

## **Community Perceptions of the Redemptive Works of Christian Ministries in Post-Genocide Rwanda: A Case Study of Africa New Life Ministries**

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### **Abstract**

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The 1994 Rwandan genocide against the Tutsi left the country with deep social, emotional, and spiritual wounds, raising questions about the role of Christianity in national healing in a predominantly Christian nation. This study explored how communities perceive the redemptive work of Africa New Life Ministries (ANLM) and its role in promoting both spiritual and social restoration in post-genocide Rwanda. The study employed a mixed-methods case study approach, integrating ethnographic observation, semi-structured interviews, and surveys. Data were gathered from 81 participants, including ANLM leaders, staff, and beneficiaries across three ministry locations. Findings showed that while the long-term effects of the genocide remain visible in ongoing poverty, trauma, and fractured trust, participants perceived that ANLM's holistic model, combining evangelism, education, healthcare, vocational training, and women's empowerment, has played a significant role in individual and community healing. The participants described redemptive ministry as helping people move from painful memories toward renewed faith, self-worth, and restored relationships. The study concludes that Christian ministries in post-conflict contexts can drive meaningful transformation when they combine spiritual renewal with material empowerment, align their work with local cultural values, and foster self-reliance grounded in faith and divine grace.

**Keywords:** Redemptive Mission, Rwanda, Post-Genocide Recovery, Christian Ministry, Holistic Development, Community Perceptions, Africa New Life Ministries

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### **Introduction**

The Rwandan genocide against the Tutsi in 1994 is one of the most terrible human disasters in the twentieth century. Over a million people were killed in a short span of one hundred days, some of them being Twa and Hutu moderates. This had a profound impact on the country's



social, economic, and spiritual landscape.<sup>1</sup> This reality is especially unsettling given that more than 80% of Rwandans at the time identified themselves as Christians.<sup>2</sup> Churches, which had traditionally been regarded as the place of refuge, turned into the scene of betrayal and massacre, and the Christian witness in the country was put into question.<sup>3</sup> In the years following the genocide, Rwanda's recovery process demanded not only social and political rebuilding but also emotional and spiritual restoration.<sup>4</sup> Many Christian groups responded to this by establishing education, counseling, and reconciliation programs to support healing and resilience.<sup>5</sup> Among these, Africa New Life Ministries (ANLM) emerged as a key faith-based organization, offering holistic services in education, healthcare, vocational training, and women's empowerment to thousands of families across the country.<sup>6</sup>

Most Christian organisations refer to themselves as agents of transformation, but the term is open to extensive interpretation.<sup>7</sup> This study uses the concept of 'redemptive works' to provide a theological and practical framework for assessing ministry effectiveness. In this context, *redemptive works* refer to acts, programs, and relationships that help individuals and communities move from painful memories toward renewed purpose and flourishing.<sup>8</sup> These redemptive works involve redeeming people from the paralyzing effects of their pasts, pain, suffering, and trauma, so that they can embrace a hopeful future through the divine grace provided by Jesus Christ, the chief Redeemer of humankind.<sup>9</sup>

This interpretation of redemption aligns with the modern reconciliation theology in Rwanda, emphasizing healing, truth-telling, and restoration.<sup>10</sup> Recent research confirms that the continuation of intergenerational trauma on the generation born after the genocide, and that the

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<sup>1</sup> Helen M. Hintjens, "Explaining the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 37, no. 2 (1999): 244.

<sup>2</sup> Luc Reydam, "More than a Million: The Politics of Accounting for the Dead of the Rwandan Genocide," *Review of African Political Economy* 48, no. 168 (2021): 237.

<sup>3</sup> Christine Schliesser, *Theologies of Reconciliation in Rwanda: Healing Divided Societies* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2018), 52.

<sup>4</sup> Phil Clark, *The Gacaca Courts, Post-Genocide Justice and Reconciliation in Rwanda: Justice without Lawyers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 131–33.

<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth King, *From Classrooms to Conflict in Rwanda* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 76.

<sup>6</sup> Africa New Life Ministries. *Africa New Life Ministries*. <https://www.africanewlife.org>. Accessed September 24, 2025.

<sup>7</sup> Schliesser, *Theologies of Reconciliation in Rwanda*, 52.

<sup>8</sup> Jerry Bridges, *The Transforming Power of the Gospel* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2022), 18.

<sup>9</sup> Donovan L. Graham, *Teaching Redemptively: Bringing Grace and Truth in Your Classroom*, 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs: Purposeful Design Publications, 2009), 34.

<sup>10</sup> Schliesser, *Theologies of Reconciliation in Rwanda*, 54.



memory of violence is still influencing the family and community dynamics of the past.<sup>11</sup> This highlights the ongoing need for faith-based interventions that promote forgiveness and holistic renewal.<sup>12</sup> Redemption is a theological concept that encompasses both spiritual renewal and social transformation. The Great Commission (Matt 28:19) encourages believers to seek both faith and moral responsibility. Similarly, faith without works is dead; in other words, faith cannot be independent of action (Jas 2:14–17). True Christian ministry should thus address the spiritual and physical needs.<sup>13</sup>

However, even with the current Christian initiatives, the post-genocide nation is still struggling with the burden of trauma, poverty, and a lack of trained Christian leaders.<sup>14</sup> Past studies on youth and survivors show that unresolved pain still affects community trust and long-term resilience.<sup>15</sup> This raises a critical question: Are present-day Christian ministries actually creating any real change, or are they producing superficial expressions of faith that fail to address deeply rooted wounds? This study examines Africa New Life Ministries as a case study to explore how local communities perceive its redemptive works in post-genocide Rwanda. It examines whether ANLM's programs are perceived as genuinely redemptive, enabling individuals and communities to move beyond trauma toward hope, restored dignity, and meaningful participation in society. The study not only seeks to highlight effective practices but also to assess whether Christian ministry in post-genocide Rwanda is truly fulfilling its redemptive purpose. Ultimately, the goal is to identify both the strengths and the limitations of ANLM's approach and to offer insights into how Christian ministries can more effectively embody redemptive work in post-conflict societies.

