

Quaker Peace Network Burundi

Unarmed civilian protection six- day workshop narrative report

Nov 21 - 26, 2022

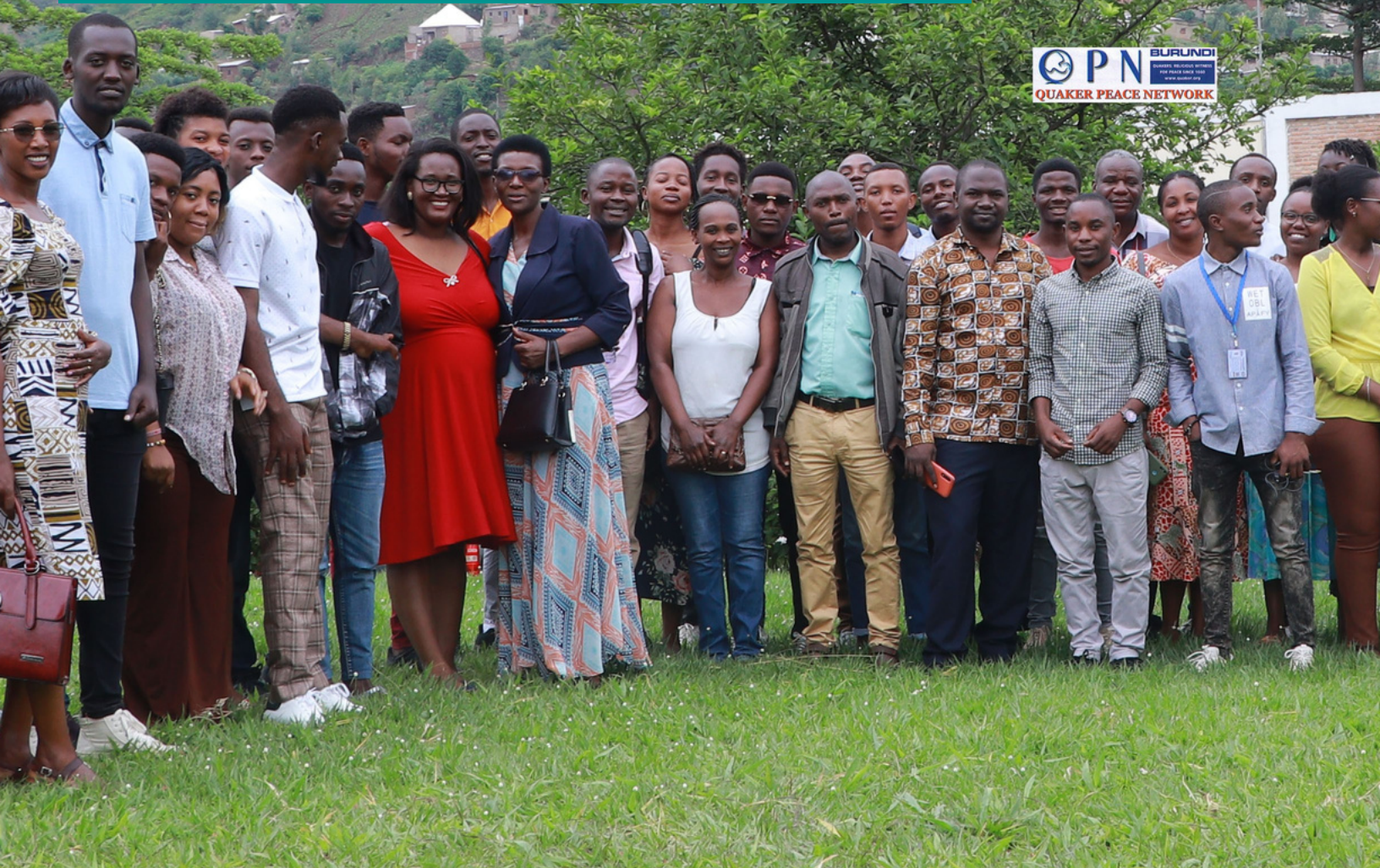


Table of Contents

3	Introduction
4	Objectives & Methodology
5	Training Content
6	UCP in Practice
8	Visit to Université Lumière de Bujumbura
10	Lessons Learned from Role Play Exercises
12	<i>Pray the Devil Back to Hell</i> Feedback
13	Workshop Evaluation
15	Testimonies
16	Next Steps

