into society, aiming to foster unity, resilience, and socio-economic development.

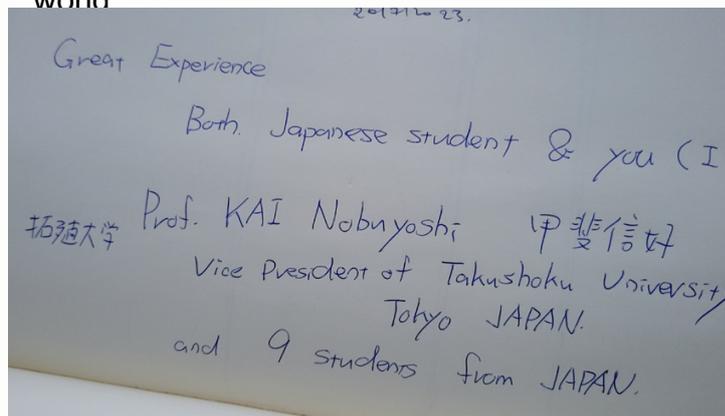
Expressing their impressions of the visit, Professor KAI Nabuyoshi, Vice-President of Takushoku University of Tokyo, hailed the Mutobo centre as "a great experience". He noted the students' profound interest in Rwanda, affirming their love for the country.



In a gesture of appreciation, KAYIRANGA Francois, Director of Administration and Finance at RDRC, extended gratitude to the Japanese delegation. He highlighted Japan's partnership with Rwanda, particularly through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Through JICA's support, RDRC has been able to enhance the capacity of Mutobo Centre trainees by providing vocational training toolkits, furthering the centre's mission of reintegration and peace-building.

The visit of the Japanese students to Mutobo Centre serves as a testament to the global significance of Rwanda's efforts towards peace, fostering international understanding and collaboration in the pursuit of a more harmonious world.



Professor KAI Nabuyoshi, Vice-President of Takushoku University in Tokyo, Japan, regards the Mutobo Centre as 'a remarkable experience', as he signs the visitor's book

RDRC Launches Comprehensive Psychosocial Support Programme for Ex-Combatants



RDRC Chairperson Hon. Valerie NYIRAHABINEZA officially launched the psychosocial seminar, which drew participation from ex-combatants experiencing social vulnerabilities.

The Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) has embarked on a significant initiative aimed at providing essential psychosocial support to ex-combatants, encompassing individuals struggling with substance abuse, chronic illnesses such as HIV/AIDS, and mental health issues.

This comprehensive support system includes regular workshops focused on addiction screening, life condition assessment, and counseling sessions. Notably, the most recent screening and diagnosis workshop, held from 24th to 28th June 2018 at Mutobo DC over a six-day period, marked a pivotal step in this endeavour.

The latest retreat, conducted from 13th to 30th August 2023 at Mutobo Centre, represented a strategic effort by the RDRC to address the psychosocial needs of 84 ex-combatants facing various challenges. Designed with a rehabilitative approach, the retreat aimed to explore avenues for sustainable change and establish mechanisms for long-term support and transformation.

Hon. NYIRAHABINEZA Valerie, Chairperson of the RDRC, commented on the initiative, stating, "This programme underscores our commitment to ensuring the holistic well-being of ex-combatants. By addressing their psychosocial needs, we are not only facilitating their reintegration into society but also fostering a foundation for lasting socially peace and stability."



Nigerian Delegation Explores Rwanda's Demobilisation Efforts



On 28th September 2023, a delegation from Nigeria embarked on a significant visit to the MUTOBO demobilisation centre in Rwanda, with the aim of gaining valuable insights into the demobilisation process, pre-discharge orientation programmes, and various components comprising the demobilisation, and reintegration Programme in the country.

The Nigerian delegation was warmly received by Mr. MUSONI Francis, the Secretary General of the Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRC).

Mr. Francis provided a comprehensive overview of RDRC's pivotal role in peacebuilding efforts within the Great Lakes region, emphasizing the commission's significant contributions towards fostering stability and reconciliation.

Mr. Francis outlined RDRC's key role in peacebuilding efforts in the Great Lakes region, emphasizing its significant contributions to stability and reconciliation.



The visit underscored the importance of cooperation and exchange in addressing complex challenges associated with conflict transformation and sustainable peacebuilding. It served as a testament to Rwanda's continued commitment to fostering regional stability and advancing reconciliation initiatives through comprehensive DDR strategies.

As the delegation departed, they carried with them valuable insights and lessons from Rwanda's experiences, poised to enrich their own efforts towards promoting peace and unity within the Nigerian context and beyond.



The Nigerian delegation was welcomed by Mr. MUSONI Francis, RDRC's Secretary General, who briefed them on the commission's peacebuilding efforts in the Great Lakes region.



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Background

Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) was created in 1997 by a Cabinet decision and approved by a Presidential Decree No.37/01 of 09/04/2002 instituting the Commission in order to support the design, implementation and administration of the Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Programme. The presidential Decree has been repealed by the Law N°50/2015 of 14/12/2015 establishing Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission and determining its responsibilities, organisation and functioning.

Mission

To facilitate the reinsertion and reintegration of the former military member to empower him/her to develop him/herself and contribute to the comprehensive development of the country.

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Nyarutarama



Rwanda Demobilization and
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