



RWENZORI FORUM FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE



ANNUAL REPORT

2022

Rwenzori Forum for Peace and Justice (RFPJ) Annual Report: 2022



Community reporters demonstrating the referral pathway during a training on conflict identification and management in Fort Portal City.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acronyms.....	3
MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON	4
MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	6
VISION AND MISSION.....	8
RFPJ AT A GLANCE	8
DONORS AND PARTNERS	18
CHANGE STORIES.....	19
RFPJ TEAM IN 2022.....	21
RECOGNITION OF RFPJ IN 2022	22

Acronyms

ADF: Allied Democratic Forces

ADR: Alternative Dispute Resolution

CSOs: Civil Society Organizations

DGF: Democratic Governance Facility

FJDI: Foundation for Justice and Development Initiative

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations

OHCHR: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

RFPJ: Rwenzori Forum for Peace and Justice

TJ: Transitional Justice

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON

For and on behalf of the Board of Rwenzori Forum for Peace and Justice (RFPJ) and on my own behalf, I feel honored to see us end 2022 and start a new year, 2023 peacefully. At the end of 2022, the RFPJ General Assembly elected a new Board. Four of the elected seven members are new, presenting us with a grand opportunity to learn from them as we continue to



strengthen RFPJ's governance system. With this strong team, we hope to provide RFPJ with necessary oversight and supportive role to enable her grow and deliver her mandate. I extend my utmost appreciation to old Board members for their distinguished service to RFPJ.

RFPJ has since its evolution in 2002, remained open to learning from others and also, to contributing to the culture of peace and nonviolence in the Rwenzori region. Overtime, this mandate has grown and RFPJ is increasingly influencing the course of peacebuilding and human rights work at national level. I acknowledge this growth and implore RFPJ to have it sustained in 2023 and beyond. As an RFPJ Board, we are cognizant of the challenges and opportunities that RFPJ faces in delivering her mandate. Some of these challenges are linked to recurrent threats to peace and respect for human rights in our country, such as identity politics, social and economic hardships, failed Transitional Justice (TJ) processes and political intolerance. We are also aware that RFPJ, alongside other Civil Society Organizations (CSO) and State actors can harness existing opportunities to further a culture of dialogue and consensus building. In 2022, RFPJ through her numerous interventions and working hand in hand with several volunteers, women groups and informal mediators, demonstrated the possibility of occasioning peace, nonviolence and the culture of respect for human rights in fragile contexts. RFPJ needs to build on the 2022 work and experience and start a process of advocating for peaceful 2026 general elections.

The Board and the entire RFPJ family appreciate the donors that made RFPJ work possible. The Board in its oversight role, will maximize RFPJ loyalty to the people it serves. Further, the Board will continue to create an enabling environment within RFPJ, not only for the staff, but also, for all interested stakeholders to contribute to the cause of peace, justice, nonviolence and respect for human rights in the Rwenzori region and beyond. In this effort, the Board will continue to give strategic guidance to the RFPJ fraternity, contribute to resource mobilization and keep RFPJ vibrant as a platform for learning and extending frontiers of peace.

Let us all be instruments of peace!

Twebaze Gerald



Board Chairperson

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear partners, friends and all people who strive for the cause of peace and justice,