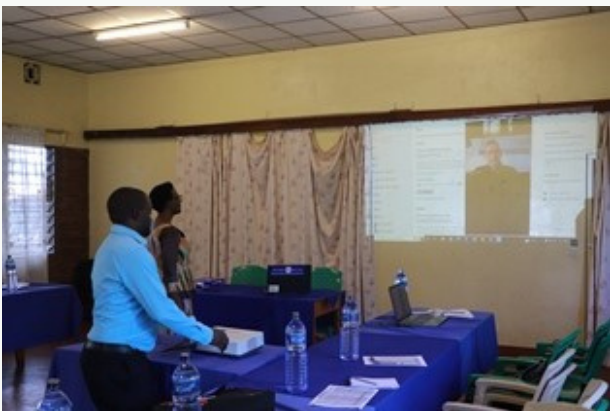
Introduction

This narrative report is made of ten parts: the introduction, the content of the training, the methodology, UCP in practice, the visit at Université Lumière de Bujumbura, testimonies from the participants, lessons learned from the role play exercises, the feedback after watching the video “Pray the Devil Back to Hell”, the next steps and the UCP workshop evaluation by participants.

On November 21-26, 2022, under the support of Selkirk College and Nonviolent Peaceforce, Quaker Peace Network (QPN) Burundi ran a six-day training on unarmed civilian protection for 20 participants, including 11 women and 9 men from QPN Burundi member organizations. Each local organization was represented by three participants. Six local organizations were represented. They are Ministère de la paix et la réconciliation sous la Croix (MIPAREC), Trauma Healing and reconciliation Services (THARS), Friends Women’s Association (FWA), Healing and Rebuilding our Country (HROC), Groupe Volontaire en faveur des Enfants et Femmes en Difficulté (GVFEFD) and Innovations in Peacemaking Burundi (IPB). At the same time, two international organizations were represented. They are the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). Each of them was represented by one person. The venue was the Kinindo Training center in Bujumbura Mairie.

Two facilitators (Parfaite Ntahuba and Louis Pasteur Nizigiyimana) were running the training face to face while Randy Janzen and Marion Girard from Nonviolent Peaceforce were facilitating the training through zoom. Two UCP practitioners (Tarteel al Junaidi from Christian Peace Teams (CPT) in Palestine and Yves Irakoze from Nonviolent Peaceforce South Sudan).

On Wednesday, November 23rd, 2022, we had an opportunity to go to the University of Lumiere de Bujumbura where participants had an opportunity to explain to 90 students what is UCP, its strategies and principles.



Randy Janzen ready to introduce UCP through zoom call



Students Learning about UCP



Course participants

Objectives

- 1 To deepen the UCP skills as QPN peace actors in Burundi
- 2 To train trainers who will talk about UCP and practice it in their different communities where they are working
- 3 To strengthen the partnership among Quaker Peace Network Burundi, Selkirk College and Nonviolent Peaceforce

Methodology

Different methodologies were combined, including expository, role play, small groups, questions, brainstorming and videos.

Training Content

1. Introduction to UCP including what is UCP
2. Principles of UCP: nonviolence, nonpartisanship, primacy of local actors, independence, respect of human rights, leadership of civilians
3. Strategies of UCP: Proactive engagement, relationships building, monitoring, capacity building of local actors
4. Key terms of UCP: nonviolence, peace, protection, civilian
5. List of organizations which practice UCP (From Selkirk college Database)
6. The UCP sources' of orientation
7. The skills, knowledge and qualities required for a UCP practitioner.