## Problem Statement

Christian ministries are called to participate in God's redemptive work by making disciples, meeting needs, and restoring dignity to broken lives. In Rwanda, many such ministries were

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<sup>11</sup> Marie Grace Kagoyire, Pierre Celestin Rutayisire, and Ghislaine Uwizeye, “‘A Calf Cannot Fail to Pick a Colour from Its Mother ...’: Intergenerational Trauma among Youth with Genocide Survivor Parents in Rwanda,” *BMC Psychology* 11 (2023), 5.

<sup>12</sup> Adeyinka Daniel Damilare, “Theology of Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Building Peace through Biblical Narratives,” *Jos Journal of Religion and Philosophy* 5, no. 2 (2024), 227.

<sup>13</sup> Gerard Clarke, “Faith-Based Organizations and International Development: An Overview,” in *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations: Bridging the Sacred and the Secular*, ed. Gerard Clarke and Michael Jennings (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 40.

<sup>14</sup> Déogratias Byanafashe and Paul Rutayisire, *History of Rwanda: From the Beginning to the End of the Twentieth Century* (Kigali: National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, 2016), 213.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas Gautier, “From Missing Brothers to Educated Sisters: The Effects of Victimization during the Rwandan Genocide,” *World Development* 191 (2025), 7.



active before the 1994 genocide and continue to operate today.<sup>16</sup> However, the genocide exposed a painful contradiction. A nation with a Christian majority was unable to reflect the gospel message it professed, as churches became sites of violence and betrayal.<sup>17</sup> This tragedy shattered any hopes that the transformative nature of the Christian faith could be applied to the Rwandan situation and posed questions that will linger about the real meaning of redemption, both in theory and in practice.<sup>18</sup>

During the post-genocide era, ministries like Africa New Life Ministries (ANLM) have emerged, focusing on evangelism, education, healthcare, and community development to help rebuild the nation.<sup>19</sup> However, Rwanda continues to face deep challenges such as poverty, trauma, and a persistent deficit in discipleship and leadership formation.<sup>20</sup> Numerous church initiatives focus on observable charity but do not promote long-term spiritual transformation.<sup>21</sup> As such, it is necessary to examine whether the methods employed by Christian ministries are redemptive. Redemptive work involves salvaging individuals out of the memories of pain, suffering, and trauma to ensure that they are not defined or limited by their past.<sup>22</sup> This knowledge extends beyond humanitarian response; it is spiritual rejuvenation and strength that rebuilds identity, purpose, and trust in God and others.<sup>23</sup>

Notably, there have been few studies examining locals' perceptions of the effectiveness of Christian ministries in achieving such redemptive objectives. It is essential to understand these perceptions, as sustainable transformation will depend not only on the program's success but also on the beneficiaries' actual healing and empowerment.<sup>24</sup> This study, therefore, focuses on Africa New Life Ministries as a case study to explore how Rwandan communities perceive its redemptive works in the aftermath of genocide.

## General Objective

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<sup>16</sup> Schliesser, *Theologies of Reconciliation in Rwanda*, 52.

<sup>17</sup> Hintjens, "Explaining the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda," 244.

<sup>18</sup> Reydam, "More than a Million," 237.

<sup>19</sup> Africa New Life Ministries, *Africa New Life Ministries*, <https://www.africanewlife.org>.

<sup>20</sup> Kagoyire, Rutayisire, and Uwizeye, "'A Calf Cannot Fail to Pick a Colour from Its Mother ...,'" 5.

<sup>21</sup> Phil Clark, *The Gacaca Courts*, 145.

<sup>22</sup> Bridges, *The Transforming Power of the Gospel*, 45.

<sup>23</sup> Schliesser, *Theologies of Reconciliation in Rwanda*, 54.

<sup>24</sup> Bridges, *The Transforming Power of the Gospel*, 45.



This study investigated community perceptions of Africa New Life Ministries' effectiveness in promoting spiritual and physical restoration through its redemptive work in post-genocide Rwanda.

### **Specific Objectives**

1. To assess the long-term social, emotional, and spiritual effects of the 1994 genocide on communities served by Africa New Life Ministries.
2. To examine the role of Africa New Life Ministries' holistic programs in addressing both spiritual transformation and physical needs in post-genocide Rwanda.
3. To identify key challenges and contextual factors that influence the effectiveness of Africa New Life Ministries in fulfilling its redemptive mission.

## **Literature Review**

### **The Concept of Redemptive Works by Christian Ministries**

Redemptive works in Christian theological explanations are described as a process of restoration through divine grace, which extends beyond spiritual salvation to the regeneration of social and moral life. In theology, redemption is the liberation from bondage and the restoration to wholeness (Eph 1:7; Col 1:13-14). It is God's effort to restore damaged human relationships and reconstruct human dignity. In the ministry of Christians, such understanding is practically expressed through programs that restore hope, promote communal restoration, and heal the wounds of injustices and suffering.<sup>25</sup>

Redemptive works in this paper refer to intentional and ongoing spiritual, emotional, and social actions designed to assist individuals and communities in leaving trauma behind and moving forward with renewed purpose. This meaning is based on the belief that faith not only changes beliefs but also experiences. The gospel enables believers to live a life of victory amidst brokenness, and redemptive ministry should incorporate both grace and truth to bring about holistic renewal.<sup>26</sup> Redemptive ministry is not charity aid, but a cooperative effort with God in His mission of healing creation. Healing, in this case, in post-genocide Rwanda, has depth that is spiritual and cannot be accomplished through institutional reform or social policy.<sup>27</sup> Redemptive

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<sup>25</sup> Schliesser, *Theologies of Reconciliation in Rwanda*, 52.

