



Association de la Jeunesse pour la Promotion
des Droits de l'Homme et le Développement
(AJPRODHO-JIJUKIRWA)



Norwegian People's Aid



Citizen Engagement in Public Policy Information Monitoring and Advocacy in Nyagatare, Gatsibo, and Ngoma Districts (PPIMA) Project

Outcomes, Lessons Learnt, Actionable
Recommendations

November 2024

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AJIC	Access to Justice Information Centre
AJPRODHO	Association de la Jeunesse pour la Promotion des Droits de l'Homme et le Développement
CSC	Community Score Card
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EDV	Ending Domestic Violence
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GFP	Governance Focal Person
HRBA	Human Right Based Approach
MAJ	Maison d'Accès à la Justice
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
PPIMA	Public Policy Information, Monitoring, and Advocacy
TV	Television
VSLAs	Village Savings and Loan Associations

FOREWARD

A quick look on 14 past years signals undeniable achievements of AJPRODHO thanks to concomitant efforts of the members, our friends [the donors] and the right holders. Projects flourished; the target right holders' welfare bettered. Along the dynamic status of projects and programmes, it comes a moment whereby some of them theoretically phase out; however, AJPRODHO and the projects' right holders have always made the possible to maintain the outcomes for our good.

The PPIMA, the NPA funded project, is one of the impactful project we ever run. As it comes up a time for the backer to release it in our hands, it is rather a good occasion to mature the capacities, abilities and know-how we gained from it, keep the machinery working and maintain the track to the envisaged goal we set up from the beginning.

While striving for the sustainables from PPIMA—for *e.g. core strategies like the CSC and full involvement of the citizens, the policy dialogue, etc.*— it also relates to our duties to tackle the emerging societal and global issues such global warming issue and global economic crisis issues. We are always optimistic that our friends and stakeholders will be much supportive in our efforts to contribute to resolving such puzzle problems.

MUTSINZI MUSSA

AJPRODHO, Legal Representative.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

For the past 14 years, AJPRODHO has been implementing the Public Policy Information, Monitoring, and Advocacy (**PPIMA**) program, coordinated by Norwegian People's Aid (**NPA**). The program aims to foster active interest and engagement among Rwandan citizens in the formulation and implementation of policies at both national and local levels. Its overarching objective is to ensure that these policies effectively deliver improved services, particularly benefiting economically disadvantaged Rwandans.

To achieve its objectives, PPIMA utilizes the Community Score Card, a participatory tool that enables communities to assess and provide feedback on the quality and effectiveness of public services. This approach fosters greater community engagement in government policies and programs. The PPIMA project has been implemented in three districts: Nyagatare, Gatsibo, and Ngoma.

Key results achieved include, but are not limited to, the following: A total of **1,586** issues were raised at the district level for inclusion in the District Imihigo, of which **806** were successfully incorporated. These issues primarily focused on critical sectors such as agriculture, water and sanitation, health, infrastructure, social protection, and private sector development, among others. In the area of access to justice, **1,172** issues were raised, with **926** resolved and **246** referred to the appropriate authorities for further action. Below is a summary of the key outcomes, lessons learned, and challenges encountered during the implementation process.

KEY OUTCOMES, LESSONS LEARNT, KEY CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED & WAY FORWARD

At AJPRODHO Level

Outcomes

- **AJPRODHO staff and Governing bodies/ organs received comprehensive capacity-building in public policy advocacy, gender mainstreaming, resource mobilization strategies, environmental protection, legal aid, conflict management, governance, and project cycle management.** These enhanced competencies have since enabled the organization to leverage these gains effectively in its daily operations and management activities. AJPRODHO has jointly or individually successfully advocated for the reinstatement of motorcycle transport in Kigali city after it had been stopped by government in 2012; successfully advocated for the reversal of the increase of court fees in 2013; successfully advocated for the reinstatement of the Government student scholarship/ bursary after it had been removed in 2014; in consortium with other CSOs.

- **AJPRODHO successfully advocated for the review of the property tax of the law No 75/2018** determining the source of revenue and property of decentralized entities in 2019; and successfully advocated for the reform of Gender and GBV government community-mechanisms in 2017. **AJPRODHO is prominently known for the Public Policy Monitoring and Advocacy (PPIMA) project** for the last 14 years now, currently in Nyagatare and Ngoma districts and previously in Gatsibo district to enhance citizen participation in public policy processes.
- **The confidence of citizens to actively engage has been bolstered**, resulting in increased participation in the District planning and budgeting processes. PPIMA has significantly **reduced the divide between citizens and local leaders**, leading to improved citizen confidence and receptiveness. This empowerment has enabled citizens to hold leaders accountable and offer constructive ideas for the development of their districts and communities.
- **Enhanced Citizen Capacity in Legal Understanding:** The empowerment of citizens through capacity building in legal comprehension and policy understanding has effectively bridged gaps stemming from a lack of public knowledge regarding rights and procedures for asserting them within the justice system.
- **Empowerment of People with Disabilities:** People with disabilities have been encouraged to provide feedback, particularly in specialized categories: Citizens with disabilities have been actively encouraged to provide feedback and contribute their perspectives, especially in areas that specifically impact them. This empowerment ensures that their voices are heard and their unique needs are addressed in the decision-making processes.
- **PPIMA played a significant role in enhancing community awareness of Alternative Dispute Resolution models**, thereby contributing to a decrease in cases of gender-based violence (GBV) and domestic violence.

Lessons Learnt

- **No evidence**, no room for advocacy
- **The active participation of women in CSC forums** allowed AJPRODHO being aware of most pressing gender related issues within the community and helped it making informed decisions, policies and action towards addressing GBV and domestic violence.
- **Vital Role of CSC Process:** The CSC process is essential for enabling citizen participation in decision-making and ensuring their rights are addressed. Continuous efforts by GFPs to mobilize citizens are crucial for effective implementation of district plans.
- **Collaborative Advocacy:** Joint advocacy efforts enhance the impact and lead to meaningful changes in policies and service delivery, demonstrating the power of collective action.

At Community Level

Outcomes

- **The confidence of citizens to actively engage has been bolstered**, resulting in increased participation in the District planning and budgeting processes.
- PPIMA has significantly **reduced the divide between citizens and local leaders**, leading to improved citizen confidence and receptiveness. This empowerment has enabled citizens to hold leaders accountable and offer constructive ideas for the development of their districts and communities.
- **Enhanced Citizen Capacity in Legal Understanding:** The empowerment of citizens through capacity building in legal comprehension and policy understanding has effectively bridged gaps stemming from a lack of public knowledge regarding rights and procedures for asserting them within the justice system.
- **Empowerment of People with Disabilities:** People with disabilities have been encouraged to provide feedback, particularly in specialized categories: Citizens with disabilities have been actively encouraged to provide feedback and contribute their perspectives, especially in areas that specifically impact them. This empowerment ensures that their voices are heard and their unique needs are addressed in the decision-making processes.
- **PPIMA played a significant role in enhancing community awareness of Alternative Dispute Resolution models**, thereby contributing to a decrease in cases of gender-based violence (GBV) and domestic violence.

