

## FINAL EVALUATION OF TWO SFCG PROJECTS IN RWANDA

This external evaluation, conducted in 2010, examined two inter-related SFCG projects in Rwanda: Using Communications and Dialogue to Facilitate the Implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategies, funded by the European Commission (EC), and Promoting Collaborative Land Conflict Transformation in Contemporary Rwandan Society, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Though separate, the two projects complimented each other as both dealt with similar and inter-related issues in Rwanda, namely poverty and land issues. The EC project sought to stimulate citizen interest and engagement around issues of youth entrepreneurship, decentralization and land reforms as key elements of poverty in Rwanda by providing information that met the needs of rural, especially youth, populations. Similarly, the USAID project sought to foster effective conflict resolution and reconciliation at the community level in support of the implementation of the National Land Policy and Land Law by the Government of Rwanda. Cumulatively, four objectives were met:

- Information was provided on how decentralization and land reform processes can benefit vulnerable rural and youth citizens;
- The capacity of state and non state actors was built to engage in more effective and consultative practices in their poverty reduction work; and,
- Broader awareness was cultivated amongst the population concerning their rights under the new National Land Policy and Land Law, and of the conflict management options available to them;
- Effective, dialogue-based approaches to conflict management through both state and non state channels were fostered.

*I personally and the National Land Center worked with SFCG in many activities and I found them interesting, relevant and useful because they help us in public awareness, to teach the population about their rights and obligations on land and to solve conflicts related to land.*

-National Land Center employee

The evaluation utilised a mixed research methodology, employing both qualitative and quantitative methods. The evaluation drew on project documents, key informant interviews, focus groups and both qualitative and quantitative surveys to evaluate the project in light of its stated objectives, outputs and outcomes. Ultimately, the evaluation highlighted numerous positive aspects of the project, and also provided recommendations to strengthen the project's impact.

## IMPROVING THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT THROUGH RADIO

Utilising a multi-pronged approach, the two SFCG projects sought to improve the social environment of rural Rwanda by raising levels of awareness and knowledge of land rights, specifically as they relate to the National Land Policy and Land Law. In order to reach a larger population, SFCG utilised radio as a key method of information dissemination. The evaluation concluded that radio programming was highly successful in delivering key messages on the national land laws and policies.

Both projects used radio as a key method of knowledge dissemination amongst the population. Various subjects were covered, ranging from land rights and the related land laws to women's and young girls' issues. *Ubutaka Bwacu*, a radio programme on land issues, was found to be an important tool of information dissemination, with approximately half of all respondents affirming that they listen to the show—which had only been on air for 18 months. The completion of both projects saw a dramatic decrease in the percentage of respondents who do not know anything about the new land laws (44% at the baseline and 32% upon project completion). For those with knowledge on the land laws, an average of 1.5 elements were named, most frequently land registration (25% baseline, 49% final) and land consolidation (23% baseline, 32% final).

*"This programme, more than any other means, explains land law and policy."*

-Land Officer, Karongi

## BUILDING LOCAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CAPACITIES

A key element of the USAID sponsored project was training for the Abunzi, elected community mediators, in various conflict resolution and mediation techniques, specifically a Common Ground approach to mediation and conflict resolution. In key informant interviews, the Abunzi praised the training they had received, saying it gave them, in order of importance, skills or tools for conflict resolution, information and confidence in themselves. The profile of Abunzi was also raised in communities as a result of SFCG activities; the evaluation found only 4% of respondents was unable to state the role of Abunzi in the community. The Abunzi are, furthermore, perceived to be more effective and trustworthy by the population (71% Little or Much More Responsive; 86% trust the work of Abunzi compared to 75% at baseline).

Abunzi training was also supplemented with the dissemination of conflict resolution concepts to the larger population via radio. Respondents demonstrated through examples that they are becoming more educated about approaches to resolving land conflict, and focus group discussions supported this conclusion. Furthermore, respondents said they took fewer conflicts to the Abunzi as a result of this increased capacity. A combination of the various dynamics mentioned herein contributed to an increased perception of the effectiveness of the Abunzi.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue programming and extend reach if possible.
- Work with Radio Salus to increase reliability of program transmission.
- If possible and practical, send a copy of every radio program to Land Officers, MAJ and Abunzi to ensure that they have the opportunity to hear all the broadcasts at a time that is convenient to them.
- If efforts have to be concentrated on one area due to resource limitations, the Southern and Western provinces have the greatest need for more programming and training.
- Provide more training on land issues to Land Officers (as they requested).

*Source: This document is a summary of, and taken directly from “Rwanda Final Report: Project Funding from the European Commission and USAID”. A copy of this document can be acquired at <http://www.sfcg.org/sfcg/evaluations/rwanda.html>, or by contacting Nick Oatley, Director of Institutional Learning at Search for Common Ground at [noatley@sfcg.org](mailto:noatley@sfcg.org)*

**John Marks**  
**President**  
Search for Common Ground  
1601 Connecticut Avenue NW | Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20009 | USA  
Tel: +1 202 777 2222 | [jmarks@sfcg.org](mailto:jmarks@sfcg.org)

**Rebecca Besant**  
**Director, Common Ground, Rwanda**  
Kicyiru South | Plot Number 61  
Rwanda [Courier] B.P. 4807  
Kigali, Rwanda  
Tel: +250 78 574 85581  
[rbesant@sfcg.org](mailto:rbesant@sfcg.org)



**Understanding Differences; Acting on Commonalities ([www.sfcg.org](http://www.sfcg.org))**