



COMMUNITY BASED  
SOCIOTHERAPY

# COMMUNITY BASED SOCIOTHERAPY CONFERENCE 2022

**Beyond trauma:**  
Intergenerational healing and  
peacebuilding in the Great Lakes Region

**Serena Hotel, Kigali**  
**6-8 December 2022**

**#CBSConference2022**



Kingdom of the Netherlands

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Impacting Hearts-Heads-Hands



**Prison Fellowship**  
Rwanda

**VU**  **VRJIE  
UNIVERSITEIT  
AMSTERDAM**

# BEYOND TRAUMA INTERGENERATIONAL HEALING AND PEACEBUILDING IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION

Exposure to collective traumatic events, including genocide and other types of mass violence, impacts mental health and psychosocial wellbeing and the level at which people can engage in peacebuilding processes. When the long-term psychosocial legacies of violence remain unaddressed, this may – in addition to continued personal and family suffering – also contribute to a deeply fractured society with possible cycles of repetition of violence across generations. This conference focuses on the legacies of violence and some of the processes that are required to rebuild societies that went through collective violence. These processes are multifaceted and rely on a range of initiatives to be implemented at distinct levels of society, considering historical, political, structural, economic, spiritual, cultural, and psychosocial dimensions. A cross-cutting theme of the conference will be the linkage between mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and peacebuilding (PB). The conference takes an intergenerational perspective and will mainly focus on societies in the Great Lakes Region.

Community Based Sociotherapy (CBS) is one of the approaches initiated in Rwanda that aims to contribute to addressing psychosocial needs of the Rwandan population in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi. CBS was developed in Rwanda from 2005 onwards and over time also implemented in other conflict-affected settings, including North and South Kivu in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi and more recently among conflict-affected populations in Uganda.

The Community Based Sociotherapy Conference 2022 is organized by Community Based Sociotherapy Rwanda (CBS Rwanda) and its partners in Rwanda - E.A.R. Byumba Diocese, Duhumurizanye Iwace Rwanda (DIR) and Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR), and in Eastern Congo - Africa Restoring Bridges Initiative (ARBI) and Paix et Développement Durable (PDD). The conference is supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) and the Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation (NUFFIC).

Particular attention will be paid to the outcomes of the currently running project **“Mvura Nkuvure: Intergenerational healing and community reconciliation for sustainable peace”**, implemented in Rwanda since November 2018 by CBS Rwanda and its partners - EAR Byumba Diocese, DIR and PFR - and funded by EKN, and the **“Impacting Hearts, Heads and Hands: “Addressing intergenerational experiences of trauma and violence, promoting servant leadership and strengthening partnerships in the field of Community Based Sociotherapy”**, implemented in the DRC by CBS Rwanda, ARBI and PDD, in partnership with the Free University of Amsterdam (VU Amsterdam), funded by NUFFIC.

**#CBSConference2022**

## CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

- Increase awareness about the potential legacies of violent conflicts and the relevance of working at the nexus of MHPSS and peacebuilding across generations.
- Share recent insights of trauma research and their implications for pathways of recovery.
- Highlight the contribution of community-based MHPSS approach (including community-based sociotherapy) to addressing the legacies of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi and other types of mass violence in the Great Lakes Region that impact future generations as well as its contribution to the psychosocial reintegration of ex-prisoners in their families and communities.
- Share thoughts on local conceptualization and operationalization of MHPSS and peacebuilding related concepts used in research.
- Lay a foundation for new partnerships between organizations that wish to exchange ideas and develop complementary strategies in the domains of MHPSS and peacebuilding implementation and research.

## THE MAIN THEMES OF THIS CONFERENCE

1. Linkages between MHPSS and peacebuilding and the example of Community Based Sociotherapy.
2. Recent insights of trauma research.
3. Intergenerational legacies of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi and other types of mass violence in the Great Lakes Region.
4. Psychosocial rehabilitation and reintegration of former genocidaire prisoners and ex-combatants into their family and community.
5. Localizing research: Conceptualization and operationalization.

## LINKAGES BETWEEN MHPSS AND PEACEBUILDING

The integration of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) approaches and peacebuilding is an emerging field, which is still being conceptualized by practitioners, academics, and funding agencies.

Mainstreaming MHPSS into peacebuilding frameworks enables peace efforts to be inclusive and multidimensional in transforming societies and ending social suffering, particularly among victims, perpetrators, and their family members. In the recent years, numerous MHPSS initiatives active in communities affected by violent conflict have worked hard to enrich their activities by integrating peacebuilding aspects into that practice. These initiatives contribute to the rebuilding of damaged capacities and promote healing, coping with stress, resilience, social learning, and collaboration as well as community empowerment, which are all key to peacebuilding at the community level.

