

"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" - (Jesaja 12:3)

Iriba Shalom International e. V.

NEWSLETTER #26

Christmas 2025

Warm christmas greetings!



"When the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared, he saved us not by works of righteousness that we have done but on the basis of his mercy, through the gift of his grace" (Titus 3:4f)

God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. (2 Cor. 5:19)

Christmas was not a sentimental event, but led to Good Friday and Easter, because it was and is about our salvation. God's love for humanity is revealed in the manger and on the cross. Only through this are we reconciled with God. Only through this are we then able to reconcile ourselves, even with enemies and murderers of our loved ones.

We heard this again this year, shaken, when Drocella, the director of Shalom Ministries, told us on her trip in Germany how she became a bearer of hope and a peacemaker through the grace of God.

Or when we recently learned that the widows in Mukoma had pooled their money for the funeral of one of their children's murderers! Inconceivable, but true and real through God's reconciling love for humanity and the effective 'word of reconciliation'! In this spirit, we wish you a joyful and reconciled Christmas!

Your team of *Iriba Shalom International e. V.*

Murakoze cyane! - thank you very much!
Umwaka mushya Muhire 2026 - happy new year 2026

For you, your loved ones and for all nations:

It is simply a great joy to celebrate Christmas in community—within the family, with friends, or at the Christmas market with colleagues. The atmosphere, illuminated by the Christmas star lights, is always especially beautiful. On Christmas Eve, before or after dinner, everyone eagerly awaits the giving of gifts. The birthday of the Child Jesus brings us the great joy of sharing. Father Joseph and Mother Mary also rejoiced in their wonderful gift, and the Wise Men brought their offerings to the Child. You too can share your Christmas joy with traumatized widows, orphans, children in need, and young people in Rwanda by enabling us, through a donation, to send gifts to our partner associations in Rwanda, which they can share together in community and thus celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Share the light of love with a donation, using the reference: **Christmas celebration.**





Christian healing ministry

A path to inner healing, renewed dignity, forgiveness, and reconciliation

Is there any greater gift than healing and peace of the soul? Hardly. That is why trauma pastoral care is a central part of our ministry, as many survivors continue to suffer from the severe consequences of traumatic experiences. In particular, the widows of Mukoma in southwestern Rwanda still bear the cruel burden of the genocide against the Tutsi to this day: murdered family members, destroyed dignity, rape, and the loss of their children. Many struggle with nightmares, sleep disorders, and chronic illnesses; the younger generation is also affected by transgenerational trauma. Especially during the period of remembrance, we offer workshops and seminars, with our partners working through an effective, community-oriented approach.

“Because of my trauma, I was called a ‘mad widow,’” reports Theresie (a genocide survivor and widow). “Only our community, Iriba Shalom Rwanda, gave me peace.” Since August 2001, the women in Mukoma have supported one another—praying, sharing God’s Word, singing, dancing, and telling each other their stories. Despite the suffering they have endured, they strive to live in peace with their former enemies and even open their doors to their enemies’ children. “This is how we dismantle hatred,” Theresie says with a smile. “One day we will experience eternity with Jesus and our murdered loved ones.”

To continue the annual trainings for inner healing, we ask for your support. Every contribution restores dignity to the survivors.

Purpose: **Trauma consulting** – Need for 2026: approx. €8,000.

Our Senior Center in Mukoma

A place of dignity for the elders of Mukoma

From the many years of trauma work in Mukoma, an important place came into being exactly one year ago: a safe home for the oldest and most heavily burdened surviving widows. Since December 2024, 16 senior women—each deeply marked by the genocide against the Tutsi—have been living in the new retirement home of Iriba Shalom Rwanda in Mukoma. The oldest resident celebrated her 100th birthday this year—a testimony to the strength and will to live of these women.

Many of them have endured unimaginable suffering. Like Martha, whose five sons and one daughter were murdered. For decades she lived alone, sick, and wounded in body and soul. Today, for the first time, she feels safe again.



The staff team cares for the senior women with great compassion, respect, and love. Thus, exhausted and hopeless faces have been transformed into shining eyes full of peace and joy. The women say, “We will no longer die in sorrow.” To ensure that this place of safety can continue to exist, we depend on support. To cover the costs of the kitchen, security, garden maintenance, cleaning, administration, and home management, the retirement home requires €1,500 per month. Every gift—€25, €50, €100, or any other amount—brings light, hope, and dignity into the lives of these women. Every monthly or one-time donation makes a decisive difference—please use the reference: **“Senior Center.”**

Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education

A small donation can give the gift of a great future

Alongside mental and physical health, education is also a great gift that we can give to our friends in Rwanda. Many poor young Rwandan men and women cannot afford to pursue higher education unless they receive a scholarship. Tuition fees are generally very high (from €600 up to €2,000 per year). We are looking for sponsors who will support young people throughout the duration of their studies, thus giving them a strong perspective for a good future. In addition, many children and young people receive school fees, school supplies, and a school uniform through our organization—currently around 1,000 primary and secondary school students are being supported. Please use the reference **“Education”** with your donation and give the gift of a future.



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