



DEMOB RWANDA

A Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission Quarterly Publication



MILITARY AFFILIATION	NUMBERS
EX-RDF	18,692
EX-RFA	26,675
EX-FAR	12,969
EX-AGS	13,025
TOTAL	71,361

NOTE: The 13,025 Ex-AGS include 387 Child ex-combatants from FDI and its splinter factions

In this edition



RDRC Shines at Commonwealth Local Government Conference Exhibition.



84 Former Armed Group Members Successfully Discharged from Mutobo DC, Phase 70.



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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the latest edition of our DemobRwanda newsletter, covering the period from October to December 2024.

We extend our sincere thanks for your continued support and valuable feedback.

At DemobRwanda, our mission is straightforward: to promote the socio-economic empowerment of all RDRC beneficiaries while actively contributing to sustainable peacebuilding efforts in the Great Lakes region.

During this quarter, we have achieved significant milestones. We are pleased to announce the successful resettlement of ex-combatants from the Mutobo Demobilisation Centre back into their communities, a pivotal step in their reintegration process.

Additionally, we are proud to have completed and handed over 20 purpose-built houses to disabled ex-combatants, providing them with a foundation for a dignified and independent life after conflict.

RDRC had the privilege of participating in the esteemed Commonwealth Local Government Conference exhibition at the Kigali Convention Centre (KCC).

This platform provided stakeholders with valuable insights into Rwanda's steadfast commitment to peacebuilding through the demobilisation and reintegration of former armed group members, reaffirming our nation's role as a leader in the region's progress.

Throughout this period, we were honored to host distinguished visitors from around the world, facilitating enriching exchanges of experiences and expertise.

Notable delegations included representatives from South Sudan, experts from the Joint Fusion Intelligence Centre (JIFC).

These interactions highlighted the universal significance of our work and the importance of collaborative efforts in advancing peace and stability.

As RDRC continues its journey, our commitment to the well-being of our beneficiaries nationwide remains unwavering.

Through a diverse range of activities and initiatives, we aim to uplift and empower individuals, paving the way for a future defined by hope and opportunity.

We invite you to delve into the stories and achievements captured in these pages, and we hope you will be inspired by the resilience and determination of those we serve. Thank you for joining us on this journey towards a brighter tomorrow. Enjoy reading!



RDRRC Excels: Showcasing Innovative Solutions at Commonwealth Conference

Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRRC) made a significant impact at the Commonwealth Local Government Conference (CLGC2023) exhibition held at the Kigali Convention Center from November 14 to 17, 2023.

With the theme "Building Local Resilience across the Commonwealth," the conference aimed to address the preparedness of local governments for current and future challenges, ensuring sustainable development for all.

During the event, the Right Honourable NGIRENTE Edouard, Prime Minister, inaugurated the conference and toured various stands. At the RDRRC stand, he was graciously hosted by the Chairperson of RDRRC, Hon. Valerie NYIRAHABINEZA.

Reflecting on the importance of RDRRC's participation, Chairperson Hon. NYIRAHABINEZA stated, "Our presence at CLGC2023 highlights our commitment to fostering resilience and sustainable development. We believe in the power of collaboration and innovation to create positive change in our communities."

"The Commonwealth Local Government Conference provides a platform for sharing best practices and forging partnerships to address shared challenges," she added.

The RDRRC underscored the vital role of peacebuilding in Rwanda and the wider Great Lakes region, showcasing compelling evidence of individuals who have undergone disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration into Rwandan society.

"We are proud to showcase the success stories of individuals who have embraced peace and are contributing meaningfully to society," said Chairperson NYIRAHABINEZA. "Their resilience and determination inspire us all to work towards a brighter future for Rwanda and the Commonwealth as a whole."

RDRRC's participation in the CLGC2023 exhibition not only highlighted Rwanda's achievements in peacebuilding and reintegration but also served as a testament to the country's commitment to sustainable development and inclusive governance. As Rwanda continues to progress on its journey of reconciliation and rebuilding, RDRRC remains at the forefront, championing innovative solutions and fostering a culture of peace and prosperity for all.

84 Ex-Combatants Discharged at Mutobo Demobilisation Centre



"Ex-combatants gathered for a group photo with all guests at the Mutobo Demobilisation Centre on November 23, 2023."

