

PRESENTATION OF BIHAPH WITH KEY INSIGHTS ON HER CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS COMMUNITY PEACE BUILDING AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION IN THE FACE OF WORSENING HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES AND DEEPENING HUMANITARIAN CRISIS.

ABOUT BIHAPH/CREATION OF BIHAPH

- ▶ **The organization was created on the 14th of August 2010 bearing the name **Bihndumlem Humanitarian Association of “peace and hope” BHAPH AS A COMMUNITY INITIATIVE****
- ▶ **Our goal is to promote human dignity social justice through cultural revalorization**
- ▶ **We strive for a holistic and sustainable rural transformation:**
- ▶ THE MOTIVATION: THE DREAM AND DESIRE TO BE THE CHANGE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
- ▶ THE INSPIRATION: for a holistic and sustainable rural transformation. All founding members of **BIHAPH** finally resolved to form an organization which poor people would be supported and empowered to address challenges facing them.
- ▶ DEDICATION:**BIHAPH**'s activities in the formative years meant a lot of sacrifice on the part of the founders. Most of the initial activities were funded from founders' pockets, and once in a while, through friends and other contacts and donations, mostly in kind.
- ▶ PASSION:**MRS. MBEI BIBIANA DIGHAMBONG** for instance saved her stipend as she attended both national and international conferences to buy office equipment (computers) with time concerted fundraising attempts and aggressive networking through friends and acquaintances bringing in small donations. **BIHAPH** however, along the line, had several setbacks including material, financial and human setbacks.

ABOUT BIHAPH/CREATION OF BIHAPH

- ▶ Despite these initial setbacks, **BIHAPH**'s impact at community level remained impressive which in itself attracted other donors including the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP) UNHCR, SWISS EMBASSY YAOUNDE, CROSSROAD FOUNDATION HONGKONG, THE GOVERNMENT OF CAMEROON THROUGH THE PIB PROJECT, local churches and institutions.
- ▶ Seeing **BIHAPH**'s implementation performance at the community level, this had resulted in respect and confidence in **BIHAPH** project implementation capacity as contributing partnership in Driving change at community level.
- ▶ Utilization of available resources at community level has become not only a legacy but a strategy of expanding project coverage aspects that have been ingrained in **BIHAPH**'s Modus Operandi,
- ▶ Though Board members have remained active in directing all organizational activities. As years gave way, some Board members come and go making the task of sustaining the initial vision of **BIHAPH** alive. Through a lot of striving and determination, the BODs of **BIHAPH** have remained as **BIHAPH**'s touch bearers and finally, since 2011 a well constituted and capable board has been in place to direct **BIHAPH** into its future.

**BIG THANK YOU TO MY GRAND MUM THE
CONCEPTOR, MY MENTOR AND INSPIRATION
AN EPITOME OF HUMAN DIGNITY, HOPE AND
PEACE**



BIHAPH VISION

- ▶ An empowered community: free from wars and conflicts, poverty, hunger, disease and want, where all life can thrive. A world where no woman, girl or man lives in poverty, fear or oppression, where all have access to a decent standard of living and the opportunities and choices essential to a long healthy and creative life.

▣ BIHAPH MISSION STATEMENT

- ▶ Our mission is to uplift the living standards of the poor and disadvantaged communities affected by wars and conflicts in Cameroon and beyond through partnership, capacity building, and development programmes by empowering communities to respond more effectively to their needs

OUR CORE PASSIONS

- ▶ **CONFLICT PREVENTION**
- ▶ **HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**
- ▶ **LIVELIHOOD**
- ▶ **PEACEBUILDING**
- ▶ **TOWARDS HOLISTIC APPROACH AND SUSTAINABLE RURAL TRANSFORMATION.**

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND MOTIVATION: WHY FOCUS ON COMMUNITY MOBILISATION TOWARDS CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION AND PEACE BUILDING?

