

# NEXUS

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Ordinary people can make an  
extraordinary difference



**FRIENDS IN TANZANIA**



## KINYAMBU SCHOOL AND LIBRARY KENYA, EAST AFRICA

by Connie Gerwing



Kinyambu, in Makueni County in Kenya, is a village about 200 kilometers east of Nairobi. Nairobi, the capital and largest city of Kenya, has about three million people. Most of Kenya's population, just over 40 million, live on shambas (small farms) and villages throughout the country. It's a rural country. Since 2010, Rainbow of Hope has had a project with the Kinyambu Primary School. We began by raising funds to help purchase school resources. The parents and teachers chose a security fence as their first need. The school grounds are large and students are trying to plant trees and learn about agriculture by growing a garden. Without a fence, grazing animals, goats and cattle, are free to wander through the school grounds and ruin their efforts. Cardinal Leger School in Saskatoon decided, in 2010, that they would take on fundraising to help Rainbow of Hope build a library at the school. They met their goal in two years.

Simon Ngumbi, a resident of the Kinyambu and deputy educational director for a neighboring area, worked to set up an organization in the area that could handle the accountability needs of Rainbow of Hope. This local organization initiates and oversees the projects and keeps the records. They are mainly teachers and parents who live in the area and want to work on helping young people be successful.

In November 2013, Rainbow of Hope President George Bunz and director, Connie Gerwing, and two other members of the group, Norm Duerr and Henry Spennath came to monitor the projects. The needs of rural Africa are great and this project is helping an area where there have been few development projects.

We visited several schools, secondary and primary, and learned how the Kenyan educational system operates. A typical primary school provides free education for children to Standard 8, like Grade 8 to us. The government supplies books and materials but there are usually not enough texts. The children often get only one pencil and one notebook for the entire year for all subjects, and parents must supply uniforms.



There are almost no basic supplies like chalk, books, writing materials, art and music supplies, or library books. The walls are mostly bare and desks are crude and crowded.

When we visited in November 2013, the library building had just started. Foundations were dug and the construction supplies were stacked and waiting for the workers.



**Workers tying rebar and laying rock to be covered with cement for foundation.**



We had a great meeting with the parents and teachers. We presented them with some teaching and basic school and sports supplies we had brought with us. They were excited to have something substantive to take to their classrooms. We also made sure to tell how the project began and what people in Canada were doing to help them. We were very pleased with how the project coordinator, Simon, was involving all the stakeholders in the implementation of the project, including the district and school administration.

The parents have taken a great interest in and participated fully in the projects. For example, Rainbow of Hope supplied the funds for fencing materials and the parents and teachers volunteered to build it. And now they were offering to volunteer, where they could, to help construct the library.



**The library is a technical project involving a qualified engineer and skilled labour. So pupils (at left) and parents (at right) helped build the library by carrying and biking water for cement making, providing security to protect supplies and helping with other tasks that didn't require construction experience.**



**Above are Kinyambu pupils in assembly with the library building in the background behind the big tree on the right. Below, teachers are gathered in their new library, sending their appreciation.**



The library building was completed early March 2014. The school staff, parents and pupils are very excited to have a beautiful new building with good windows and doors so that books and materials won't deteriorate.

The school staff is eagerly considering what books and materials they would like to have in the library. They are looking at setting up some programs where parent volunteers read to the students and also listen to the students read. This type of volunteer activity is not well-known in Kenyan schools. They are also getting organized to finish the fence around the school yard and considering what other resources they want with the funds that have been raised. Electricity has just come to the school in a limited way and this presents some exciting possibilities for them.

When I return to Kinyambu in February of 2015, I hope to help the staff set up the library and bring some new ideas to the school. I'd love to take a teacher librarian and some other teachers along to provide some in-service education to the school staff. **Any retired teachers want to come along?**



## MEETING NEW FRIENDS IN TANZANIA by George Bunz

Following our visit to Kenya, on November 21, 2014, Rainbow of Hope's monitoring team stepped into a prop plane at Nairobi. We arrived an hour and half later at Mwanza, the second largest city in Tanzania and economic centre of the Lake Victoria region, Africa's largest lake.

