

RIGHT TO READ RWANDA

A Rotary Project to Assist Teachers and Community Leaders in Rural Rwanda

VOLUME 2

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Friday, November 14th, **GRADUATION DAY!**

Completion of Teacher Training Workshop in Nyamata, Bugesara District.

The team completed the teacher training workshop at the Nyamata Hub School in Nyamata, Bugesara District on Friday, November 14th, with 68 proud teachers receiving their graduation certificates! Graduation celebrations included a lunchtime snack with a Fanta (a favorite of most Rwandans), singing several of the songs learned over the week including BINGO, O When the Saints, and We are Marching, presentation of a Canada Flag to Headmaster Vianney, and presentation of graduation certificates and Canada Flag pin to each participant.

WEEKENDS ARE TIME TO PREPARE

Saturday, November 15th, 8am!



There are many preparation and administrative tasks that need to happen to keep the project running smoothly, during each workshop and in preparation for the next one.

No days off here! A typical weekend between classes involves shopping for resource materials, getting placement tests photocopied, making sure we have enough cash on hand for expenses, making arrangements for food, cutting cardboard for book building, building resource kits, keeping the accounting records in good order and preparing graduation certificates.

In your typical North American city or town, getting these tasks completed in a day would be relatively straight forward. Not so easy in an African town. things take time. ...

ONE DAY to prepare for the next 3 weeks

As the workshops for next three weeks will be away from Kigali, the one day off is a flurry of activity. It starts at 8am, right after finishing the Nyamata workshop the day before. Downtown Kigali is supply central as most products are available there.

Buy the paper for graduation certificates for the next three workshops – 300 of them!

Get the certificates photocopied. Not easy when the only copy centre is already dealing with a large University job.

Off to the T2000 (a major department store) to buy useful gifts (notebooks, scissors, markers, etc.) for teachers as an incentive to be on time and to continue to come to class.

Count and load 250 of each item into carts then over to checkout where they are counted again.



While the items are being counted at check-out, we head to the back of the store to exchange US\$ into Rwandan Francs. (the exchange rate is better than at the local bank.) An intimidating stack of 562 - 5,000 RWF notes is necessary for the next three weeks! They are the largest notes available in Rwanda.

Supply issues, delivery issues, photocopy issues, traffic and street activities, all delay the process but finally the order is complete.

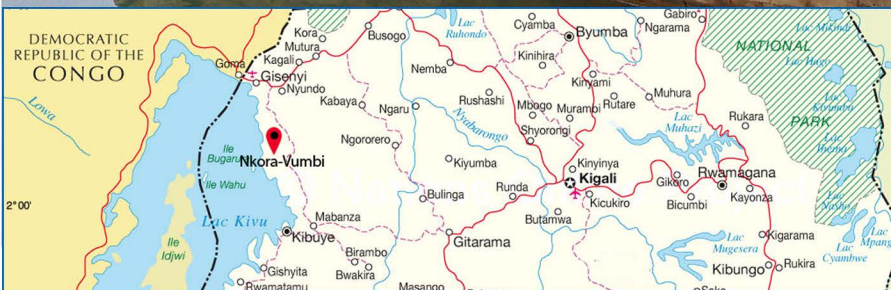
It is now 2pm and what was going to be a 4 hour job, has taken 6 and we still need to have lunch, do up invoices, cut more cardboard, confirm food orders that will be picked up next week while we are in Gisenyi, and repack boxes of supplies and luggage that will be loaded into the car the following morning at 7am before our departure at 8am - all this on Saturday, our rest day!



Workshop #2 – Nkora-Vumbi Hub School



Workshop number two took place at the Nkora – Vumbi Hub School located on the shores of Lake Kivu, south of Gisenyi in the Rutsiro District of Rwanda. The training team would normally drive the treacherously windy, steep, narrow, rocky dirt/mud road (you get the picture) from Gisenyi to Nkora, as they did last year, a trip that would take 1.5 hours. However, three major bridges were washed out in last year's rainy season and have not yet been repaired, leaving the training team to find alternate means of transportation. After many phone calls, arrangements were made for the training team to travel to Nkora via a small wooden, canopied boat on Lake Kivu for the 1 hour trip each way.



