

# OASIS OF PEACE COMMUNITY CENTER





## Maison Shalom Rwanda

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Dear friends,

Two years already in exile!  
Two years of apprenticeship!  
Two years of a deep calling into question!

In 2013, our work Maison Shalom celebrated 20 years with its slogan: "The victory of love over hatred". Regrettably, this message comes from Rwanda where I have had to seek refuge in 2015 after the political situation in my country, Burundi, extremely deteriorated and the situation became too dangerous for me and thousands of my Burundian brothers and sisters.

Since its foundation; Maison Shalom was born to light the candle in the middle of the darkness; console, reconcile and restore the hope to these children and families who had lost everything.

This is why we will not surrender against adversity and we have decided that more than ever we will continue our "NOBLE" fight. This time however in Rwanda, where thousands of Burundians have sought asylum.

To you the foreign partners who look at us by far and wonder if it is again necessary to support our efforts to restore the hope to all these young people, we reaffirm you our determination.

"Nothing can stop us". We are decided to go on the battlefield with other weapons of dialogue and compassion. "The evil will never have the last word". Now it is necessary to act, we do not want to repair any more the broken jars. We are going to get involved so that "ever children do not become orphan or children soldiers". But we shall need your self-abnegation.

For this reason, I write these lines to tell you that Maison Shalom Rwanda is a boat of which the captain is "God"; it will arrive at destination. Some of our Burundian colleagues are today in fear, the doubt, the bitterness, but thanks to your self-abnegation and involvement we will be strong and we shall overcome. We know where we go and our ideal is "NOBLE"

Allow me, dear friends, before concluding my message to express you my deep gratitude, especially those who understood that our sublime mission in this world "is to distribute HAPPINESS and LOVE "

Thank you.

Marguerite Barankitse



Since 2015, the Burundian government violently repressed the protests against the president led by thousands of young people in the streets. This violence included the arrest of anyone involved in the protests, killing and torturing those who speak up. Indeed, the UN not only documented cases of gang-rape and mass graves, but also recently UN investigators have accused Burundi's government of crimes against humanity and urged the International Criminal Court to open a case "as soon as possible".

As a consequence of this untenable situation, approximately half a million Burundians have had to flee their country to neighbouring countries, such as Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The Burundi refugees need urgent support, as there are significant needs in refugee settlements, as the overall refugee population has continued to grow with new arrivals coming on a daily basis.

## ◦ **Medical dispensary building**

Maison Shalom Rwanda is planning to build a medical dispensary to provide medicines to thousands of urban refugees that have problems to have access to them.

## ◦ **Microfinances**

Maison Shalom is seeking economic support since more than 30.000 refugees call at our doors asking for help to carry out their micro-businesses to overcome poverty.

## ◦ **Scholarships for university students**

343 students are already beneficiaries of our scholarships but there are 1000 students more are still waiting for our help to pursue their studies.

## ◦ **Residence building for students**

Maison Shalom Rwanda seeks to build residencies within its compound to host students, since university residencies are extremely expensive.

## ◦ **Sport facilities**

Often Burundian refugees are banned to find playgrounds or to integrate and compete in Rwandan football and basketball teams. By building these facilities in Maison Shalom we would allow refugees to practice sport while building social cohesion and strengthened ties among members of our community.

# VOCATIONAL TRAININGS

Young Burundian refugees in Rwanda learn sewing.



Culinary arts is one of the trainings offered to young refugees.



# FOUNDING SMALL BUSINESSES

Cassava flour is one the most common food in the region, therefore mill businesses can be essential to both owners and the community.



Women empowerment is crucial since she is the corner stone of the family



# EDUCATION

Building peace by educating young refugees.

Marguerite Barankitse visits Mahama refugee camp in Rwanda where more than 50 thousands Burundian refugees are temporarily settled.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Early childhood education to refugee children to ensure adequate mental growth.

Balanced diet is provided to nursery schools to ensure adequate physical growth.



## INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES

Sewing activities are conducted at the Oasis of Peace to generate income for young refugees.



# ARTS AND CRAFTS

Crafts and music (modern and traditional) activities are conducted both for leisure and income purposes.



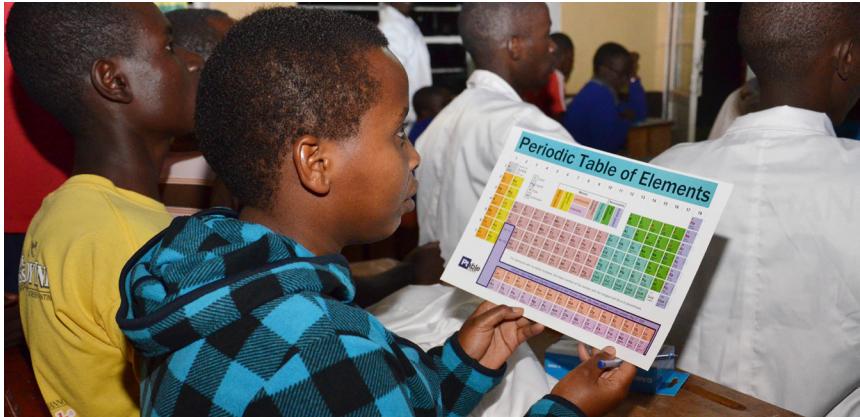
Young Burundian refugee suffering from gunshot being taken care of/at Maison Shalom after many organizations refusal to provide heavy medical expenses.

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## ADOLESCENT EDUCATION

Adolescents refugees can be vulnerable to delinquency, the best tool we use to prevent that is education.



# EMBRACING THE FUTURE

Today, empowering the youth cannot be done without computer skills, despite the hardship of refugee life.





