

# RIGHT TO READ RWANDA

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

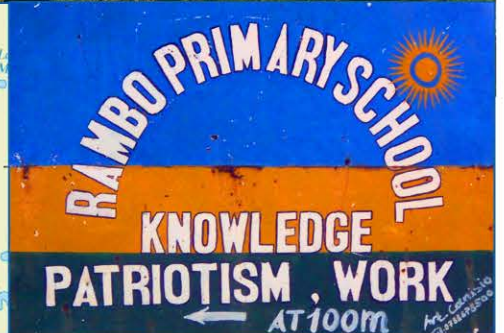
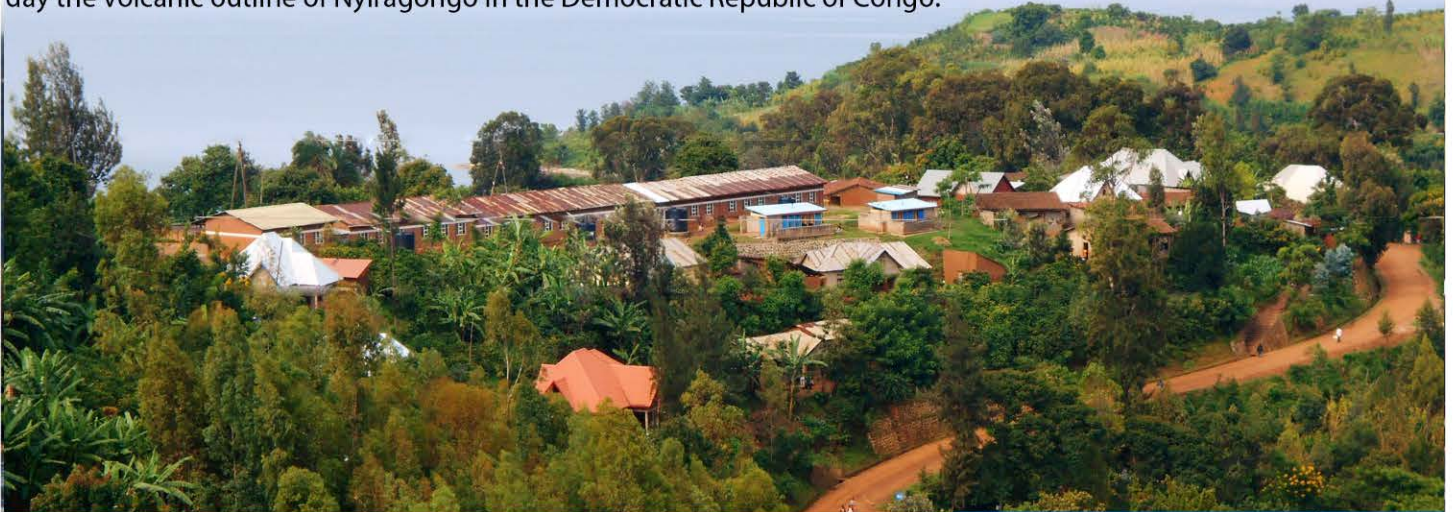
