

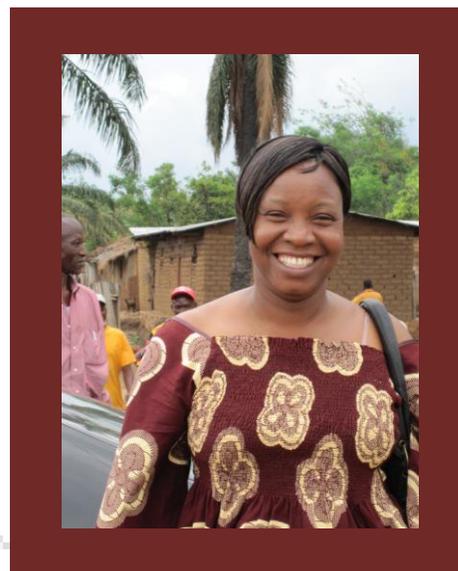
Restoring Health, Hope, Peace: Reflections from a Grassroots Doctor in Burundi

Health is a human right. When this right is truly respected, there is hope for long-term sustainable peace in Burundi.

After 13 years of civil war, Burundi is working to heal itself and move towards a more peaceful future. Yet healing from such devastating violence cannot just take place at the political level, efforts to heal and rebuild must take place at the grassroots because that is where violence was most often experienced.

In this talk, Dr. Alexia Nibona reflects on growing up in Kamenge, Burundi—one of Burundi’s deadliest warzones and an area which has the country’s highest HIV/AIDS rate—and her decision to pursue her medical degree so that she could return to work with women, HIV+ people, and trauma survivors in her community. She argues that health, which is not just the absence of physical disease, but the whole wellbeing of body, mind, and spirit, is the basis of peace. Thus to achieve peace, you must also achieve health. And the achievement of health requires access to quality and dignified healthcare, clean water, nutritious food, shelter, and trauma healing.

Dr. Nibona then tells the story of the Friends Women’s Association and their work to provide comprehensive community-based health care to women and their families, especially those women who are HIV-positive, to reinforce women’s capacities to achieve their wellbeing, and to work towards the recovery of peace and health in Burundi.



When:

Where:

About Dr. Alexia Nibona

Dr. Alexia Nibona is the medical and executive director of the Friends Women’s Association, a grassroots women’s clinic focused on HIV/AIDS, sexual violence, and post-genocide trauma in Kamenge, Burundi. Being from Kamenge herself, Dr. Nibona grew up knowing the devastating effects of war, poverty, and HIV/AIDS on her family and community. This inspired her to pursue her medical degree at the University of Burundi where she specialized in the psychoses (trauma) resulting from the 1993-2006 Crisis (the term Burundians use to describe the 13-year civil war that followed the death of President Melchior Ndadaye). She is also certified in HIV/AIDS physical and psychosocial care, trauma healing and conflict mediation, and community-based development. Dr. Nibona is a member of the Kamenge Friends Church, where she recently served as clerk.