I heartily congratulate you upon finishing the year 2022 and starting a new year, 2023. The year 2022 was complex for civil society work in Uganda. In September 2022, the winding up of the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF), one of the largest donor agencies to RFPJ and to other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Uganda, shocked the RFPJ fraternity. Further, the shrinking civil society space continues to be amplified by stringent rules and regulations that NGOs have to comply with as linked to the 2016 NGO Act and to other laws in Uganda. To date, NGOs have different compliance obligations to meet at over ten centres, including Uganda Revenue Authority, National Social Security Fund, the National Bureau for Non-Governmental Organizations, Financial intelligence Authority, and National Registration Services Bureau. The complex terrain for CSOs notwithstanding, the year 2022 was punctuated by a series of events as a demonstration of RFPJ resilience. Notably, RFPJ commemorated twenty years of her existence and service in the Rwenzori region, passed the six-year strategic plan (2023-2028) and admitted three new organizations into her membership. In commemorating the twenty years, RFPJ stakeholders from within and outside of the Rwenzori region gave us an opportunity to reflect on our work, take stock of key successes to harness and challenges to address. Further, the enthusiasm with which RFPJ stakeholders participated in the commemoration of her twenty years of existence and service served to further accentuate the continued relevance of the RFPJ mandate for years to come. As RFPJ, this commemoration involving other mini-events such as the memorial event in honor of the victims of the 1998 massacre at Uganda Technical College, Kicwamba, orchestrated by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) ,reminded us of the outstanding work in furthering healing, truth telling, reconciliation and victim-centered accountability for past mass atrocities and human rights violations.



With the admission of three additional member organizations, RFPJ hopes to easily realize its ambitious six-year strategic plan (2023-2028). These new

members namely, Rwenzori Agency for Integrated Development (Rwenzori Aid); Peace and Disaster Concern Uganda (PDCU) and; Kitara Civil Society Organizations' Network (KCSO) have credible experience in peace and justice work. The old RFPJ membership will tap into the experience of these new members to enhance symbiotic relationships and further the cause of peace and justice. Remarkably, in 2022, RFPJ elected a new Board of seven members for the next three years. This election provided RFPJ with an opportunity to consolidate the culture of democracy, accountability and good governance within its operations. Three women got elected on the seven-member Board as one way of ensuring women representation and empowerment at the RFPJ policy making level. Before these elections, RFPJ had only one woman on the Board.

RFPJ has key priorities to pay attention to in 2023 as embedded in her six-year strategic plan. Key of these include, rallying the Rwenzori region for peaceful 2026 general elections, strengthening local capacities for peacebuilding and violence prevention, amplifying the role of women and the youth in conflict prevention, contributing to TJ efforts in the country and accelerating social and economic empowerment of communities as an enhancer of peace and justice.

Lastly, I extend the RFPJ appreciation to all people of the Rwenzori region and Uganda who in one way or the other, contributed to the growth of RFPJ in 2022. I recognize all peace activists in the Rwenzori region; the RFPJ Board and Staff, religious, cultural and political leaders; security agencies; RFPJ member organizations and other CSOs; the media; members of the public and; victims of conflicts and human rights violations. I acknowledge RFPJ donors and partners in 2022 including the DGF, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, the UN Women, Baylor College of Medicine Children's Foundation-Uganda and ENABEL. With the support of these partners and donors, RFPJ was able to consolidate her work and scale up her interventions within and outside of the Rwenzori region.

May peace continue to prevail in our Rwenzori region and country! May the cause of peace and justice continue to thrive! And may we all be agents of love, peace, and hope.

Tuhaise Francis


Executive Director

VISION AND MISSION

Our Vision: A peaceful and Just Society

Our Mission: To create and strengthen synergies that further Peace and Justice

RFPJ AT A GLANCE

RFPJ is an NGO that is legally registered with the National NGO Board to operate in Uganda, and its head office is located in Butebe, Bwamba Road, Fort Portal Tourism City. As a Forum of peacebuilding and Human Rights CSO, RFPJ seeks to prevent violence and build an infrastructure that can support sustainable peace and realization of rights. Specifically, RFPJ's mandate rotates around: (i) Creating and strengthening spaces for citizens, government, CSOs, private sector and development partners to engage and foster peace, non-violence, access to justice, and respect for human rights; (ii) Strengthening local and regional peace building infrastructure to harness the culture of peace and nonviolence; and (iii) Researching and sharing information to inform peace building and conflict management work.