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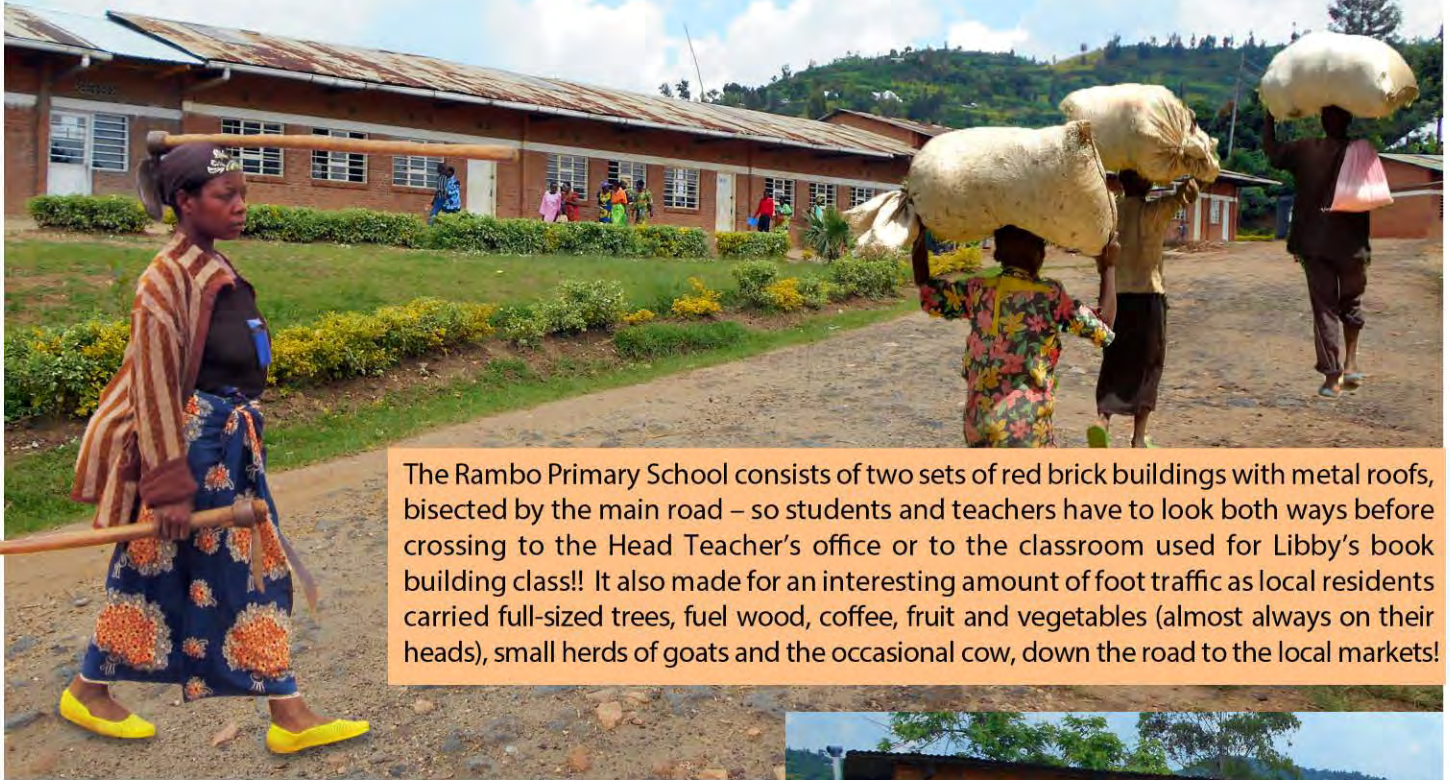
## Teacher Training Workshops at the Rambo Hub School