At the airport, we immediately knew we were in a country with few resources. The terminal was tiny for a region of 2 million people, no waiting area inside nor luggage handling services. But what a very beautiful country it was and how friendly the people were, everyone offering a Tanzanian handshake, "Welcome to Tanzania!"

Five hours later, we arrived at 10:30 pm by van at St. Thomas Aquinas School, a private boarding school, in Ussongo. Fr. Valerian and seminarian, Ande Mlene, welcomed us and offered us a lunch of rice, chicken, and *sukuma wiki*, a type of kale chopped into a spinach-like salad, nourishing and tasty. Its name means "push the week". Most people here only can afford to eat meat once a week, usually on the weekend. So when you eat *sukuma wiki*, you are pushing for the weekend to arrive to have some meat with your meal.

We especially thank Fr. Francis Chuwa, founder of St. Thomas Aquinas School, for inviting us to stay there. Over the years, he has done an impressive job improving the resources and living conditions at the school to enable greater access to boys and girls from many parts of Tanzania to attend.

Currently 150 girls and 550 boys attend the school. It has many needs, but by Tanzanian public school standards, it is well endowed. Norman Duerr and his supporters have helped the school, but Rainbow of Hope, being a register charity, can only do projects that have access to all, especially those with little family income. Fr. Chuwa appreciated that we were here to help the Ussongo Primary Public School and assess the state of other schools. He and his staff graciously drove us over dusty roads to visit these schools and communities.

Shortly after we arrived, Norman and I walked several km to Ussongo School to prepare for the visit of our full team and the inauguration of the new facilities. Along the well trodden trail, we met the charming family featured on our NEXUS cover. They were walking to visit a friend for morning tea, grandmother, gracefully, carrying the teapot on her head. What a privilege to meet them and to share stories and friendship. We are grateful they gave us permission to use their picture in our publications.

Passing through the little village, several children came to walk with us holding our hands. The homes were mostly sunbaked clay with thatched roofs.



We arrived at the school to the excitement of children. Vice-headteacher, Monica, and a beginning teacher, Jacqueline, warmly greeted us. Jaqueline spoke perfect English and said their headteacher, Miss Valentine, was recuperating at home from an accident. She had fallen off a motorbike and severely injured her leg. She was treated by a medical doctor, Sr. Fabiola, at the Convent clinic. They told us that Miss Valentine requested us to visit her at home. Sr. Fabiola walked us there. After profuse hospitality, we reviewed the project details and the accountability report requirements.

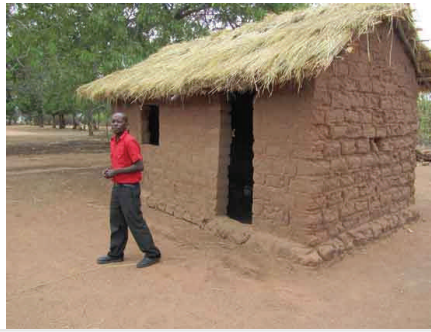


Miss Valentine showed us her wound. Ouch! Sr. Fabiola explained that she had to stitch inside to cover the flesh over the bone and then outside to cover the skin over the wound. Not yet fully healed, Miss Valentine was determined to attend the inauguration scheduled two days hence.

One of our objectives was to visit schools in the area and assess their needs. So over the two days, we visited 4 government primary (standard 1-7) schools. Typically larger schools were better off than smaller ones, but not much. The schools had high enrollments mostly 50 to 80 in each class. Discipline was strict, but kind, and all were bursting with school spirit.



**This is an inside and outside view of a typical school kitchen where staff and parents cook meals. Cooking is done on an open fire.**



Then, Monica rushed to the office to get pieces of chalk, and several children approached the blackboard, and they proudly showed us their writing.



After receiving hundreds of hugs and high-fives from the children, the teachers invited us to their new staffroom where we enjoyed refreshments and local roasted peanuts, very tasty. We presented a Canadian flag and gave each staff member a Canadian pin and the school skipping ropes and Frisbees. The teachers enjoyed these as much as the children and began to skip and play Frisbee with the them.



