

GRANT FUNDING PROPOSAL

Prepared for:
Youth Peace Talks Initiative

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June 2023

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SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSAL

The program "PROPEACE: Empowering Youth Leaders for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Engagement in the DRC" is a program developed with the idea of promoting resilience, awareness, participation and empowerment of young leaders to achieve sustainable peace and democratic engagement in the DRC. The program addresses ethnic tensions and resource-related conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), with a focus on this year's presidential elections and beyond. The objectives of the program are twofold: firstly, to promote stability during elections and, secondly, to establish a lasting legacy for lasting impact. By selecting and equipping 25 young leaders from various political backgrounds and regions of the country, PROPEACE aims to empower them as catalysts for peace.

Through inclusive dialogues, stakeholder collaboration and expert advice, PROPEACE enables these young leaders to effectively address challenges, ease tensions and drive positive change. The program enables them to acquire essential conflict resolution skills and strategies, thereby fostering an environment of peace and coexistence. PROPEACE envisions a transformed DRC, where empowered young leaders actively contribute to lasting peace and democratic engagement, transcending the current electoral cycle.

The program is expected to launch on August 14 for a period of two months. During this time, selected participants will participate in brainstorming sessions, expert-led workshops, retreats and discussions with election officials and key figures. They will then share lessons learned with their respective organizations, supported by media coverage provided by YPTI's media company, THE NEWSPAPER. AFRICA.

The cost of implementing the program is estimated at USD 48,359, covering participants' travel costs, accommodation, and all the logistics necessary for the success of the program.

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Youth Peace Talks Initiative (YPTI) is a US-based non-profit organization dedicated to promoting peace, stability, and social development in Africa. It was established in November 2022 in the state of Minnesota through insightful brainstorming sessions among the diaspora of young Africans, who sought ways to foster peace in their respective home countries. YPTI's mission is to create a just and peaceful Africa and, ultimately, a just and peaceful world.

As part of its peace building efforts, YPTI operates LE JOURNAL. AFRICA, a media company founded in 2017. Through LE JOURNAL. AFRICA, YPTI cultivates a sense of community among young Africans and provides access to free and unbiased information about their own communities and others nearby.

THE NEWSPAPER. Africa has collaborated with reputable organizations, including the U.S. Embassy in Burundi, IOM, UNICEF, and the United Nations Information Centre for Burundi. These partnerships have enabled YPTI to raise awareness of critical social issues through conferences, trainings and various sponsored and non-sponsored events.



YPTI strongly believes that the proposed program will advance its mission and strengthen the relationship between the United States and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Its dedicated team of people from diverse fields of expertise work together to defend a just and peaceful Africa.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) faces a daunting challenge when ethnic conflicts, provoked by divisive politicians, have a significant impact on the conduct of democratic elections. With more than 450 ethnic groups coexisting within its borders and more than 800 political parties operating in the country, the political landscape in the DRC is further complicated by the interaction between ethnic representation and the proliferation of political factions.

Credible sources and reports have highlighted the harmful effects of these ethnic conflicts and the multiplicity of political parties on the democratic electoral process in the DRC (source: International Crisis Group, United Nations, etc.). Politicians often manipulate ethnic tensions and align with specific ethnic groups to gain support, leading to a fragmented political landscape that hinders the formation of stable and inclusive governance.

To address this complex challenge, it is essential to equip young leaders with the skills and knowledge to navigate the intricacies of ethnic conflict and political dynamics. By equipping them with conflict resolution strategies, democratic values and inclusive dialogue techniques, they can become agents of change within their respective political groups and parties. Young leaders have the potential to overcome divisions and promote peaceful coexistence, fostering a more inclusive and accountable political system.

In addition, media coverage plays a central role in amplifying the impact of young leaders' efforts. By providing support and media coverage, we can improve the reach and influence of their message, enabling them to communicate effectively with their audience. This support ensures that the knowledge and values they acquire during the program are widely disseminated, reaching communities across the DRC.

Through media coverage and the active participation of young leaders, we aim to create a multiplier effect. By sharing their knowledge and values within their respective political groups and parties, these autonomous leaders contribute to a broader societal transformation. By fostering dialogue, understanding and the promotion of democratic principles, they can help overcome ethnic divisions and build a more united and inclusive nation.

This grant proposal aims to empower young leaders in the DRC, providing them with the skills, knowledge and media support needed to promote peaceful coexistence and democratic engagement. By leveraging their influence, we can foster a positive ripple effect that transcends ethnic divisions and contributes to fair, inclusive and peaceful elections in the DRC.