The third and fourth teacher training workshops of the Right to Read Rwanda Project took place at the Rambo Hub School between November 24th and December 5th, 2014. The Rambo Primary School is located outside of Rubavu (formerly Gisenyi), near the small villages of Rambo and Rubano, perched on a plateau above the Bralirwa Brewery (Brassieres et Limonadières du Rwanda), with a spectacular view of Lake Kivu, surrounding countryside, and on a clear day the volcanic outline of Nyiragongo in the Democratic Republic of Congo.



The 74 participants of the first workshop at Rambo comprised teachers from Rambo Primary School and Muybe Secondary School, including 2 Head Teachers and the Head of the education sector within which the schools are located. The second Rambo Workshop was attended by 57 participants from a variety of other Primary and Secondary Schools in the area, including the Head Teachers from Rambo Primary and Busoro Secondary Schools.

## Rambo Hub School and Schools in the Education Sector

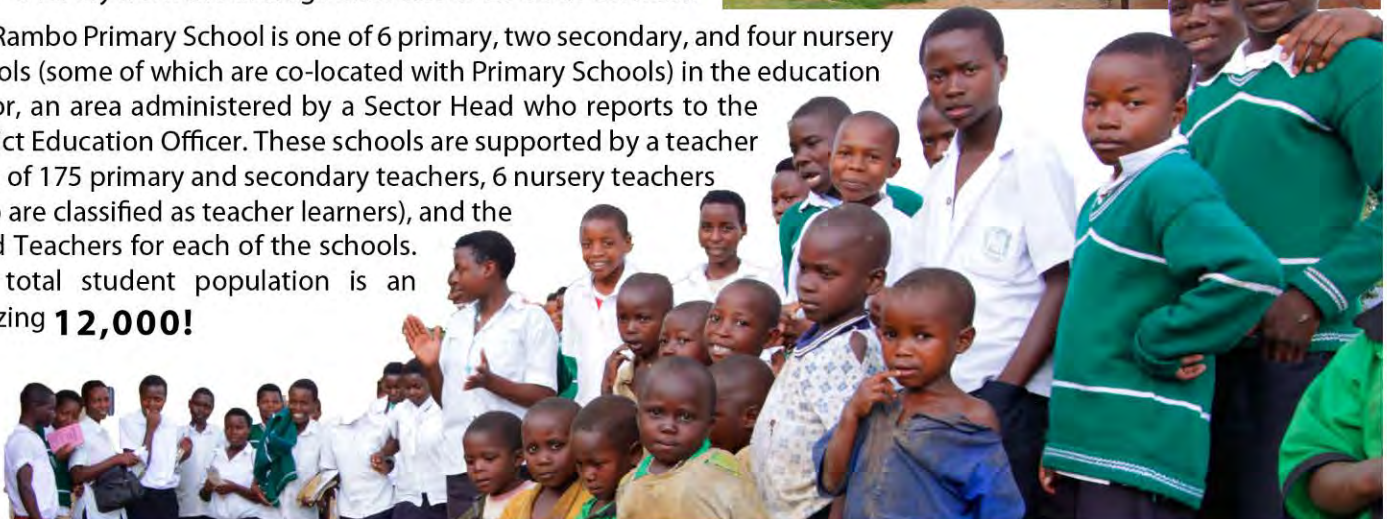


The Rambo Primary School consists of two sets of red brick buildings with metal roofs, bisected by the main road – so students and teachers have to look both ways before crossing to the Head Teacher’s office or to the classroom used for Libby’s book building class!! It also made for an interesting amount of foot traffic as local residents carried full-sized trees, fuel wood, coffee, fruit and vegetables (almost always on their heads), small herds of goats and the occasional cow, down the road to the local markets!

Built in 2003 to replace two older buildings which the student population had outgrown, it consists of 13 classrooms for Primary 1 – 6 (Grades 1-6 in North America), one office for the Head Teacher, a small library/resource room and a storage room. The school is also supported by several banks of the common long-drop outhouses (makes for interesting and sometimes unpleasant experiences) and several 1,000 gallon above-ground water storage tanks that harvest rain water off the roofs of the buildings, water used for domestic cleaning and often drinking water for students and surrounding community residents.

With a student population of just over 2,000 and a teaching team of 30 teachers, the school has a student – teacher ratio of 67—a far cry from the average class size of 20-30 in Canada!!

The Rambo Primary School is one of 6 primary, two secondary, and four nursery schools (some of which are co-located with Primary Schools) in the education Sector, an area administered by a Sector Head who reports to the District Education Officer. These schools are supported by a teacher team of 175 primary and secondary teachers, 6 nursery teachers (who are classified as teacher learners), and the Head Teachers for each of the schools. The total student population is an amazing **12,000!**



## Rambo Primary School Area

The Rambo area is primarily agricultural, although it is adjacent to the shores of Lake Kivu and the Bralirwa Brewery, so fishing and jobs at the brewery also support the local economy. The hills around the school are dotted with houses and terraced fields with crops of maize, sugar cane, cassava, beans, onions, peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers, as well as mangos, avocado, bananas and pineapple. At the Rambo School, we saw much of the produce being carried on top of women's heads along the road that bisects the school, on its way to small markets at the bottom of the road at the village of Rubano, into Rubavu, several kilometers away. Livestock, including chickens, goats, turkeys, cattle, rabbits and the odd fat-tailed sheep also forms a part of small family farm produce, some of it being used by the families, but most of it being sold for cash or other products.

