

PUR/PIASS Scientific Week 2017: Home Grown Initiative.

Reconciliation and Reconstruction of Rwanda

Topic: 1.

The Parents' Evening Forum (Umugoroba w'Ababyeyi) : A factor for the Reduction of the Family Gender Based Violence (GBV).

By Dr Josephine Mukabera, PUR/PIASS

Officially launched at the national level on March 8th, 2013 by the Rwandan First Lady, Madam Jeannette KAGAME, the Parents' Evening Forum (*Umugoroba w'Ababyeyi*) relies on the long-standing Rwandan practice and culture of collective action and mutual support to take advantage of existing local potentialities and opportunities to solve problems within a community. The Rwandan Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion decided to develop this strategy to empower, secure, protect and support families in order to move to family based sustainable development. Therefore, one of the social expectations from *Umugoroba w'Ababyeyi* is to improve family relationships and living conditions through resolving family conflicts, preventing and fighting against Gender Based Violence (GBV).

This study assesses the contribution of *Umugoroba w'Ababyeyi* to the reduction of family GBV in Tumba sector of Huye District. Fundamentally, the paper finds the answers to the following questions: How Parents' Evening Forums of *Amahoro and Ubumwe* cells are empowering families to eradicate gender based violence in their daily life? Fundamentally, presenting an overview of the *Umugoroba w'ababyeyi* policy, assessing the contribution of Parents' Evening Forum to the reduction of family GBV and the challenges met in the planning, organization and implementation of the policies so as to provide information about the needs, activities, and priorities in relation to GBV campaign's accountability by the Rwandan government and Civil Society Organizations is at the centre of this study.

Discussant of the paper: Rev Dr Appoline Kabera, UoK.

Topic no 2.

Pastoral Care of the Family, a Mission of the Churches in Rwanda

By Rev Prof Elisee Musemakweli, PUR/PIASS

Today the family is experiencing huge changes. From the dawn of time, the definition of the family has varied according to the cultures, the contexts and the epochs. But in the present situation, the impact of modernity and post-modernity is increasingly felt on families, in terms of freedom and individual responsibility, but also in terms of meaning. The tradition that has always been the basis for the family seems to lose momentum. Families today have a variety of styles and forms, depending on the meaning they are given. These changes undoubtedly lead to problems that must be resolved if we ought to safeguard the integrity of families and that of society. In any case, Protestant churches have a responsibility to care pastorally for families, firstly for the stability and cohesion of the families themselves and then for their own stability and growth and finally for the cohesion and development of our society. This study is basically using desk review approach; it should be completed when possible by quantitative data, first reviewing any existing family pastorates within the protestant churches, reflecting of the reasons behind the absence of the pastorate; it will then propose a theological guide policy/pastorate to guide the choices of the churches.

Discussant of the paper: Rev Dr Appoline Kabera, UoK.

Topic no 3:

Ubudehe Program and Socio Economic Development in Rutsiro District

By Edward Ntakirutimana & Gaspard Ngendahayo, PUR/PIASS

The Rwandan society had many approaches of addressing its socio-economic development problems. However, some of them were subverted by colonial powers and post-colonial governments with the purpose of destroying Rwandan solidarity and unity. This may be one of the factors that contributed to the 1994 Genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi.

After the 1994 genocide, the government of Rwanda has called some approaches from the tradition to find out solutions to various problems the society destroyed by the Genocide was facing. Some of these programs include *Girinka Munyarwanda, Gacaca, Umuganda, Imihigo, Itorero, Ubudehe*. Focussing on *Ubudehe*, a program restored in 2008 to promote rural areas development calling to the solidarity of the people; the researchers used a desk review approach, read different literatures to understand the policy in detail. They looked at how on the *Ubudehe* program has been implemented, the challenges met and its impact on the social economic development of the Rutsiro District?

Discussant of the paper: Dr Claudette Uwimana.

Topic 4:

Diaconia - source of hope in society

By Rev. Dr. Wolfgang Gern, Rev Dr Obed Niyikiza, Rev Dr Viateur Habarurema, Rev Juvenal Rwamunyana, Mr Gady Kubwayesu and Mr Leopold Hategekimana, PUR/PIASS

In the first part , a number of theologians and pastors reflect **on the biblical and theological foundation of diaconia**. Since faith and love belong together, church and diaconia belong together. Diaconia is found wherever people are a blessing to each other. The Bible is full of diaconal stories, full of examples of diaconal behaviour or action. Dietrich Bonhoeffer once summed up: "God comes into the world as a weakling in order to be alongside us in our weakness ... The fellowship of disciples is not afraid of suffering but goes into it head on". The passion of Christ enables us to be compassionate - and to be in solidarity with the weak and poor in society.

In the second part the researchers present **the results of the first survey on diaconia in the protestant churches in Rwanda** - together with the PUR/PIASS team: the practical and structural approaches to diaconia in churches. Some have diaconal activities on the congregational and regional level (presbytery, district or diocese), others have autonomous diaconal institutions with professional personnel and skills, some have none.

In the third part , the **survey shows that there is** a new awakening for diaconal responsibility in society. And there is a hopeful movement within the churches to join in the public advocacy work for the poor and marginalized.

Discussant of the paper: Dr Claudette Uwimana.

