In August 2017, the TURIKUMWE (We are Together) program brought together 17 young leaders from Rwanda, the United States, Malaysia, United Kingdom and Congolese refugee camp for an intensive two-week program exploring human rights, peace cultivation and genocide prevention, in a national and international context.

Turikumwe 2017 was implemented in partnership with Global Youth Connect and INARA Legal Aid Services (INALAS).

Our Young leaders met with various governmental and non-governmental organizations working on the human rights promotion, peace cultivation and mass atrocities prevention.
Meetings and Site Visits

The program schedule included exploring different notions about human rights, peace, and mass atrocities prevention through group discussions, workshops, site visits, and homestays.

- Kigali Hope
- Esperance
- Health Development Initiative (HDI)
- National Itorero Commission (NIC)
- Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
- Parliament of Rwanda
- Gihembe Refugee Camp
- Youth Council
- Embassy of the United States in Kigali
- MindLeaps
- EJO! Youth Echo

Gihembe Refugee Camp

Gihembe Refugee Camp, a camp that houses Congolese refugees, welcomed GYC Rwanda delegates. Delegates learned from the democratically elected Youth Council about how they serve residents in the camp, and how they seek to address resident concerns. Additionally, delegates were led on a brief tour by camp residents and sat to have a local meal before returning to Kigali.
Volunteering in Rwanda

For two days, participants had the valuable opportunity to volunteer at one of our local partner organizations tackling different human rights and peace cultivation issues in Rwanda, gaining hands-on skills and experience in working in the field. VSO service included volunteering at Kigali Hope, Esperance, MindLeaps and Inalas.

ESPERANCE

Esperance is a youth organization based in the suburbs of Kigali, Rwanda. They incorporate soccer (called Football Amaharo), theatre, and cinema education. The purpose of this organization is for social inclusion, conflict resolution, and updates on government charges and questions. Esperance is focused on helping the youth of the community, by providing them with a space to play and learn at the same time. It is a growing organization that hopes to continue to help the community.

INALAS

Delegates spent time volunteering at Inara Legal Aid Services (INALAS), an organization in Kigali that offers free legal advice to vulnerable populations.

MIND LEAPS

MindLeaps was founded by a GYC Alum. GYC Rwanda visited the NGO where they had a chance to interact with young people served by MindLeaps and also participated in a dance program. MindLeaps creates dance and educational programs for street children and out-of-school youth in post-conflict and developing countries.
Making GYC
Rwanda History

A historical milestone for the Turikumwe program was achieved, as it was the very first time that the delegates were able to visit the National Itorero Commission (NIC). The delegation was formally received by the chairman of NIC and three other NIC officials. Through the presentation, the delegates learned about Itorero as a crucial peacebuilding mechanism. Itorero sets in motion a promising process of unity and reconciliation by not only cultivating U bunyarwanda (Rwandan spirit) and other Intore (Rwandan) values, but also restore the dignity of all Rwandans through a common Rwandan identity. In the context of Itorero's historical and cultural origins, its reintroduction into Rwandan society really drove home the importance and effectiveness of revisiting culture and values to resolve conflicts. Most importantly, this message about peace could not be emphasized enough: peace is never an end, but a perpetually ongoing process across generations that is part of life itself.

Being a part of GYC has shown me the importance of bringing together people from all around the world to promote human rights from a different range of perspectives

- GYC RWANDA DELEGATE
A VISIT TO THE U.S. EMBASSY

"Our delegation had the privilege of paying a visit to the U.S. Embassy. We were greeted by a USAID representative and a diplomat, both of whom fielded our many questions for over an hour! They explained in detail their day-to-day activities, and what it is like working for the U.S. State Department. They also spoke about the work they do directly with the Rwandan Government, and how they support the country in its development endeavors. It was very interesting to see the differences between Rwandan government visits and our visit to the U.S. Embassy, a visit we will surely not forget."

- GYC Delegate Jess

PARLIAMENT OF RWANDA

One of our last visits during the summer 2017 program was to the Republic of Rwanda’s Parliament. This was the first time GYC delegates were invited to Parliament. Leading our meeting was the Chair for the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs. The delegates were presented with an overview of the structure and duties of Rwanda’s Parliament. Time was also allotted for the discussion focusing on human rights in Rwanda; how the country is moving forward from its past, allowing them to build a strong and thriving nation. GYC delegates were also given the opportunity to ask a variety of questions focusing on the Rwandan Constitution, the role of women in Rwanda’s government, and how the government fights political corruption. Delegates were also honored to enjoy coffee and tea with our hosts. This provided us the opportunity to personally meet representatives of this county.

"The reason why GYC has been so important to me is its has helped to instill a new sense of pride and purpose in my life. Just being around so many people who share the same passions and goals as myself has really helped to remind me what I can do moving forward with my life and my career."

- GYC DELEGATE
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