Lessons Learnt

- **Empowerment and Participation:** When citizens are empowered, they can engage meaningfully in development plans that impact their lives, leading to more effective and relevant outcomes.
- **VSLAs contribute towards boosting live style:** PPIMA encouraged communities to establish Village Savings and Loan Associations (**VSLAs**). Currently, Nyagatare has 17 savings groups, Kirehe has 12, and Gatsibo has 8. These VSLAs have made significant contributions to improving the livelihoods of community members, as evidenced by testimonials from the Governance Focal Persons.
- The impact is reflected in increased monthly income, as members borrow funds for income-generating activities, pay school fees for their children, and provide women with greater access to finance and decision-making power, equal to their male counterparts. These developments have enhanced overall community well-being.
- **Role Model Citizens:** GFPs have evolved into exemplary citizens, demonstrating their capacity to foster prosperous and harmonious households.
- **Enhanced Dialogue and Engagement:** The PPIMA and CSC processes have taught citizens that engaging with leaders on issues affecting their livelihoods is beneficial. Similarly,

decision-makers have learned that closer interaction with citizens enhances their commitment to government programs and policies.

AT District Level

Outcomes

- **The local government leverages the existing structure of Governance Focal Persons (GFPs)** for efficient community mobilization, as they have demonstrated trustworthiness, awareness, and ownership of current government policies and programs.
- **There is greater accountability**, with leaders being held responsible for their duties, and citizens understanding their roles and responsibilities, thereby reducing corruption and misconduct.
- **Decentralization:** There has been a strategic shift towards decentralizing governance, which involves transferring authority and decision-making power from central authorities to local levels. This move aims to enhance the capacity of local communities to address their own issues and seek solutions tailored to their specific needs.

Lessons Learnt

- **Leveraging GFPs Structure:** Local governments benefit from utilizing existing GFP structures for community mobilization, as these groups are trusted and have demonstrated awareness and ownership of government policies and programs.
- **Citizen's satisfaction increases in districts** where PPIMA strategy is well accommodated by local authorities; those districts perform better in Imihigo (performance contracts)
- **PPIMA project contributed to changes in Violence Against Women attitudes and practices** through sensitization, engaging with duty bearers, and strengthening links between communities and relevant authorities. Service providers worked together with GFPs to educate women on their rights and how to report violations. This increased rights knowledge and remedy to support services enabled some Female GFPs to stand up for themselves.

Key Challenges Encountered

- Awareness and knowledge gaps about citizens' rights and entitlements on side of grassroots leaders as they keep rotating following the elections' terms.
- Emerging forms of human rights violations in Rwandan context [*e.g. the human trafficking*];
- Relatively increasing domestic violence and GBV (including spousal killings & suicides);

- The citizen participation which is not yet at a desired satisfaction across PPIMA zone.

Way forward

- It is important and imperative to maintain what we have achieved through PPIMA; to this end, we commit to work together with PPIMA Districts
- Keep providing necessary training support upon the district's evidenced request
- The districts' staff in charge of planning and budgeting should keep working closely with GFPs at sector levels in order to ensure citizens' priority needs are incorporated into imihigo. The citizens will continue playing their role in imihigo while the district will ensure appropriate budgets are allocated to address citizens' needs.
- **Seeking/ Mobilizing Financial Support:** Requests for increased financial support to address significant needs raised by citizens.
- **Training on New Laws:** Providing training to community representatives on new legal regulations.
- **Training New Leaders on CSC:** Educating new leaders about the Community Score Card (CSC) process.
- **In-Depth Advocacy for People with Disabilities:** Advocating extensively for individuals with disabilities, particularly in relation to infrastructure and essential services.
- **Assisting Community Representatives with Transportation:** Providing transportation support to community representatives to facilitate their work.

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview about AJPRODHO

Association de la Jeunesse pour la Promotion des Droits de l'Homme et le Développement (AJPRODHO-JIJUKIRWA) is a local Non-Governmental Organization founded in the aftermath of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi by students attending the National University of Rwanda to ensure that the youth become the spearhead of national reconstruction after their devastating role in the 1994 Genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi as a result of manipulation by selfish leaders.

Since its founding, AJPRODHO has transitioned from a small student association to a Non-Governmental organization working to improve the rights of disadvantaged youth, women and children in Rwanda through Human Rights promotion and protection with 25 years of experience. AJPRODHO works to empower youth to claim and respect human rights and advocate for socio-economic betterment.

1.2. About PPIMA Project

The Public Policy Information, Monitoring, and Advocacy (PPIMA) program, coordinated by Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), aims to foster active interest and engagement among Rwandan citizens and civil society organizations in the formulation and implementation of policies at both national and local levels. Its goal is to ensure that policies effectively improve service delivery, particularly for disadvantaged communities. To achieve this, PPIMA employs a range of innovative methodologies, such as the Community Score Card, Anti-Corruption initiatives, and the Justice and Information Centre.

1.3. Theory of Change for the PPIMA Project

If Rwandan Civil Society Organization and citizens are equipped with knowledge and skills; provided with the required tools and effective strategies; and given the platform to interact with decision makers and service providers; they will, meaningfully, participate and contribute positively to influence policy formulation and service delivery.

Grounded in a human rights-based approach, the Public Policy Information, Monitoring, and Advocacy (PPIMA) project leverages the Community Score Card as a structured self-assessment and feedback tool for evaluating service delivery. This tool involves both service recipients and providers, creating a collaborative framework where community members and service delivery personnel jointly assess the quality, accessibility, and effectiveness of public services.

The Community Score Card empowers community members by giving them a formalized platform to express their needs, identify service delivery gaps, and prioritize areas for improvement. Through this participatory process, citizens can rank and score services based on criteria such as responsiveness, transparency, and accountability. By bringing together both community members and service providers, the approach also fosters dialogue, mutual accountability, and shared understanding, leading to more informed and inclusive decision-making.

The insights and feedback collected through the Community Score Card process directly influence government policy implementation, helping to align public services with the actual needs of citizens. Ultimately, this approach seeks to promote a culture of active civic engagement and accountability, ensuring that public policies and services better serve all community members, particularly those in vulnerable or underserved groups.