- ▶ A conflict analysis of the current situation in Cameroon reveals that the causes of the armed conflict is rooted in political, ideological, identity and colonial legacy from the top not from the bottom.
- ▶ The gruesome impact is felt at the bottom with devastating and alarming consequences on ordinary citizens.
- ▶ The villagers fleeing into the bushes to take up permanent residence, with some killed by reptiles of various forms as well as the invading military and separatist fighters.
- ▶ More than 200-260 villages and 15 hospitals. Several schools have been burnt down in the South West and North West Regions.
- ▶ More than 855000 children are out of school with an increased in armed robbery, high crime wave, prostitution and sexual exploitation and rape .
- ▶ Every day news of kidnapping and demand for ransom
- ▶ An estimated 7000 to 10000 people killed with several thousand wounded.
- ▶ Poverty on the rise

WHY FOCUS ON COMMUNITY MOBILISATION TOWARDS CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION AND PEACE BUILDING?

- ▶ BIHAPH'S notion of supporting bottom-up peacebuilding initiative at the grassroots is to address tensions that affect thousands of ordinary citizens who know nothing about what the conflict is all about.
- ▶ Individuals most affected by violence—and not outsiders—should figure out what it would take for them to feel safe and how they can achieve this goal.
- ▶ Rather than focusing on handshakes between presidents, abstract peace agreements, and negotiations between governments and rebel leaders, BIHAPH Believes in concrete, everyday actions that make a difference on the ground.
- ▶ Some of these are bizarre, some are creative, some involve time-tested traditions, and some are just good old-fashioned common sense. And most importantly, they promise a new peace in communities in Cameroon, all over the world OSHEI, IKILIWINDI, MAMFE, MUNDEMBA, WUM, IFANG—from Idjwi in Congo to Chicago in the United States.

WHY FOCUS ON COMMUNITY MOBILISATION TOWARDS CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION AND PEACE BUILDING?

- ▶ My story and inspiration is from my experience in RWANDA, I began to tire of addressing the consequences of violence, rather than the causes. All of the humanitarian aid workers present in war zones spent a tremendous amount of money, time, and energy doing incredibly important work. We responded to cholera epidemics, took care of orphans, provided health care to wounded people and rape survivors, gave temporary shelter to displaced populations, and made sure civilians caught in the crossfire would have clean water to drink and something to eat.
- ▶ In many places, aid workers are the only ones with the training and resources to save lives. But do not do anything to actually prevent entire populations from starving, children from being orphaned, women from being raped, and civilians from being displaced.
- ▶ Sadly many of these actions have only aggravated the situation on the ground.

WHY FOCUS ON COMMUNITY MOBILISATION TOWARDS CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION AND PEACE BUILDING?

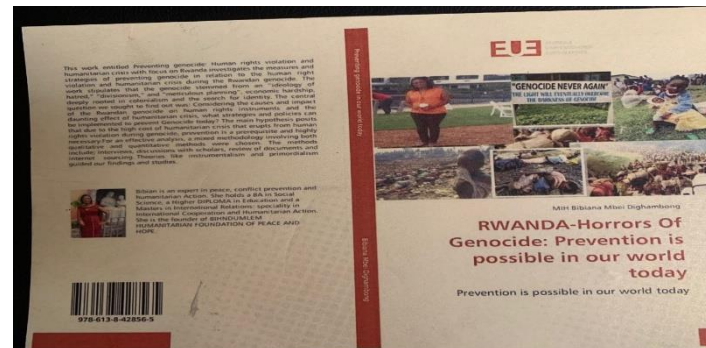
- ▶ Lederach refers to the bottom level as ‘a web of human relationships made up of individual people, their networks, organizations, and institutions around which social and community life is built.’ Grassroots have become a key element in social mobilization and bottom-up peacebuilding initiatives, also referred to as community-based peacebuilding.
- ▶ **‘Peacebuilding supports the development of relationships at all levels of society: between individuals and within families; communities; organizations; businesses; governments; and cultural, religious, economic, and political institutions and movements. Relationships are a form of power or social capital. When people connect and form relationships, they are more likely to cooperate together to constructively address conflict.’**

WHY FOCUS ON COMMUNITY MOBILISATION TOWARDS CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION AND PEACE BUILDING?