<sup>26</sup> Graham, *Teaching Redemptively*, 35.

<sup>27</sup> Schliesser, *Theologies of Reconciliation in Rwanda*, 54.



action seeks to transform pain into hope and testimony, illustrating how the grace of God can transform ashes into new life.<sup>28</sup>

Modern literature has emphasized that the redemptive ministry should encompass both the internal and external aspects of human experience. Rwandese young people still face threats of holistic restoration because of emotional wounds and intergenerational trauma.<sup>29</sup> Effective reconciliation, therefore, must incorporate psychological healing, social renewal, and spiritual transformation.<sup>30</sup> This study examines Africa New Life Ministries (ANLM) as a case study to determine whether it embodies these theological principles by translating divine grace into tangible acts of renewal and service.

### **Long-Term Social, Emotional, and Spiritual Effects of the 1994 Genocide**

The genocide against the Tutsi that occurred in 1994 created an indelible mark on the moral, social, and spiritual scene in Rwanda. More than one million lives have been lost during a time span of one hundred days, and sometimes at the hands of their neighbors and even fellow Christians.<sup>31</sup> Beyond the physical destruction, the violence fractured trust, destroyed family structures, and undermined the moral authority of both civic and religious institutions.<sup>32</sup> The psychological and social consequences remain profound. The survivors are still dealing with unresolved grief, trauma, and isolation, whereas the second generation picks up the emotional weight of the suffering of their parents.<sup>33</sup> These impacts are reflected in chronic anxiety, social isolation, and the inability to restore trust.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, healing must extend beyond physical rebuilding to address emotional and spiritual injuries that remain in the national memory. The *Gacaca* courts, which were state-led and proved highly effective in uncovering the truth and promoting restorative justice, failed to provide emotional closure.<sup>35</sup> Scholars rightly argue that reconciliation is incomplete without including the theological aspects of forgiveness and moral restoration.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Bridges, *The Transforming Power of the Gospel*, 20.

<sup>29</sup> Kagoyire, Rutayisire, and Uwizeye, ““A Calf Cannot Fail to Pick a Colour from Its Mother ...,”” 5.

<sup>30</sup> Damilare, *“Theology of Forgiveness and Reconciliation,”* 233.

<sup>31</sup> Hintjens, “Explaining the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda,” 244.

<sup>32</sup> Reydam, “More than a Million,” 237.

<sup>33</sup> Kagoyire, Rutayisire, and Uwizeye, ““A Calf Cannot Fail to Pick a Colour from Its Mother ...,”” 5.

<sup>34</sup> Gautier, “From Missing Brothers to Educated Sisters,” 15.

<sup>35</sup> Clark, *The Gacaca Courts*, 132.

<sup>36</sup> Schliesser, *Theologies of Reconciliation in Rwanda*, 54.



Faith-based initiatives have played a crucial role in bridging this gap. Churches have evolved into places of meaning, belonging, and transformation that help survivors redefine their faith in the face of tragedy.<sup>37</sup> Forgiveness and community worship-based programs have helped with moral re-orientation, especially among the youth who had not witnessed the genocide, but they still carry its effects with them.<sup>38</sup> The genocide has forced Christians to question the reality of their faith, spiritually. Rwandan theology is being shaped by a praxis of reconciliation that emphasizes compassion, justice, and restoration. Faith is no longer understood as a static belief, but as a lived embodiment, expressed through empathy, service, and moral repair.<sup>39</sup>

These are societal, emotional, and spiritual implications that are intertwined and on which redemptive works are established. Nonetheless, even with the increasing interest in faith-grounded reaction to the recovery of Rwanda, very little is known about the long-term social, emotional, and spiritual effects of the 1994 genocide on communities served by Africa New Life Ministries.

### **The Role of Holistic Christian Ministry in Addressing Spiritual and Physical Needs**

Christian ministries have emerged as critical actors in the reconstruction of lives in the post-genocide era, using holistic practices that integrate spiritual formation and social growth. True redemption is a combination of healing and justice; it heals not only the soul but also society.<sup>40</sup> Africa New Life Ministries (ANLM) exemplifies this integrated mission. Founded shortly after the genocide, its mission statement — transforming lives and communities through preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ and acts of compassion — captures the theological foundation of its redemptive vision.<sup>41</sup>

This practice is similar to the teaching of Christ, whose ministry was not divided between spiritual and physical care. Jesus feeding the hungry, healing the sick, and forgiving sins are described in the Gospels, reflecting a model in which faith and works intersect (James 2:14–17). This model, set against the backdrop of Rwanda, where poverty, trauma, and moral breakdown converge, is a poignant testament to the gospel in action. It has been demonstrated that faith-

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<sup>37</sup> King, *From Classrooms to Conflict in Rwanda*, 76.

<sup>38</sup> Damilare, “*Theology of Forgiveness and Reconciliation*,” 77.