Our last day, we visited the Daughters of Mary convent. What impressive work they do! Sr. Fabiola and Sr. Angela are certified medical doctors and operate a medical clinic for the entire region. Watch for their story in the fall/winter NEXUS.

Teaching resources were virtually non existent. A few textbooks, soiled from use and bits of chalk were stored preciously in the office and brought to class by each teacher as needed. Notwithstanding the lack of resources, the pupils excelled in academic achievement, each headteacher displaying their government exam results in their office and proudly speaking of them.

We asked how best could we help them. All said water to cope with the long periods of drought. They often rely on pupils to bring water from a creek. They were skeptical of drilling wells, due to cost and fear of a dry hole. They said that helping them to install infrastructure to collect rain would be the best water security.

November 27, the time had come for the inauguration of their new classrooms funded by Rainbow of Hope. Dozens of "scouts" rushed to inform their teachers of our arrival into the schoolyard. Excitement pierced the air, as children paraded us to meet Miss Valentine. She invited us to her little office where her staff had gathered and heartily welcomed us to the school.

After sharing precious time together with the staff discussing our respective school systems, we went to meet the pupils who were standing in assembly. They sang their national anthem to the beat of drums, and we reciprocated with O Canada. Then, Miss Valentine invited each of our team to speak, and she did a good job translating English into Swahili.

***We asked how best could we help them. They all said water to cope with the long periods of drought.***

The assembly ended with the children singing a few spirited songs to the rhythm of several drums. Norman and I were invited to cut the ribbon. The facility was well constructed, housing 2 classrooms, a staff room, and a storage room. It had steel framed windows and security shutters. Then, the teachers invited us to visit their pupils in their new classrooms.

We were astounded to see the standard 1 class had 50 pupils and the standard 2 class had 72 pupils. We spoke to the children about Canada and encouraged them in their studies.





# Huert Escolar El Sauce

## O'KANE CONSULTANTS VISIT PROJECTS IN EL SALVADOR: ORGANIC GARDENS AT EL SAUCE SCHOOL AND COMUS SUSTAINABLE COFFEE PROJECT IN USULUTAN REGION

Mike O'Kane and his group of consultants based in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan have been very supportive of our projects in El Salvador, including our recent scholarship programs implemented by CIS that help disadvantaged youth who otherwise could not attend high school or university. Rainbow of Hope traditionally values its supporters visiting its international projects to observe first hand the conditions of the people and how their support is helping them. In February of 2014, the O'Kane consultants stretched their support to visit El Sauce School and COMUS with Clara Qualizza, our project coordinator, environmentalist, and Rainbow of Hope director.



El Sauce School receives many visitors from universities, farmers, and environmentalists, local and abroad, because of its unique program of integrating bio-intensive agriculture in its curriculum. With the support of Rainbow of Hope, the students have literally turned their school yard into a bountiful organic mini-farm. What was once ground, solid like pavement, is now deep rich soil, hand tilled by the students. They learn environmentally friendly agriculture techniques in class and practicum and develop leadership skills sharing their knowledge with their visitors.

The Canadian visitors were greeted at the school by the students waving hand coloured Canadian flags. Then, Professor Castor Artiga welcomed the O'Kane crew to their school and addressed the assembly. He explained that the "bio intensive" method is based on principles that can be adapted to climate conditions easily implemented with hand techniques and simple tools. The result is an ecological agriculture producing nutritious organic food and also helps to reconstruct and improve soil fertility in the process.



Mike O'Kane was presented with a hammock and each consultant was awarded a medal of thanks.







The O'Kane crew, along with some local police who dropped in, learned the technique of double digging.



Then the students explained the types of soil and compost and how to plant the seeds.



Before leaving, the O'Kane crew challenged the students to a hockey game. We have not heard who won, but it was a time of friendship to be remembered by both forever.



Faceoff time

## ASOCIACIÓN COORDINADORA DE COMUNIDADES UNIDAS DE USULUTAN COMUS SUSTAINABLE COFFEE PROJECT

This project is Rainbow of Hope's largest (over \$1,000,000) involving the local COMUS, and a 3:1 matching grant from Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development (DFAITD). It is in its second year of five. Its goal is to improve the long term economic and environmental viability of the community owned coffee processing plant and capacity of the COMUS to improve the food security of vulnerable rural families in the Department of Usulután, about 25,000 people.