- ▶ FIVE YEARS IN AN ARMED CONFLICT WITH HORRIFYING CONSEQUENCES IS NOT SOMETHING TO LOOK AWAY AS A GRASSROOT VULNERABLE WOMAN LIVING THE REALITIES ON DAILY BASES. I SEE MYSELF EACH DAY MORE AS A CASUALTY AND A VICTIM.
- ▶ But when I talk about the hopeful cases that I've seen, people get very excited. They find inspiration in the experience of our work in poor rural communities. Our success stories may not be enough to yield lasting peace but we are extremely motivated to establish astonishingly peaceful societies in the midst of horrendous conflicts. They get motivated by the work of the Life of BIHAPH passionate peace crusaders, which has developed a revolutionary approach to grassroots, bottom-up peacebuilding.
- ▶ These stories give them hope and, for those who work or plan to work in COMMUNITIES, it finally provides them with the possibility for success they so badly need. Many peace actors are already putting these ideas of building peace at community level into practice, in all kinds of organizations and ministries, all around the world. But they need more support, and we need more individuals in our own communities.
- ▶ What follows is the story of what I've learned over the past 15 years regarding how best to end violence. It is the tale of the ordinary yet extraordinary individuals and communities who have found effective ways to combat wars, and build peace.

THE CEO OF BIHAPH DRAWING INSPIRATION FROM HER RESEARCH WORKS TO PUT KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE, HER HUMAN CENTRIC APPROACH TO PEACE BUILDING.

- ▶ AUTHOR OF A BOOK RWANDA-HORRORS OF GENOCIDE: PREVENTION IS POSSIBLE IN OUR WORLD TODAY.



- ▶ ATTENDED A FIVE WEEKS TRAINING COURSE : XXV REACT Expert Course - Rapid Expert Assistance and Cooperation Teams for Conflict Preventions, Crisis Management and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation, from t May 31st to July 2nd, 2021.
- ▶ THE YEARNINGS AND LONGINGS TO MITIGATE THE SUFFERINGS OF MAGINALISED PEOPLE AS A RESULT OF THE ARMED CONFLICT.

BIHAPH'S MODUS APARATUS: CHAMPION FOR COMMUNITY MOBILISATION TOWARDS CONFLICT PREVENTION AND PEACE BUILDING.

- ▶ Before the crisis BIHAPH was actively involve in **building a society where youth, women, men and the vulnerable are well informed to take responsibility for the contribution towards building healthy communities and adopt a healthy behavior.**



HUMANITARIANS WITHOUT BARRIERS OVERCOMING BARRIERS, ON THE MOVE TO SAVE LIVES: BIHAPH WILL TAKE ALL THE RISK T RESCUE ONE SOUL. AN ARMY FOR HUMANITY



BIHAPH KEY CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION AND PEACE BUILDING

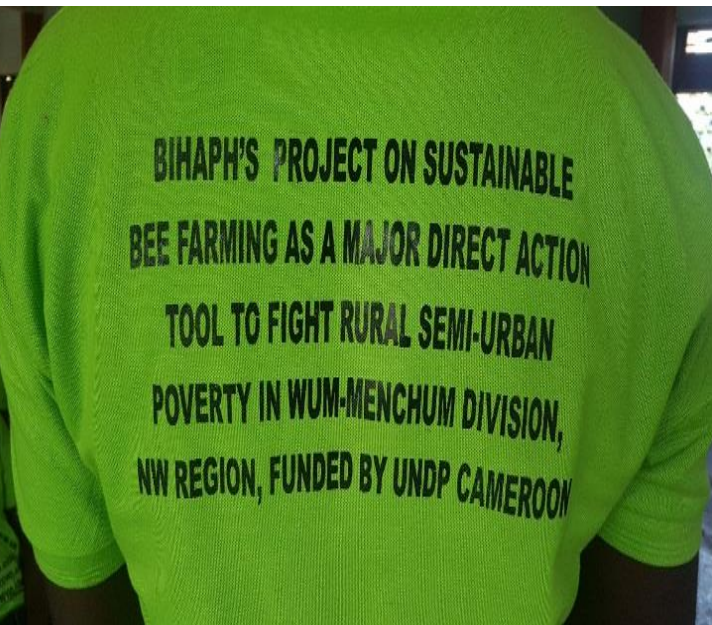
- ▶ In 2019, BIHAPH intervened in the Aghem-Mbororo crisis in Wum, assisted the survivors and mitigated for peace and reconciliation amongst the warring parties



In 2019, BIHAPH intervened in the Aghem-Mbororo crisis in Wum, assisted the survivors and mitigated for peace and reconciliation amongst the warring parties



BIHAPH Sustainable Bee Farming as a Major Direct Action Tool to fight Rural Semi Urban poverty in Wum Central Sub division funded by UNDP as part of the small grant for early recovery and social cohesion in the North West and South West Region



In February 2020 BIHAPH organized an Inter-Community Peace Dialogue in Wum during the Aghem-Mbororo insurgence. Through resilience, humanitarian assistance, peace speeches, forgiveness and reconciliation fragile peace reigned in Wum which needs to be sustained by all.



