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15<sup>th</sup> June 2020

## NAHIMANA'S NEWS

Dear Friends,

Gosh and golly, hasn't the world changed so much in the 6 months since I last wrote to you! We are used to crises of varying descriptions happening here, but the Western World is usually our point of reference, because you can rely on things there being pretty stable, year in year out...or so we thought! This Coronavirus Pandemic has turned so many things on their heads and has really driven home the point that God needs to be our foundation, as He is the only one who can be relied upon to remain the same, yesterday, today and forever.

So many of our plans and expectations for 2020 have changed. This was supposed to be the year when Bethany took her A-levels in England, and Abigail her IGCSE's here...although frustrating, the cancellation of exams definitely decreased the stress levels for our daughters. The plan for Bethany to return to Burundi for Abi's graduation and to spend the summer here with us, also had to be cancelled, as the borders and airport have been closed since March. We have no idea when they will re-open, and having been quoted a ticket price of \$3315/£2800 per person for a single flight to London, I'm very glad this was not our summer to be returning to the UK!

These are strange days to be living in Burundi. The Pandemic is not being dealt with here as it is in the rest of the world. People have been told to wash hands and trust God to protect them. Other than that, the majority of people continue about their daily lives as usual. As an Insulin Dependent Diabetic (who has access to external news reports and can see the effects this virus can have on those with underlying medical conditions) once the first death from COVID-19 was reported here, we made the decision to observe social distancing measures, much to the amusement of our Burundian friends and colleagues. So, the children and I have been at home for most of the last 11 weeks...



It's one thing to be in lockdown when the rest of your community are also...a whole different challenge when most people are continuing with life as usual. Josiah and Abigail have been doing home-based learning, which thanks to them being older and the advent of Google Classrooms, is a totally different experience to the trauma that was Home Schooling, during the crisis of 2015. They have both been awesome. We start the day with some kind of exercise, whether Joe Wickes with the rest of the world, or a different YouTube workout, and then they settle down to study. It has been fine, but I think we will all be relieved once tests are over and school finishes in just over 2 weeks' time.

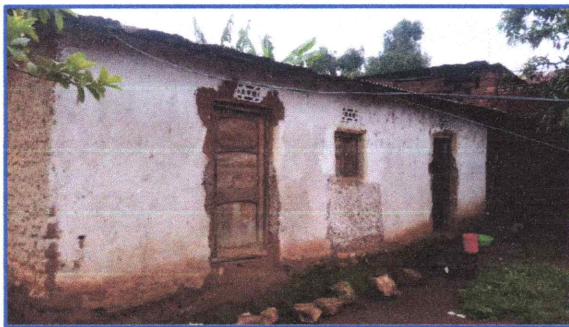


So...what is going on with Restoration of Hope? Thanks to the amazing response to our Christmas newsletter, we received enough money to not only to buy some furniture and provide a Christmas meal for Via and the 9 children that she has taken in, but also to build them a new house! What an incredible answer to prayer that was!

In January, a friend in America contacted us and explained that she had been left money to buy a new house after her father recently passed away. She was feeling a bit uncomfortable moving into a bigger property, knowing so many people in the world didn't have a home. When she received our newsletter, she decided that if she could donate a house to a family in need, she would feel better about her own upcoming house move! How awesome is that – God's timing is perfect!

When Honda drove up to Kirundo to explain to Via, that our friend in America wanted to build her a house, she couldn't quite understand it. Via's Mum kept asking if that would mean that when she died, Honda would take the house back and take her land with it too! The fact that someone could offer to build them a house, with no strings attached, just as a gift of love, was too much for them to grasp.

And so in January, Honda set off to Kirundo to start to build the family a new home. As is usual here, nothing quite works out how you anticipate – a change of house design, the unavailability of materials in Kirundo and a rise in costs, meant that after 2 months the money had finished, but the house build hadn't. Again, our American friend stepped in and at the beginning of May, Via's home was completed:



Via's old home



Via's new home!

