

I chose a profession !

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Sadi Wacawasem

Sadi Wacawasem is a demobilized ex-combatant who fought with the CNDD-FDD Movement (*Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie-Forces pour la défense de la démocratie*) for more than seven years. Today he is 26 years old and determined to return to a peaceful life.

When he left the demobilization center, Sadi returned to his parents in Makamba in the South of Burundi. With the transition allowances he received through the National Program for Demobilization, Reinsertion

and Reintegration, which is supported by the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP), he first decided to try his hand at business and opened a small store.

But Sadi soon decided that he was not made to be a businessman – after just two months his shelves were bare and he had no means to re-stock them. At that point, he chose to learn a profession instead.

A few days later, the young man approached the local mechanic and asked whether he could teach him to repair vehicles. The mechanic agreed, on the condition that Sadi pay him 200,000 Burundian francs (US \$ 200). Determined to learn auto mechanics, Sadi agreed and

paid the required charge, selling what few possessions he had left.



Mr. Wacawasem repairs a vehicle

He apprenticed under the mechanic for one year, working hard. When his apprenticeship was complete, he signed up with a non-governmental organization in Makamba that was offering automobile mechanic training to demobilized individuals. Under this program, Sadi was able to perfect his newly-acquired skills and six months later received a kit of tools to get him started in his new profession.

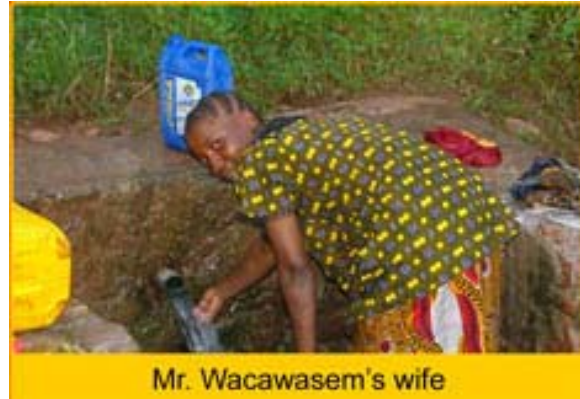


The Wacawasem's house

News & Noteworthy

Sadi proudly opened his own garage next to the Makamba market and has since established himself as one of the main mechanics in this town bordering on Tanzania. Every morning transport vehicles line up at his garage waiting for service.

With the money he has earned, Sadi has been able to restore and move into a house left to him by his grand-mother, where he now lives happily with his wife, Chantal.



Asked what advice he would give to other young demobilized people like himself, he answers that he would tell them not to go into business assuming that it will be an easy way to make money. The only way to weather today's economic hardships, he says, is by learning a profession.

- by Yves Niragira, National Commission for Demobilization, Reinsertion and Reintegration of ex-combatants (CNDRR), Burundi. With thanks also to Augustin Nzabampema of the CNDRR for his assistance.

For more information on MDRP, please visit www.mdrp.org or contact Bruno Donat, Communications Officer, MDRP Secretariat, World Bank at info@mdrp.org.