- The main skills are: listening, collecting and managing information, building relationships, moderation, negotiation, ability to analyze conflicts and the context
- The main knowledge: understanding the organization for which you work (Objectives, principles, functioning), security protocols of the organization, understanding the UCP (Principles, values, methods), the context and local customs, lessons learned from your colleagues
- The main qualities are: adaptability and responsiveness, proactivity, ingenuity/creativity, empathy, sociability, humility (Do not feel superior to your client or beneficiary; be convinced that the person in distress has a solution. Otherwise he will always be dependent), empathy (It is really central, but also the PCP practitioner must take care of himself), team spirit

- Active Listening
- Building relationships
- The ability to collect and manage information
- The ability to analyze the conflict and the context
- Creativity
- Empathy
- To have team spirit

8. Conflict analysis, context analysis and needs' assessment. To do the context analysis, you must describe the current situation, the causes (geographic, economic, social and political), the parts in conflict, and what are the vulnerable groups. Participants were put in six different small groups to do conflict analysis. Although the conflicts analyzed were different, the main vulnerable groups were women, children and refugees. To do needs' assessment, you need to find out if there are groups or teams practicing UCP, decide to which group you need to talk to (Civilians, police, government, other groups or persons) and formulate appropriate questions to ask them.

9. UCP dilemma: UCP faces a variety of dilemmas. A dilemma is a situation in which it is necessary to make a choice between two different solutions which both present constraints. These dilemmas call upon the skills, knowledge and qualities of the PCP practitioner, including:

UCP in Practice

Conversation with Tarteel, CPT Palestine

About the experience from the UCP practitioner from Palestine, she underlined that they document what happens and do protective accompaniment for more than 300 children because they are stopped at checkpoints by soldiers while going to school. Those children sometimes throw stones at those soldiers. These last can even kill while defending themselves. Community Peacemaker Teams (CPT) records every incident. She gave one example when the soldiers arrested an 8-year-old and a ten-year-old and imprisoned them for five hours. The role of CPT was to call for some organizations which could help to release those children. CPT also intervenes in other situations. For instance, when Palestinian families go to live in Israel, CPT monitors if there is any violence by Israelites against those families. Their strategy is to build relationships with both parties. She said that most of the time, they expect violence when there are Jewish celebrations. That's why before holidays, CPT invites other NGOs to identify areas where they need to protect people. The third thing they do is protective accompaniment when militaries from the Israeli government come to demolish Palestinian houses even though they have legal papers. And it is very difficult to prevent violence because they don't know when their houses will be demolished. For instance, there is a village which will be destroyed so that Israeli soldiers can do their exercises there. Now Palestinians are building underground houses where they will hide. Tarteel said that they are sometimes attacked by Israeli soldiers or stopped from working. Now because of covid, they are national staff only (no internationals), but they persevere. In short, the CPT team is there to document, do protective accompaniment, publicize what is happening through social media and support vulnerable families.

Three main questions were asked of Tarteel:

- How do you apply the principle of nonpartisanship while you are also affected by the conflict? The answer was that they work objectively. Tarteel is a Palestinian, but she also reports violence done by Palestinians
- What is the approach you use for Israeli soldiers to allow you to document those human rights violations while you are a Palestinian? The answer was that they work as a legal organization, and they build relationships with both parts
- The third question was a general question: "What is the situation there? Do you think the war will end? The answer was that the situation is worse because Israel is taking more lands from Palestine. According to her, they cannot say that there is a war between Israel and Palestine because Palestine cannot stand before Israel which is supported by the United States.

Conversation with Yves Irakoze, NP South Sudan

"South Sudan is a very young country born in 2011 after a 20-year civil war. NP I using different strategies while working in South Sudan. It is hard to believe how civilians can protect civilians. The relationships we build with the community helps to protect ourselves and others. We use the UCP principles from the morning to the evening. The UCP tree is used every day. Every morning, we must call local people to know the security situation before we leave the NP

mission. If I learn that there was violence, I have to collect information to know what really happened. We do this through what we call patrols. Then we come back to our NP mission to report what we learned after the verification of the rumour. Then, in the afternoon, we go back to local actors to find out what can help to go through the situation. For instance, in the last few weeks, people from an area called Bangoro reported that militaries were collecting illegal taxes. Then, we went together with my colleague Idi to listen to the Bangoro chief. There, we practised active listening. As for him, he called another local chief who had more information. After that, we went to the commander of the soldiers in order to understand well both the conflict and the context. In 2021, I had been working in areas affected by floods. UCP principles and strategies were used to protect people affected by the flood. We run more activities, including the creation of safe space for civilians to dialogue with their local authorities, and capacity building for women protection teams (WPTs) and youth protection teams (YPTs) so that they find solutions to their own problems. Both the WPTs and YPTs are useful to collect information. In UCP, any information has to be verified. Before it is verified, it is considered as a rumour.”