Based on credible sources and research, we will develop evidence-based approaches that will enable young leaders to share their knowledge and values within their respective political groups and parties. By leveraging media coverage, we aim to amplify their impact, ensuring that their messages of unity and democratic values reach a wider audience, thereby contributing to a stronger, more stable and truly representative democratic process in the DRC.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME

I. GOALS:

Goal 1: Strengthen the U.S.-Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Partnership

- Strengthen collaboration and understanding between the United States and the DRC in promoting peace, stability, and democratic values.
- Support the DRC's efforts to foster a strong, stable and peaceful society governed by leaders who represent all Congolese.

Goal 2: Empower young leaders to build lasting peace and democratic engagement in the DRC

- Equip young leaders with the skills, knowledge and resources to become catalysts for peace, conflict resolution and democratic engagement.
- Foster a sense of ownership and responsibility among young leaders to actively contribute to their communities and promote a culture of peace and coexistence.

II. OBJECTIVES:

Goal 1: Empower young leaders as agents of peace

- Select and train 25 youth leaders from diverse backgrounds, including representatives from youth leagues from political parties, civil society and the Ministry of Youth.
- Provide capacity building workshops, training sessions and mentorship programs to equip young leaders with conflict resolution skills, democratic values and peace-building strategies.

Objective 2: Promote inter-party cooperation and dialogue

- Create safe spaces and platforms for inclusive dialogues and discussions between young leaders from different political parties, encouraging cooperation and understanding across ethnic divides.
- Encourage collaborative projects and initiatives among young leaders to address common challenges and promote peacebuilding at the local level.

Goal 3: Strengthen democratic engagement and participation

- Improve understanding of democratic processes and principles among young leaders through educational programs, workshops and civic engagement activities.
- Encourage young leaders to actively participate in the democratic process, promote voter education and participate in peaceful political activities.

Objective 4: Disseminate knowledge and values

- To help young leaders share the knowledge, skills and values gained through the program within their respective organizations, political parties and communities.



- Use media coverage and online platforms to amplify the voices and messages of empowered young leaders, reach a wider audience, and promote the values of the peace, unity and democratic ideals agenda.

Objective 5: Measure program impact and sustainability

- Establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of the program in achieving its objectives.
- Continuously improve program implementation based on feedback and lessons learned, ensuring the long-term sustainability of initiatives led by empowered young leaders.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The following program activities were designed for PROPEACE: Empowering Youth Leaders for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Engagement in the DRC. These activities aim to resolve ethnic tensions, resource-related conflicts and political fragmentation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). By selecting and equipping 25 different youth leaders, the program aims to empower them as catalysts for peace, stability and democratic engagement within their communities and political spheres.

The program activities described below include a range of capacity-building workshops, inter-party dialogues, stakeholder engagement and knowledge-sharing initiatives. These activities are designed to promote dialogue, improve conflict resolution skills, foster cooperation between parties and encourage the dissemination of knowledge and values among participants. The program also focuses on monitoring, evaluation, and reflection to ensure the effectiveness and continuous improvement of activities.

Through these activities, the program aims to create an enabling environment for young leaders to develop the skills, knowledge and networks needed to promote sustainable peace and democratic values in the DRC. Activities are structured to empower young leaders as agents of change, enabling them to drive positive transformation in their communities and contribute to a stronger U.S.-DRC partnership in promoting peace, stability, and democratic governance.

I. SELECTION AND ORIENTATION:

- Develop selection criteria and guidelines to identify 25 young leaders from various political backgrounds and regions of the DRC.
- Conduct an application and interview process to select participants.
- Provide an orientation session to introduce the program, its objectives and expectations to selected youth leaders.

II. CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS:

- Organize workshops led by subject matter experts on conflict resolution, peacebuilding and democratic engagement.
- Cover topics such as facilitating dialogue, mediation techniques, promoting inclusion and understanding democratic processes.

- Provide interactive sessions and practical exercises to enhance participants' skills and knowledge.

III. INTER-PARTY DIALOGUES:

- Create safe spaces for young leaders from different political parties to engage in constructive dialogues and exchange views.
- Facilitate discussions on the role of young leaders in promoting peace, democratic engagement and resolving ethnic tensions.
- Encourage inter-party cooperation and collaboration and the search for common ground to foster a peaceful and inclusive political environment.