Several peaks along the shore of Lake Kivu exceed 2,800 meters, including Volcano Nyiragongo (Congo)

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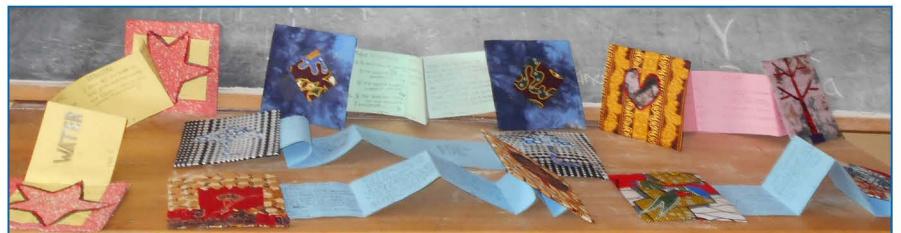
85 participants were waiting for us at 8:00am on day 1 of the five day workshop, comprising teachers from Nkora Nursery School, Vumbi Secondary School, Maziba Primary School, Policemen from the local lake-based detachment station, and Caferwa Coffee Station workers, including the General Manager. A majority of the participants walked to the workshop, often more than an hour one way on dirt paths and through fields to get to class for the 8:30 start.

This was the fourth teacher training workshop to be held at Nkora-Vumbi. Both the communities and Caferwa were pleased to be able to host another workshop and there has been significant improvement demonstrated by numerous past participants – individuals who had no English only 2 years ago being placed in the intermediate classes as a result of this year's placement test!

Classrooms to support the teaching team comprised the Nursery school, coffee warehouse, two Caferwa Offices, and an outdoor coffee drying and sorting station that had long wire mesh tables.

Past work at Nkora has included donations by Tools for Schools, a Canadian Registered Charity dedicated to improving education in rural Rwanda, for the construction of a Nursery School, Ecotoilets, school uniforms, tables, chairs, blackboards and other school furnishings for the 65+ nursery students who attend each day.

Graduation day, Friday, saw 85 proud students celebrate the receipt of their graduation certificates, exhibition of their hand-made English story books, and a farewell on the beach to the training team!



Amato fishing boats (3 dugouts bound together) for fishing at night on Lake Kivu



Other Elements of the Right to Read Project

In addition to the delivery of teacher training workshops at 5 different hub schools in rural areas of Rwanda, the Right to Read Project is focusing on three other activities:

- Providing the resources necessary for the development of a school and community-based library for each of the five hub schools;
- Providing teachers, administrators and community leaders with the training necessary for the effective use of the library and teaching resource materials; and
- Providing solar panels and lights for teachers who attend the workshops who do not have power in their homes for use in reading and class preparations.



Partners in the Project

Part of the **HEINEKEN** Company

This week our thanks and formal recognition of contributions to the Project goes to Jonathan Hall and Kirsty Robertson, the General Manager and his wife of the Bralirwa Brewery, one of the largest in Rwanda and located just outside of Gisenyi. As they did last year, they have donated the use of their house and staff for our project team for the three weeks that we are in the Gisenyi area delivering workshops at the Nkora-Vumbi and Rambo Hub Schools. A beautifully situated house on the shores of Lake Kivu only 1 kilometer from the border of the Democratic Republic of Congo. This amazing contribution means that the financial resources that would normally have gone to hotel accommodations for the 7 team members, can go directly to other activities of the Right to Read Project. Thank you Jonathan and Kirsty - your contributions to the Right to Read Project, the communities of Nkora-Vumbi and Rambo, as well as the country of Rwanda is significant and appreciated!!