In a momentous event on Thursday, November 23, 2023, 84 ex-combatants took a significant step towards reintegration into society as they were discharged from the Mutobo demobilisation centre in Musanze district.

These individuals had successfully completed five months of civic education training, marking the culmination of Phase 70 of the pre-discharge orientation programme.

The discharge ceremony was honoured by the presence of the Minister of State for Local Government, Marie-Solange Kayisire, whose impassioned speech urged the ex-combatants to embrace unity within the Rwandan community.

Of the 84 individuals, 55 were soldiers, 14 civilians, and 15 were dependent adults who were formerly associated with armed groups. Minister Kayisire passionately called upon these former combatants to actively participate in government programmes aimed at community development.

"Effective leadership is crucial to the resilience and progress of our nation," stated Kayisire, emphasising the importance of good governance.

Furthermore, she counselled against involvement in activities that could jeopardise security and encouraged a focus on collaboration for the nation's advancement.

In a related appeal, Hon. Valerie Nyirahabineza, Chairperson of the Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRC), praised the initiative shown by the ex-combatants in returning to their homeland. She urged them to act as ambassadors and persuade their comrades still in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to return, highlighting Rwanda's current state of peace.

"Your return is a beacon of hope for peace and prosperity in our nation. Embrace your role as ambassadors of resilience and inspire others to follow suit," urged Hon. Nyirahabineza, underscoring the significance of their decision to return.

Nyirahabineza passionately implored those residing in the jungles of the DRC to consider voluntary repatriation, stressing the opportunities for a peaceful and prosperous life awaiting them in Rwanda.



"Strong leadership plays a pivotal role in fostering resilience and driving progress within our nation," Kayisire asserted, highlighting the significance of sound governance principles.

Former Armed Group Members Share Motivations for Repatriation

NDIKUMANA Faustin, born on August 16, 1962, fled to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) with his family during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. Initially aligned with the FDLR terrorist group, Faustin later shifted allegiance to the CNRD/FLN. Reflecting on his delayed return to Rwanda.

Faustin emphasised, "I decided to return upon learning my parents were alive. We've been misled about the country's security for too long, but as you can see, we're happy and secure."

Meanwhile, NTAMITONDERO Grace, indoctrinated by FDLR leaders, made the courageous decision to voluntarily repatriate to Rwanda. "Some FDLR members return home upon realising their failure," she asserted. Overwhelmed by Rwanda's progress upon her return, Grace is determined to contribute to her country's development, stating, "Witnessing Rwanda's advancement upon my return fills me with determination to contribute to its development."

With optimism for the future, Grace urges those still in the DR Congo jungles, "Rwanda is for all Rwandans; there are no ethnic divides. Abandon these futile plans and come home." Faustin and Grace's stories embody resilience, hope, and belief in Rwanda's inclusive future.

Grace and Faustin are now undergoing Technical Vocational skills training. They are actively equipping themselves with necessary tools and knowledge to reintegrate into civilian life confidently. This transition highlights their commitment to rehabilitation and represents a significant step towards a brighter future for themselves and their communities.

Their journey from former combatants to dedicated learners demonstrates a notable transformation. Through perseverance and dedication, Grace and Faustin are acquiring practical skills while showcasing resilience and determination. As they prepare to enter the workforce, their hard work serves as evidence of the potential for positive change and the opportunities that second chances can provide.



Faustin underscored, "Upon discovering my parents were alive, my decision to return was solidified. There has been a prolonged misperception regarding the security of our country, yet our contentment and sense of safety speak volumes."



Filled with hope for what lies ahead, Grace passionately urges those remaining in the jungles of the DR Congo, "Rwanda belongs to all its citizens; there are no divisions based on ethnicity. Let go of these fruitless pursuits and return home." The narratives of Faustin and Grace epitomize resilience, optimism, and a profound belief in Rwanda's future that embraces inclusivity.

Former Armed Group Members Laud Rwanda's Resolute Leadership

Former members of armed groups have expressed admiration for Rwanda's steadfast leadership, citing the government's efforts in reintegrating them into society as commendable.