CSOs that makeup the RFPJ membership

- Anti-Mines Network-Rwenzori (AMNET-R) headquartered in Kasese District
- Kabarole Research and Resource Centre (KRC) headquartered in Fort Portal City
- Kamwenge Development Centre (KDC) headquartered in Kamwenge District
- Kind Uganda headquartered in Kyenjojo District
- Kitara Civil Society Organizations' Network (KCSO) headquartered in Kagadi District
- Peace and Disaster Concern Uganda (PDC) headquartered in Kyenjojo District
- Program Enhancing The Underprivileged in the Rwenzori Area (PETURA) headquartered in Ntoroko District
- Rural Health and Education Mobilization for Development (RHEMD) headquartered in Kagadi District
- Rwenzori Agency for Integrated Development (Rwenzori AID) headquartered in Fort Portal City

PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED IN 2022

In the year 2022, RFPJ implemented five underlisted projects

- Enhanced livelihood skills of youth and women in Fort Portal Tourism City and Kabarole District
- Amplifying the participation of women in peacebuilding processes in the Rwenzori region
- Fostering Victim-Responsive TJ in Uganda
- Accelerating epidemic control in Fort Portal (ACE-Fort)
- Fostering Inter-Ethnic Dialogue and Reconciliation

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND OUTREACHES IN 2022

Celebrating 20 years of existence and service: The year 2022 marked exactly 20 years of RFPJ existence and service in the Rwenzori region and Uganda. In commemorating these years, RFPJ undertook a series of activities across the Rwenzori region and at national level from May to September 2022 including;

Rallying 200 members of the public in a Fort Portal City clean-up campaign organized under the theme: **“A clean environment: a peaceful city.”** On May 27th 2022, RFPJ conducted a Fort Portal City cleaning drive in which over 200 members of the public and City leaders participated. The event served as an avenue for sensitizing communities on their environmental protection and conservation responsibility and accentuating RFPJ's commitment

to environmental conservation and protection for a healthy and peaceful Rwenzori region.



RFPJ Executive Director and Fort Portal City leaders launching the city clean-up campaign to mark 20 years of RFPJ existence and service

Commemorating the 1998 ADF Massacre at Uganda Technical College, Kichwamba and petitioning the President:

On 22nd July 2022, RFPJ organized ecumenical prayers in remembrance of over 40 lives lost on the night of June 18th 1998 to a rebel attack at the Uganda Technical College, Kichwamba. The event provided a platform for over 200 stakeholders to share ideas on



His Grace Archbishop John Baptists Odama of Gulu Catholic Archdiocese and other leaders march from Fort Portal City to Uganda Technical College, Kichwamba for interfaith prayers

combating violent extremism in the Rwenzori region and consolidating the current region's peace, stability, and cohesion. On the same day, survivors of the massacre presented a petition to the President through the Minister of State for Local Government, seeking compensation, rehabilitation and recognition.

Galvanizing 200 women peace activists to call for peace; In the spirit of amplifying women's participation in peacebuilding processes, RFPJ held one district-level women's peace convention in each of the districts of Kasese, Bundibugyo, and Kyenjojo and one Rwenzori regional level convention in Fort Portal City, between July and September 2022. Conventions provided spaces for over 200 women peace activists to reflect on their role as peace actors in preventing and managing conflicts. From each convention, activists issued a communique calling for peace and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls.

Flagging off Rwenzori regional peace and conflict issues to development

partners: On 2nd September 2022, RFPJ held a conference at Hotel Africana in Kampala for development partners in Uganda. The high-level conference was attended by representatives from the DGF, European Union, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Women, Baylor College of Medicine Children's Foundation-Uganda as well as Austrian, French, and Dutch Embassies. The Rwenzori region was represented by a cross section of leaders including RFPJ Staff and Board members. In the conference, RFPJ shared with development partners, key peace and conflict issues afflicting the Rwenzori region. This sharing helped enrich development partners' appreciation of the context in the Rwenzori region to inform their development work in Uganda.