1.4. Implementation Strategies

Strategies	Implementation Approach
Community Score Card	The Community Score Card is a participatory tool designed to involve village communities in assessing and providing feedback on the quality and effectiveness of public services, thereby fostering their engagement in government policies and programs. This process facilitates dialogue between citizens and government authorities, enabling both parties to discuss issues affecting service delivery, share perspectives, and collaboratively develop an action plan to enhance services. Moreover, the Score Card empowers citizens to monitor and provide feedback on services while actively participating in district planning and budgeting processes. Special emphasis is placed on engaging groups often excluded from development initiatives, including women, youth, people with disabilities, the historically marginalized, and others.
Governance Focal Persons (GFPs)	<p>The Governance Focal Person is an ordinary citizen elected by the community at cell level as a volunteer to facilitate community participation in formulation, implementation and follow up of government programs for service delivery improvement by using the community Scorecard. Governance Focal Persons have a potentially challenging, but crucial role which will require a range of organizational, facilitation and communication skills, an open-mind, energy and motivation.</p> <p>As part of the Scorecard process they are responsible for sensitizing the community to the process, explaining the process, encouraging them to attend meetings, persuading them of the benefits, sustaining their interest; ensuring that the diversity of the community is represented in the process, including men, women, youth, people with disabilities and the Historically Marginalized, organizing and preparing for meetings, with both the community and Service Providers and facilitating the various stages of the scorecard process, including the Interface Meeting with Service Providers, ensuring maximum participation and inclusion.</p>
District Dialogue Forum (DDF)	A dialogue between relevant service providers and citizens at District level, with the aim of discussing challenges, and devising solutions to the issues raised during the CSC process throughout the PPIMA operational Sectors in the District.
National Dialogue	Civil Society partners at national level draw from the experience of the community score card and related research to organize dialogue between relevant government officials, CSOs and citizens (through interface and call-ins).
Radio Call In	Information-sharing strategy used by PPIMA in which service providers and citizens discuss and share views on a radio call-in programme.

Radio Talk Show	Panel debate facilitated by trained journalists to present decision-makers with issues gathered from investigation and findings in the CSC process.
AJIC	AJIC is a legal advisory Centre where citizens report their individual concerns and are assisted by legal personal to resolve them. AJICs are managed by district level partners Volunteer paralegals from communities are trained by AJIC to be the first point of contact on legal issues at AJIC. They provide basic legal advice, and refer complex cases to AJIC.
Radio Call In	Information-sharing strategy used by PPIMA in which service providers and citizens discuss and share views on a radio call-in programme.
Radio Talk Show	Panel debate facilitated by trained journalists to present decision-makers with issues gathered from investigation and findings in the CSC process.

1.4. Rationale for the Development of the PPIMA Outcome Harvesting Booklet

The rationale for developing the PPIMA Outcome Harvesting Booklet is to document, analyze, and showcase the results, impacts, and lessons learned from the implementation of the Public Policy Information, Monitoring, and Advocacy (PPIMA) program. This booklet serves multiple purposes, including:

1. **Demonstrating Impact:** Highlighting the tangible outcomes of PPIMA's programme in fostering citizen engagement and improving policy formulation and service delivery.
2. **Promoting Accountability:** Providing stakeholders, including donors, government agencies, and communities, with transparent insights into the program's achievements and challenges.
3. **Facilitating Learning:** Capturing lessons learned and best practices to inform future program design and enhance the effectiveness of similar interventions.
4. **Advocacy and Awareness:** Strengthening advocacy efforts by using documented outcomes as evidence of the program's contribution to promoting active citizenship and participatory governance.
5. **Celebrating Success:** Recognizing the efforts of all stakeholders involved in the program and inspiring continued commitment to its goals.

Chapter 2: Implementation Approaches

The **score card engages** both "Service Users" (citizens) and "Service Providers" in a discussion of the issues that affect service delivery.



District Dialogue Forums are structured dialogue meetings held at the district level between relevant service providers and citizens. The primary objective of these forums is to discuss challenges identified during the Community Score Card (CSC) process and collaboratively devise practical solutions to address the

issues raised across the district.



Interface meetings provide a platform for direct engagement between citizens and service providers, fostering open dialogue on service delivery issues. During these sessions, citizens have the opportunity to voice their concerns, share their experiences, and highlight challenges they face in accessing services. Service providers, in turn, respond to these concerns, offering

clarifications, sharing updates on ongoing initiatives, and discussing potential solutions. This collaborative approach aims to improve accountability, enhance mutual understanding,

and identify actionable steps to address service delivery gaps effectively, ultimately strengthening trust between the community and service providers.



"The media remains a critical mode of communication in Rwanda and through the media, citizens are informed and are likely capable of engaging with the policy on one hand while on the other hand policy makers are right holders of citizens informed feedback".



The rehabilitation of traffic roads began with community-driven initiatives and public works, later receiving additional funding through a cross-border project. This funding enabled the continuation of road development, driven by the community's commitment and prioritization, as reflected through the Citizen Scorecard (CSC). A notable example of this progress is the Shirimpumu-Nyamiyonga Road, an 8 km stretch in Musheru Sector, Nyamiyonga Cell. Similar improvements were also made in the Matimba, Karama, Kiyombe, and Tabagwe sectors

within Nyagatare District.

Community work-The rehabilitation of these roads has significantly addressed trade-related challenges by improving connectivity between cells and sectors, facilitating easier vehicle movement. According to Damascene NTAWURIMENYA, a resident of Nyamiyonga Cell, Musheru Sector, "The road rehabilitation has also created employment opportunities for youth and vulnerable individuals, empowering them to improve their livelihoods." He further highlighted that, since the rehabilitation, access to clean water has improved due to the installation of new water pipes, and electricity is now more accessible.



During the **National Dialogue** on Teenage Pregnancy, a panel discussion featured (left to right) Mr. Kananga Andrews, Executive Director of the Legal Aid Forum; Ms. Nsanga Sylvia, a gender activist and feminist; and Mr. Mupenzi Ejid, Programs Manager at AJPRODHO JIJUKIRWA. In a separate panel for a live district-level radio discussion focused on teenage pregnancy prevention and response challenges, key participants included Murekatete Juliette, Vice Mayor in charge of Social Affairs in Nyagatare District; DPC Mr. Sano Nkeramugaba; Jean Claude Maj, Coordinator; Niyosnhuti Jean Pierre, a representative of RIB; Mutegwaraba Egidia, CNF District-level representative; and Nkurunziza Anathole, representing AJPRODHO.



In the first photo, taken on December 23, 2020, panelists provided feedback to the community on issues raised through the Community Score Card via a radio broadcast. From left to right: Mr. Mushabe D. Claudia, Mayor of Nyagatare District; Mr. Hategekimana Freud, District Executive Secretary (DES); Mr. Nkurunziza Anathole, AJPRODHO Representative; and Mr. Hakizamungu Thomas, Director of Planning and Evaluation. The JADF Chairman, Mr. Aime Iyaturemye, participated remotely via phone.

The second photo, taken on December 18, 2020, shows district representatives at the District Development Forum (DDF), with Mr. Hakizamungu Thomas (right), Director of

Planning, and Mr. Nkurunziza Anathole (left), representing AJPRODHO. The third photo features Mr. Wilson Mwesigye, Director of the One Stop Center, addressing community concerns. The third and fourth photos also show other participants actively engaged in the DDF.

Capacity building: AJPRODHO's current and newly recruited staff participated in the PPIMA Quarterly Reflective and Learning Meeting. This platform provided an opportunity for the new team members to gain a deeper understanding of the PPIMA project and its significant contribution to AJPRODHO's mission and vision.