According to Yves, UCP can be applied in Burundi by creating WPTs, establishing teams in charge of child protection, dialogue between youth and political parties’ leaders, Early warning Early Response and rumour control when it comes to elections, advocacy for both women and youth participation in decision making.

Questions asked of Yves:

·What language do you use in South Sudan? The answer is English. And when the person speaks a local language, I need someone to translate.

·How are you considered by people in the community where you work? Answer: We are well seen by the community because we are with them 7/7 days and 24/24 hours

·How are you working with both the government and the rebels? Answer: Through relationships building

·What is the first service you offer to a victim who comes to you for help? Answer: Listening

·How do you build trust while protecting your own life at the same time? Answer: the relationships that we build are limited. For instance, I cannot talk to a local civilian if I’m not with a local staff from NP

·How are you paid by NP? Answer: the salary from NP is above salaries from Burundi

·When you want to talk to rebels, don’t they ask you something in exchange? Answer: No. If you have built good relationships with them, they know well whom you are; they don’t ask you anything in exchange

·When rebels give you an audience, don’t you inform the local authorities? Answer: No. This is about professional confidentiality



Yves from NP South Sudan on the screen

Visit to Université Lumière de Bujumbura

After the explanation of UCP, its principles and strategies, the six following questions were asked:

1. How do we become UCP practitioners? Don't you think that someone can hide as a UCP practitioner while he wants to kill people? Answer: You become a UCP practitioner firstly because you are convinced that peace is possible without weapons (It is a kind of divine call). Secondly, you become a UCP practitioner through learning. If someone hides as UCP practitioner while he is a criminal, the truth will be found after a certain period because there are qualities for a UCP practitioner.
2. Is UCP an organization or an approach? It is an approach
3. How to become independent? By knowing and practising your values; by initiating income-generating activities.
4. Isn't possible to have peace through violence? Violence produces violence only
5. As a Burundian, can I go to DRC as a UCP practitioner? Yes, you will be called an international
6. What will be the role of the police and the militaries if we promote UCP? UCP is not there to replace existing institutions. It is there to collaborate and reinforce the capacities of those institutions.

A group photo after the UCP presentation



After our visit to the Université Lumière de Bujumbura, we took time to share our observations:

- The time was short
- Some students particularly those from DRC want to learn more about UCP



A class of students at Université Lumière de Bujumbura



From left to right: The dean of the faculty of communication at Université Lumière de Bujumbura, QPN Burundi national coordinator, a lecturer

Lessons Learned from Role Play Exercises

A group meeting held before crossing the river



Crossing the river starts



1. Crossing the river

- Leadership is very important for the success of a UCP team
- The leader has to be close to the people he is leading, he doesn't have to coach from a long distance
- Empathy is very important in UCP. Actually, some people were struggling to cross the river as individuals; they were not carrying for their sisters and brothers who were still behind
- The team must be mixed and diverse: some team members are weak or vulnerable while others are strong
- Creativity is very important as you may encounter unexpected challenges as a UCP team
- Communication and particularly active listening is very important in UCP
- Teamwork is very important because if one fails, it is the whole team which fails

2. The Rat and the Cat

- Protecting vulnerable groups require regular meetings and creativity
- Protecting vulnerable groups is tiring
- We need to practice the principle of "Do no harm" while doing the work of protection. Indeed, we can harm those we were supposed to protect
- We need to work as a team and combine different strategies while protecting vulnerable people
- When perpetrators attack, they know the weak part of the UCP team. That's why to UCP team needs also to assess his strengths and weaknesses before intervening

The team is struggling as the crocodile is trying to take the bridges



A group of people protecting the rats from being caught by the cats



3. The hen, the chicks and the bird of prey

Game used to understand how to apply the concept of early warning and early response (EWER).