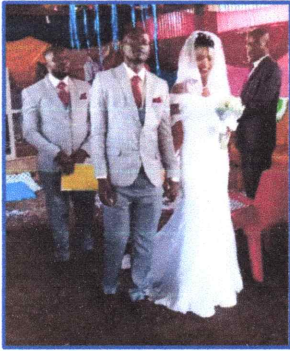
The week before the house was completed, one of the smaller children said to Via, "That looks like a house that would have a television. Will we have a TV?" Via just laughed and said "No, of course not". This family had never had electricity or water piped into their house before. During the second week of May, Honda went with a team from Bujumbura to pray with the family and hand over the keys. The night before they left, someone had contacted him and asked if he could take a television that they no longer needed, to bless the family! Honda had no idea of the conversation that had taken place with Via and the child...you can imagine the looks on the children's faces when he arrived and took the TV out of the car! Honda may not have known the desires of that little child's heart, but God did...and He answered, like the awesome Father that He is!



Thank you to everyone who prayed and gave to make this dream a reality. Honda sat and spoke with Via, who was just in awe – with tears in her eyes, she shared how for years she had prayed



for God to provide beans and rice, but would never have dared to voice a prayer for a home. As it says in Jeremiah 29:11, God's plans are to prosper and not to harm, to give hope and a future – He really does provide for His children.



At the end of last year Jean-Marie, one of the oldest in our RoH family got married. He moved out of the Mutakura Hope House in 2017, and it is wonderful to see him making progress in life. He has a job, a rented home and now has a wife to share life with.

Through our educational support charity, "Hope in Burundi" (Charity No.1151062), we now provide school fees and educational support for more than 40 girls, as well as the 110+ boys, from all over the country. In February, 2 of the girls who graduated last summer started University. Both are studying for degrees in Business Management. This month another 2 students will also graduate from secondary school. It is encouraging to see young people, who wouldn't have even been able to attend primary school, finishing year 13 and moving on to university. "Hope in Burundi", which started off as a 'good idea' from our friend Sarah Ballard, is helping so many young people achieve their dreams... When you have a 'good idea', dare to voice it – you don't know how many people's dreams will be realised because of your obedience in stepping out!

We would ask you to be standing in prayer for Ella, one of the girls from our Hope House in Gitega, who was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis earlier in the year. She had a particularly bad flare up and couldn't walk, use her hands or get out of bed. She is receiving treatment and is doing much better now, but decided that being in school wasn't going to work. Ella is now doing training in a local hair salon, and really enjoys her time there.



In April, heavy rains caused major flooding in Uvira – Democratic Republic of Congo – the town where we support Pastor Joel and 18 orphaned children. Heavy rain in the mountains caused 2 rivers to overflow their banks, causing devastating mudslides - the water and mud sweeping through the town destroying everything in their path. Hundreds of homes were destroyed, making thousands homeless. The mud was so high that minibuses could only be identified by their roofs, sticking out of the mud.



The flood waters reached the roof!

Sadly, the motorbike we had purchased to use as an income generator for the orphaned children was swept away, along with its driver. To this day we have no idea where he went – many bodies were never found. At present there are 40 people taking refuge in the small church building as their homes were destroyed. Please pray for Pastor Joel to have wisdom as he tries to counsel and lead so many people who have been traumatised by the loss of family members and their homes.

If anyone would like to contribute specifically to help Pastor Joel as he cares for the flood victims, please use the bank details at the end, and mark your gift "Help for Uvira".

Three weeks ago Maria, who is the Mamma at our Gitega Hope House, was hit by a motorbike as she crossed the road. It was a terrible accident, and the motorbike driver lost his arm and leg in

the crash. Maria had to be hospitalised and was brought down to Bujumbura to have surgery to pin her elbow back together. Please pray that she heals quickly, without complications.

Since I started this newsletter (yes it does take a few days of procrastination before I finally finish) we have received news that the President of Burundi unexpectedly passed away. The new President will be sworn in 2 months early, but this leaves people with many questions and concerns. We would ask for your prayers for peace during this time of transition.

In these strange days let us all try to learn from the following quote:

“Sometimes you have to let go of the picture of what you thought life would be like & learn to find joy in the story you’re living”

The Apostle Paul nailed it when he said “I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances”. Let’s focus on being thankful for what we do have and let go of the unfulfilled expectations, knowing that in ALL things, He is working for our good!

Thank you so much for all your prayers and support. We could not do this without you!

Much love

**Honda, Libby, Bethany, Abigail, Josiah**  
**XXX**



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