The Annual **National Level Dialogue** Meeting was inaugurated by the Mayor of Ngoma District, who emphasized the challenges faced by youth, particularly in employability. She also encouraged them to take on the role of problem solvers, recognizing their position as the leaders of tomorrow. Likewise, a two-day training session was conducted for new staff and members of AJPRODHO's newly elected Board of Directors, Control and Evaluation Commission, Arbitration Commission, and Secretariat. The training focused on key topics such as Gender, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), Sexual Harassment, and safeguarding policies.



Here, **Mr. Mussa Mutsinzi, the Legal Representative of AJPRODHO**, is delivering the opening remarks to all participants, including both the Secretariat and Board members, during the training session on *Gender, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), Sexual Harassment, and safeguarding policies*.



Organize **quarterly reflective learning** and planning meetings as part of the PPIMA Project to assess progress, share insights, and identify areas for improvement. These meetings served as a platform for project stakeholders, including staff, partners, and community representatives, to evaluate implemented activities, reflect on lessons learned, and collaboratively plan for the next steps. The sessions also provided an opportunity to address emerging challenges, align strategies with project objectives, and strengthen the overall effectiveness of the PPIMA Project in promoting active citizen engagement and improved service delivery.



AJPRODHO's current staff, along with newly recruited team members, actively participated in the PPIMA Quarterly Reflective and Learning Meeting. This event provided a valuable platform for fostering organizational learning and alignment. For the new staff, it was an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the PPIMA project, including its objectives, strategies, and overall impact. The meeting highlighted how the PPIMA project aligns with and contributes to AJPRODHO's broader mission of promoting social justice and human rights, as well as its vision of empowering communities for sustainable development. Through discussions, reflections on past activities, and the sharing of insights, the session equipped new staff with knowledge and tools to effectively support the project's goals. It also reinforced AJPRODHO's commitment to fostering collaborative and impactful interventions that resonate with its core values and priorities.



The Youth Dialogue through the Soccer4Change initiative was an outstanding program endorsed by AJPRODHO in collaboration with Norwegian People's Aid (NPA). This activity brought together a diverse group of participants and stakeholders, including the Mayor of Ngoma District, who officiated the event. Other notable attendees included the Programs Manager of AJPRODHO, the Programs Manager of NPA, the Executive Secretary of Kazo, PPIMA staff, Gender Focal Point (GFP) representatives, and local citizens. The initiative served as a dynamic platform for engaging youth, promoting dialogue, and fostering community development through sports.



The District-Level Meeting was officially opened by Mrs. Niyonagira Nathalie, the Mayor of Ngoma District. In her opening remarks, she emphasized the importance of delivering high-quality services to citizens, aligning with the theme "*Umuturage Ku Isonga*" (Citizens First). Her message underscored the district's commitment to prioritizing the needs and welfare of its residents while fostering accountability and excellence in service delivery.



The Bi-annual District-Level Stakeholders' Monitoring and Advocacy Forum focused on addressing citizens' issues raised through the Community Score Card and monitoring the implementation of *Imihigo*, with a particular emphasis on youth-related concerns. The forum brought together various stakeholders from the district and sector levels, creating a collaborative platform for discussion and action. The workshop was officially opened by Mrs. Nathalie Niyonagira, Mayor of Ngoma District, who expressed her appreciation for the establishment of this forum, particularly for its focus on youth advocacy. She emphasized the importance of such a platform in engaging youth more actively in planning and budgeting processes, thereby ensuring their perspectives and priorities are integrated into local development initiatives.



The Annual National Level Dialogue Meeting was officially opened by the Mayor of Ngoma District, who highlighted the pressing challenges facing youth, particularly in the area of employability. In her address, she encouraged the youth to rise to the occasion and embrace their role as problem-solvers, reminding them of their critical position as the leaders of tomorrow. Her remarks underscored the importance of empowering young people to actively participate in addressing societal issues and shaping a better future.



The Youth Dialogue through Soccer4Change initiative was a remarkable program endorsed by AJPRODHO in collaboration with Norwegian People's Aid (NPA). The event was graced by the presence of notable individuals, including the Mayor of Ngoma District, who officiated the proceedings. Other key participants included the Programs Manager of AJPRODHO, the Programs Manager of NPA, the Executive Secretary of Kazo, PPIMA staff, Gender Focal

Point (GFP) representatives, and members of the community. The initiative served as a vibrant platform to engage youth, foster dialogue, and promote community development through the unifying power of sports.



Through the meeting supported by RCN Rwanda Justice & Democracy, Nyagatare JRLOS (Justice, Reconciliation, Law and Orders Sector) members were committed to collaborate between them and with district justice sector committee to prevent and respond to human rights issues, included GBV. In Nyagatare district, AJPRODHO represents CSOs in Justice Sector committee (Vice-Chair). JRLOS members meeting in Nyagatare district.



The rollout of the **GBV Community Score Card** was conducted in Rwimiyaga (Rutumgo Cell) and Karama (Kabuga Cell). Across the entire district, over 900 issues were identified during this exercise. These issues, based on their similarities, were systematically categorized into 34 thematic areas for streamlined analysis and action (refer to the appendix for details).

CHAPTER 3. Highlights on Key PPIMA Outcomes

(1) Increased Citizen Courage: Citizens have become more courageous in expressing the issues they face within the community related to service delivery. They now offer their opinions on budget allocations and district performance targets:

Citizens have shown significant growth in their willingness to voice concerns and challenges they encounter regarding service delivery within their communities. This newfound courage allows them to openly discuss and highlight issues such as inadequacies in public services, inefficiencies, and areas needing improvement. They are no longer hesitant to articulate their grievances and suggestions, which contributes to a more responsive and accountable local governance system. Moreover, citizens are now actively participating in discussions about budget allocations and district performance targets. They offer their insights and recommendations on how funds should be allocated to meet community needs effectively and ensure that district goals are realistic and attainable. This engagement helps ensure that the resources are used efficiently and that the district's performance is closely aligned with the expectations and needs of its residents. By fostering a more inclusive approach to governance, this increased courage among citizens contributes to more transparent and effective decision-making processes.

(2) Enhanced Accountability: There is greater accountability, with leaders being held responsible for their duties, and citizens understanding their roles and responsibilities, thereby reducing corruption and misconduct:

The introduction of more robust accountability mechanisms has led to significant improvements in governance. Leaders are now held more accountable for their actions and responsibilities, with clear expectations and consequences for their performance. This increased scrutiny ensures that leaders fulfill their duties effectively and address any shortcomings in their roles. At the same time, citizens have developed a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the community. They are more aware of how their actions and participation contribute to local governance and the overall functioning of public services. This heightened awareness enables them to hold leaders accountable and to act as vigilant overseers of public affairs. Together, these advancements have led to a notable reduction in corruption and misconduct. By clarifying expectations and fostering a culture of responsibility and transparency, both leaders and citizens contribute to a more ethical and effective governance system. This collaborative approach ensures that resources are managed properly and that public trust in government institutions is strengthened.

(3) Education on Preventing Abuse: There has been an emphasis on educating citizens about how to combat abuse:

There has been a significant focus on educating citizens about preventing and addressing abuse. This initiative includes comprehensive training and awareness programs designed to inform individuals about different forms of abuse such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, and discrimination and the mechanisms available to address and prevent them.

