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Transcript of an Audio-Recorded Conversation in Post-Conflict Rwanda

Participants:

- Kantarama Peace
- Mukamana Marie Julie

Relation: mother

Relation: daughter

Facilitator: Mukangiruwonsenga Agnes

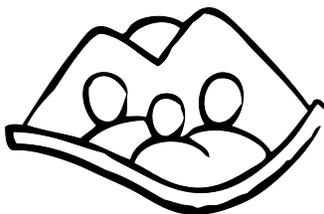
Date: 31/08/2009

Recording Location: Byumba

Story Number: SFH0100

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Kantarama Peace & Mukamana Marie Joie

Story Number: SFH0100

Joie: I am called Mukamana Marie Joie. I am a servant of God in this area. I am very glad to have you here, I am going to ask you all the questions about which I have been doubting!

Peace: My name is Kantarama Peace. I am a business lady. I am delighted too my child, I hope God will help me explain everything to you.

Joie: I heard that long ago, before a girl would get married, she would first consult her aunties for counseling. I want to know what this whole issue was about, what was the counseling for?

Peace: There are some things parents would fear telling their daughters, things concerning their bodies. The counseling was meant to teach them how to behave in their homes. It still happens even today, only we don't have to go to our aunties only. I am a member of a mother's union in church. We stand in the shoes of mothers and advise whoever comes our way! We advise them building on the Bible.

Joie: Are you sure that everything they could tell the girls would be helpful? You know what happened to our country, we no longer have those aunties. I wonder what we will do.

Peace: Children of those days were polite, they would respect whatever an old person would tell them. I remember they could tell us that whoever did not respect an auntie's word would be cursed. We followed that phenomena, we feared to be cursed. On the part of what happened to our country, I know we lost all these people, and that is why I gave you an example of the mother's union in our church. They also do what an aunt can do to help you be successful in your home.

A conversation between Kantarama Peace and Mukamana Marie Joie

Joie: I have a curious question. I know you're a member of a mother's union, and you have advised many girls. If I may ask you, did you go for any training or is this what you obtained from your parents? Is it necessary for everyone to first pass through that stage?

Peace: It is true I have helped many girls. I was brought up in a Christian family, and my mother was a member of a mother's union. When I got married I also joined them. It is very important to consult these old people because they have gone through all kinds of lives. I remember my mother used to tell us not to play with boys in hidden places, that a girl was always supposed to be humble and get home before 6:00 pm, along with many other things. So you see how we grew up in that culture.

Joie: There are so many resources where we can get information nowadays: televisions, the media, and all that. Do we still have to consult these people?

Peace: It is very true, but you have to be extra careful. Not all these resources give you true information... you have to filter out what is good for you.

Facilitator: How did you manage to be the type of person you are today?

Peace: I dedicate all that I have achieved to my parents, most especially my mother. She was a very hardworking woman, she would wake up very early and leave no one in bed. My dad used to tell us that if you don't work, you will not get food. They would encourage us that if they die, we would not fail to get someone to take care of us if we were hardworking. I look at this as a great inheritance!

Joie: That is good advice. What I have learned is that when a parent is hard working, her children learn from her! I have another question, again. I don't have any auntie, and my mother is very old, you know that. Now, what did you do to maintain your home stability up until now?

Peace: That is a wise question my daughter. You should be hard working, and avoid depending on a man every time. You should always strive together to raise your family quickly, if you are lazy you will discourage your partner and he will see you as some disabled person there so he will undermine you. You should be careful not to allow this to happen to you at all!

Joie: What is the secret behind all that?

Peace: The secret is in Proverbs 31:10. This scripture in the Bible describes all the qualities of a good woman: respect him and make sure to give him enough care, and check his clothes and get him something to eat before he leaves home. I do that

A conversation between Kantarama Peace and Mukamana Marie Joie

myself. It's not because I don't have maids, but it's a sign of respect I have for him! It also gives him the strength to trust me.

Joie: What could you do if you did all that but he still disappoints you?

Peace: You don't give up! You keep on trying until he gets attracted to what you do for him. As long as you do it in the name of love, you will become successful.

Joie: Thank you mum, I promise to put into practice whatever I have learned from you. I will always come to you for more advice, please don't get fed up if I do!

Peace: I will not, my daughter. I promise to be there whenever you need me. Thank you too for lending me your ear! May God guide you.