<sup>39</sup> Schliesser, *Theologies of Reconciliation in Rwanda*, 52.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>41</sup> Africa New Life Ministries, *Africa New Life Ministries*, <https://www.africanewlife.org>.





based interventions are most effective when grounded in local contexts and community ties.<sup>42</sup> Programs that nurture belonging, forgiveness, and hope can interrupt cycles of trauma and cultivate resilience.<sup>43</sup>

The education programs of ANLM are not only a means of regaining access to learning, but also a way of re-establishing moral values and civil cohesion. Its pastoral and leadership education enriches theological knowledge, ensuring that tomorrow's leaders integrate faith and social awareness.<sup>44</sup> This holistic vision is further manifested in healthcare and women's empowerment programs, such as the Dream Medical Center and occupational training, which help address physical suffering and financial vulnerability.<sup>45</sup> These initiatives illustrate that redemption in post-genocide Rwanda must be both proclaimed and practiced.<sup>46</sup> Holistic Christian ministry thus stands as a bridge between spiritual renewal and tangible transformation. It demonstrates that authentic faith must engage with human suffering in its fullness, encompassing body, mind, and spirit, to rebuild both individuals and communities. Despite growing recognition of the role of Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) in Rwanda's post-genocide recovery, little empirical research has examined how Africa New Life Ministries' holistic programs have contributed to both spiritual transformation and the meeting of physical needs. This study, therefore, seeks to address this gap by exploring the ministry's impact on the communities it serves.

### **Community Responses to Christian Redemptive Programs in Rwanda**

Community perception is a crucial measure of the extent to which Christian ministries can fulfill their redemptive mission.<sup>47</sup> Though the church's image was tainted in the genocide period, today, many Rwandese have learnt to trust the Faith-Based Organizations as true healers and social restorers. By participating in Christian programs, especially those that combine spiritual guidance with education, reconciliation workshops, and psychosocial support, survivors have found it easier to restore trust and a sense of belonging. Initiatives that engage communities as

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<sup>42</sup> Emmanuel Ishaku Ashafa, "A Theological Framework for the Implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategy Involving Faith-Based Organizations, Churches, and Communities," *Jalingo Journal of Multi-Disciplinary Research and Innovations* 1, no. 2 (2025): 27.

<sup>43</sup> Kagoyire, Rutayisire, and Uwizeye, "'A Calf Cannot Fail to Pick a Colour from Its Mother,'" 5.

<sup>44</sup> Africa New Life Ministries, *Africa New Life Ministries*, <https://www.africanewlife.org>.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Bridges, *The Transforming Power of the Gospel*, 20.

<sup>47</sup> King, *From Classrooms to Conflict in Rwanda*, 76.





active partners rather than passive recipients tend to achieve deeper reconciliation and ownership.<sup>48</sup>

The combined strategy employed by Africa New Life, which involves education, healthcare, and discipleship, has been widely popular since it effectively relates the gospel message to daily needs.<sup>49</sup> Such programs are frequently referred to as practical expressions of love and restoration, and not necessarily religious outreach by communities. The studies indicate that the effectiveness of Christian redemptive programs is more closely tied to the level of relationships and sensitivity to culture.<sup>50</sup> Programs that are perceived as compassionate, transparent, and empowering are more likely to result in long-term change, whereas those that are viewed as top-down or externally driven are unlikely to be trusted.<sup>51</sup> Thus, redemption in Rwanda is not only about faith, but also about partnership and collaboration. Ministries that listen, include, and serve alongside communities embody the gospel most credibly.

### **Challenges and Contextual Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Redemptive Ministry**

Despite their successes, Christian ministries in Rwanda face long-term struggles that impact their redemptive efforts. These include beneficiary dependencies, limited resources, geographic barriers, and internal differences in motivation and leadership.<sup>52</sup> Dependency is perhaps the most widespread problem. The redemptive effect of empowerment is impaired when recipients of aid become accustomed to receiving help rather than learning to be self-reliant.<sup>53</sup> Thus, to prevent the enhanced dependency cycles, balancing between compassion and responsibility is necessary if the ministries do not contribute to them.<sup>54</sup> The limited resources also limit outreach activities. Despite the immense growth of organizations such as ANLM, they have limited capacity to operate relative to the scale of the national need. The dependence of such organizations on international donors exposes them to funding fluctuations, underscoring the need for effective local leadership and community ownership.<sup>55</sup> Access to ministry programs is also restricted by

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Africa New Life Ministries, *Africa New Life Ministries*, <https://www.africanewlife.org>.

<sup>50</sup> Ashafa, "A Theological Framework," 30.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Joseph Kuria Wanyoike and Hannah Orwa Bula, "Strategic Management Practices and Sustainability of Faith Based Organisations: An Empirical Study of Anglican, Diocese of Thika," *International Journal of Education and Research* 4, no. 1 (January 2016): 172.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Bridges, *The Transforming Power of the Gospel*, 19.

<sup>55</sup> Ashafa, "A Theological Framework," 31.



geographic barriers, particularly in rural regions. Such inequalities in education and healthcare perpetuate trauma and exclusion.<sup>56</sup>

Cultural and contextual processes also influence ministry outcomes. Historical research indicates that communal society and respect for authority in Rwanda can either facilitate or hinder ministry work.<sup>57</sup> Effective engagement depends on cultural sensitivity, the use of local language, and the employment of Rwandan staff.<sup>58</sup> At the organizational level, motivation based on calling, not just employment, is what sustains the redemptive work's integrity.<sup>59</sup> Lastly, the political and social context of Rwanda remains a significant factor in determining the operation of Faith-Based Organizations. Ministries need to reconcile prophetic testimony and the recognition of national unity and justice systems.<sup>60</sup> These factors suggest that redemptive ministry in Rwanda should be grounded in discernment, humility, and cultural sensitivity. Dependency, local capacity building, and preserving theological integrity are all essential factors for sustaining transformation. The literature reveals that the redemptive nature in Christian ministries is a complex interplay of theological beliefs, culture, and structural realities. Their achievements are measured by the degree to which they put spiritual truth into practice and make it sustainable, an act of healing and renewal. Nonetheless, very little has been done to examine the specific challenges and contextual factors that shape how ministries such as Africa New Life carry out their redemptive mission.