The conference will explore the contribution of the CBS approach, as one of the integrated MHPSS and peacebuilding approaches, implemented on individual, interpersonal, family and community level against the backdrop of local and international developments in the field.

## RECENT INSIGHT OF TRAUMA RESEARCH

In community based sociotherapy, we have observed positive changes in people's emotional, psychic, somatic, moral, and social-relational life affected by trauma, among the first as well as the second generation. To understand and theorize what in the sociotherapy process may help to explain these changes needs an interdisciplinary approach. Themes that will be addressed from different theoretical perspectives during the conference will include: the impact of trauma on not only the psyche but also on the body and brain; the intergenerational transmission of trauma and violence; the neuroception of danger and safety; the resetting of the nervous system after trauma; and the co-regulation of each other's behaviour in the recovery process. Outcomes of recent developments in interdisciplinary trauma research addressing the themes listed may contribute to a further development of the theoretical underpinnings of sociotherapy and other community-based MHPSS approaches.



# EXPLORING INTERGENERATIONAL LEGACIES OF COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE

While trauma comes in different forms, a multitude of studies have shown that both individual and collective trauma is ongoing in nature and often has intergenerational consequences. Historical trauma, referred to as a multigenerational trauma experienced by a specific social group, influences how different generations characterize and give meaning to their relationships at family and community level. In Rwanda in particular, accounts of how parents' experiences of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi and its aftermath influence the way they raise their children and communicate with them will be presented at the conference. On the one hand, studies suggest that children in diverse ways can be seriously affected by what parents and caretakers transmit to them in terms of memories, attitudes, and emotions. On the other hand, there is also a great resilience among the second generation to live constructively with what is transmitted by their parents, extended family and community members, as well as by public and cultural memory transmission. Nevertheless, research findings point to the need of making the healing and peacebuilding process more inclusive by actively including 'the generations after' and ensuring that the issue of intergenerational transmission of traumatic memories to children, is addressed through psychosocial interventions. This helps the community to move away from (potential) feelings of fear, mistrust, hatred, and revenge as well as complex identity problems across the generations.

Beyond Rwanda, the intergenerational legacies of violence will also be explored in the context of other countries in the Great Lakes Region, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi and Uganda and embedded in theoretical understandings of these legacies.

## PSYCHOSOCIAL REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION OF EX-PRISONERS INTO FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

One of the concerns raised in sociotherapy groups, particularly in the context of Rwanda, includes the peaceful reintegration of genocide ex-prisoners back into families and communities and the repair of diverse forms of relational trauma. Gacaca offered most genocide suspects an opportunity to confess to genocide crimes in exchange for a reduced sentence. For community members, and in particular genocide survivors, the release of génocidaires may lead to increased trauma and anxieties regarding cohabitating and interaction with people who committed genocide crimes. Ex-prisoners often experience the fear of being confronted with genocide survivors and family members of these survivors and people killed during the genocide after their release and struggle with feelings of worthlessness, guilt, insomnia, depression, and a distorted self-image. Reintegration back into their families also comes with a diverse range of challenges. For instance, how does the younger generation respond to the history of a parent who has been accused of and/or tried for severe crimes and subsequently imprisoned for years?

In addition to continuing to be implemented in communities, CBS has also been implemented in prison to contribute to a peaceful reintegration after prisoners' release. Sociotherapy sessions are facilitated by trained prisoners for their fellow prisoners. It was observed that psychological distress resulting from the crimes committed and the life in prison constrain prisoners from engaging themselves in reconciliation processes. While impoverished psychosocial well-being is likely to hamper processes of rehabilitation and reintegration, efforts that improve the psychosocial wellbeing of (ex-)prisoners is expected to contribute to the reestablishment of peaceful relationships across generations.

Besides the rehabilitation and reintegration process in Rwanda, Uganda will also be presented as a case study, with a particular focus on the reintegration of ex-combatants, including child soldiers, and its intergenerational effects.