The education efforts aim to empower citizens with the knowledge and skills necessary to recognize the signs of abuse, understand their rights, and access support services. By providing this crucial information, the program helps individuals protect themselves and others from harm, promote safer communities, and foster a culture of respect and dignity. These educational activities also include practical guidance on how to report abuse, seek legal recourse, and utilize support networks effectively. As a result, citizens are better equipped to take proactive steps in preventing abuse and advocating for their own and others' safety and well-being. This approach not only helps in addressing current issues but also in building long-term resilience and awareness within the community.

(4) Peaceful Dispute Resolution: Issues are being resolved peacefully without resorting to courts, utilizing Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms as appropriate:

There has been a marked shift towards resolving disputes through peaceful means, avoiding the need for court interventions. This approach emphasizes the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms, such as mediation and arbitration, to address and resolve conflicts effectively within the community. By employing ADR methods, disputes are handled in a more collaborative and less adversarial manner. These methods focus on finding mutually acceptable solutions through dialogue and negotiation, which helps maintain relationships and foster community cohesion. The use of ADR mechanisms also provides a more accessible and less formal avenue for resolving issues, which can be particularly beneficial for individuals who may find the court system intimidating or inaccessible. This approach not only expedites the resolution process but also reduces the burden on judicial systems, promoting a more harmonious and efficient means of addressing conflicts. Overall, the emphasis on peaceful dispute resolution helps to cultivate a culture of cooperation and understanding, enabling community members to address their grievances constructively and collaboratively.

(5) Awareness of Service Provision: Citizens are now aware of where each service is provided:

Citizens now have a clearer understanding of where and how various services are provided within their community. This increased awareness enables them to easily identify and access the services they need, whether related to healthcare, education, public safety, or other essential areas. By knowing the specific locations and availability of these services, citizens can make more informed decisions about where to seek assistance and support. This transparency helps to ensure that services are utilized efficiently and that community members are aware of their entitlements and resources. Furthermore, this awareness contributes to greater accountability and effectiveness in service delivery, as citizens can provide feedback and report issues more readily when they have a clear understanding of the service provisions. Overall, improved awareness of service provision enhances community engagement and satisfaction, ensuring that residents are better equipped to meet their needs and address any service-related concerns.

(6) Empowerment of People with Disabilities: Individuals with disabilities have been encouraged to provide feedback, particularly in specialized categories:

Citizens with disabilities have been actively encouraged to provide feedback and contribute their perspectives, especially in areas that specifically impact them. This empowerment ensures that their voices are heard and their unique needs are addressed in the decision-making processes. By inviting and valuing their input, the program fosters an inclusive environment where people with disabilities can play a more significant role in shaping policies and services that affect their lives. This feedback is particularly important in specialized categories, where tailored solutions are needed to address specific challenges faced by individuals with disabilities. This approach not only helps to create more accessible and equitable services but also promotes a greater sense of agency and involvement among people with disabilities. As a result, policies and initiatives are better aligned with their needs, leading to improved outcomes and enhanced quality of life for this community.

(7) Decentralization: There has been a move towards decentralizing governance and providing the capability to seek solutions locally:

There has been a strategic shift towards decentralizing governance, which involves transferring authority and decision-making power from central authorities to local levels. This move aims to enhance the capacity of local communities to address their own issues and seek solutions tailored to their specific needs. Decentralization empowers local governments and community leaders to take a more active role in managing resources, implementing policies, and addressing local challenges. By doing so, it fosters more responsive and efficient governance, as decisions are made closer to the people affected by them. This approach also encourages greater local participation and ownership, as community members and local officials are directly involved in the decision-making processes that impact their lives. As a result, governance becomes more inclusive and adaptable, leading to improved service delivery and better alignment of public initiatives with the needs and priorities of local populations.

Other Key PPIMA Outcomes

- Thanks to PPIMA, AJPRODHO experienced capacity development in Public Policy Advocacy, HRBA, gender mainstreaming, conflict resolution and effective strategies for engaging citizens and local leaders, particularly in the context of district planning and budgeting. Within the framework of the PPIMA program, community volunteers or Governance Focal Persons (GFPs) serve a pivotal role in facilitating citizen participation processes;
- The confidence of citizens to actively engage has been bolstered, resulting in increased participation in the District planning and budgeting processes;

- Pieces of research conducted have underscored the necessity for advocacy efforts aimed at enhancing youth participation and engagement through tailored approaches. Consequently, support was provided for their involvement in initiatives such as "Soccer for Change," leading to heightened youth participation in community meetings and other engagement events;
- Due to PPIMA, the divide between citizens and local leaders has been significantly narrowed. As a result, citizen confidence and receptiveness have improved, empowering them to hold leaders accountable and contribute constructive ideas for the development of their districts and communities;
- The media continues to serve as a central communication channel whereby citizens are informed and empowered to engage with policies, while policymakers are provided with valuable feedback from well-informed citizens, thereby strengthening the accountability loop;
- The local government leverages the existing structure of Governance Focal Persons (GFPs) for efficient community mobilization, as they have demonstrated trustworthiness, awareness, and ownership of current government policies and programs;
- Through the PPIMA and CSC processes, citizens gained insight into the importance of engaging with their leaders regarding issues affecting their livelihoods, realizing that such discussions are beneficial. Decision-makers, in turn, learned that engaging directly with citizens fosters greater ownership of government programs and policies among the populace;
- PPIMA played a significant role in enhancing community awareness of Alternative Dispute Resolution models, thereby contributing to a decrease in cases of gender-based violence (GBV) and domestic violence;
- In light of the outcomes achieved through PPIMA, districts authorities have pledged to institutionalize the use of the community scorecard tool in all cell assemblies to identify citizens' issues or priorities to inform district planning and budgeting process as well as assessing the quality of service delivery in the signed MoUs with AJPRODHO
- Enhanced Citizen Capacity in Legal Understanding: The empowerment of citizens through capacity building in legal comprehension and policy understanding has effectively bridged gaps stemming from a lack of public knowledge regarding rights and procedures for asserting them within the justice system.