Retired Major Peter Kubwayo, aged 48 and representing these discharged members, extended gratitude towards the government for its initiatives, highlighting the disciplined and compassionate approach of the Rwandan Defence Force (RDF) soldiers at the border.

"In this space, we discover freedom, emphasising that war is not a viable option for us presently. On behalf of my comrades, I extend thanks to President Paul Kagame for his unwavering commitment to fostering effective leadership and advancing the nation," remarked Retired Major Kubwayo.

Kubwayo and his colleagues conveyed their appreciation to the Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) for the warm reception extended to them at the Mutobo Centre.

They acknowledged the comprehensive support provided, enabling them to pursue various courses and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

"We underwent training in diverse vocational skills such as tailoring, construction, hairdressing, mechanics, welding, electrical engineering, agriculture, and more.

Additionally, we received lectures on our country's history, entrepreneurship, and the essentials for civilian life," Kubwayo stated.



Furaha was receiving the certificate in Mutobo DC



Peter Kubwayo was speaking on behalf of Phase 70 beneficiaries at the Discharge ceremony in Mutobo Demobilisation Centre.

Furaha Peninah, who hails from Ziralo in the Chambomo area of Kalehe Territory in South Kivu Province, shared her poignant journey. Born in 2001, Peninah and her siblings endured a nomadic existence in the jungles of Congo, fleeing the unrest. Despite the challenges, she eventually commenced schooling, though her family's transient lifestyle persisted.

Following her parents and siblings' return to Rwanda, Peninah voluntarily repatriated after escaping the clutches of the FDLR terrorist group, joining the Mutobo Demobilisation Centre.

Expressing gratitude to the Rwandan government, she highlighted the invaluable support and transformative lessons acquired at Mutobo, viewing it as a pivotal step towards reclaiming a semblance of normalcy in her life.



Furaha Peninah

"Phase 70: A Journey of Redemption - Capturing Moments from the Official Discharge Ceremony at Mutobo Demobilisation Centre"



Hon. KAYISIRE Solange, Minister of State in MINALOC, presenting a certificate to PTE NTAMITONDERO Grace (In the middle). Photo, from left to right: 1. Minister of State/MINALOC, Kayisire Solange; 2. NTAMITONDERO Grace; 3. Chairperson of RDRRC, Valerie NYIRAHABINEZA.



Mr. Jean Jacques ROGER, Chief of the DDR Section at MONUSCO, presenting a certificate to PTE DUSENGIMANA Gilbert.



HE MANDISI Mpahliwa, High Commissioner of the South African High Commission, presenting a certificate to FURAHA Penina. From left to right in the photo: 1. Governor of the Northern Province, MUGABOWAGAHUNDE, 2. State Minister (MINALOC) Kayisire Solange, 3. South Africa High Commissioner, HE MANDISI Mpahliwa, 4. Furaha Penina (Beneficiary).



Attendees were given the unique privilege of engaging in celebratory dances alongside the discharged beneficiaries. These poignant ceremonies unfolded at the esteemed Mutobo Demobilisation Centre, nestled in the heart of Musanze district.



Former combatants, who returned from the Democratic Republic of Congo, including members formerly associated with the FDLR, exude a profound sense of joy and readiness to actively contribute to the nation-building efforts. Following an intensive five-month pre-discharge orientation programme at the Mutobo Demobilisation Centre, these individuals are poised to integrate positively into society.



Following their discharge, the journey of reintegration begins for all 84 beneficiaries as they embark on a bus journey to reunite with their communities dispersed across various districts. Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) holds high expectations for these individuals, envisioning tangible contributions to emerge from their return to civilian life. With a commitment to ongoing support, the RDRC plans to conduct thorough follow-ups, ensuring that the transition is not only successful but also sustainable in the long term.

Guided by the district, sector, cell, and village leadership, the beneficiaries are set to seamlessly integrate back into Rwandan society. This concerted effort aims to foster a profound sense of belonging while empowering individuals to actively contribute to their communities in meaningful ways. By adhering to a structured approach, the reintegration process is designed to be comprehensive, addressing various aspects of societal engagement and personal development, thereby facilitating a smooth transition into their new roles as civilians.