## LOCALIZING RESEARCH: CONCEPTUALIZATION AND OPERATIONALIZATION

Generally, many of the MHPSS interventions in Sub-Saharan African countries have been based on 'modes of thinking' which originated in western countries. Available medical personnel, including psychologists and psychiatrists, are trained in western psychology and medicine and therefore their orientations remain often western-based. Though the World Health Organisation (WHO) called for increased attention to traditional healing practices when it comes to treatment of mental health disorders, the reality in these countries shows that in many interventions people are requested to deliver western-based treatments, instead of using their unique skills and knowledge regarding, for instance, local idioms of distress. A risk of applying MHPSS tools which are developed in parts of the world other than the area where an intervention is implemented, is that it could impose a vision that does not fit the local realities and culture. The latter could lead to further stigmatization of mental health problems.

Apart from interventions, a similar trend applies to evidence-based working in Sub-Saharan Africa, including the Great Lakes Region. In the development sector it is widely accepted that evidence contributes to improving development of policies and programs. Therefore, many organisations put emphasis on research and conducting evaluation studies, including randomized control trials. However, often international actors maintain control over the research, whereby interventions are modified to fit researchers' interest and/or local organizations and communities become merely implementers of what is assigned to them, rather than (co-)designers of the research. This has the potential to undermine local knowledge production and dissemination, which is crucial for effectively addressing issues related to MHPSS and PB. So far localizing research designs to support integrated MHPSS/PB interventions and their effectiveness have not yet been widely implemented. In this perspective, strategies used by CBS Rwanda and partners to localize research approaches by using bottom-up community indicators will be presented at this conference.

## VENUE AND DATES

Serena Hotel Kigali, 6-8 December 2022

## PROGRAMME OF THE CONFERENCE

Find the most recent programme of the conference on:  
[www.cbsrwanda.org](http://www.cbsrwanda.org)



# DAY ONE – 6 DECEMBER 2022

| TIME        | ACTIVITY  | PRESENTER   |
|-------------|---|---|
| 08:00-09:00 | Arrival and Registration of participants        | Protocol  |
| 09:00-09:10 | Welcome note from CBS and partner organizations | Chair of CBS – Archbishop Onesphore Rwaje   |
| 09:10-09:30 | Speeches by Guests of Honour                    | His Excellency Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands<br>Honourable Minister of MINUBUMWE |

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS – RECENT INSIGHTS ON HEALING TRAUMA

|               |   |                           |
|---------------|---|---------------------------|
| 9:30 - 10:00  | Personal experiences of forgiveness and resilience after trauma                           | (TBC)                     |
| 10:00 – 11:00 | Trapped by history: Strategies to break the cycles of trauma, re-enactment, and suffering | Prof. Bessel van der Kolk |
| 11:00 – 11:05 | Group photo   | Conference Participants   |
| 11:05 – 11:30 | Tea break   |                           |

## LINKAGES BETWEEN MHPSS AND PEACEBUILDING: AN INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

|               |  |  |
|---------------|--|--|
| 11:30 – 12:00 | Deepening Transitional Justice processes by linking the local, the regional and the global - Beyond the rhetoric | Dr. Webster Zambara                    |
| 12:00 – 12:30 | Connecting MHPSS and Peacebuilding from an intergenerational perspective   | Prof. Annemiek Richters                |
| 12:30 – 13:00 | Q&A  | Presenters and conference participants |
| 13.00-14.00   | Lunch  |  |

## COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACHES TO MHPSS AND PEACEBUILDING

|               |  |   |
|---------------|--|---|
| 14:00 – 14.30 | Rethinking Mental Health: Culturally specific and decolonial approaches to healing in Rwanda and the importance of 'home grown' community solutions. | Dr. Jean Pierre Ndagijimana   |
| 14.30-15:00   | Community-based sociotherapy as an approach to healing and peacebuilding   | Lucie Nzaramba  |
| 15:00 – 15:45 | Panel: Experiences from Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and Eastern Congo<br>Sewimfura, Felix HBigabo,   | Lucie Nzaramba, Jina Bachunguye, Theophile<br>Elson Mageza, Prof.dr. Grace Akello,<br>Rickie-Nelly Ndagano<br>Led by Reverien Interayamahanga |
| 15.45- 16.15  | Q&A  | Presenters and conference participants  |
| 16.15 – 16:45 | Documentary  | CBS, EAR, DIR, PFR  |
| 16:45 - 17:00 | Closure of the day   | Chair of PFR - Bishop John Rucyahana  |
| 17:00 – 19:00 | Cocktail reception   |   |

