

# RIGHT TO READ RWANDA

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

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## Week 5 - Teacher Training Workshop at the Nemba Hub School

The fifth and final teacher training workshop of the Right to Read Rwanda Project for 2014-15 took place at the Nemba Hub School between December 11 – 16, 2014.

The Nemba Primary School is located close to the Burundi border, approximately 56 kilometers (1.5 hour drive) south of Kigali.



The Nemba Primary School is located in the Bugesera District, a very different area than any other visited by the Right to Read Rwanda Project Team. It is one of seven Districts of the Eastern Province in Rwanda, with a population of 363,339 and 48% of which are below the poverty line. This is a predominately rural area with more than 65% living in small community settlements called Imidugudus.

Bugesera District is located in the southeastern plains of Rwanda and borders the Republic of Burundi in the South. The region is predominantly vegetated by dry savannas which are characterized by short grasses, shrubs and short trees – a characteristic of arid and semi-arid areas. Crop farming and livestock rearing (primarily cattle and goats) are the district's economy's backbones with 78% of the population depend on agriculture compared to 72% for national average.



Gross enrollment rate in Primary school is 142% while that of secondary is 22%. This percentage beyond 100% in primary school is due to the effort of the Rwandan primary education program (part of Vision 2020) – that of providing free schooling to all children between Primary 1 to Secondary 3 (grade 9) . English language proficiency, however, by both teachers and students is poor. This and high poverty levels, were the reasons the area and school was selected for inclusion in the Right to Read Rwanda Project.



## Nemba Hub School

Built in 2008 for school operations in 2009, with several of the buildings (now classrooms) previously serving as a refugee camp for youth after the Rwandan Genocide of 1994, the Nemba Primary School consists of three sets of red brick and metal siding/roofed buildings, in a well laid out, vegetated grounds approximately ½ kilometer off the main highway and close to the town of Nemba. The three buildings include: an office for the Head Teacher, staff room and meeting room/classroom; a building with 4 basic classrooms; and a building of 6 classrooms.

There are two sets of new toilet blocks, both with water supply harvested from the roofs and stored in above-ground storage tanks. One set of toilet blocks (two buildings) is for the boys and male teachers, with the second set for girls and female teachers. Two sets of toilet blocks (one for boys and one for girls) are currently under construction with grants from PLAN in Rwanda, in order to meet the needs of the growing student population. Each toilet block comprises typical long-drop toilets, 1 conventional toilet with running water for teachers and visiting dignitaries, a hand washing station, and a shower stall for use by students and teachers.

The school also prides itself with a new domestic water catchment and storage system, a system that did not exist only 8 months ago! Harvesting water from the roofs of the school buildings, the water system provides water for domestic use and the toilet blocks, includes: a 90 square meter underground storage tank and heavy duty hand pump; a 1000 gallon above ground storage tank, and 2 smaller above ground storage tanks, one each at the toilet blocks. This new water system was also made possible with grants from NGOs in Rwanda.

The grounds are well planned maintained, providing a great combination of shade, grass surfaces for play by school children and aesthetic beauty,

The student population is approximately 450 from P1 – P6 (grade 1-6) and growing, with class sizes of about 40. There is one shift of students in the morning and another in the afternoon. In addition to the Head Teacher, the teaching staff comprises a staff of 10 who live in community housing.

Future infrastructure needs to meet the needs of a growing student population are a new classroom building with 4-6 classrooms. This expansion would meet the needs of an additional 320 primary students, or perhaps an expansion into middle school grades (grades 7-9) so that students do not need to be transported to Nyamata (if their parents can afford it), a 30 minute commute (one-way)! The estimated cost of design and construction of a new classroom building is \$10 million Rwandan Francs, or about \$16,000 USD. No source of funding has yet been secured, so the School and Education Sector are still in search of a partner and source of funds to make this much needed expansion a reality – **perhaps an interested Rotary partner??**

## Teaching Team Member Profiles

In this Newsletter, we provide profiles for the three remaining members of our Right to Read Rwanda project team.



### Jill Fenton

Jill is a retired teacher and elementary school principal from Jasper (Alberta, Canada) who after her retirement (yeah right) decided she wanted to devote her time, experience and energy in Africa, after having lived and worked in West Africa (Ghana) for two years after completing teaching college many years ago. Jill was the Director of Green Hills Academy in Kigali, Rwanda for 10 years before turning her attention to her non-profit, Canadian registered charity, Tools for Schools, in 2010. Tools for Schools ([www.toolsforschools.org](http://www.toolsforschools.org)) was founded in order to utilize the experience and lessons learned during the development of Green Hills to aid other schools across Rwanda, and in so doing improving the educational opportunities available to Rwanda children, one child at a time.