IV. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:

- Organize sessions that bring together influential stakeholders, including representatives of political parties, civil society leaders, and delegates from the Ministry of Youth.
- Foster dialogue between young leaders and these stakeholders to explore avenues of collaboration and shared responsibility in promoting peace and democratic values.
- Encourage networking and knowledge sharing among participants and stakeholders to leverage collective efforts.

V. KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND DISSEMINATION:

- Provide platforms for young leaders to share their learnings and experiences within their respective organizations, political parties and communities.
- Encourage participants to develop action plans and initiatives that promote peacebuilding and democratic engagement.
- Support the dissemination of these initiatives through media coverage, including through LE JOURNAL. AFRICA, to reach a wider audience and inspire increased engagement.

VI. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REFLECTION:

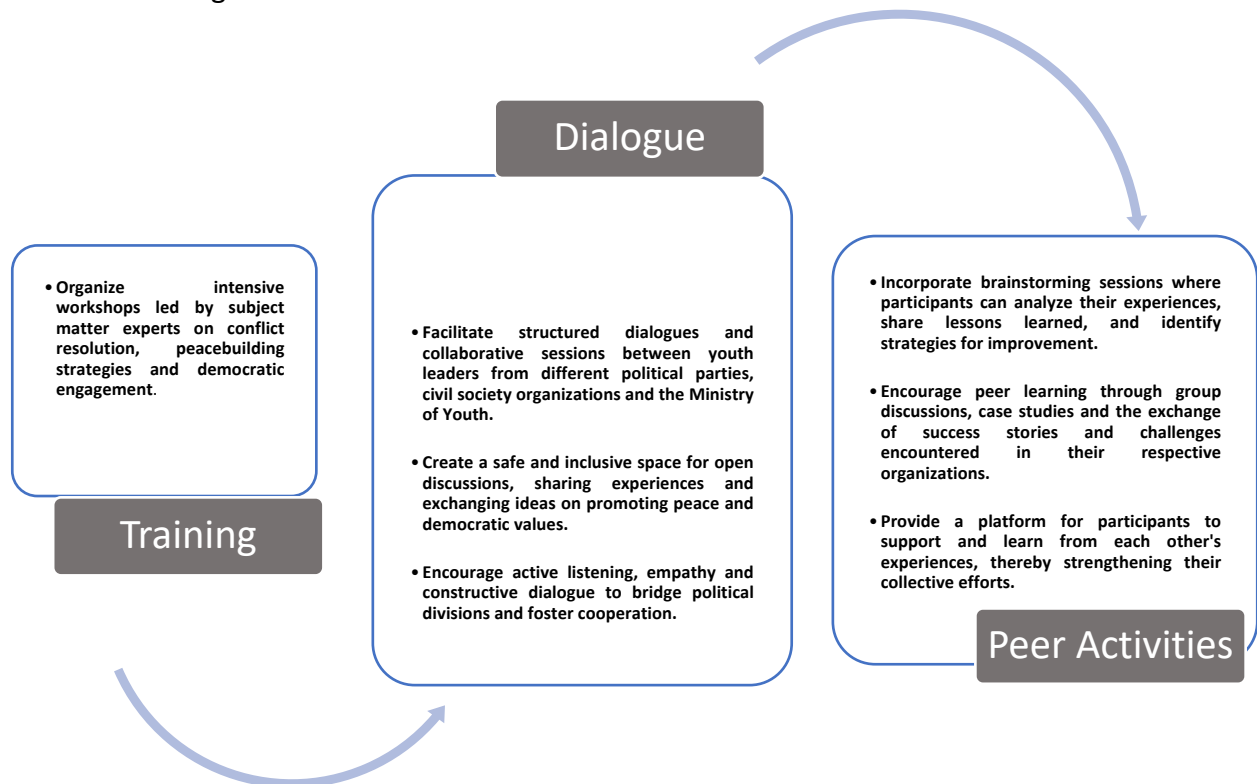
- Establish a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the progress and impact of the program.
- Conduct regular evaluations and feedback sessions to gather the views of participants and stakeholders for continuous improvement.
- Facilitate retreats for young leaders to reflect on their personal growth, program outcomes, and future engagement opportunities.

VII. FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES AND SUSTAINABILITY:

- Facilitate the development of follow-up activities and projects by youth leaders to continue their peacebuilding and democratic engagement efforts.
- Provide mentorship, advice and resources to support the implementation of these initiatives.
- Foster networking and collaboration among young leaders to maintain their collective impact beyond the duration of the program.