His Highness Isebantu Ateenyi, the Babanyabindi cultural leader and a cross section of stakeholders during an RFPJ organized conference with development partners at Hotel Africana, Kampala

Raising funds to improve WASH facilities for 500 pupils in Fort Portal City: In August and November 2022, RFPJ contributed and participated in corporate games aimed at raising funds to improve water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities at Njara and Haibaale Primary Schools in Fort Portal city. Rwenzori Aid, one of RFPJ's member organizations took lead in organizing these games. Funds raised from organized games, supported the installation of safe water taps, and tanks in the above-mentioned schools for the benefit of over 500 pupils.

Converging 100 leaders to commemorate the International Day of Peace: Under the theme: *"End Racism; Build Peace."*, over 100 key leaders and regional stakeholders gathered at Kalya Courts Hotel in Fort Portal city to deliberate on the year's theme. National media including Urban TV and NBS, and local radio stations substantially covered the event for public consumption. In attendance were officials from UN WOMEN, one of the development partners of RFPJ.

Expanding the RFPJ membership and electing a new RFPJ Board: On September 29th 2022, the RFPJ General Assembly admitted three new organizations into the RFPJ membership. Newly admitted members are; Rwenzori Aid; PDCU and; KCON. The admission of these new members is notable in two ways. First, by admitting KCON, RFPJ has now got two members in Bunyoro sub region. Before this admission, RFPJ had only RHEMD as her member organization in the aforementioned sub-region. Second, all the three new organizations are national by legal registration and as such, present RFPJ with an opportunity to amplify her influence and work not only across regions but also, at national level.

The expansion of the RFPJ membership was followed by the election of a new Board on October 24th, 2022. This Board was officially inaugurated on December 16th, 2022 for a three-year constitutional mandate and all outgoing Board members were awarded certificates in recognition of their distinguished service to RFPJ. The Board election created yet another space for RFPJ to exercise internal democracy and allow the RFPJ membership to competitively and democratically choose the Board. Further, this election depicts strength in the internal governance and management of RFPJ and the willingness of RFPJ stakeholders to account to all stakeholders. As expected, the elected Board will have to navigate new challenges and opportunities associated with realities of reduced donor funding to CSOs and dynamics in the relationship between the Ugandan State and CSOs. The following members from respective RFPJ member organizations were elected on the Board.

Name	RFPJ member organization	Position on RFPJ Board
Twebaze Gerald	Executive Director- KDC	Board Chairperson
Bwambale Wilson	Executive Director-AMNET-R	Vice chairperson
Ruhundwa Solomon	Accountant-Kind Uganda	Board secretary
Kemigisa Rhoda	Member-PETURA	Treasurer



Some of the delegates from RFPJ member organizations pose for a photo at St. Joseph's Inn, Virika in Fort Portal City after electing a new Board

Kyokusiima Moureen	Publicity Secretary-KSCON	Board Member
Tumuhimbise Novence	Member-RHEMD:	Board Member
Murungi Amon	Executive Director-Rwenzori Aid	Board Member

Approving a six-year RFPJ strategic plan: 2023-2028: On September 29th, 2022, the RFPJ General Assembly approved a six-year strategic plan (2023-2028). This plan provides a grand framework within which RFPJ intends to build peace, prevent violence and further the observance of human rights in the Rwenzori region and beyond. This plan was a product of protracted consultations with several stakeholders including; RFPJ member organizations and peacebuilding stakeholders in the Rwenzori region including Local Government leaders; community members; women and youth groups; Peace actors; elders and; opinion leaders. Further, the RFPJ secretariat consulted the Board and General Assembly as two critical governance structures in the running and functioning of the Forum.