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods case study design, combining qualitative data (ethnography) and quantitative methods (surveys) to analyze the efficacy of Africa New Life Ministries (ANLM) in supporting both spiritual and physical revival in post-genocide Rwanda. The approach was selected for its combination of numerical data and lived experience, which is why a mixed-methods approach was chosen to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the

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<sup>56</sup> Gautier, "From Missing Brothers to Educated Sisters," 7.

<sup>57</sup> Saaida, Mohammed B.E. "Overcoming Cultural Differences for Community Reconciliation in Rwanda." *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development* 10, no. 3 (2023): 8.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Schliesser, *Theologies of Reconciliation in Rwanda*, 54.

<sup>60</sup> Reydam, "More than a Million," 237.



complex social realities.<sup>61</sup> The case study design was suitable given the concern of a single organization in a particular post-conflict environment. Case studies enable researchers to examine contemporary phenomena in depth in real-world settings.<sup>62</sup> This design enabled the study of how ANLM programs mirror redemptive works that not only change people's spiritual well-being but also their material well-being. The qualitative aspect was based on anthropological ethnography, which entailed conducting fieldwork in three ANLM communities. This enabled the researcher to be in the field and interact with respondents to gain nuanced information about the ministry's role in healing and transformation.<sup>63</sup> The quantitative part used structured questionnaires to evaluate community perceptions and identify patterns, using descriptive statistics.<sup>64</sup> Combining these methods yielded a balanced, validated understanding of the redemptive impact of ANLM.

### **Data Collection Methods**

The methods of data collection included participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and structured questionnaires. To balance the outsider's perspective with that of the insider, the researcher spent 18 hours in three of the selected ANLM communities: Kigali, Kayonza, and Kageyo-A, where she interacted with the locals in their day-to-day activities. Four Key Senior Leaders (KSL) were interviewed to represent leadership and organizational views on theology and program strategy. Organized, semi-structured questionnaires were then distributed to 30 employees and 47 beneficiaries (including parents, women, and youth) to ensure diversity in age, gender, and background. A few questionnaires were completed with the assistance of a bilingual research assistant to support respondents who were more comfortable in Kinyarwanda. The instruments were explicitly designed to align with the research aims. The questionnaires used a Likert scale to measure participants' perceptions of ANLM's effectiveness, and the open-ended questions prompted reflection. The interviews with top leaders were conducted in an open-ended format to gather more in-depth information about the issues, strategic decision-making, and the theological underpinnings of the ministry approach.

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<sup>61</sup> John W. Creswell and Vicki L. Plano Clark, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, 3rd ed. (SAGE Publications, 2018), 12.

<sup>62</sup> Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research and Applications*, vol. 6 (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2018), 15.

<sup>63</sup> James P. Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview* (Waveland Press, 2016), 17.

<sup>64</sup> John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, "Mixed Methods Procedures," *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* 31, no. 3 (2018): 76.



### Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The study employed both purposive and random sampling to achieve depth and representativeness. The four senior leaders were selected by purposive sampling since they possessed specialized knowledge and experience related to the redemptive role of ANLM. This method is particularly useful when targeting individuals who can provide critical insights into program design and implementation.<sup>65</sup> Simple random sampling was used to select staff and beneficiaries across the three ANLM communities. Random sampling ensures that each individual in the target population has an equal chance of being selected, thereby minimizing bias and improving the reliability of the results.<sup>66</sup> The final sample size comprised 81 participants: 4 senior leaders, 30 staff members, and 47 beneficiaries. The purposive and random sampling provided an opportunity to triangulate between community experiences and organizational perspectives, thereby enhancing the validity and credibility of the study's findings.

### Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data collected through interviews and field observations. It was conducted according to the six steps of the thematic analysis process by Braun and Clarke, including familiarization with the data, initial coding, possible themes, theme revision and refinement, theme definition and labeling, and a final synthesis.<sup>67</sup> The researcher was keen on local expressions and cultural indicators, ensuring that participants' voices were properly represented. Questionnaires yielded quantitative data, which were analyzed using SPSS descriptive statistics. The reviewed data provided an overview of indicators, including the ANLM impact agreement, attendance rates at the programs, and perceived changes in community well-being. The qualitative and quantitative triangulation of the findings increased the study's validity, as the evidence from various sources converged to substantiate the major conclusions.<sup>68</sup> This combined method enabled the research to obtain not only quantifiable results

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<sup>65</sup> Ilker Etikan and Kabiru Bala, "Sampling and Sampling Methods," *Biometrics & Biostatistics International Journal* 5, no. 6 (2017): 215.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, "Reflecting on Reflexive Thematic Analysis," *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health* 11, no. 4 (2019): 590.

<sup>68</sup> Michael D. Fetters and Deborah Freshwater, "Publishing a Methodological Mixed Methods Research Article," *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 9, no. 3 (2015): 210.



but also the lived experience behind ANLM’s redemptive activities, providing a holistic account of how Christian ministry can contribute to healing and change in post-genocide Rwanda.

## Findings of the Study

### Long-Term Social, Emotional, and Spiritual Effects of the 1994 Genocide

The first objective sought to assess the long-term social, emotional, and spiritual effects of the 1994 genocide on communities served by Africa New Life Ministries (ANLM). The results indicate that the legacy of the genocide still influences the sense of community, religion, and emotional health, the way survivors perceive healing and redemption in the work of ANLM. All key senior leaders (100%) reported being personally affected, including the loss of family members and witnessing church betrayals. Among general ministry staff, 67% lost relatives, many becoming orphans or displaced and subsequently facing poverty. Among younger beneficiaries, 19% were orphaned during the genocide, though 86% reported that their parents survived. Nearly half of beneficiaries (48%) were born after 1994, showing both progress toward renewal and a continuing need for intergenerational healing.

