

**Knowledge network  
Dutch Consortium for Rehabilitation  
Research brief #13**

**Analysis of the  
connectors and  
Pamoja's influence on  
the connectors  
(Lubero, DR Congo)**

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village bell. As the results of opposition to another CARE program have shown, religious leaders, who are held in high regard by the communities, represent a key element in the general acceptance of the projects. They could represent a good opportunity for the DCR to spread its message.

**Lesson 3: Registration of new-born babies with the Civil Registrar can reduce the occurrence of conflicts relating to heritage**

When a child who is not registered at local government level, comes to claim his/her inheritance, conflicts can arise among the rest of the family members. If the child had been registered, the number of these conflicts could be reduced. However, parents often do not know that the registration is free during the first months of the child’s life. One way to facilitate registration of the children, which has been proposed by the communities, would be to have the religious leaders require a registration certificate, as well as a birth certificate, at the time of baptism.

**Lesson 4: Local Peace Committees (LPC) are sometimes perceived as having insufficient authority**

The LPCs represent genuine connectors for the communities targeted for this research. However, their power is sometimes perceived as being too limited. They are, in fact, among the external mediators to whom the villagers turn in the event of conflict, but they are not among the most popular. People prefer to go to the chiefs of the ten houses and the capitas; and before appealing to the LPCs they go to their neighbors, religious leaders, police and area chiefs. In some villages, those interviewed have specifically reported cases of persecution by the national judicial authorities of the capitas who have gone to the LPCs.

**Lesson 5: Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) simultaneously represent connectors and dividers**

Almost all of those interviewed agree that the VSLAs have some beneficial aspects. They are genuine connectors who foster economic and social development and, therefore, peace. At the same time, these associations can cause conflicts in the home, between husband and wife, when the wife participates in the activity without the consent of her husband, or when she refuses to leave the management of money she has earned in the hands of her husband. In particular, some men are opposed to women’s participation in these associations because they believe them to be places of prostitution. Another source of conflict regarding the VSLAs arises when a member does not repay a loan or even embezzles funds.



**Recommendation 3:**

Inform and educate the communities about the advantages of registration; think of ways to require a registration certificate, not just a birth certificate, at the time of baptism.



**Recommendation 4:**

Examine the reasons why the people often do not have recourse to the LPC’s for help on settling conflicts; advocate with the national judicial authorities so they will accept an organization which can help them, not re-place them, in the implementation of judicial matters.

**Recommendation 5:**

Continue to provide information about the purpose of the VSLA’s and their benefits for the household economy and for the entire community; think of ways to try and limit the non-repayment of loans.

### ***Lesson 6: The function of the judicial authorities is often perceived as corrupt***

In a poverty situation, as exists in North Kivu, competition for resources is very stiff and can result in extremely bitter conflicts. According to some witnesses, the national judicial authorities profit from these situations when the parties present themselves to resolve the conflict. The judicial authorities allow those who give them the most money to prevail. As a result, justice is not served, and sometimes those who have not asserted their rights resort to a violent “popular” justice, which provokes a cycle of reciprocal violence and vengeance which ends very badly.

### ***Lesson 7: The attitude of the communities toward the DCR is sometimes negative***

In some villages located in the zones which are most exposed to the prevalence and attacks of armed groups, certain communities fear that the DCR is among the organizations which have connections to the rebels, and therefore the DCR may deceive the communities about the soundness of the project and its benefits for the people. This perception could affect the communities’ acceptance of the organization and the project’s success. Moreover, it is noted that in the zones which do welcome many NGOs, a wait-and-see attitude is very much ingrained in the communities. They have a tendency to live on the goods distributed by the NGOs and to remain passive while waiting for them, which goes against the spirit of Pamoja. The risk is that the communities may prefer to wait for distributions from other NGOs rather than participate in Pamoja’s activities, whose goal is sustained development.

### **Implications of the results of the research for the implementation of the DCR program**

*This section is written by the advocacy officer for the DCR*

As cited above lesson number one has already been the subject of a report and has become a matter of advocacy, in an effort to remove obstacles to farmers from having access to land in the Lubero Territory. Outreach activities have been implemented and they must continue in order to induce the residents to draw up contracts for the lease of land. With respect to this lesson, ZOA plans to produce more sample copies of the written land farm-out contract, which the organization has been disseminating since 2014. Nevertheless, by way of experience, this lesson remains valuable and can be integrated into the advocacy plea. Those recommendations

### ***Recommendation 6:***

Advocate with the judicial authorities to carry out their work in a manner that would be free of any hint of corruption.

### ***Recommendation 7:***

Continue to provide information in a reasonable fashion about the activities and soundness of the project in those villages which are located in less-secured zones, where the people are particularly distrustful, explaining the objectives and emphasizing the community approach of the program.

### ***Recommendation 8:***

Heighten awareness about the message and spirit of Pamoja; look for ways to collaborate and share efforts with other NGO’s who carry on intervention activities in the same zone, so that any advancements obtained through the activities of one organization will not offset those of another organization.

whose goal it is to heighten awareness in order to better inform the community will be taken into account in formulating an exit strategy in the context of communication, by initiating radio transmissions and field visits for the purpose of informal exchanges with the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries in the communities. With respect to lesson 5, insolvency and embezzlement of funds, CARE is implementing outreach measures which aim to limit the incidence of these occurrences. For example, loan provision by means of payment relief in exchange for pledge of specific collateral when repayment becomes problematic. With respect to lesson 7, ZOA plans to stop giving more agro-veterinarian products to the communities free of charge. In 2015, each village will receive a kit including these products and will manage it with the support of veterinary assistants and the AGRIPEL, which will entail direct community involvement and will counter this wait-and-see attitude.