YPTI APPROACH AND PROGRAM DESIGN

YPTI's approach has been adapted to align with the objectives and scope of PROPEACE: Empowering Youth Leaders for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Engagement in the DRC. This approach aims to equip young leaders with the skills, knowledge and networks to become catalysts for positive change in their communities and contribute to sustainable peace and democratic values in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This is a 4-pillar approach, as shown in the diagram below:



PROGRAMME PLANNED RESULTS

| Main activity of the result | Result indicator | Result Target | Means of verification |
|--|--|---------------|---|
| Selection and guidance of young people | Number of youth identified | 25 | List of identified youth |
| | Number of youth attending the orientation session | 25 | List of participants, Report of the session |
| Capacity-building | Number of youth workshops held | 1 | Report of the workshop |
| | % of young people trained who are able to make restitution to other young people | 85% | Report of the interactive sessions |
| Dialogues between political parties | % of participating parties committed to dialogue for positive change | 70% | Commitment sheet |
| | % of young people who understand their role in promoting peace, engaging and resolving ethnic tensions | 98% | Testimonials |
| | Number of networks created between parties | 1 | Report |
| | Number of action plans developed by youth for peacebuilding and democratic engagement | 25 | Action plans |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---------|-----------------------------------|
| Knowledge sharing and dissemination | Number of youth initiatives that benefit from Le Journal.Africa's media coverage | 25 | Article, Photos, Publication link |
| | Number of people reached by the publication of youth actions | 200.000 | Link to publications, statistics |
| Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning | Number of sessions held with youth for follow-up and continuous improvement | 3 | Report |

SCHEDULE OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The proposed schedule spans approximately 11 weeks, from the scheduled start date of August 14 to October 15.

Phase 1: Preparedness and Capacity Building

| Activity/Task | Start date | End date | Responsibility |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Program Arrival and Orientation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants from other regions arrive in Kinshasa - Welcome session, networking and introduction to the program - Overview of program objectives, expectations and timeline | 08/14 3:00 pm | 08/24 10:00 p.m. | Armel Derere |
| Conflict resolution and peacebuilding skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity-building workshop on conflict resolution techniques - Introduction to peacebuilding strategies and practices - Interactive sessions and group exercises to improve skills | 08/15 8:30 a.m. | 08/15 4:30 p.m. | Expert-led |
| Democratic engagement and leadership development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshop on Principles and Practices of Democratic Engagement - Leadership Development Activities and Exercises - Discussions on the role of youth workers in promoting democratic values | 08/16 8:30 a.m. | 08/16 4:30 p.m. | Expert-led |
| Inter-party dialogues and collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitated dialogues between young leaders of different political parties - Discussions on bridging political divides and promoting cooperation - Group exercises to improve understanding and collaboration | 08/17 8:30 a.m. | 08/17 4:30 p.m. | Expert-led |
| Reflection and action plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brainstorming session on the week's learnings and experiences | 08/18 8:30 a.m. | 08/18 3:00 pm | Expert-led; Armel Derere |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of action plans for follow-up activities - Closing session and preparation for the next phase | | | |
|--|--|--|--|

Phase 2: Knowledge Translation and Sharing

| Activity/Task | Start date | End date | Responsibility |
|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Knowledge sharing and planning of media coverage measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of scheduling and media coverage | 08/21 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. | 08/22 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. | Prosper Aobe |
| Knowledge sharing sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Young leaders facilitate knowledge-sharing sessions with their respective groups - Sharing strategies, skills and ideas gained from Phase 1 workshops - Interactive discussions, case studies and practical exercises - Media coverage provided by LE JOURNAL. AFRICA, YPTI's media company - Documentation of knowledge sharing sessions through interviews and video recordings - Dissemination of content through various media platforms | 09/04 8:30 a.m. | 09/28 4:30 p.m. | Young leaders Prosper Aobe Armel Derere |