As these beneficiaries embark on their journey back to their communities, their reintegration signifies more than just a return home; it symbolises a collective effort towards nation-building and societal cohesion. With the support of the RDRC and local leadership, these individuals are poised to embrace their newfound roles with resilience and optimism, ultimately shaping a brighter future for themselves and the broader Rwandan society.

RDRC Provides Homes for 20 Families of Disabled Ex-Combatants



The Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) has recently delivered homes to 20 families of disabled ex-combatants, a gesture emblematic of President Paul Kagame's steadfast dedication to the welfare and advancement of the Rwandan population.

Situated in Nyabihu District, specifically within the vibrant community of Jenda Sector, Rega Cell, Bihinga Village, these newly constructed residences stand as symbols of hope and progress for their recipients.

The beneficiaries, deeply moved by the transformative impact of these dwellings, expressed heartfelt gratitude towards President Kagame for his enduring support.

NTIRAMPEBA Jean Pierre, demobilised in 2004, shared his relief at leaving behind the instability of renting, stating, "I am immensely pleased to have secured a comfortable home for my family. Thanks to RDRC and our esteemed leader, President Kagame, we can now confidently pursue our development and well-being."

BAGIRUBWIKO Théodomire echoed these sentiments, praising President Kagame's consistent generosity and the quality of the housing provided. The Chairperson of RDRC, Hon. Nyirahabineza Valerie, lauded the collaborative efforts between local government bodies and Reserve Force leadership, attributing Rwanda's peace and progress to President Kagame's unwavering vision and support.

The allocated houses, strategically distributed across Nyabihu, Nyaruguru, Gisagara, Huye, and Ruhango Districts of the Southern Province, feature three rooms, a meeting space, an outdoor kitchen, a bathroom, and a toilet. Furnished with chairs, tables, beds, and sofas, each complete house reflects an investment ranging between 15 and 18 million Rwandan francs.

As RDRC remains committed to overseeing the health and welfare of ex-combatants, these homes serve as tangible symbols of the nation's dedication to facilitating their continued development and integration into society.



During the event, one of the fortunate recipients received their home. The proceedings were overseen by RDRC Chairperson, Hon. NYIRAHABINEZA Valerie, alongside the mayor of Nyabihu District.

JIFC Commends RDRC's Demobilisation and Reintegration Efforts



On the 11th of October 2023, the Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) headquarters welcomed a delegation of experts, predominantly comprising members of the Joint Fusion Intelligence Centre (JIFC), eager to witness the Commission's demobilisation and reintegration efforts firsthand.

Representing the Chairperson, RDRC Commissioner Brigadier General John Bagabo, alongside fellow Commissioners Munyurangabo David, Mutarambirwa Elie, and Nyirarugero Dancille, as well as Secretary General Musoni Francis, warmly received the delegation at RDRC's headquarters nestled in Gishushu, Nyarutarama.



Brig. Gen. BAGABO interacting with JIFC Members.

During the presentation, Secretary General Musoni provided the visitors with a comprehensive historical overview of Rwanda, illuminating the Commission's inception and its pivotal role since 1997 in demobilising and reintegrating ex-combatants into Rwandan society.

The delegation lauded the Commission's achievements as In the guestbook, they noted: "The commission sets an exemplary standard for the entire region. Others should take heed and learn from its successes."

The visit served as a testament to RDRC's dedication and effectiveness in promoting peace and stability through its demobilisation and reintegration initiatives, garnering recognition and praise from international partners and experts alike.



JIFC members interacting with Mutobo beneficiaries.

Rwanda Demobilisation Commission Hosts South Sudan Delegation for Peacebuilding Benchmarking



On Thursday, 5th October 2023, the Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) welcomed a delegation from the South Sudan Ministry of Peacebuilding, led by the Honourable Pia Philip Michael, Undersecretary at the Ministry of Peacebuilding of South Sudan.

The visit marked a significant benchmarking opportunity, aimed at enhancing the professional skills of the ministry's staff in the vital domains of peacebuilding, unity, and reconciliation. This exchange served as a platform for collaboration and knowledge-sharing, ultimately benefiting both nations.