The area is very hilly, with very rough, rocky roads and trails that are used to and from the many small villages, settlements or Umudugudus. The majority of people walk or take one of the many motos (motorcycle taxis), up and down the steep road.



## Teaching Team Profiles



Libby with Hezekiah, Erick & Elizabeth

### Elizabeth N Ireri

Elizabeth is a Kenyan citizen who is married with two children who all live in Kenya. She came to Rwanda in 2007 in search of greener pastures and has worked as an English mentor in government sponsored primary schools in the two Districts of Gasabo and Bugesera. She has also taught at Green Hills Academy. Elizabeth has worked for Tools for Schools for the past three years, saying “each year I get inspired when I see the improvement of the level of English with the teachers”.

### Hezekiah Owina

Hezekiah is a 29 year old Kenyan citizen and a teacher by profession. He has also completed a number of university courses in library information science, environmental science, special needs education, and active learning methodologies. Hezekiah currently works in Rwanda as a School Based Teacher Trainer (Mentor) with international education exchange in UNICEF child friendly schools in the Rusizi District (Gihundwe Sector) of Rwanda. Hezekiah has worked for Tools for Schools with the Partners For Change and Right to Read Rwanda Project for the past two years, and hopes that this important project will continue here in rural areas of Rwanda.

### Erick Odhiambo Oketch

Erick is from Nairobi, Kenya. A graduate of Jamhuri High School in 2003 with O levels, he later went to Green Technical Institute of Computer Studies and received a Certificate in Information Technology. Erick later joined Muranga Teachers College for P1 certificate course. He has worked with different education institutions since then, and is currently an English and sports teacher at Good Foundation School in Kigali, Rwanda. Erick has worked with the Tools for Schools Team, supporting the Right to Read and Partners for Change Rwanda project for the past 3 years.

## Partners in the Project

In this Newsletter, our thanks and formal recognition of contributions to the Right to Read Rwanda Project goes out to Rotarian Saudah Nadule. Saudah, a member of the Rotary Club of Kigali-Virunga and the lead member of the Host Rotary Club Committee, is also a very successful business woman with business interests that include a hair salon, a Spa, sale of delicious meat chickens (as opposed to tough, free-range country chicken), part owner in a call center, and the sale of Highland Milk produced just over the border in neighboring Uganda where she also has a number of family, friends and business associates.

Our thanks to her are not only for her significant contributions to the Project as a key member of Project Team and Host Rotary Club Committee, but also in her extra ordinary job and special skills at sourcing local supplies and suppliers from vehicles to move teaching team and all their gear to and from Rubavu for the three teacher training workshops, to food, furniture, library books and resources materials.

**Thank-you Rotarian Saudah for your valuable contributions to the Right to Read Rwanda Project!!**



Rotarian Saudah Nadule

## Book Building

The following is a profile of one of the fabulous books made by teachers as one of the projects completed during special English classes with Libby Weir, with each participant making a book from locally available materials (cardboard, cassava glue, scraps of fabric and paper) and then used the book to tell a story – a project that not only introduces art techniques in the development of the book cover, but reinforces the use of English in the development of their story and book.



### A Dream

By Venantie Uwamariya

Dedicated to my little children.

Have you ever seen two moons in the sky?

Certainly No.

My first moon, it symbolizes my first born.

It is a strong, big, wonderful son.

My second moon, it is a nice, pretty daughter.

I shoot for the moon and certainly fell on the stars!