RFPJ General Assembly members pose for a photo after approving an RFPJ 6-year strategic plan (2023-2028) at St. Joseph's Inn, Virika in Fort Portal City

AREAS OF INFLUENCE IN 2022

- **Fostering dialogue and reconciliation as tools for peacebuilding:** Through her peacebuilding infrastructure of over 500 peace actors acting as informal mediators across the Rwenzori region, RFPJ was able to extend dialogues to various conflicting parties at family and community levels. On average, peace actors successfully handled over 2000 conflict cases in the region on quarterly basis and in so doing, helped replicate and extend RFPJ's reconciliation work.
- **Contributing to campaigns against gender-based violence (GBV) and biases:** Rwenzori region in which most of the RFPJ programs are based, remains enmeshed in a myriad of complex patriarchal and patrilineal systems and structures. These structures, both formal and informal, including local governments, courts, clan and family systems as well as religious and cultural institutions by far, continue to nurture structural violence and biases against women and girls. In this nurturing, women and girls get disenfranchised in the public domain including in conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives. To negate these biases and address recurrent GBV, RFPJ rallied over 20,000 duty bearers and actors from traditionally patriarchal structures through public dialogues, radio talk shows, TV documentaries and community meetings to discuss about these GBV and biases. Over 10 commitments were made by different stakeholders towards the elimination of GBV and biases in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
- **Fostering victim-centered TJ:** RFPJ expanded her TJ work by among others, solidifying her partnership with Foundation for Justice and Development Initiative (FJDI) in Northern Uganda and harnessing local, regional and national TJ synergies. Specifically, RFPJ and her aforementioned partner trained over 240 victims of conflicts in the



A cross section of stakeholders after attending a national-level dialogue on Transitional Justice in Uganda, organized by RFPJ at Hotel Africana, Kampala

Rwenzori and northern Uganda and engaged in the regional and national TJ advocacy work. This advocacy culminated into the formation of the Parliamentary Forum on Peace and Justice comprising over 30 Members of Parliament, amplified awareness on TJ issues among at least 20,000 members of the public in Rwenzori and Northern Uganda and generated commitment from over 200 duty bearers at national level to push for the enactment of the TJ law in Uganda.

- **Advancing frontiers of Human rights observance:** Past and current fragilities in the Rwenzori region and associated governance deficits have continued to sustain a culture of human rights abuse and violations. In response, RFPJ reached over 200,000 members of the public and 10,000 duty bearers in the Rwenzori region in her media and community-based public campaigns for human rights observance. Specific to second generation rights, RFPJ in partnership with Baylor College of Medicine Children's Foundation-Uganda supported 4329, (2253 female and 2076 male) Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) and over 200 families affected by and infected with HIV/AIDS to access health services and receive nutritional support. Lastly, RFPJ collaborated with UNHCHR and the Uganda Human Rights Commission to train 45 Human rights defenders (22 male and 23 female) from across the Rwenzori region in human rights documentation and reporting.
- **Amplifying public awareness on peacebuilding and nonviolence:** With support from the UN Women, RFPJ reached over 80,000 members of the public and over 10,000 duty bearers through radio talk shows, dialogues and community outreaches to amplify public awareness on peacebuilding and nonviolence. As a result, heightened public awareness triggered extended community and media-based debates on subjects of nonviolence and resolution of existing conflicts. Further, this awareness has rejuvenated dormant Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) structures including elders' fora and women groups in handling and reporting incidents of natural resource conflicts and GBV.
- **Strengthening capacities of women as agents of peace and nonviolence:** With support from the UN Women, RFPJ strengthened local peacebuilding infrastructure of 40 community reporters from the districts of Kabarole, Kasese, Bundibugyo and Kyenjojo and over 140 women peace activists from different formal and informal women groups and associations. In strengthening of

capacities, RFPJ trained these activists in ADR and advocacy and also, conducted periodical coordination and mentorship sessions as avenues for experience sharing and peer learning. As a milestone, RFPJ linked women peace activists to CDOs, probation and social welfare officers, Labour Officers, Resident District Commissioners and police to whom they refer conflicts cases beyond their capacity and/or mandate to handle.

