



Serving. Training.
Energizing Partnerships.

RWANDA

Partnership

Our primary partner in Rwanda is the Association of Baptist Churches in Rwanda (AEBR). They strive to minister to the nation through evangelism and grassroots community development through medical clinics and sustainable agricultural projects.

The AEBR is an example of vision and hard work. Rwandan Baptists stress the need for every church to be engaged in church planting. The AEBR has grown from 15 churches in 1975 to over 500 congregations and church plants in 2004.

In 1999, in partnership with the Baptist World Alliance, the AEBR founded the Baptist International Theological University (BITU) to train pastors. This work is complemented by a few other Bible Institutes throughout the country.

African Enterprise is another Rwandan partner. It is a movement committed to teaching and mentoring emerging leaders who are passionate about peace and reconciliation.



The relationship between Canadian and Rwandan Baptists began through the ministry of The Sharing Way and has been shaped by the initiatives and the priorities of the Rwandan Baptists. After the genocide, the AEBR contacted TSW to see if Canadian Baptists could offer help to returning refugees. Initially TSW assisted with reconstruction after the war, providing agricultural tools and seeds, as well as small business loans.

Today, TSW works in community development and capacity building through the AEBR's church-based co-operatives. Though these co-ops started as church initiatives, they involved the whole community. During the genocide, they were destroyed, but with the TSW's help, they are now fully operational again. The AEBR believes that fully engaged communities with viable economic opportunities are essential for a peaceful future.

One of our commitments to Rwanda also includes empowering the Kenya-based Africa Brotherhood Church to become a mission sending body as they nurture and encourage small Rwandan congregations.

The AEBR is committed to assisting their Canadian brothers and sisters by educating Canadian Baptists on working among the poor, peace and reconciliation ministries, and ministries for people living with HIV and AIDS. One of the ways this will be done is by hosting regular short-term teams for both specific ministries such as teaching or building and for special funding-related, educational trips.

Recent Challenges

Rwanda is infamous for one of the most horrific events in the past century. In 1994, the Hutu majority attempted to exterminate the Tutsi population. The effects of this genocide continue to be felt at many levels even today.

The international community turned a blind eye to the genocide. After the murder of 10 of their soldiers, UN forces were forbidden to intervene. They stood by while more than 800,000 people were slaughtered in 100 days.

More than a decade later, the legacy of the genocide remains. The road to justice and reconciliation is a long one. There are approximately 100,000 Rwandans who were involved in the genocide and are currently in prison awaiting trial. *Gacaca* courts, in which ordinary Rwandans judge their peers, were created to clear the backlog of these cases. The contribution of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda has been limited.



The government has made efforts to promote unity among Tutsis and Hutus. However, many Rwandans are still afraid to speak out against their government for fear of imprisonment or forced exile. As a result of the genocide, the

AIDS pandemic, and malaria, nearly 13 million children under the age of 15 have lost one or both parents and a vast number of those are living in child-headed households. They are often victims of abuse and exploitation.

Your contribution at work

True partnership requires mutuality. CBM honours the ministry priorities of our partners, and they in turn value ours. Therefore, the financial contribution of STEP partners will be allocated according to these priorities.

Grassroots Leadership Development

The AEBR is a predominantly rural denomination and the Baptist University (BITU) is well-placed to prepare pastors for bi-vocational ministry. While learning farming techniques, students are also trained in Biblical studies and Christian ministry. The Godwin family live in Rwanda where Colin teaches at BITU and mentors leaders. Rev. Dr. Julius Karanja (a Kenyan church leader), Patrick Deneut and Stephan Couture (UEFBC Quebec) have all contributed through short-term teaching assignments at BITU.

Guardians of Hope Program – HIV and AIDS related ministries

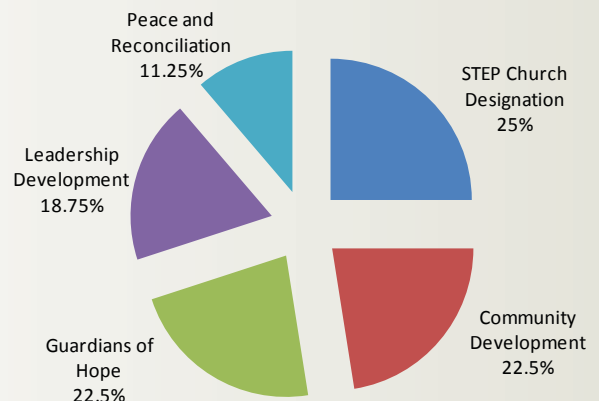
This ministry provides training on HIV and AIDS prevention, pastoral care for AIDS-affected families, and care and support for orphans.

Sustainable Community Development

This work is carried out through The Sharing Way. It includes building capacity for economic growth by helping church-initiated cooperatives establish and implement programs such as micro-credit (small loans for business development).

Peace and Reconciliation

Our partner is committed to bringing hope and healing to the social fabric of Rwanda. Through the African Enterprise's efforts towards practical training and opportunities for dialogue, they strive to promote unity, peace and adopt a spirit of forgiveness that leads to reconciliation.



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