Phase 3: Evaluation and follow-up activities

| Activity/Task | Start date | End date | Responsibility |
|---|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Arrival of participants and orientation of the program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants from different regions arrive in Kinshasa - Welcome session and reorientation towards program objectives and schedule - Opportunity for participants to settle in and reconnect with each other | 10/02 2:00 pm | 10/02 10:00 p.m. | Armel Derere |
| Program Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation session to assess the impact and effectiveness of the program - Gathering feedback on strengths and areas for improvement - Reflection on individual and collective experiences during the program | 10/03 8:30 a.m. | 10/03 4:30 p.m. | Expert-led |

| | | | |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| <p>Planning follow-up activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brainstorming and follow-up planning session with participating organizations - Identification of potential projects, initiatives or campaigns to promote peace and democratic engagement - Development of action plans, timelines and resource requirements | <p>10/04 8:30 a.m.</p> | <p>10/04 4:30 p.m.</p> | <p>Expert-led</p> |
| <p>Conclusion and celebration of the program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closing ceremony and celebration of participants' achievements - Recognition of their commitment and contributions to peacebuilding efforts - Final reflections, gratitude and farewell | <p>10/05 8:30 a.m.</p> | <p>10/05 4:30 p.m.</p> | <p>Expert-led</p> |

KEY PERSONNEL

I. PROGRAM MANAGER: GRATIEN ASIMBAHWE

- Founder of LE JOURNAL. AFRICA and co-founder of YPTI, dedicated to supporting African youth.
- Brings 9 years of combined experience in technical and management fields.
- Extensive experience working with companies in Africa and the United States, including Afra Airways, Afriregister, Bleachr, JP Morgan Chase, Infosys, Citizens Bank Group and media companies.
- Mastery of the Agile methodology, effective communication with technical and non-technical stakeholders.
- Certified Professional in Corporate Finance from Columbia University, currently pursuing a MicroMasters in International Law at the Catholic University of Louvain.

As Program Manager, Gratien Asimbahwe will provide strategic leadership and oversight of program management. Through its technical and management expertise, it will ensure the effective implementation of program activities, coordination with key stakeholders, and adherence to program goals and objectives. His dedication to supporting African youth and his experience in various fields make him a valuable asset in ensuring the success of the program.

II. PROGRAM COORDINATOR: ARMEL DERERE

- A seasoned professional with over 15 years of experience in media and communications, as well as programming.
- Extensive experience serving media companies, including Habari DRC and Yaga Burundi.
- Youth entrepreneurship coach, providing advice and support to young aspiring entrepreneurs.
- Mastery of program coordination, logistics management and stakeholder engagement.



- Strong organizational and communication skills, ensuring the smooth running of program operations.

Armel Derere, the program coordinator, brings a wealth of expertise to the program. With over 15 years of professional experience in media, communications and programming, he has worked with various organizations and companies, including Habari DRC and Yaga Burundi. Armel's skills in program coordination, logistics management and stakeholder engagement will play a crucial role in ensuring the successful delivery of program activities. In addition, her dedication as a youth entrepreneurship coach demonstrates her commitment to empowering youth and fostering their leadership skills. Armel's diverse skills and unwavering dedication will contribute significantly to the success of the program, supporting the program manager and fostering effective coordination among all stakeholders involved.

III. MEDIA COVERAGE COORDINATOR: PROSPER AOBÉ

- Regional Director of LE JOURNAL. AFRICA with more than 8 years of professional experience in media and communication.
- Expertise in planning and executing media coverage strategies for various events and initiatives.
- Successful coordination of media coverage for LE JOURNAL. AFRICA since 2019.
- Extensive experience covering major events, including the presidential elections in Burundi in 2020 and collaborations with the US Embassy in Bujumbura, IOM, UNICEF and other major institutions.
- Mastery of media team coordination, media relations management and effective coverage.

Prosper Aobe, as Media Coverage Coordinator, brings extensive media and communications experience to the program. With his successful experience in coordinating media coverage events for LE JOURNAL. AFRICA and his involvement in covering important events, he has a deep understanding of media dynamics and strategies. Prosper's expertise will be instrumental in developing and implementing a comprehensive media coverage plan for the program, leveraging his network and experience to ensure impactful and extensive media exposure. Her knowledge and skills will contribute to the visibility of the program, reaching a wide audience and amplifying the message of empowering young leaders for sustainable peace and democratic engagement in the DRC.

KEY PARTNERS

YPTI will work closely with CPAS for conference rooms and equipment and LE JOURNAL. AFRICA for media coverage.

PROGRAMME MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The program will use a rigorous monitoring and evaluation framework to assess its progress, effectiveness, and impact. The following evaluation methods and performance indicators will be used:

I. EVALUATION METHODS :

1. **Before and After Surveys:** Participants will complete pre- and post-program surveys to assess changes in their knowledge, skills and attitudes related to conflict resolution, peacebuilding and democratic engagement.
2. **Panel discussions:** Facilitated group discussions will be conducted with participants to gather qualitative information about their experiences, lessons learned and the impact of the program on their leadership capacities and peacebuilding efforts.
3. **Stakeholder interviews:** Key stakeholders, including representatives of political parties, civil society organizations and the Ministry of Youth, will be interviewed to understand their views on the program's contribution to peaceful elections and youth empowerment.
4. **Document Review:** Program documents, including session plans, participant reflections and action plans developed by youth leaders, will be reviewed to assess fidelity of implementation, program quality and outcomes.