Statistical data derived from the impact of the Community Score Card

ACCESS TO JUSTICE	2014-2022		
TYPE OF ISSUES	# OF ISSUES RECEIVED	# OF ISSUES RESOLVED	# OF ISSUES REFERED TO COMPETENT AUTHORITY
Execution of court judgment and other decision	28	13	15
Land issues	301	240	61
Judicial	13	9	4
Family issues	101	89	12
Labor issues	8	5	3
GBV issues	293	219	74
Property Right	49	40	9
Civil Matters	169	110	59
Administration issues	4	1	3
Criminal	206	200	6
TOTAL	1,172	926	246

PPIMA CONTRIBUTION IN DISTRICT IMIHIGO

TYPE OF ISSUES	# ISSUES ELEVATED AT DISTRICT LEVEL	# ISSUES INTEGRATED INTO DISTRICT IMIHIGO
Agriculture	249	81
Water and Sanitation	127	88
Health	101	43
Infrastructure	236	137
Education	179	94
Governance	109	49
Social Protection	306	207
Transport	82	28
Environmental protection	43	13
Energy	81	32

Private Sector Development	73	34
Total	1,586	806

CHAPTER 4: Key Changes

- Citizens have gained a robust platform to voice their opinions, concerns, and issues impacting their lives;
- The **CSC** has enabled citizens to actively participate in the planning and budgeting processes of Nyagatare, Ngoma and Gatsibo Districts;
- Consistent feedback has strengthened trust in Nyagatare, Ngoma and Gatsibo leadership, making citizens feel valued as their ideas are now integrated into District plans and *imihigo*;
- The relationship between leaders and citizens has become more cordial, and citizens no longer hesitate to raise issues with authorities, confident that their concerns will be addressed;
- PPIMA has significantly reduced the divide between citizens and local leaders, leading to improved citizen confidence and receptiveness. This empowerment has enabled citizens to hold leaders accountable and offer constructive ideas for the development of their district and communities;
- The local government effectively utilizes the Governance Focal Persons (**GFPs**) for community mobilization, recognizing their trustworthiness, awareness, and strong ownership of current government policies and programs;
- The PPIMA and CSC processes have provided citizens with valuable insights into the importance of engaging with their leaders on issues affecting their livelihoods, recognizing the benefits of such interactions. In turn, decision-makers have realized that direct engagement with citizens promotes greater ownership of government programs and policies;
- PPIMA has significantly influenced local decision-making and planning processes. Over the course of **14 years**, AJPRODHO and citizens have effectively shaped local plans, demonstrating a deep internalization of empowerment values;
- Nyagatare, Ngoma and Gatsibo districts authorities have committed to institutionalizing the use of the Community Scorecard tool in all cell assemblies to identify citizens' concerns and priorities, thereby informing district planning, budgeting, and service delivery assessments, as outlined in their signed **MoU** with AJPRODHO in 2022;
- Citizen participation in the planning and implementation of Nyagatare, Ngoma and Gatsibo district's *Imihigo* has significantly increased;
- The Community Scorecard, interface meetings, District Dialogue Forums, and *Inteko z'Abaturage* have enhanced understanding and analysis, thereby reinforcing citizens' roles in governance;
- The project has improved the social, economic, and political lives of GFPs, with recent efforts strengthening their financial capacities through the formation of voluntary savings and loan groups, which are now evolving into small businesses and future ventures;

- Under the PPIMA program, Governance Focal Persons (GFPs) serve a crucial role in enabling citizen participation;
- AJPRODHO beneficiaries (GFPs) have seen notable increases in monthly income, savings, and loan acquisition rates, enabling them to invest more in income-generating activities, thereby improving food security and household well-being. Furthermore, **VSLAs** membership has empowered women, granting them greater control over income and decision-making;
- GFPs play a key role in preventing gender-based violence (GBV) in the community and in managing conflicts within their areas of responsibility;
- Citizen confidence in active engagement has been strengthened, leading to greater participation in district planning and budgeting processes.
- The PPIMA project contributed to access to justice for Nyagatare, Ngoma and Gatsibo citizens through provision of legal aid services and conflict prevention and management including mediation, building strong networks, collaboration with justice organs including MAJ, Abunzi, RIB and Local leaders;
- Reduced inequalities and improved access to justice: Governance sector: Citizen confidence and openness up-shifted, as The transformation of where the communities were in PPIMA I and where this stood in PPIMA, that was amazing, that was a very dramatic change and very pleasing
- AJPRODHO by providing legal aids services through AJIC, constituted a strong hand for the local government legal services; AJPRODHO gained a merit of pursuing tirelessly the justice related issues they received which built strong trust towards the service seekers;
- Enhanced Citizen Capacity in Legal Understanding: The empowerment of citizens through capacity building in legal comprehension and policy understanding has effectively bridged gaps stemming from a lack of public knowledge regarding rights and procedures for asserting them within the justice system;
- Decreased delays in the execution of legal decisions through bailiff workshops and mass execution drives & Enhanced efficiency in the legal system, leading to quicker resolution of cases and improved trust in the justice process;
- Service providers collaborated with GFPs to educate women about their rights and the process of reporting violations. This effort not only enhanced women's awareness of their rights but also encouraged some female GFPs to advocate for themselves and seek support services when needed;
- During PPIMA, various rights-based training and empowerment programs have significantly advanced gender equality in Nyagatare, Ngoma and Gatsibo communities. As a result, women GFPs have become more aware of their capabilities, leading them to

collaborate with microfinance institutions and initiate small income-generating projects, something that was not pursued before PPIMA's intervention;

- Increased public understanding and engagement through diverse platforms such as community dialogues, justice caravans, mobile clinics, radio talk shows, TV programs, and legal education initiatives;
- Enhanced public awareness of their legal rights and the functioning of the justice system, leading to better informed and more empowered citizens;
- Strengthened capacities of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) through dialogues on their role in justice and rule of law, focused training, and the development of effective advocacy policies and strategies;
- Expanded legal aid services through targeted training, coaching, mentorship, and the development of educational and communication materials.

The contribution of PPIMA for these changes to occur

- PPIMA played a significant role in enhancing community awareness of Alternative Dispute Resolution models, thereby contributing to a decrease in cases of gender-based violence (GBV) and domestic violence;
- The media continues to serve as a central communication channel whereby citizens are informed and empowered to engage with policies, while policymakers are provided with valuable feedback from well-informed citizens, thereby strengthening the accountability loop;
- Facilitation of District Dialogue Forums (DDFs), which are district-level meetings between relevant service providers and citizens, aimed at discussing challenges and collaboratively devising solutions to issues identified through the Community Scorecard (CSC) process;
- Through the Public Policy Implementation Monitoring and Advocacy (PPIMA) and Community Score Card (CSC), AJPRODHO reached the marginalized; their ideas opened district authorities on special needs to be budgeted for to reduce social injustices;
- Through PPIMA, AJPRODHO by providing legal aids services through AJIC, constituted a strong hand for the local government legal services; the organization gained a merit of pursuing tirelessly the justice related issues they received which built strong trust towards the service seekers.
- AJPRODHO established 1144 spaces for unity and reconciliation (clubs), with the goal of promoting dialogues on unity and reconciliation Nyagatare, Ngoma and Gatsibo

districts planning processes thus the District has significantly improved in terms of Imihigo performance and service delivery

- The Public Policy Information Monitoring and Advocacy Project (PPIMA) empowered the citizens in matter of knowing their entitlements and became able to openly ask for their rights. It augmented their ownership in the implementation of the imihigo and districts plans
- Local government takes advantages on existing Governance Focal Persons (GFPs) structure for effective community mobilizations for they trust in their proven awareness and ownership of current government policies and programs;
- AJPRODHO benefited from numerous capacity building & coaching sessions via PPIMA programme: policy formulation; policy advocacy; HRBA, gender mainstreaming and conflict resolution and the latter built strong networks (especially with PPIMA partners) and it increased experience in advocacy.