The O'Kane crew were impressed with the crop diversity at the demo site and El Palmo Coffee tree nursery.

Bravo, O'Kane consultants, we salute you for taking such a keen interest in our projects in El Salvador and for building relationships with the people there!



## RAINBOW OF HOPE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE SUPPORT OF:



Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada

Affaires étrangères, Commerce et Développement Canada



All our donors, several Rotary Clubs and Knights of Columbus, Edmonton Community Foundation, and the Al Gerwing Charitable Foundation. Special thanks to Jonathon at Bison Printing for our cover page in colour and the leadership students at Blessed Sacrament School in Wainwright for helping with the mailout.

Government of Alberta  
CIP - International Development

**Thank you all for your support**

## NEW BY-LAW AND OBJECTIVES

Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) has been working full steam auditing registered charitable organizations, some 800 this year. Interestingly, the focus of these audits is on by-laws and objectives to assure the activities engaged in are indeed charitable. A concern is to assure registered charities are not engaged in political activity which CRA defines as: any activity that tries to change, retain, or oppose a law, decision, or policy of any government. We were missing only one by-law, a dissolution clause. Although no project was identified to be political or non-charitable, CRA said our objectives were too broad and developed a set of objectives, based on our projects, that are more focused. We were able to make a few changes before signing a compliance agreement. The board of directors plans to retain some of its previous objectives as value statements.

## ANNUAL MEETING JUNE 28 AT 1:15 PM

### BLESSED SACRAMENT CHURCH HALL

906 - 6 AVENUE  
WAINWRIGHT, ALBERTA

## NEW BYLAW

Upon the dissolution of the corporation and after payment of all debts and liabilities, its remaining property shall be distributed or disposed of to qualified donees as they are defined in subsection 149.1 (1) of the Income Tax Act.

## NEW OBJECTIVES

1. To advance education in developing nations by providing training on agriculture and horticulture with a view to develop and implement sustainable and self-sufficient farming practices.
2. To relieve poverty in developing nations by providing food and basic necessities of life to individuals and families in need.
3. To promote health in developing nations by providing health care services and treatments to individuals and families in need.
4. To advance education by establishing and/or operating schools.
5. To advance education by providing scholarships, school supplies, and other forms of financial assistance to individuals in need.
6. To address and prevent specific problems faced by youth and women in developing nations at risk of substance abuse, violence, and prostitution by providing applicable counselling, workshops and seminars.
7. To provide the necessities of life to victims of disasters.

## RAINBOW OF HOPE FOR CHILDREN PROGRAMS

1. Reducing avoidable blindness, Bali, Indonesia
2. MMTRP-AL (Rural women workers and fisherwomen in Alagoas), Brazil
3. School of family agriculture, Bahia, Brazil
4. Grota da Alegria, Brazil
5. PREDA protecting children, Philippines (future)
6. El Sauce School organic agriculture, El Salvador
7. COMUS sustainable coffee cooperative, El Salvador
8. Scholarship program, CIS, El Salvador
9. Disaster reconstruction & education, Chincha Baja, Peru
10. Kinyambu Primary School, Kenya
11. Ussongo Primary School, Tanzania
12. School for early childhood education and disadvantaged adolescent girls - Daughters of Mary, Ussongo, Tanzania
13. Water infrastructure for schools in East Africa (future)
14. PAMBE mother tongue bilingual School, Ghana
15. Disaster relief fund
16. Undesignated: where most needed

We thank you for offering a gift to one of these projects and are pleased to acknowledge your gift with an income tax deductible receipt. Kindly send you gift to:

RAINBOW OF HOPE  
PO BOX 2883  
WAINWRIGHT, AB T9W 1S7

Registered Charity No: 889160172-RR0001  
[www.rainbowofhopeforchildren.ca](http://www.rainbowofhopeforchildren.ca)

**CORRECTION ON FLAP OF RETURN ENVELOPE:**  
Please note our Treasurer, Richard Forer, has a new email address. It is: [forer711@shaw.ca](mailto:forer711@shaw.ca)