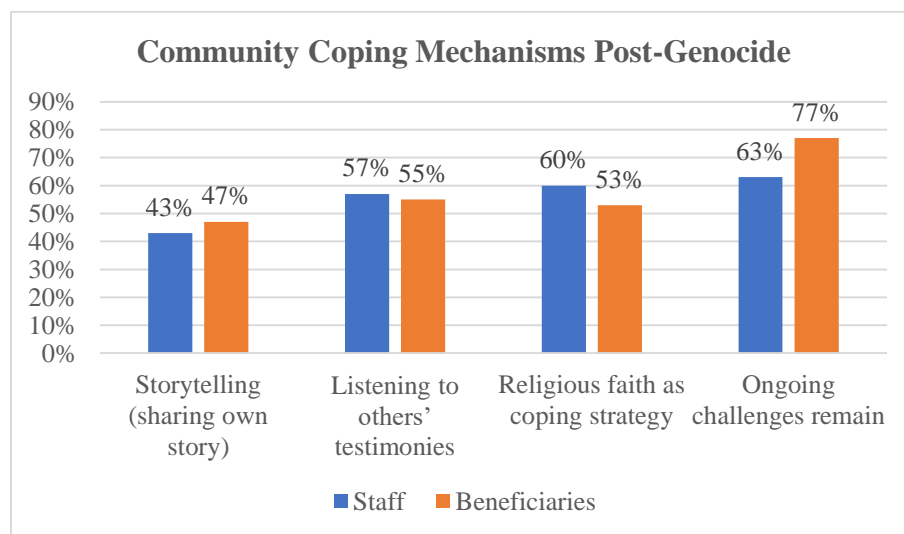
Within this context of pain, participants frequently described ANLM’s work as a source of redemptive hope. Respondents emphasized that redemption involves helping individuals reinterpret their past without erasing it, turning suffering into a source of faith, empathy, and motivation. As one participant put it, *“We still carry our scars, but through ANLM we have learned that God can use even our pain for a better future.”* Table 1 summarizes the extent of genocide-related losses among participants, highlighting the ways these experiences have shaped leaders, staff, and beneficiaries within ANLM’s programs.

**Table 1: Genocide Impact on Study Participants**

Category	Personal Loss	Family Impact	Community Effect
Key Senior Leaders	100% affected	Family members killed	Witnessed church betrayals
General Staff	67% lost relatives	Orphaned/displaced	Experienced poverty
Beneficiaries	19% orphaned	86% parents survived	48% born after the genocide



As the data provided in Table 1 indicates, even younger participants, who were born later than 1994, bear inherited trauma, but are more resilient and willing to reconcile. This shift in generation marks a transition from survival to renewal, in which ANLM’s programs foster faith-based resilience through education, mentorship, and discipleship. The most widespread coping processes were faith and storytelling. Over 60% of staff and beneficiaries reported that individual religious conviction was a main component of recovery, and storytelling, both in church services and community assemblies, as well as in youth mentorship, was considered a redemptive act of remembering and reclaiming dignity. Figure 1 illustrates how storytelling, faith, and adaptive resilience intersect in participants’ recovery journeys.



**Figure 1: Community Coping Mechanisms Post-Genocide**

Emotional and spiritual recovery, as illustrated in Figure 1, remains strongly interconnected. Members of the community do not consider ANLM a service provider but rather an organization that assists them in rebuilding their sense of meaning, dignity, and faith. According to them, redemptive work is not just a charitable practice but rather the maintenance of relationships that confirm life after devastation. The long-term impacts of the genocide are still perceivable in terms of emotional agony, social discontinuity, and spiritual doubt. However, according to the programs in ANLM, group members reported experiencing a redemptive process—a transition from disintegration to renewal—where faith and action intersect to heal both the individual and society. These findings affirm the enduring presence of grief and the intergenerational



transmission of trauma,<sup>69</sup> and align with the view that theological reflection and narrative reconstruction are critical for healing in post-genocide Rwanda.<sup>70</sup>

These findings suggest that the legacy of the 1994 genocide remains deeply entrenched in the social, emotional, and spiritual lives of Rwandan societies. However, it is also the root through which redemptive change sprouts. Although trauma and loss still define who people are and how they relate, ANLM has been instrumental in enabling survivors to redefine pain in their lives by means of faith, narration, and community involvement. The intergenerational trauma is persistent, which demonstrates the necessity of further healing, but the strength of the younger generations suggests hope and revival. The programs of ANLM are therefore not considered charity. However, a redemptive partnership that restores dignity, enhances faith, and re-establishes social trust through a progressive process of collective suffering to faith-based restoration.

### **The Role of Africa New Life Ministries' Holistic Programs in Addressing Spiritual and Physical Needs**

The second objective examined how Africa New Life Ministries (ANLM) addresses both spiritual transformation and physical needs in post-genocide Rwanda. The results indicate that ANLM has an integrated model that combines evangelism, education, healthcare, and empowerment, representing a holistic approach to redemption that integrates faith and practical service. The participants characterized ANLM as an organization that puts its belief into reality through action, a ministry that develops both the soul and the body. Survey results showed that 78% of staff and 82% of beneficiaries viewed ANLM's programs as contributing to "spiritual and social transformation." This reflects an understanding of redemption not only as salvation but as the recovery of dignity, purpose, and self-worth. One female beneficiary explained, "They taught us that being healed means not only having food or school fees, but knowing that God still has a plan for our lives." Table 2 summarizes the scope of ANLM's program areas and beneficiaries, highlighting both the breadth of engagement and the scale of impact across different dimensions of community life.