- **Promoting Livelihood as an approach to peacebuilding:** To increase opportunity cost to violence, contribute to the promotion of economic rights and enhance graduation from vulnerability to resilience, RFPJ opened and expanded livelihood options for 135 youths and 90 vulnerable women. With support from ENABEL, these vulnerable groups got trained in agricultural enterprise management, specifically in piggery, rabbit farming, mushroom, vegetable and watermelon growing. After the training, all these trainees got



A cross section of some beneficiaries of RFPJ's skilling program in 2022 in North Division of Fort Portal City

assessed and certified by the Directorate of Industrial Training as specialized farmers. In addition, trainees received start-up kits in form of farm tools, inputs and supplies. Besides, ENABEL, RFPJ partnered with Baylor College of Medicine Children's Foundation-Uganda to offer agricultural extension services as well as farm inputs to over 350 families affected by HIV/AIDS in Kabarole district and Fort Portal city aimed at improving the quality and quantity of their farm output and subsequently household income. Further, RFPJ strengthened 37 village saving and lending associations with over 900 members of these associations getting trained in best microfinance governance and management practices.

CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Gender: For programmatic and strategic reasons, RFPJ treats gender as a cross cutting issue within her programming and program delivery protocols. Specifically, RFPJ runs a youth and gender desk that oversees gender mainstreaming initiatives on grounds that women, men, boys and girls are equal before and under the law even though women and girls, to a greater extent, remain socially, economically and politically disenfranchised. In 2022, as the practice has been over the years, at least 30% of RFPJ's directly targeted stakeholders were women and girls. Further, RFPJ deliberately worked with and through formal and informal women structures to further her peacebuilding and conflict management mandate. These structures included over 40 formal and informal women groups including women councils, elected women leaders and women-run CSOs. Still on gender, RFPJ paid attention to GBV as a programmatic issue, partly heightened by the eruption of covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and the subsequent national lockdowns.

HIV/AIDS: HIV/AIDS remains both a threat to peace and an outcome of violent conflicts. As such, RFPJ has for years, sought to map out and address HIV/AIDS issues within her mandate. In this effort, RFPJ runs an HIV/AIDS specific project directly targeting over 5000 OVC and caregivers. Further, RFPJ integrated HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns into her different project activities and interventions, extending the awareness campaigns to over 200,000 members of the public in the Rwenzori region.

Environment: RFPJ invested in environmental conservation initiatives, both within her projects and in external spaces. In all her livelihood support programs, RFPJ promoted the adoption of environmental-friendly practices. Further, through her established community structures, RFPJ intervened in, mediated and resolved over 60 natural resource conflicts in Kabarole, Kyenjojo, Bundibugyo and Kasese and also, mainstreamed within her human rights awareness campaigns, information about environment and climate change.

RFPJ 2022 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Donor	Bal b/f from 2021	Funds	Expenses	Bal. as at 31.12.2022
DGF	24,312,908	314,823,161	338,624,107	511,962
Baylor- Uganda	9,720,673	264,352,904	262,353,206	11,720,371
ENABEL	246,128,641	130,187,747	371,957,920	4,358,468
UNDP	70,000		70,000	0
Others	32,143,519	347,947,800	370,054,945	10,036,374
UN Women	71,029,006	369,242,252	444,074,015	23,197,243
Total	383,404,747	1,453,553,864	1,787,134,193	49,824,418

DONORS AND PARTNERS

RFPJ extends sincere gratitude to all her donors in 2022, namely; Baylor College of Medicine Children's Foundation Uganda, the DGF, ENABEL-Uganda, UN Women, the UNDP and others for making her work possible. Further, RFPJ appreciates her sub-grantees under different projects in 2022 namely; FJDI in northern Uganda, Action on Women Foundation (AWF) in Kampala and Bulhalho Foundation in the Rwenzori region. This sub-granting was in conformity with the RFPJ founding philosophy that impactful peacebuilding and human rights interventions requires synergy building and strengthening.