## Rambo Hub School Workshop Graduations

Graduation days at Rambo Hub School (Friday, November 28th and Friday, December 5th saw 74 and 57 proud student teachers, respectively, celebrate the receipt of their graduation certificates! Other celebration activities included an exhibition of their hand-made English story books, singing some of the songs they learned together during Circle Time at the end of each day, the receipt of a Canada Flag pin and a group photo out in front of the School overlooking Lake Kivu!



The impact or reach of the two teacher training workshops held at the Rambo Hub School is significant. On the basis of average number of 65 – 70 students being taught per year by a teacher participating in the workshops, the reach is between 8,385 – 9,030 – huge numbers with potentially very big impacts on students who will be the future leaders of Rwanda!! The impacts are even greater if you look at numbers of students taught by these same teachers over the course of several years: approximately 18,000 over two years and 40,000 over 5 years!! This compared to only 8,000 and 20,000 over the same period of time for same numbers of teachers in Canada!

## Sponsorship

This Project is being funded with the support of a TRF Global Grant. Rotary partners include: Rotary Clubs of Jasper and Stony Plain from District 5370 (Canada); The Rotary Club of Kigali-Virunga from District 9150 (Rwanda); and Rotary Clubs of Chennai Info City, Madras East, Madras Marina, and Chennai Towers from District 3230 (India).

Other partners include: Tools for Schools, a Canadian registered, not for profit organization established in 2000 specifically to support enhancing education in rural areas of Rwanda; and Mission of Hope Rwanda, a newly established Rwandan not for profit organization focused on improving the quality of education in rural areas of Rwanda.



## Best-Unique Things About Rwanda

The following are common responses received from student teachers by Jill Fenton during one of her exercises intended to reinforce English language vocabulary during the workshops. Students were asked to work in small groups and to brain-storm the things that are best or unique about Rwanda, with a goal of coming up with a minimum of 40 different things. The groups assigned reporters and scorekeepers, as points were assigned depending on how unique their ideas are in comparison to the other groups.



**BEST NATIONAL MUSEUM IN EAST AFRICA**

**GOOD SYSTEM OF NATIONAL PARKS & NATURAL AREAS**

**VOLCANOS & MOUNTAIN GORILLAS**

**THE SOURCE OF THE NILE RIVER**

**NATIONAL ONE FAMILY-ONE COW PROGRAM**

**PEACE-KEEPING** – with highest percentage of troops per capita in the World to UN Peacekeeping missions in Africa.

**BEST ROADS & TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IN EAST AFRICA**

**VERY BUSINESS FRIENDLY COUNTRY**

- with certification following a two day course

**CLEAN COUNTRY** - with legislation prohibiting plastic bags

**UMUGANDA** – national public cleaning day (last Saturday each month) where all Rwandan participate in communal work for public good.

**MEMBER OF THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH**

- to enhance trade opportunities for Rwanda

**NATIONAL EXERCISE DAY**

- mandatory for all businesses for 2 hours every Friday

**NATIONAL SECURITY/SAFETY**

- supported by police and Rwandan Defense Forces

**MOST WOMEN AS MP<sup>s</sup> & IN PARLIAMENT (56%)**

- of any country in the world

**DECENTRALIZATION** - encouraging development in rural areas

**MOST DENSELY POPULATED COUNTRY SOUTH OF THE SAHARA**

- with 12 million people (420 per square kilometer)

- with new active national family planning program

**VISION 2020**

- including free education for all from P1 to S3 (grade 9), and targeting to S6 (grade 12) in future

**NATIONAL MALARIA ERADICATION PROGRAM**

- with netting provided for every 2 family members

- and 50% reduction in malaria cases

**GACACA COURT SYSTEM**

- following genocide of 1994 – tradition, community-based court for forgiveness and reconciliation by perpetrators of genocide and the individuals or families involved.

**NATIONAL NUTRITION PROGRAM IN ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

- 1 cup milk for every child

**MUTUAL** - national insurance program, with 98% of population subscribed,

- the highest of any African country

**NATIONAL RESTORATION/GREENING PROGRAM**

- 1 person, 3 trees, every year (36 million trees per year)

**UNITY AND RECONCILIATION**