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<sup>69</sup> Kagoyire, Rutayisire, and Uwizeye, "A Calf Cannot Fail to Pick a Colour from Its Mother ...," 5.

<sup>70</sup> Schliesser, *Theologies of Reconciliation in Rwanda*, 54.



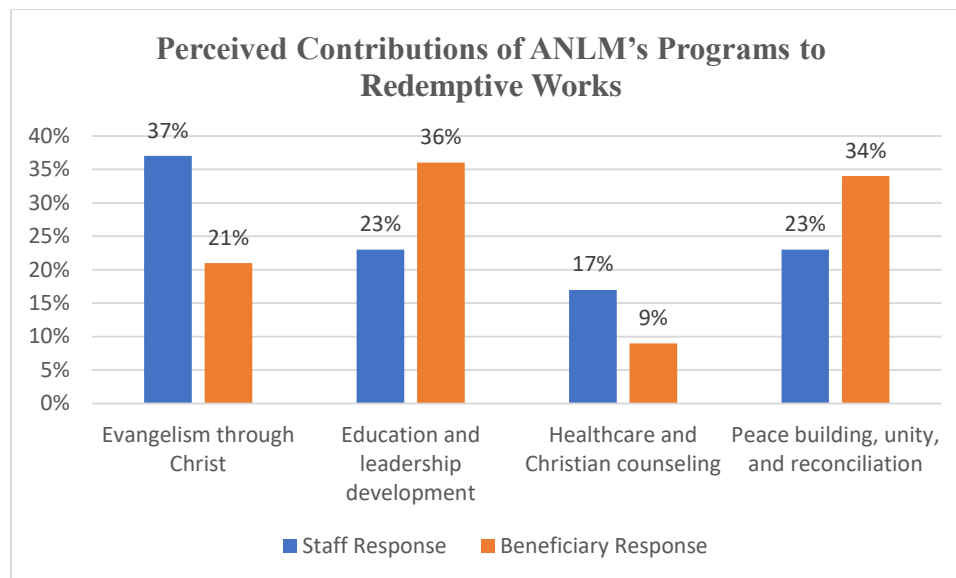


**Table 2: ANLM Program Categories and Beneficiaries**

<b>Program Area</b>	<b>Number of Beneficiaries</b>	<b>Key Activities</b>
Child Sponsorship	10,000 children	Education, healthcare, spiritual nurture
Education	2,234 students	5 schools, university partnerships
Pastoral Training	604 students	Africa College of Theology
Healthcare	Community-wide	Dream Medical Center, community nurses
Women’s Empowerment	320 women trained	Sewing, beauty academy programs
Vocational Training	436 youth	Technical skills, employment preparation

Participants often described these programs as expressions of “living faith.” Child sponsorship was considered redemptive in that it gave hope and a sense of belonging to the vulnerable children. Medical health programs, such as the Dream Medical Center, were viewed as ministries of compassion that aimed to heal both the body and the spirit. These align with the argument that true reconciliation in Rwanda would entail applying emotional and physical healing as part of the redemptive process. Pastoral and theological education also played a central role. Leaders explained that training future pastors and youth ministers ensures integrity and theological depth in Rwanda’s emerging church leadership. Graduates of the Africa College of Theology described their formation as “a redemption of the mind,” preparing them to model moral leadership within their communities. While staff prioritized evangelism (37%), beneficiaries emphasized education (36%) and peacebuilding (34%), reflecting complementary understandings of redemption. Figure 2 illustrates these differing emphases.





**Figure 2: Perceived Contributions of ANLM's Programs to Redemption and Transformation**

Participants also linked ANLM's holistic model to the restoration of dignity and self-agency. One of the beneficiaries shared, "They do not simply offer things to us, but they educate us to perceive ourselves differently." These narratives emphasize a theology of empowerment, in which the grace of God is manifested through education, service, and shared accountability. ANLM combines evangelism with social service, thereby fulfilling the principle that faith without works is dead (James 2:14-17). Such outcomes are in line with Graham's idea of redemption as a process of spiritual and social healing.<sup>71</sup> These results suggest that the holistic paradigm of ANLM is a viable, contextually based model of redemptive ministry in post-genocide Rwanda. The ministry restores dignity, builds trust, and fosters renewal within the community through faith, education, healthcare, and empowerment, as redemption is experienced as a lived and shared reality rather than an abstract belief.

### Key Challenges and Contextual Factors Affecting ANLM's Redemptive Mission

The third objective aimed to identify the key challenges and contextual factors that influence the effectiveness of Africa New Life Ministries (ANLM) in fulfilling its redemptive mission. The results suggest that several internal and external factors, including dependency, resource scarcity, geographic isolation, staff motivation, and broader socio-cultural realities in post-genocide Rwanda, influence the ministry's work. Dependency syndrome was identified as the most commonly discussed issue, with 100% of senior leaders and 64% of staff mentioning that it has

<sup>71</sup> Graham, *Teaching Redemptively*, 35.



been a long-time hindrance to long-term change. At times, the beneficiaries perceived ANLM as a key provider rather than an empowerment partner. As one of the leaders mentioned, some still want the ministry to do it all on their behalf rather than expand to do it themselves. Such an attitude has the potential to undermine the redemptive purpose of ministry work by substituting self-reliance for expectation, which is prevalent in the aftermath of a crisis. The participants concurred that genuine redemption has to heal not only faith but also the ability to act and be responsible for one's own future.