Description of the game

- The hen alerts the chicks that there is a danger (The raptor who comes).
- Three chicks come to the mother “hen” for protection
- A chick stays away from the mother and the raptor tries to catch it
- The mother continues keeps on shouting to alert
- Two people join the mother to protect the chick that was left alone

Interpretation of the game

- The chicken represents the early warning and early response teams in the community. They are there to alert as soon as they see indicators of conflict. If they alert on time, there will be prevention or mitigation of the conflict
- The two people who join the mother to protect the chick who was left alone remind the EWER teams to work as a network (Networking) for the prevention of conflicts
- The protection of the chick that has not responded to the call of the mother (disobedient chick) reminds us that we must protect even the authors of the conflicts. For example, if there is someone who is accused of being a poisoner if people in the community want to kill him, we must look for ways to protect this person from death

Pray the Devil Back to Hell Feedback

- Theory is different from practice.
- UCP in practice requires creativity.
- Perseverance is very important in UCP.
- Nonviolence can bring change.
- The initiative was started by Christian women. Then Muslim women joined the movement. This shows that UCP is beyond religion; networking is very important for UCP to be effective.
- While practising UCP, you need to understand the culture and traditions of the community where you are working. For instance, there was a woman who was arrested by the police and then released because she put off her clothes.
- UCP is about protecting vulnerable groups. For instance, in the film, there were people who were running carrying old people on their backs; others carrying children.
- The women in Liberia applied the non-partisanship principle because they were talking to both parties in conflict.
- The women in Liberia were very courageous.
- The women in Liberia created a great movement of women to the point that even the IDPs in Ghana joined them and were present during the peace talks in Ghana.
- The women in Liberia were very powerful since the beginning of their movement because they were wearing uniforms to recognize each other. This is conscious visibility.

Workshop Evaluation

Peer Appreciation

Before filling the UCP workshop evaluation, there was an exercise to appreciate each other as participants. Example: touch someone who has demonstrated a sense of responsibility, touch someone who made you smile, touch someone who has showed you kindness.

Notice: in turn, a group of three people was asked to touch people (The people to touch had to close their eyes). During the exercise, some people cried. At the end, they had chance to express themselves about how they felt when someone touched them. Some said that they cried because they were surprised. They had not known that they have been important to some of their colleagues during the UCP workshop.

Unarmed Civilian Protection Workshop Evaluation Form

Participants were asked to please read the following statements and rate 1-5 (agree to disagree) in a way that best reflects your view of the statement.

1. The objectives of the workshop were well defined
2. Participation and interaction were encouraged
3. The topics covered were very important to me
4. The material was organized and easy to understand
5. The training experience will be useful in my organization
6. The facilitators mastered the subject
7. The facilitators were prepared
8. The objectives of the training have been achieved
9. The time allocated for training was sufficient
10. The training room and other facilities were adequate and comfortable

Results

- For the first question, 16 out of 19 gave the note 5, 2 gave the note 4 and one gave the note 3
- For question 2, 15 out of 19 gave the note 5, 3 gave the note 4 and one gave the note 3
- For question 3, 16 out 19 gave the note 5, 2 gave the note 4 while one gave the note 1
- For question 4, 8 out of 19 gave the note 5, 10 gave the note 4, one gave the note 3
- For question 5, 14 out of 19 gave the note 5 while 5 gave the note 4
- For question 6, 15 out of 19 gave the note 5, 3 gave the note 4 and one gave the note 3
- For question 7, 15 gave the note 5, 2 gave the note 4 and 2 gave the note 3
- For question 8, 13 out of 19 gave a note of 5 , 5 gave a note of 4 and 1 gave a note of 3
- For question 9, 4 out of 19 gave a note of 5, 4 gave a note of 4, 4 gave a note of 2 and 7 gave a note of 1
- For question 10, 1 out of 19 gave a note of 5, 12 gave a note of 4, 3 gave a note of 3 and 3 gave a note of 2

Notice: As one of the participants was hospitalized at the end of the training, only 19 participants responded to the questions.