FUTURE FINANCING AND SUSTAINABILITY

Ensuring the future funding and sustainability of PROPEACE: Empowering Youth Leaders for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Engagement in the DRC is crucial to its long-term impact. We have developed a comprehensive strategy to secure ongoing support and establish a sustainable framework:

- **Resource diversification:** We will actively seek funding from a variety of sources, including government grants, international organizations, foundations, and corporate sponsors, thereby reducing reliance on a single funding stream.
- **Strategic partnerships:** We will forge partnerships with local and international organizations, fostering collaboration, resource sharing, and potential funding opportunities for joint initiatives, thereby enhancing sustainability.
- **Capacity building:** By building the capacity of local stakeholders and organizations, we empower them to support similar initiatives, creating a network of qualified individuals and institutions engaged in peacebuilding and democratic engagement.
- **Advocacy and awareness-raising:** Through targeted advocacy efforts, we will raise awareness of the program's impact, its successes, and the importance of youth leadership in promoting sustainable peace. This will attract support and funding from stakeholders who share our vision.

- **Monitoring and evaluation:** Our robust monitoring and evaluation framework will provide evidence of the effectiveness and impact of the program, enhancing its value to potential funders and stakeholders and thereby increasing future funding prospects.
- **Local ownership:** We will actively engage local communities, organizations and stakeholders in program design and decision-making, ensuring that the program aligns with local needs, values and aspirations and thereby enhances its sustainability.
- **Knowledge sharing:** Documenting best practices, lessons learned, and successes will allow us to share our ideas with the broader peacebuilding and youth empowerment community, positioning the program as a model for sustainable initiatives.

By implementing these strategies, we are establishing a solid foundation for ongoing funding and sustainability. The program will continue to empower young leaders, fostering sustainable peace and democratic engagement in the DRC long after the initial grant period.

DESCRIPTION OF BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

- **Participants' travel:** The allocated budget of \$12,000 for participants' travel covers round-trip transportation costs for 10 people traveling from different provinces to Kinshasa. This amount allows for two trips, one for Phase 1 and one for Phase 3, with an estimated cost of \$600 per person per flight.
- **Travel of the Media Coverage Coordinator:** The budget includes \$759 for the travel of the Media Coverage Coordinator from Bujumbura to Kinshasa. This covers transportation costs for the coordinator to participate in and support the program.
- **Hotel expenses:** A total of \$4,950 is allocated for accommodation costs for 11 people during the program. This covers 9 nights of stay, with an average rate of \$50 per night per person. Accommodation ensures a comfortable and safe environment for participants and the media coverage coordinator.
- **Catering:** The budget includes \$6,300 for meals during the program. This amount covers the provision of meals to 35 people, including 25 participants and 10 other staff, for a total of 9 days. The estimated cost is based on a daily rate of \$20 per person.
- **Supplies (Cameras, laptops and printer, Internet, notepads, papers, pens):** The budget allocates \$7,050 for the purchase of supplies. This includes \$3,200 for two DSLR cameras, \$2,400 for two laptops, and \$700 for one printer, \$750 is allocated for Internet connectivity and stationery supplies. These purchases will support program activities and ensure high-quality documentation and media coverage. They also cover the cost of Internet access during the program and provides the necessary stationery such as notepads, papers and pens for use by participants and for documentation purposes.



- **Conference room:** The budget allocates \$4,500 for the rental of a conference room for 9 days, at a rate of \$500 per day. This cost includes the use of a public address system and a main projector for conference sessions.

- **Compensation:** The total compensation budget is \$12,800, which includes payments for various staff members participating in the program. This includes a fixed salary of \$1,000 for the full-time dedicated program coordinator, \$700 for the media coverage coordinator, \$1,200 for two photographers/videographers covering the 9-day program, \$1,800 for three journalists, \$2,000 for other support staff, and \$5000 for per diems for the 25 participants (\$200 per person). In addition, \$1,000 is allocated for transportation costs for other media journalists covering events in the provinces.

The total budget for the program, including all expenditures mentioned, is **\$48,359**, ensuring the successful implementation of the program.