In September 2019, BIHAPH successfully trained 50 youths in ICT in partnership with the Public Investment Budget (PIB) and graduated them as Peace Ambassadors later in February 2020. These youths now serve as torch-bearers of peace in the community



YOUNG DYNAMIC PEACE AMBASSADORS SHINING LIGHTS IN OUR COMMUNITIES FOR PEACE



In March 2020, BIHAPH represented civil society on the **Ngarbuh massacre** independent investigation alongside Bishop of Kumbo George Nkou and Mr. Chemutah Divine Banda, President of the National Commission on Human rights and Freedom of blessed memory

- ▶ To investigate the massacre Since March 2020, BIHAPH is actively involved in the promotion of peace through dialogues with members of the said commission to prevent another Ngarbuh incident.

From 8-10th October BIHAPH organized a three-day training on community mobilization towards conflict prevention and transformation, crisis management, peace building, humanitarian assistance, trauma healing and rehabilitation: SHAPING PEACE TOGETHER. This training empowered 16 councilors across 13 different councils in community peace building at grass roots



BIHAPH is one of the few grassroots peacebuilding organization that has understood and mainstreamed an economic empowerment through income generating livelihood activities in her actions for social cohesion.

- ▶ BIHAPH brings together youths; men, girls and women in the community together to start a honey farm which enables them to meet regularly, dialogue and realize many other peacebuilding initiatives, stop the women from fleeing and rather amplify their voices against attacks and threats from both government and non-state armed forces. A good, peaceful, human-centric and nonviolent initiative to engage the communities to take responsibilities to prevent violence, mitigate human suffering and safe lives:



In July 2020, BIHAPH trained and empower 300 Grass-Roots women in Bafmeng, Fungom Sub-Division-Menchum on their role as women in building peace in their community in laundry-soap, bathing soap, and body lotion production for Economic Empowerment

The aim is to reduce the rate of Gender-Based-Violence where women are the most affected.

Also to rebuild livelihoods that have been destroyed by the conflict.