During their visit, the Minister responsible for Peacebuilding in South Sudan expressed delight at the opportunity to tour the Mutobo Demobilisation Centre. Here, he engaged with students undergoing Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs. Encouraging these students, the Minister emphasised the importance of diligence and urged them to seize the opportunities available in their country for socio-economic development. The visit proved to be a moment of inspiration, motivating the young learners to strive for excellence in their pursuits and contribute meaningfully to their nation's progress.

The visit of the South Sudanese delegation underscores the commitment of both countries to fostering collaboration and sharing best practices in peacebuilding initiatives. Such exchanges not only enrich the professional skills of involved personnel but also contribute to the broader goal of promoting peace, unity, and reconciliation within their respective regions.



The Minister of Peacebuilding in South Sudan engaged with students undergoing Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs.

PSF Teams Up with Jabana Sector to Empower Ex-Combatants

In a heartwarming gesture of solidarity, the Private Sector Federation (PFS) collaborated with the Jabana sector to spread joy among ex-combatants residing in the Kamatamu Cell, Cyere village.

The event, convened on Wednesday, 27th December 2023, at the City of Kigali offices, was aimed at providing support and encouragement to those who have dutifully served their country.

Manzi Irené Merci, spokesperson for the group, elucidated the impetus behind the initiative, underlining the collective responsibility to assist those in need. "Acknowledging the journey our nation has undertaken and the milestones achieved, it is incumbent upon us, as compassionate individuals from diverse backgrounds, to extend a helping hand," articulated Merci.

The essence of the initiative lies in furnishing ex-combatants with sustainable business opportunities, thereby equipping them with the requisite skills and resources for self-reliance. "Rather than proffering transient assistance, our objective is to engender independence by nurturing their entrepreneurial pursuits," supplemented Merci.

Lt (Rtd) MUZIRANKONI Stella echoed these sentiments, accentuating the pivotal role of effective leadership in the success of such endeavours. "Through initiatives of this nature, we harbour the potential to flourish and proffer meaningful contributions to society," affirmed Stella.



Brigadier General John Bagabo, Commissioner at RDRC, exhorted ex-combatants to persist in their battle against poverty, underscoring the significance of collaborative endeavours. "Our veritable struggle lies in combating poverty, ignorance, and divisionism. By actively engaging in governmental programmes and community initiatives, we pave the way for a brighter future for all Rwandans," observed Bagabo.

The Jabana Sector administration reasserted its commitment to supporting ex-combatants on their journey towards socio-economic empowerment. WIBABARA Justine, in Charge of Social Affairs, reiterated the commitment to guiding ex-combatants towards self-sufficiency and integration within society.

"Through mentorship and practical training, our objective is to uplift these individuals and their families, ensuring they prosper akin to any other Rwandan citizen," affirmed Justine.



The event took place at the main hall of Kigali City, where PSF members express gratitude to disabled ex-combatants.

RDRC Staff Boosts Operational Pace



On November 9, 2023, the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) convened for its quarterly general assembly at the RDRC headquarters, attended by all staff members and commissioners. Also present were personnel from RDRC centres, including the Mutobo Demobilisation Center and the Medical Rehabilitation Unit (MRU).

The main purpose of the assembly was to inspire employees to closely monitor the progress of their activities and ensure the fulfilment of their performance contracts for the fiscal year 2023-2024. Discussions also focused on the ongoing need for sensitization efforts, particularly concerning ex-armed groups entering the country from the forests of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

RDRC Commissioner NYAMURANGWA Fred led various sessions throughout the assembly, where he commended the staff for their dedication and hard work. However, he underscored the importance of doubling efforts to effectively accomplish RDRC's mission. The gathering served as a platform for constructive dialogue and strategic planning aimed at enhancing the commission's effectiveness within Rwanda's broader socio-political landscape.

The RDRC Chairperson provided guidance to the staff regarding the importance of collaboration in their daily tasks to enhance productivity and achieve greater success.

"The cultivation of a collaborative ethos among our staff is essential for achieving heightened success. This must be complemented by the strategic utilization of skills planning in our daily duties." - RDRC Chairperson, Hon. Valerie Nyirahabineza.





Rwanda
Demobilisation and
Reintegration
Commission

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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Gasabo, Remera, Gishushu,
Nyarutarama



Rwanda Demobilization and
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