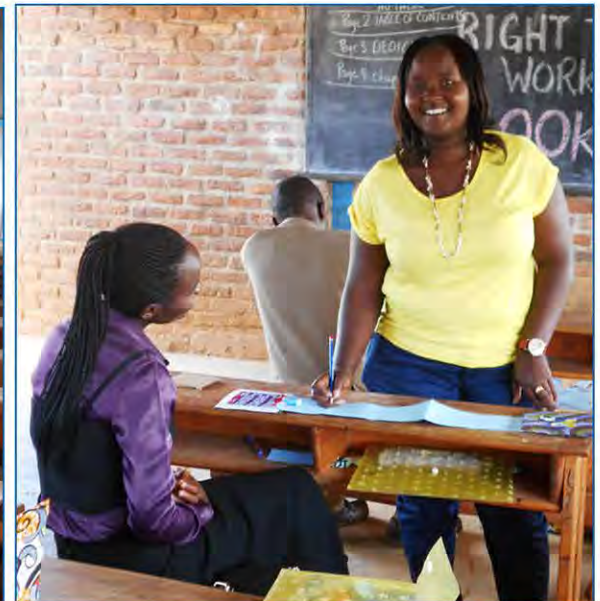
### Libby Weir

Libby is a visual artist and arts educator from Jasper (Alberta, Canada) who has a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Masters of Visual Arts degrees from the University of Alberta. She has been an active professional artist and educator for more than 25 years across Canada and internationally, is represented by a number of galleries in Canada and in 2006 was the recipient of a Manitoba Foundation for the Arts Above & Beyond Award for the Arts for the quality of her art education programming in rural and remote schools throughout Manitoba. Her visual arts and education background, along with her extensive travel in Europe, Central America and Africa have made her a great addition to the Right to Read Rwanda Project team for the past 3 years.



### Greg Fenton

Greg is the Superintendent at Jasper National Park in the Canadian Rockies (Alberta, Canada) who has worked for the Parks Canada Agency for almost 35 years as a senior manager and various other resource conservation-related positions across western and central Canada. He has travelled extensively in Europe, Central America and Africa with his wife Libby, and has assisted with humanitarian projects in Belize and Honduras. Although he has supported the Right to Read Rwanda Project for several years, this is the first time on the ground in the capacity of assistant project administrator, organizer, driver and co-producer of the Project newsletters.



## Nemba School Workshop Graduation



Graduation days at the Nemba School on Friday December 16, 2014 saw 47 proud student teachers 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 and their beautifully vegetated grounds!

## Partners in the Project

In this Newsletter, our thanks and formal recognition of contributions to the Right to Read Rwanda Project goes out to the following:

**Green Hills Academy**  
[www.greenhillsacademy.rw](http://www.greenhillsacademy.rw)



Green Hills Academy is a private family of schools from Nursery to Secondary 4 and linked with Cambridge IGCSE and International Baccalaureate programs. Located in Kigali, Rwanda they are committed to preparing future leaders of both Rwanda and the world by providing an excellent education. Green Hills continues to be a supporter of the Right to Read Rwanda Project, providing specialized training to librarians, nursery teachers and Head teachers towards improving quality of education at the rural schools included in the Project.

**Vision of Hope Rwanda**  
[www.vohrwa.org](http://www.vohrwa.org)



Vision of Hope Rwanda is a Rwandan non-governmental organization established to empower children, youth and women, through advocacy for rights, business skills and entrepreneurship, improved Agriculture, nature conservation, reproductive health education, water and sanitation, ICT integration in schools and community for better livelihood. They were instrumental in identifying and feasibility assessments that resulted in the Nemba and Nyamata Hub Schools in the Bugesara District of Rwanda being included in the Right to Read Rwanda Project for this year.

**Hugh Lecky**  
[www.tekarracolorlab.com](http://www.tekarracolorlab.com)



Hugh Lecky, Owner/Operator of Tekarra Color in Jasper (Alberta, Canada) and past President of the Rotary Club of Jasper has been a long-time supporter of the Right to Read Rwanda Project. This year he donated several digital cameras for use in documenting Project activities, as well as his time and skills in the production of the Project Newsletters.

**Thanks to each of you and your organization for your valuable contributions to the Right to Read Rwanda Project in 2014-15!!**

## The Next Elements in the Project

Other elements of the Right to Read Rwanda Project that are currently in process, now that the teacher training workshops have been completed, include:

- ▶ the establishment of a school and community-based library for Nemba and Nyamata Hub schools;
- ▶ the training of a teacher or community member from each hub school at Green Hills Academy in Kigali to ensure accessibility and effective use of the library and resource materials by teachers, students and community members;
- ▶ the giving of solar panels and lights to teachers from Nyamata and Nemba Hub Schools who have no or limited electricity in their homes; and providing bulletin and white boards for Nyamata and Nemba Primary Schools as educational aids for teachers and students.



## 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.

