

# Poverty and Hope Appeal: Aug 2019 update from Burundi

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## Seeds of hope in Burundi

*Partnered with Christian Aid, supported by Poverty and Hope from 2019.*

This year Poverty and Hope has started a three-year journey supporting a Christian Aid project in Ngozi province in northern Burundi. Ngozi has the highest prevalence of malnutrition cases in Burundi, a country which itself has the highest level of food insecurity in the world.

The project is bringing increased food security to three vulnerable groups: young people, widows and the marginalised Batwa community. Through horticultural training and access to land and good seed, beneficiaries will grow nutritious vegetables which can be used to feed their families or sold at market.

Aline Bihoyiki is a member of the Batwa community. She is 41 years old and a mum of six children. She says “I have benefitted from this project a lot. We have been given skills in growing vegetables. We have benefitted as a family, we can eat well. We can sell our harvest. The money means we can save as a group. When one of my children gets sick I can get a loan and pay for medication. I can also afford books and stationery thanks to the savings and loans scheme”.



*Aline and her community are seeing the benefits of horticultural training*

In July the University of Ngozi jointly with Christian Aid Burundi organised an advocacy workshop to promote food security and nutrition for these vulnerable groups. The purpose was to raise their voices in order to be heard by the Government and other actors in the provinces and to promote the programme.

During the workshop, attended by over 8 agencies, leaders were given the opportunity to discuss candidly the state of the situation in the province and the need for a concerted effort to seek permanent and sustainable approaches to food security.

Philip Galgallo, Christian Aid Country Manager, in his presentation, appealed to all the actors in the provinces to take responsibility and act within their capacity to address the perennial problems in the province. The community was also challenged to speak out and act decisively on the issues facing them. The Government was challenged to ensure equitable distribution of the available resource and services, especially on land issues for the minority groups. Philip called on all stakeholders including government to work together to set up a clear strategy to tackle the issue of malnutrition in Ngozi.



*A beneficiary of the project addresses advocacy workshop delegates*

The Principal Advisor for the Governor of Ngozi, noted the marked changes he observed in the communities supported by the project, in their dressing and thinking. Representatives of the communities also spoke passionately about the challenges they face and the need for the Government and other stakeholders to review their development approach and focus.

As an outcome of the event, all stakeholders accepted to set up a food security coordination structure in Ngozi in August 2019 that will map out all organisations working in Ngozi and coordinate intervention.



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