The graduates' family photo



The two in-person facilitators



Open Questions

1. How will you practice UCP?

80% of the participants said they will use UCP by sharing the content of the training with their colleagues and neighbours.

2. Which parts of the training did you find most beneficial?

90% of the participants have underlined that the parts that were useful were: the introduction to UCP, the UCP principles and strategies, the skills, the knowledge and qualities of a UCP practioner, the video "Pray the Devil Back to Hell", the testimonies from those who practice UCP both in Palestine and in South Sudan

3. What aspects of the training need improvement and how?

Find sufficient time for the training, the training should be more practical than theoretical, more time to be more skilled in conflict analysis, internet connection



Honoured by the presence of Kristine, the former Quaker Service Norway (QSN) coordinator and now a board member of the QSN



Graduate with the facilitators

Testimonies

My name is Chantal. I have helped a child who was born outside of marriage. She was refused to be graduated from school because she had no certificate of birth. I gave accommodation to the child as she was coming far from the family of his father. This family was my neighbour. Then they were against me for hosting the child. Then, I accompanied the child to our local authorities. Now the process is still ongoing to register the child. I'm proud of that. I invite all of us to support those children born outside of marriage to be registered"

"My name is Trinity. I was studying in primary school when my mother gave me the responsibility to look for a housekeeping worker. Unfortunately, they brought a child. I and my mother were shocked. Then I asked my mother if we can support the child to go at school. As my mom was a teacher in primary school, she accepted. The family was against us because the child was not sending money to them. What makes me proud of myself today is that the child will be graduated from secondary school by next year. We had very few brothers in my family. Today my mom loves him very much and calls him his son."

"My name is Wilson. As MIPAREC, we have contributed a lot to reconcile CNL and Imbonerakure in Cibitoke province. I have learned that UCP is possible. Another thing is that Burundians from Cibitoke used to go to DRC for agriculture. When they were going for harvest, they were killed by the Congolese. We are thankful because we have succeeded to reconcile Burundians and Congolese. Today, Burundians go there for agriculture and harvest without being killed"

"My name is Marcelline. In 1993 Aloys was from Gihogazi in Karuzi province and was living with my family. Indeed, he was working at Kibimba hospital. When the civil war started, my neighbours arrested him and wanted to kill him because he was very new in our local community. As he has very black skin, they thought he was a Tutsi. When I heard about this, I went for intervention. I told them that he is my son, and they refused to release him. I explained to them that he is a son of mine because his parents are my friends. The group who was arrested was finally burnt with fuel. Then, I asked Aloys to run away from home together with us. It was in that way that he escaped from death. That's why he still calls me his mother"

"My name is Parfaite. During the civil war in Burundi in 1996, our neighbours were two families from a different ethnic group. One family was always threatening us that they will burn our house one day. As for the second family, they were very kind to us. The chief of the family "Papa Chevalier" was always close to us and encouraged us not to leave the area. As we were very afraid, he was always staying in our house until 100PM or 200PM. And his presence made us feel strong and hopeful that they could not burn our house with him inside. I have now understood that this was protective presence. We never left our house because of Papa Chevalier. He was practising UCP while he had never heard about this approach."

Next Steps

The next steps include QPN member organizations' commitments and recommendations. This was done through small groups. Each organization formulated a list of commitments and recommendations.

A. Commitments

- As QPN member organizations' delegates, we will sit together to remind ourselves about the content of this training before we share it with our colleagues
- To share with the other members of the organization, staff and beneficiaries about UCP
- To include UCP in the approaches they are already using for peacebuilding
- To look for potential partners who can support the UCP approach implementation

B. Recommendations

- QPN Burundi should organize another training (more than six days) for the same participants to deepen this concept
- QPN Burundi should decentralise this work and accompany its member organizations to implement the UCP concept in all the provinces of Burundi for violence prevention when it comes to the gender-based violence issue, natural disasters and elections
- QPN Burundi should train the recent community-elected mediators on the UCP approach
- QPN should educate the youth on UCP to implement UCP youth clubs in different communities
- QPN put in place a team in charge of projects' elaboration