Other partners that RFPJ worked with include; OHCHR; Uganda Human Rights Commission; Amnesty Commission; Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs; Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Office of the Prime Minister; Parliament of the Republic of Uganda; religious and cultural leaders; Local Governments in the Rwenzori and Acholi subregions; security agencies; the media; Victim groups and associations; RFPJ member organizations and; the RFPJ Board. Lastly, RFPJ heartily appreciates communities in the Rwenzori and northern Uganda regions for accepting and embracing RFPJ programs.

CHANGE STORIES

Life change with a tin of seedlings; A story of a resilient grandmother served under the ACE-Fort Project:

"I received a half a tin of spinach and cabbages from RFPJ and planted them around my home. Before planting, I had, alongside other micro farmers, received agricultural advisory services from RFPJ encouraging us to grow vegetables to improve our family nutrition and sell off the balance to generate income and take care of our HV/AIDS orphaned grandchildren. Prior to this RFPJ support, I would save only 1000/= per week and my nutrition and that of my grandchildren was visibly lacking. Today, I cannot serve a meal without vegetables and together with my dependents, we look healthier and more resilient. Further, my income has improved. Every Tuesday, I go to Karago market in North Division of Fort Portal city to sell off my vegetables. On average, I am able to earn 5,000 UGX from my vegetable garden every week. Out of this income, I keep at least 2,000/ on a weekly basis in a local saving group. With my earnings, I'm able to buy scholastic materials for my grandchildren without first waiting for RFPJ or any well-wisher."

Finding a fortune in mushroom growing: Economic empowerment as an enhancer of gender justice: Small and gradual contributions make a meaningful world for others. Esther Kabasinguzi, a resident of Kijanju Ward, Central Division, Fort Portal City underwent skills training in mushroom growing by RFPJ from April to September 2022, during which she also obtained knowledge in entrepreneurship, financial literacy, customer care, and ICT for business. Before that time, Esther was a house wife whose livelihood mainly depended on casual laboring, earning on average 50,000 per month from which she would meet her needs and those of her children. Upon completing the training, RFPJ gave her materials to establish a mushroom grow house and practice attained knowledge and skills. However, all what she saw was a business opportunity in her skills.

Being a member of a Village Saving and Lending Association in her village, Esther was able to acquire a small loan of 400,000 shillings to expand the mushroom grow house. Further, using acquired best agronomic practices, Esther has since adopted the use of locally available agricultural wastes such as bean husks to increase mushroom production and earn at least 50,000 per week. With this weekly income, she is able to meet her needs and those of her

family notable of which includes the payment of fees for two of her children in Primary school. Besides earning an income, Esther has a constant supply of nutritious mushrooms for her home consumption which has contributed to better family health. Easter also acknowledges an improvement in her social status reflected in the ability to influence, both family and community decisions.