CHAPTER 5. Lessons Learnt

- ✓ **Vital Role of CSC Process:** The CSC process is essential for enabling citizen participation in decision-making and ensuring their rights are addressed. Continuous efforts by GFPs to mobilize citizens are crucial for effective implementation of district plans.
- ✓ **Evidence-Based Advocacy:** Advocacy requires solid evidence. Without it, there is limited opportunity to influence policy or service delivery.
- ✓ **Empowerment and Participation:** When citizens are empowered, they can engage meaningfully in development plans that impact their lives, leading to more effective and relevant outcomes.
- ✓ **Collaborative Advocacy:** Joint advocacy efforts enhance the impact and lead to meaningful changes in policies and service delivery, demonstrating the power of collective action.
- ✓ **Reaching Marginalized Groups:** Through PPIMA and CSC, AJPRODHO effectively engaged marginalized communities, resulting in increased awareness and budgeting for special needs, which helps reduce social injustices.
- ✓ **Gender Sensitivity:** The active involvement of women in CSC forums enables organizations like AJPRODHO to identify and address pressing gender issues, facilitating informed decisions and actions to combat GBV and domestic violence.
- ✓ **Leveraging GFPs Structure:** Local governments benefit from utilizing existing GFP structures for community mobilization, as these groups are trusted and have demonstrated awareness and ownership of government policies and programs.

- ✓ **Role Model Citizens:** GFPs have evolved into exemplary citizens, demonstrating their capacity to foster prosperous and harmonious households.
- ✓ **Increased Open-Mindedness:** Citizens of Nyagatare have shown greater openness compared to the pre-PPIMA period.
- ✓ **Strengthened Legal Services:** By providing legal aid services through AJIC, AJPRODHO has significantly bolstered the local government's legal services. Their unwavering commitment to justice has earned them considerable trust among service seekers.
- ✓ **Enhanced Dialogue and Engagement:** The PPIMA and CSC processes have taught citizens that engaging with leaders on issues affecting their livelihoods is beneficial. Similarly, decision-makers have learned that closer interaction with citizens enhances their commitment to government programs and policies.
- ✓ Nyagatare, Ngoma and Gatsibo citizens' satisfaction level positively impacted on its performance in CRC over the last decade.
- ✓ PPIMA districts still need conjugating efforts with citizens and partners to upraise its performance in imihigo performance [so far decreasing over the past 5-year term].
- ✓ Local government takes advantages on existing GFPs structure for effective community mobilizations for they trust in their proven awareness and ownership of current government policies and programs.
- ✓ The GFPs serve now as role model citizens capable to maintain prosperous and peaceful families (households).
- ✓ Nyagatare, Ngoma and Gatsibo citizens are more open-minded than in the pre-PPIMA period.

CHAPTER 6. Key Challenges Encountered

AJIC's Limited Duration: AJIC operated for a relatively short period, which meant that many citizens only began to understand its benefits and importance towards the end of the program.

AJIC was in operation for a relatively brief period, which resulted in many citizens only beginning to fully recognize and appreciate its benefits and significance towards the conclusion of the program. This limited timeframe constrained the program's ability to build sustained awareness and fully demonstrate its impact within the community.

Lack of Legal Awareness: Legal knowledge is not well-known among citizens, leading to a lack of awareness about their rights and the protections available to them in various situations they may encounter.

There is a significant gap in legal knowledge among citizens, resulting in a limited understanding of their rights and the legal protections available to them in various situations. This lack of awareness hinders their ability to effectively advocate for themselves and seek appropriate redress when facing legal issues.

Insufficient Funding for AJIC: The budget for AJIC was inadequate to allow Paralegals to perform their duties effectively as intended.

The budget allocated to AJIC was insufficient, which impeded the ability of Paralegals to carry out their responsibilities effectively. The limited financial resources constrained their capacity to deliver the intended services and support, impacting the overall effectiveness of the program.

Communication Challenges for Paralegals: Some paralegals did not have access to phones, and even those who did struggled with insufficient funds to purchase adequate phone cards. This limited their ability to consistently communicate with citizens as required.

Some paralegals lacked access to phones, and even those who had them faced difficulties due to insufficient funds for purchasing adequate phone cards. This limitation hindered their ability to maintain consistent communication with citizens, affecting their capacity to provide timely support and information as needed.

Awareness and knowledge gaps about citizens' rights and entitlements on side of grassroots leaders as they keep rotating following the elections' terms;

Emerging forms of human rights violations in Rwandan context [*e.g. the human trafficking*];

Relatively increasing domestic violence and GBV (including spousal killings & suicides);

The citizen participation which is not yet at a desired satisfaction;

Insufficient research evidences for informing decision making and programming;

Visible pressing environmental issues critically affecting the citizen's food security and safety; etc.

CHAPTER 7. PPIMA Impact on GFPS Development

The Community Scorecard (**CSC**) has been an integral tool in the implementation of the PPIMA program, engaging both *service users* (citizens) and *service providers* in constructive discussions on challenges affecting service delivery. This participatory approach fosters dialogue, enabling both parties to share their perspectives and collaboratively develop actionable plans to enhance service delivery. Additionally, the CSC process facilitates citizens' involvement in key processes such as the preparation of development plans, budgets, and performance contracts (*Imihigo*).

Governance Focal Persons (GFPs) play a pivotal role in ensuring the inclusivity of the CSC process. They place special emphasis on the participation and representation of disadvantaged groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, historically marginalized communities, and others. GFPs advocate for these groups during community meetings, ensuring their views and priorities are not overlooked. Over the past 14 years, the economic, social, and political standing of GFPs has seen significant improvement. The table below outlines the major transformations these community volunteers have achieved in their lives.