## DAY TWO – 7 DECEMBER 2022

| TIME   | ACTIVITY   | PRESENTER   |
|--|--|---|
| 8.30-9.00  | Arrival and registration of participants   |   |
| <b>LONG TERM EFFECTS OF INTERGENERATIONAL LEGACIES OF COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE: A THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL PERSPECTIVE</b> |  |   |
| 9:00 – 10:00   | Interdisciplinary perspectives on the development of intergenerational trauma  | Prof. Bessel van der Kolk   |
| 10:00 – 10:45  | Cultural performance: Royalty meets the panic of memories  | Frank Mugisha and Michael Rhebergen   |
| 10:45 – 11:15  | Empirical findings on intergenerational legacies of the genocide against the Tutsi in the context of sociotherapy    | Dr. Chantal Ingabire  |
| 11:15 – 11:45<br>11:45 – 12:15   | Tea break<br>Intergenerational transmission of memories in the context of Burundi: The need for psychosocial support | Rickie-Nelly Ndagano  |
| 12:15 – 13:00  | Reflections and Q&A  | Presenters and conference participants  |
| 13:00 – 14:00  | Lunch  |   |
| <b>PANEL DISCUSSION</b>  |  |   |
| 14:00 – 14:30  | Panel introductory presentation<br>Voices of the post-genocide generation: Challenges and lessons learned            | Diogene Karangwa  |
| 14:30 – 15:15  | Intergenerational transmission of trauma and violence: Relevant insights and future perspectives                     | Prof. Leon Mutesa, Prof. Clementine Kanazayire, Dr. Aggee Shyaka Mugabe (TBC)<br>Led by Prof. Rutembesa |
| <b>LOCALIZING RESEARCH: CONCEPTUALIZATION AND OPERATIONALIZATION</b>   |  |   |
| 15:15 – 15:45  | Bottom-up community indicator data collection: Its rational and methodological process                               | Emmanuel Nzabonimpa, Angela Jansen  |
| 15:45 – 16:30  | Contribution of the sociotherapy program to Social Dignity: A Randomized Control Trial                               | Prof. Stefan Jansen, Dr. Epa Nsabimana  |
| 16:00 – 16:45  | Q&A  | Presenters and conference participants  |
| 16:45 – 17:00  | Closure  | Chair EAR - Bishop Emmanuel Ngendahayo  |

## DAY THREE – 8 DECEMBER 2022

| TIME   | ACTIVITY  | PRESENTER  |
|--|---|--|
| 08:30-09:00  |   | Arrival and registration   |
| <b>REINTEGRATION OF EX-PRISONERS AND EX-COMBATANTS:<br/>FROM THEORY TO EVIDENCE-BASED PERSPECTIVES</b> |   |  |
| 09:00-09:30  | Psychosocial reintegration and rehabilitation of prisoners: Global and local perspectives   | Dr. Theoneste Rutayisire   |
| 09:30-10:00  | Forgiveness in the context of prisoner reintegration  | Emmanuel Sarabwe   |
| 10:00 – 10:30  | Stigma and guilt among the children of amnestied ex-combatants in Northern Uganda   | Prof.dr. Grace Akello  |
| 10:30 – 11:00  | Protracted social conflict in DRC and the role of communities in building peace   | Dr. Aembe Bwimana (TBC)  |
| 11:00 – 11:30  | Tea break   |  |
| 11:30 – 12:00  | Q & A   | Presenters and conference participants   |
| 12:00 – 13:00  | Body work session:<br>Befriending your inner experience   | Licia Sky  |
| 13:00 – 14:00  | Lunch break   |  |
| <b>PANEL</b>   |   |  |
| 14:00 – 14:20  | Panel introductory presentation   | Dr. Kalimba (TBC)  |
| 14:20 – 15:00  | Intergenerational legacies of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi and reintegration of ex-prisoners: From research to policy making | MINUBUMWE, MINIJUST, MIGEPROF, RCS, MoH-RBC, Dr. Kalimba<br>Led by Sandra Shenge |
| <b>CLOSING SESSION</b>   |   |  |
| 15:00 – 15:45  | Conference closing reflections  | Prof. Bessel van der Kolk  |
| 15:45 – 16:15  | Final round of questions and remarks  | Conference participants  |
| 16:15 – 16:30  | Closure and Departure   | Ministry of Health   |