Another significant constraint was the limited resources. Although ANLM has expanded tremendously, its capacity remains lower than the demand for educational sponsorships, healthcare, and vocational training. According to the respondents, shortages at times stall the projects or restrict access to services, especially in remote or marginalized regions. However, resourcefulness in itself was regarded by many as redemptive, of which they would say that God multiplies little where faithfulness to work is shown. Geographic and infrastructural factors also impede participation. Approximately 62% of those who received benefits indicated that the distance to ANLM centers complicated the programs, particularly among the rural population. Other parents reported walking long distances to access health services or attend church meetings. These results align with Gautier's findings that rural inequality will keep the population vulnerable unless a strategic approach is adopted.<sup>72</sup> Participants recommended expanding outreach to underserved areas to strengthen inclusivity.

The other internal issue was variation in the staff's motivation and spiritual dedication. Although the majority of the staff were said to be passionate and mission-driven, some were perceived as treating their positions as jobs rather than a calling. Top management has addressed this issue through continuous discipleship and mentorship, thereby sustaining the culture of servant leadership. The identified point substantiates the argument by Wanyoike and Orwa that the spiritual uprightness of Faith-Based Organizations is the key to maintaining redemptive efficacy.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Gautier, "From Missing Brothers to Educated Sisters," 7.

<sup>73</sup> Wanyoike and Bula, "Strategic Management Practices," 175.



**Table 3: Key Challenges Affecting ANLM’s Redemptive Mission**

Challenge	Description	Percentage/ Observation
Dependency Syndrome	Tendency to develop an entitlement mentality among beneficiaries	Reported by 100% of senior leaders
Overwhelming Need	Needs exceed organizational capacity due to limited resources	Qualitative observation
Geographic Barriers	Distance to ANLM centers limits participation	62% of beneficiaries
Staff Motivation	Some staff serve for pay rather than mission	Qualitative observation

*Note. Data derived from study interviews and survey responses.*

The results align with the existing literature on faith-based development in post-conflict environments. This dependency nature implies that charitable assistance may inadvertently foster passivity if it is not combined with empowerment measures.<sup>74</sup> The infrastructural disparities that are evident in sub-Saharan Africa are manifested in resource and geographic constraints.<sup>75</sup> The problematic issues related to staff motivation underscore the importance of ongoing spiritual formation and leadership modeling.<sup>76</sup> Meanwhile, the ANLM’s practice of cultural assimilation and cooperation with national projects, such as Umuganda and Ubudehe, demonstrates how contextual theology, reflected in local culture, can become more credible and owned by the community in the ministry following the genocide.<sup>77</sup>

These results suggest that African New Life Ministries operates in a complex environment where there is a certain intersection between its spiritual mission and social realities. Although dependency, resource constraints, and geographic barriers remain significant challenges, ANLM continues to focus on contextualization, servant leadership, and community partnerships, which support its redemptive mission. The organization’s efficiency does not lie in avoiding challenges, but in turning them into opportunities for deeper involvement and new faith. In this context, redemption is a continuous process that restores dignity, fosters self-reliance, and extends faith into daily living by being patient, steadfast, and responsible to others.

<sup>74</sup> Dena Freeman, “Development as Transformation: Tearfund and the New Evangelical Approach to Holistic Change,” in *Does Religion Make a Difference? Religious NGOs in International Development Collaboration*, ed. Andreas Heuser and Jens Koehrsen (Baden-Baden, Germany: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2020), 44.

<sup>75</sup> Gautier, “From Missing Brothers to Educated Sisters,” 7.

<sup>76</sup> Wanyoike and Bula, “Strategic Management Practices,” 175.

<sup>77</sup> Schliesser, *Theologies of Reconciliation in Rwanda*, 62.



## Conclusion

This study explored community perceptions of the redemptive activity of Africa New Life Ministries (ANLM) in post-genocide Rwanda. The results indicate that the holistic approach employed by ANLM incorporates faith and practical service, enabling communities to experience redemption as a living reality that defines individual and communal renewal. The social, emotional, and spiritual impacts of the genocide in the long term can still be witnessed in survivors and their generations. Lots of the respondents are still struggling with trauma, poverty, and shattered trust. However, the programs of ANLM are generally considered acts of healing and hope, assisting individuals in rewriting painful memories, restoring dignity, and regaining faith in God and themselves. The ministry has fostered a sense of belonging and purpose, which are vital to recovery, through education, counseling, and discipleship.

ANLM, with its integrated approach that includes evangelism, education, healthcare, vocational training, and women's empowerment, provides the power of integrating both spiritual and material care. Vocational and educational programs have increased access for vulnerable youth, and the healthcare provided by the Dream Medical Center has ensured quality treatment. Theology education at the Africa College of Theology has empowered local church leadership, transforming not only the lives of individual beneficiaries but also those of the entire community. Although these achievements were made, the researchers found that unresolved difficulties remain, including dependency, inadequate resources, geographic location, and low staff motivation. Nevertheless, ANLM has established authenticity and trust within the community due to its adherence to cultural contextualization, local staffing, and partnerships with national initiatives such as *Umuganda* and *Ubudehe*. The organization's redemptive mission remains grounded in these contextual strengths.

The study concludes that ANLM offers a sustainable and contextually grounded model of redemptive ministry in post-genocide Rwanda. Its work demonstrates that the redemption in society after the conflicts does not only have to heal spiritual wounds but also address the realities of the day. With a blend of theological insight, cultural sensitivity, and compassionate work practices, ANLM demonstrates the significant role faith-based organizations can play in healing, reconciliation, and long-term transformation. This impact will be maintained through continued investment into local leadership, beneficiary self-reliance, and theological formation.



The redemptive ministry, as seen in the work of ANLM, occurs when faith and action intersect, thereby reinstating hope and dignity in communities characterized by trauma.

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