Dimension	Change
<p>SOCIAL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPIMA project contributed to changes in Violence Against Women attitudes and practices through sensitization, engaging with duty bearers, and strengthening links between communities and relevant authorities. Service providers worked together with GFPs to educate women on their rights and how to report violations. This increased rights knowledge and recourse to support services enabled some Female GFPs to stand up for themselves. For example, a female GFP in Nyagatare said, "Initially, when my husband does things that are not right to me, I could only cry and do nothing about it, all in the name of him been my husband. But now, through capacity empowerment I got via PPIMA, I can talk back to clear my thoughts - not in a disrespectful way but in a polite manner - or if it's beyond me I report to a disciplinary team to take action." • Currently, GFPs (men and women) who underwent AJPRODHO trainings on gender equality, Community score card, pro-poor policies live in peace, their households improved on social and economic conditions and their children receive adequate and proper education. Mo so, men and women who were not legally married have officialised their marriage • Female GFPs increased income and collective power improved children's access to education. Women saved money for school fees of children, some of whom completed teaching training as a result. Changes in men's attitudes and girls' improved rights knowledge meant fathers are more likely to allow daughters to complete their education. • Couples' dialogue sessions have addressed the issue of unequal power relationships between men and women. A marked improvement in communication between spouses has resulted in women and men having a better understanding of the root causes of GBV, and men playing a more active role in domestic duties.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GFPs in Ngoma, Nyagatare and Gatsibo testify that women, after being trained under PPIMA program with their husbands, are participating in income generating businesses. Further, battering has reduced in families whilst couples discuss and solve their issues peacefully before the situation escalates (goes to the public). Indeed, school dropout for children from victims of GBV has reduced as a result of the training. All in all, family members work collaboratively for their families' development. Before PPIMA interventions, GFPs who were part of the programme both from Nyagatare, Ngoma and Gatsibo districts used to experience challenges related to beatings and physical injuries, lack of complementarity between spouses, torture by one of the couples, distorting tranquility of one's spouse, forced sexual intercourse, exclusion of household property, lack of communication between couples, cheating a woman or a man, harassment despised, poor hygiene for one of the spouses, permanent irritations, not clothing one's wife and domestic violence. Now, after they have undergone various trainings, they have changed their mindset and practices, now live in harmony and there were radical changes in terms of social and economic development of their households. Many of them are opinion leaders and play role in ABUNZI committees, village and cells committees and do mediate families that live in conflicts.
ECONOMIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various training on rights, and empowerment programs over the last 10 years has improved gender equality in PPIMA geographical coverage like Nyagatare and Gatsibo. Hence, the latter opened up female GFPs minds and they realized that they are capable, they resolved to work with micro finance institutions and started small income generating projects which was not done before PPIMA Changed agricultural practices, market information (Improved access to market information as a result of their attendance in community meetings enabled GFPs to know where they can sell their produce at higher prices) and joint savings practices led to improved yields, higher incomes, and ability to invest in businesses. GFPs speak of better household relations as women's increased incomes and financial resilience reduced financial stress and as men spent time engaging in unpaid care work thereby reducing women's burdens.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some GFPs chose to create saving and lending organizations, which have had and continue to have a beneficial influence on their lives by allowing them to get loans and use them to run modest, income-generating initiatives. As a result, GFPs households who previously lacked livestock now do, and they apply manure in their fields, increasing agriculture productivity. These families can also afford to pay for Mutual Health Insurance, provide school supplies for their children, and appropriately clothe and nourish their family members. • GFPs in Gatsibo and Ngoma opted to be role models not just in terms of positive behaviors, but also in terms of developing their homes, with several male GFPs now riding motorcycles and earning money to help with family concerns. Others are now running other small businesses, including bricklayers, tailors, and boutiques, and women have also been trained to be entrepreneurs as a result of PPIMA, which in most cases encouraged them to develop in all spheres through a community score card in which citizens' issues are classified according to NST 1 Pillars.
POLITICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GFPs were able to participate in community meetings and raise concerns than non-participants. Their confidence grew and as a result, some participants took up leadership and decision-making positions, for example in village committees, Counsel National des Femmes (CNF), government, and religious groups. As a result, GFPS mainly women were included in community projects such as collecting community collective health insurance funds. However, it is important to note that not all women were in leadership positions. Women with young children were less likely to take up leadership positions, as well as women with male relatives who forbid them from taking these positions. At the district level, PPIMA focused advocacy on unpaid care work • GFPS through PPIMA were enabled to interface with community leaders and local officials and have their demands met.

CHAPTER 8. Conclusion & Recommendations

✎ **Mobilizing Financial Support:** Efforts should be made to mobilize additional financial resources to address critical needs identified by citizens during community engagement processes. This support is essential for effectively tackling challenges in various sectors, including infrastructure, education, health, and social services.

- ✧ **Training on New Laws:** Capacity-building sessions should be organized to educate community representatives and grassroots leaders about newly enacted legal regulations. This ensures they are well-informed and capable of guiding their communities in adhering to these laws while advocating for their rights.
- ✧ **Training New Leaders on the Community Score Card (CSC):** Newly elected or appointed leaders are provided with comprehensive training on the CSC process. This training equips them with the necessary skills and knowledge to facilitate participatory governance and address service delivery challenges effectively.
- ✧ **Advocacy for People with Disabilities:** Dedicated efforts should be made to advocate for the rights of individuals with disabilities. This advocacy focuses on improving infrastructure accessibility, ensuring equitable access to essential services, and addressing specific needs that enhance their quality of life.
- ✧ **Transportation Support for Community Representatives:** To enable community representatives to perform their roles effectively, logistical support, such as transportation, is provided. This assistance ensures they can participate in meetings, training, and other key activities without barriers.
- ✧ **Addressing Awareness and Knowledge Gaps:** Grassroots leaders often face knowledge gaps regarding citizens' rights and entitlements, particularly due to the rotational nature of their roles following electoral terms. Continuous training and awareness campaigns are necessary to bridge these gaps and ensure consistent leadership capacity.
- ✧ **Emerging Human Rights Violations:** New forms of human rights violations, such as human trafficking, are becoming increasingly relevant in the Rwandan context. Targeted interventions, awareness campaigns, and advocacy efforts are essential to address these emerging challenges effectively.
- ✧ **Increasing Cases of Domestic Violence and Gender-Based Violence (GBV):** The relatively rising incidences of domestic violence, including spousal killings and suicides, call for urgent action. Comprehensive programs addressing prevention, support services, and legal recourse are critical in tackling GBV.
- ✧ **Citizen Participation:** Despite progress, citizen engagement in governance and decision-making processes remains below the desired level. Strengthened mechanisms to enhance participation, such as public forums and inclusive decision-making processes, are needed.
- ✧ **Insufficient Research for Evidence-Based Decision Making:** A lack of adequate research evidence hampers informed decision-making and program development. Increased investment in research and data collection is necessary to address this gap effectively.

- ✍ **Pressing Environmental Issues:** Critical environmental challenges are increasingly affecting food security and safety. Addressing these issues through sustainable practices, policy interventions, and community awareness is vital to ensuring long-term resilience and well-being.

CONCLUSION

- AJPRODHO and its stakeholders [including the district authority] need continue the awareness raising *on citizens' rights, obligations and entitlements*, not only for right holders but also for duty bearers in its operational area and in Ngoma, Nyagatare and Gatsibo. A focused group would be the grassroots leaders newly elected.
- AJPRODHO would *ensure the 4-steps CSC process effectively allows the significant empowerment and participation in local decision making particularly in imihigo formulation*. AJPRODHO and stakeholders—namely cell leaders and GFPs and IZUs—must ensure the full inclusiveness of clusters [e.g. Women, PWDs, youth, PHM, key population...] likely to be marginalized in development processes. This calls for reinforcing the M&E system.
- AJPRODHO and likeminded organizations would *educate the citizens on the biodiversity protection* and support in spreading climate resilient practices including resilient energy.
- All relevant institutions and CSOs [and AJPRODHO] to jointly embark on *uprooting the cultural and traditional beliefs* and attitudes nurturing unequal gender power relations and all forms of gender inequality and violence.
- Research has always guided formulation of policies, actions, decisions, projects and programmes design and change and so forth. This imposes AJPRODHO to set researches in its priorities.