Project Documents for Transformational Mediation

**Project Description for Transformational Mediation**

Friends Peace House (FPH) has run multiple programs contributing to economic and social development in Rwanda ever since its establishment in year 2000. Started by the Evangelical Friends Church of Rwanda, its goal is to help bring about reconciliation among Rwandans affected by the genocide of 1994. In order to bring about more holistic healing and development, FPH has instituted multiple programs, from mediation and counseling (done in our Transformational Mediation program) to a vocational training school (Mwana Nshuti) teaching practical work skills, entrepreneurship, English, Swahili, and health to vulnerable youth. FPH has realized that true healing comes not only through healing the brokenness of the past, but also through investment in Rwanda's future generations. Our programs are a response to a need for peacebuilding, which we recognize is a process. Oftentimes we work for a future that we will not see and this is demonstrated very clearly through all of our programs, and particularly in our Transformational Mediation program.

In Rwanda, conflicts can arise between prisoners, prisoners and guards, and prisoners and their families. During 20th century Rwanda, colonists instituted racist ideologies, which helped ignite the 1994 genocide. While the ethnic classes created by these ideologies have for the most part dissolved, in certain cases, especially in prisons where many inmates are genocidaires, they continue to exacerbate conflict between people. It's necessary to have certain inmates trained to directly respond to these conflicts.

FPH has run the Transformational Mediation program in various provinces in Rwanda for six years, with very successful results. For example, two brothers had a land dispute in court and after the mediation, they withdrew the dispute from the court because both parties were satisfied. FPH has run both Transformational Mediation trainings as well as trainings for mediators to improve their own mediations. Mediators across all provinces meet regularly, about every three months, to discuss issues that arose in their mediations and ways to better serve their populations.

We believe this program will be successful in prisons because it works to mitigate conflicts of people living and working together This program provides tools for the prisoners to use both inside and outside the prison to work on mitigating violence that does occur and to find alternatives to violence. To make this program more sustainable, we will not only train people to be mediators, but also to work with the prison staff to find prisoners who are interested in becoming trainers and who will benefit most from the program. By training people in the prisons to run the training themselves, with guidance and assistance from FPH staff, this program will become more sustainable. We recognize that it is important to create an atmosphere where people within the prison can take agency and ownership over the project and where they can work towards becoming facilitators themselves.

It is important to train people within prisons to mediate disputes both between themselves and other prisoners and between fellow prisoners. By creating this atmosphere of mediation, respect for one another, and alternatives to disputes and violence within the prisons, we hope this will translate after the prisoners are released as well.

**Budget for Transformational Mediation**