# LIST OF CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

## CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

- 1 MINUBUMWE
- 2 MINISANTE
- 3 MINIJUST
- 4 MINALOC
- 5 MINEDUC
- 6 MIGEPROF
- 7 MYCULTURE
- 8 MINEMA

## EMBASSIES, BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

- 1 Belgian Embassy
- 2 Embassy of Israel
- 3 Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
- 4 European Union
- 5 Office of the High Commission of Canada
- 6 British High Commission
- 7 Swedish Embassy
- 8 Swiss Embassy
- 9 Belgian Development Agency (Enabel)
- 10 Department for International Development (DFID)
- 11 GIZ Rwanda
- 12 Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
- 13 Swedish International Development Cooperation (SIDA)
- 14 Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC)
- 15 UNDP
- 16 UNHCR
- 17 UNICEF
- 18 USAID

## PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

- 1 Rwanda Biomedical Centre
- 2 Rwanda Correctional Service
- 3 Rwanda Governance Board
- 4 Rwanda Rehabilitation Service



## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- 1 Burera district
- 2 Gasabo district
- 3 Kicukwi district
- 4 Karongi district
- 5 Muhanga district
- 6 Nyabihu district
- 7 Nyamagabe district
- 8 Nyamasheke district
- 9 Nyanza district
- 10 Nyarugenge district
- 11 Rubavu district
- 12 Rulindo district
- 13 Rusizi district

## INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

- 1 Action Aid
- 2 Adventist and Development and Relief Services (ADRA)
- 3 African Evangelic Enterprise Rwanda (AEE)
- 4 AEGIS TRUST
- 5 Alarm Rwanda
- 6 APRED - RGL
- 7 ARAMA
- 8 Africa Restoring Bridges Initiative
- 9 ARCT-RUHUDA
- 10 Association Modeste et Innocent (AMI)
- 11 Association of Clinical Psychologist Students
- 12 AVEGA Agahozo
- 13 CARE International
- 14 Catholic Church (Justice et Paix)
- 15 Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
- 16 Chemonics International Rwanda
- 17 Cordaid
- 18 Duhumurizanye Iwacu Rwanda
- 19 EAR Anglican church, Byumba Diocese
- 20 Fondation Dignité en Detention
- 21 Fondation Saint Dominique Savio (FSDS)
- 22 Global Communities
- 23 Hope Iwacu Initiative
- 24 Humanity & Inclusion
- 25 Ibuka
- 26 IDEAL (Inclusive Decision at Local Level)
- 27 ILPD (Institute of Legal Practice and Development)
- 28 Imbuto Foundation
- 29 Institute for Community Based Sociotherapy (IICBS)
- 30 Institute of Global Analysis
- 31 International Alert
- 32 Interpeace
- 33 Innovations for Poverty and Action (IPA Rwanda)
- 34 (Initiative for Peace and Human Rights (IPEACE)
- 35 Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP)
- 36 KOICA
- 37 Radio La Benevolencija

38 La Fondation DiDé “Dignité en Détention”  
39 Laywers of Hope  
40 Legal Aid Forum  
41 Mizero Care Organization (MoC)  
42 Never Again Rwanda  
43 Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)  
44 Nsindagiza Organization  
45 Paix et Développement Durable  
46 Peace and Love Proclaimers  
47 Peace Plan  
48 Prison Fellowship Rwanda  
49 Plan International  
50 Living Peace Institute  
51 Oxfam NOVIB  
52 Protestant Council of Rwanda  
53 Rabagirana Ministries  
54 RCN Justice et Democracy  
55 Rwanda Civil Society Platform (RCSP)  
56 Red Cross Rwanda  
57 Rwanda Resilience and Grounding Organization (RRGO)  
58 Rwanda Bridges to Justice  
59 Rwanda Men's Resource Center (RWAMREC)  
60 Rwanda Psychologists Association  
61 Rwanda Women's Network  
62 Save the Children  
63 SEVOTA  
64 Search for Common Ground  
65 Solid Minds  
66 Survivors Fund (SURF)  
67 The Kvinna Kvinna  
68 Three Mountains  
69 Transparency International  
70 Trócaire  
71 Ubuntu Care  
72 Uyisenga Ni Imanzi  
73 World Relief Rwanda  
74 World Vision  
75 ZOA

## ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

1 African Leadership University (ALU)  
2 VU Amsterdam  
3 Kepler University  
4 Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences  
5 University of Gitwe  
6 University of Global Health Equity (UGHE)  
7 University of Rwanda/ College of Medicine and Health Sciences  
8 UR Center for conflict Management  
9 UR Center for Mental Health



CONTACT US  
COMMUNITY BASED SOCIOOTHERAPY RWANDA  
KN3 ROAD

INFO@CBSRWANDA.ORG  
WWW.CBSRWANDA.ORG

UMOJA HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, KIYOVU PHONE: +250 (0)788416724  
KIGALI, RWANDA

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