Topic no 5:

Learners' School Access and Retention Through School Feeding Program

Christiane Nyiramana; Abel Dufitumukiza and Leopold Niyonzima, PUR/PIASS

After the genocide against the Tutsi, it was deemed well to base the country's socio-economic transformation on the development of human capital. As a result of the implementation of the policy of Education for all, Rwanda achieved a high access and enrolment rate (the enrolment reached 151.9% in 2007). Joint strategies and factors contributed to these achievements including political, community participation through home grown initiatives. Both the government and community shared the understanding that no child should be left behind with regard to basic education; hence the construction of 9 & 12 years basic education (YBE) schools, through the mobilization of local resources.

Although it was expected from the program that the number of dropouts will be minimized and the quality improved, the differences in interpretation and implementation of the program have created confusion which resulted in parents' frustration and commitment to participate in the program's implementation. The parents also face among other dilemma: for many families, it is difficult to eat once a day and then afford the required contribution for their children to take lunch at school so as to meet the requirements. The study followed a descriptive research design with mixed methods with a target population of teachers in selected 9&12 basic education schools located in Gisagara and Karongi districts. Statistical methods such as analysis of mean and standard deviation and t-test were used to examine whether there is a significant difference brought by school feeding program in learners' school access and retention.

Discussant of the Paper: Honorable Professor Laurent Nkusi

Topic no 6:

The Citizenship Notion Informing the *Itorero* Training for High School Learners in Post-Genocide Rwanda

Sylvestre Nzahabwanayo (PhD), the University of Rwanda

The present paper investigates the citizenship concept informing *Itorero*, a non-formal citizenship education platform meant for High School Leavers (hereafter HSLs) in post-genocide Rwanda. To this end, the paper engages with classical notions of citizenship such as civic republicanism, liberalism and communitarianism, as well as modern ones, namely, cosmopolitanism and radical democracy, in a bid to identify the notion deemed preferable to these competing notions.

The *Itorero* training relies heavily on the civic republican/communitarian concepts of citizenship. The paper argues that while these concepts contain constructive elements, such as fostering courage, self-sacrifice, patriotism, connectedness, and common good concern, excessive pursuit of this citizenship model might not be helpful for post-genocide Rwanda. The civic republican/communitarian paradigm as it is practiced in *Itorero* training is likely to produce uncritical and docile citizens. Perhaps, paradoxically, it might also be seen to encourage fanaticism. In their replacement, the paper suggests a ‘critical-democratic-cosmopolitan’ citizenship notion for *Itorero*. This new paradigm is characterized and its benefits outlined.

Discussant of the paper: Hon. Prof. L. Nkusi.

Topic no 7:

A Critical Reflection on the Implementation of Girinka Program

By Dr Penine Uwimbabazi and Rev Daniel Rutegibigeni

Girinka is a program inspired by the Rwandan culture whereby a cow is considered as a sign of friendship and conversant between the person giving and receiving. It was also a sign of wealth in the early days of Banyarwanda. Motivated by that, *Girinka* became a government program that goes in line with the implementation of the vision 2020 and EDPRS. It is known to have been reinitiated by the President of the Republic of Rwanda, Paul Kagame in 2006 where he donates cows to some very poor people and in return those people donated cows to other very poor people in their communities. The cabinet meeting of 12/04/2006 approved the program as one of the 2020 vision, EDPRS and IDP implementation measures for poverty reduction (MINALOC, 2008: 16).

The Girinka program aims at enabling every poor household to own and manage an improved dairy cow, which would help the family to improve their livelihood through increased milk and meat production and to improve soil fertility of their land for their crops using the available manure for reaching sustainable development. Referring to the cultural practice, *Girinka* programs would not only promote socio-economic transformation but enhance social cohesion among community member through the pass cow system (Kugabirana and Kuroza). This study will attempt to draw the origin philosophy of cow donation among people; the current understanding of the actual program; and how it has been implemented. Data were collected in the Eastern Province, the District of Bugesera and will further be extended to Northern and Southern Provinces, by the means of structured and non-structured interview which will help both qualitative and quantitative presentation and analysis of the study. It is expected that lessons drawn from the findings will help policy makers and practitioners in the program implementation and improvements of social economic life of the Rwandans.

The discussant was: Dr Aime. M. Kalimunda, Judge Supreme Court, Fellow ULK.

Topic 8:

The Gacaca Justice: The challenges of economic Reparation in post-genocide Rwanda.

By Kazuyuki Sasaki and Serge Muvunyi, PUR/PIASS

Redressing the injuries suffered by the survivors through various means of economic reparation is a crucial element for justice and reconciliation in post-genocide Rwanda. Concrete acts of economic reparation by the perpetrators may have a reconciliatory potential by giving the survivors the opportunity to confirm “the sincerity of the perpetrators’ remorse and desire to rebuild relationships damaged by violence” (Clark 2008: 315). As one of the reparative measures embedded in the community-based Gacaca justice system - the centerpiece of Rwanda’s justice and reconciliation program – all the convicted perpetrators responsible for property damages were given compensation orders. However, it has been reported, even after the closure of Gacaca courts in June 2012, that a significant number of compensation claims by survivors remain unresolved. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with the survivors, the perpetrators and their family members in one rural community (Cell) in Kirehe District, this research identifies the various dimensions of the challenges the concerned parties have faced and the ways they have tried to overcome them in the process of realizing, at least partially, economic reparation for the survivors. The study also highlighted varied perspectives on the role of economic reparation in people’s effort to rebuild their relationships in the grassroots community.

The discussant was: Dr Aimée. M. Kalimunda, Judge Supreme Court, Fellow ULK.

For further Contacts:

tharcissegatwa@hotmail.com/ tharcissegatwa@piass.ac.rw