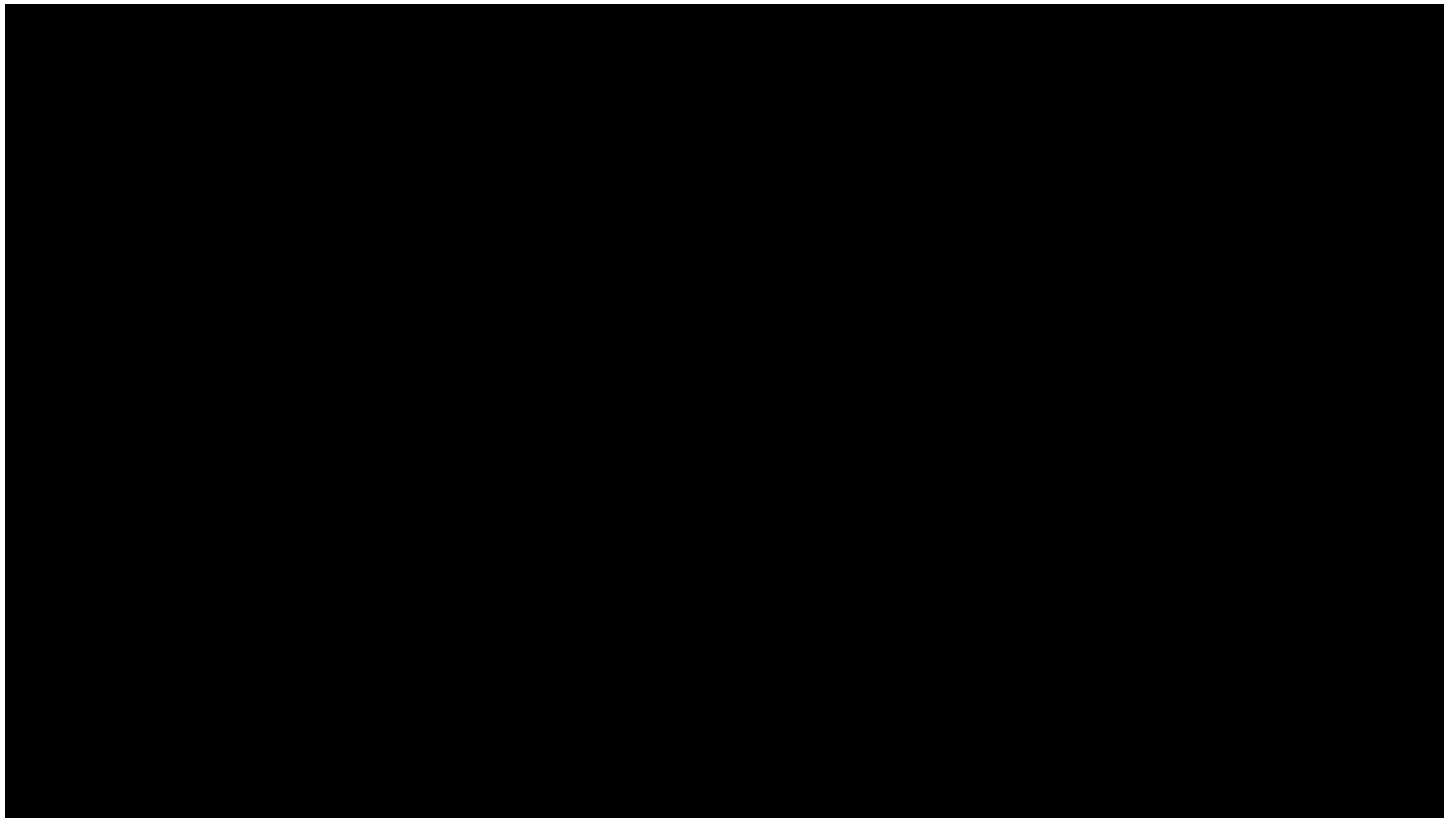


Almost on a daily basis, BIHAPH sends out peace building messages as a way of sensitizing the public through her social media handles. Through advocacy campaign.

- ▶ BIHAPH regularly publishes statements condemning every act of violence meted on human irrespective of their race, sex or affiliations. Through her sensitization campaigns, she is able to transform many lives and bring peace to those areas where possible.
- ▶ BIHAPH showed compassion and empathy by assisting in the burial of the seven children brutally killed at of the Mother Theresa's College Kumba on the

BIHAPH takes all the risk with her Dedicated and passionate team to build peace not from a distance or corridors of powers but on the ground in dangerous/ difficult circumstances especially in the most remote and disadvantaged communities where the conflict is raging.

A SHORT VIDEO ON BIHAPH'S INTERVENTION
AND RESPOND IN ONE OF THE HORRIFIC
HUMAN ATTROCITIES IN THE ANGLOPHONE
CRISIS



CONCLUSION

- ▶ Human needs, social inclusion and public participation are core elements that need to be addressed by the peacebuilding initiatives within local communities.
- ▶ I have been touched by the efforts and the role that communities are playing in processes of conflict transformation whilst being in the middle of crossfire. RWANDA EXAMPLE.
- ▶ Under these conditions communities are often threatened and/or coerced by the armed actors to help them and, in such way, gain control over territories the state is not able to. In spite of that, and also due to this situation, communities have organized starting to form the social capital needed to deal constructively with conflict.
- ▶ **‘Peacebuilding supports the development of relationships at all levels of society: between individuals and within families; communities; organizations; businesses; governments; and cultural, religious, economic, and political institutions and movements. Relationships are a form of power or social capital. When people connect and form relationships, they are more likely to cooperate together to constructively address conflict.’**

BIG THANK YOU TO THE DEDICATED? PASSIONATE AND COMMITTED TEAM OF BIHAPH

- ▶ SELF INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS AND FUNCTIONS
- ▶ BIG THANK YOU TO THE SWIZZ EMBASSY YAOUNDE WHO HAVE MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO BE HERE
- ▶ BIG THANK YOU TO OUR OUR PARTNERS, UNDP, UNHCR AND THE GOVERMENT OF CAMEROON. YOU MADE THIS JOURNEY AND DREAM A REALITY.
- ▶ **ENJOY YOUR STAY WITH US AND GOD BLESS YOU ALL AS WE CONTINUE TO WORK FOR PEACE.**