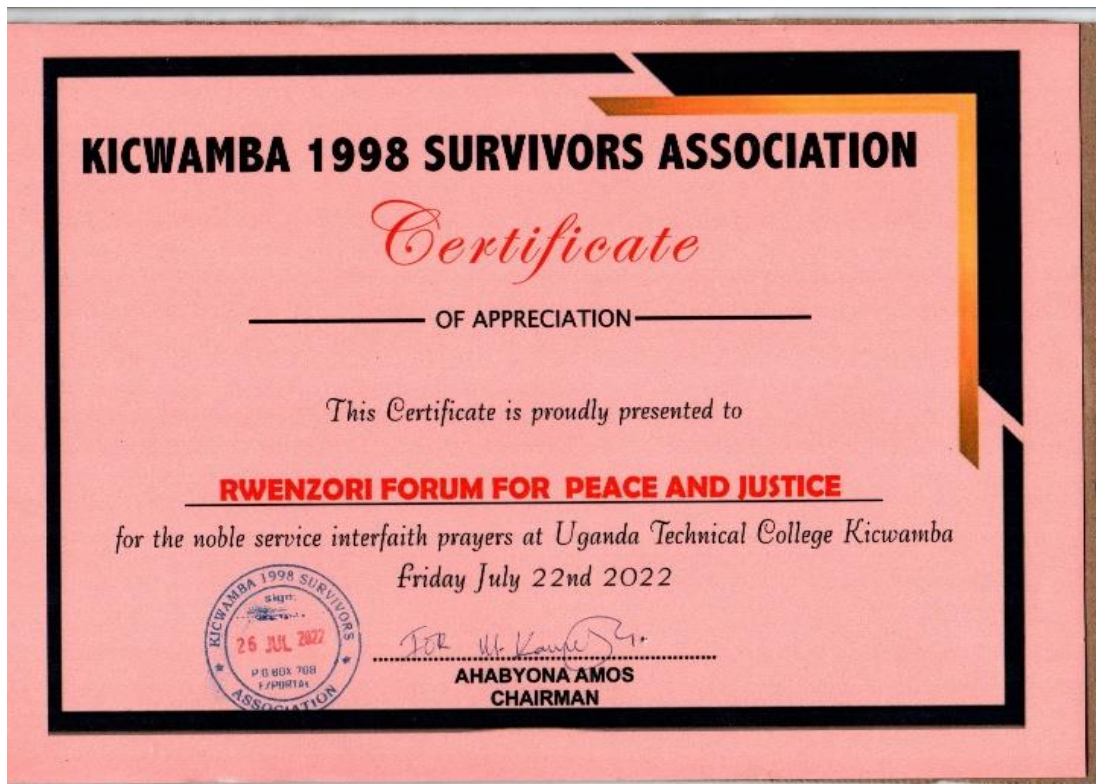
"I thank RFPJ for training me in mushroom growing. I learned how to use local materials to boost production and supply my entire village with fresh mushrooms every week. My stress is gone. I'm now respected in the community. I'm able to influence others and I can no longer be ignored on the basis of being a woman." Esther said.

Esther's story is not different from those of more than 1600 vulnerable youth and women trained under RFPJ's livelihood programs since 2018 in the Rwenzori region. With this economic empowerment, RFPJ has increased the opportunity cost to violence and in so doing, dissuaded many vulnerable youth and women from being conscripted into acts of violence. Further, RFPJ has used these economic empowerment initiatives to rehabilitate and integrate ex-combatants and victims of violent conflicts in the Rwenzori region.

RFPJ TEAM IN 2022

Name	Position
Tuhaise Francis	Executive Director
Nankima Florence Ninsiima	Finance and administration Manager
Opio Francis	Program Manager
Kemigisha Jennifer	Peace Building Specialist
Baguma Fosca	Human Rights Specialist
Twesige Emmanuel	Human Rights Officer
Atuhaire Elizabeth	Human Rights Officer
Kyampaire Kellen	Human Rights Officer
Kanweri Moreen	Accountant
Ayesiga Sharon	Accountant
Murungi Mathaias	I.T Officer
Asiimwe Scovia	Administrative Assistant
Nahurira Joan	Economic Strengthening Assistant
Karatunga Geofrey	I.T Assistant
Ategeka Amos	Driver
Atuhaire Florence	Office Assistant
Mugenyi Ronald	Security Guard
Mugume Clovice	Security Guard
Twebaze Emmanuel	Security Guard

RECOGNITION OF RFPJ IN 2022



CONTACT US:

RWENZORI FORUM FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

BUTEBE, BWAMBA ROAD, FORTPORTAL TOURISM CITY

EMAIL: rfpj@rfpjuganda.org / rfpeaceandjustice@gmail.com

WEBSITE: www.rfpjuganda.org