

BP 1865  
Bujumbura  
Burundi  
East Africa

thenahimanas@yahoo.co.uk  
www.hopeinburundi.org  
Honda: + 257 76663500  
Libby: + 257 69137070

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## NAHIMANA'S NEWS

Dear Friends,

This September marked the start of my 27<sup>th</sup> year in Burundi and our 19<sup>th</sup> year working with ex-street-children in what quickly became known as Restoration of Hope. Things have not always been easy – living through 8 years of civil war, seasons of civil unrest, a couple of attempted coups, along with the day-to-day challenges of ministering to the 'least of these' in a country which has for many years rated as the 'poorest country in the world' according to UN statistics, has its challenges, but you couldn't pay me enough to make me leave! Even though the challenges can sometimes feel almost overwhelming, being in the centre of God's will is the safest and most rewarding place to be...

### Restoration of Hope:

**Uvira:** In October Elia, one of the young men who we have supported from Pastor Joel's church in Uvira, got married. RoH supported him through university where he qualified with a degree in Business Administration. He worked as a teacher for a couple of years and is now a full-time Pastor here in Burundi. It is great to see God taking someone with no hope, turning their life around and now using them as a beacon to bring His hope to others.



**Education:** In September once again, we were blessed to be able to send 123 children off to primary and secondary school and 14 young people to university, fully equipped with everything they would need to work towards the fulfilment of their dreams to get a quality education and make a difference in Burundi. Some of those we support have struggles due to the poor start they had in life, but on the whole, 95% are doing well and achieving the targets set for them.



Cyprien was supported by RoH for 15 years and qualified as a nurse 7 years ago. He is now doing his final placement before qualifying as an Anaesthetist – from an orphan on the streets to a vital member of a surgical team – with God, all things are possible!

**Spiritual impact:** Ami and Jean, two men who have been working with us as housefathers and school liaison representatives at Restoration of Hope for over 18 years, are now both married with children of their own. They continue to serve faithfully and are also part of the intercession ministry at Eglise Vivante, the church where Honda and I met.

In November Ami and Jean were asked to travel to Doula, Cameroon, to join the Intercession team for a large series of crusades led by Chris Ndikumana, a Burundian evangelist. It was the first time both men have flown in an aeroplane, and they had a wonderful time. Most days over 200,000 people attended the meetings, hundreds gave their lives to Jesus and many miraculous healings were recorded. It is great to see those we work with being used by God in such a powerful way.



**The women's sewing project:** The second cohort from our sewing project will be graduating in January 2024. Since we restarted the Sewing Centre 2 years ago, 19 women have been trained and are now able to run their own small businesses. We would hope to be able to start another 10 women in the project in February, but in order to do that we are trusting God for £4000 which will enable us to buy 10 sewing machines, charcoal irons, material, and resources, and pay the sewing teacher for a year.



**The soap making factory:** As I said in our last newsletter, Dieudonne and his family had moved to Kenya to take up a new job and so we were praying that God would provide someone to head up this new project. The contract Dieudonne signed was only for a short time and afterwards he was unable to find further employment. Dieudonne and his wife returned to Burundi and over the last 3 months he has set up and started to run the soap making factory. At present he is training one young man, and the hope is that in time, the project will expand and become an income generating business.

**Thankfulness:** In October we were contacted by a few members of the RoH family who said they wanted to come and see Honda and me. They wouldn't say why, but just asked for a few hours of our time. One Saturday morning I bought the fantas which are a vital part of any gathering in Burundi, made a cake, then over 25 of our RoH family, past and present arrived. We were unsure of the purpose of their visit but were absolutely



blown away when they took it in turn to thank us for the impact we had had on their lives , rescuing them from dire poverty and a life of crime on the street and giving them a future and a hope.

Honda and I were presented with a golden cup and medals for being parents who had blessed them beyond what they had ever imagined to be possible, giving them a home, an education and introducing them to the God who loves them. They apologised that only a few of them had been able to come, then proceeded to give us a USB memory stick which contained almost 2 hours of testimonies and messages of thanks from RoH alumni now living all over the world – in Oman, China, Germany, Canada, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa and here in Burundi. They had spent months collecting the messages and also wrote a song which they recorded for us. This was such a special time and we felt so blessed to have raised these young men and women, who have now grown up and are making a difference all over the world.



We know that we are the ones on the ground here but readily acknowledge that none of this would be possible without your prayers and financial support, and for this we are so grateful.

## Challenges:

The economic situation in Burundi continues to be one of the greatest challenges we face. The dollar exchange rate is at an all-time high, which helps when we transfer money, but has pushed the cost of all goods to impossibly elevated prices. We have had to make cutbacks in our spending and changed the way we shop in order to feed so many people in our care. As we head towards Christmas, our bank account is almost empty, but we are believing God for a miracle to be able to celebrate with all of those who are supported by Restoration of Hope. In 19 years of running RoH we have always celebrated the birth of Jesus, and we trust that this year will be no different.

Another challenge in Burundi is the high unemployment, which means those who are finishing school are unable to find work. In the poorest country in the world, with high levels of corruption, limited natural resources and a very small manufacturing sector, I'm not sure how this can turn around, but I know we serve the God of the impossible!

## Prayer Points:

1. Pray for the Burundi government to have wisdom and integrity in running the country – that they may make wise decisions that will benefit the population, not just line their own pockets.
2. Pray for miraculous provision for the sewing project, Christmas outreaches, meals, and celebrations.
3. Pray for Honda and the team to have vision and direction to know how to lead RoH forward in the coming year.

## Answered Prayers:

Thank you so much for your prayers over the last 6 months – we serve a God who answers prayer:

- Dieudonne is now overseeing the soap making factory, which is a real answer to prayer.
- Since I returned to Burundi in August the petrol situation has been somewhat better. The government raised the price by 62%, which has had a knock-on effect on the cost of buses, taxis, and food items, due to increased transport costs, but at least petrol is more readily available.
- Thanks to the generosity and sacrificial giving of friends and supporting churches we were able to send 123 children to school and 14 to university for the new academic year. This is such an answer to prayer.

## Nahimana Family News:



Thanks so much for your prayers – my health is now much improved. While I was in the UK, I was given Libre Sensors – adhesive patches that constantly monitor my blood glucose and send alerts via my phone if my blood sugar is going too high or too low. They took a while to get used to but now my life as a diabetic is much easier to handle. I rarely have very low blood sugars as I get warning when they are beginning to drop. This has transformed my life – praise Jesus for the wonders of technology and the NHS! I continue to be involved in running CRIB, counselling, mentorship, discipleship, Freedom in Christ, heading prayer and intercession and generally loving people in as many creative ways as I can. I am so blessed to love what I do and feel privileged to be able to be the hands and feet of Jesus in this country.

Thank you so much to all of you who we interacted with during our time in the UK – we returned home feeling truly blessed by our time away, and so grateful to God for the people He has put in our lives who love us so well.

**Josiah** had a fabulous time in the UK and was so happy to reconnect with friends at our home church, The Community Church in Burton. Although a UK passport holder, as with Bethany, Josiah will have to spend 3 years in the UK before attending university to qualify for UK resident rates. We are so grateful to God that friends of ours, the Brown family, have offered to host Josiah while he is doing his A-levels in England. Paul Brown has visited Burundi twice, and his 2 children Sam and Molly, are Josiah's best friends in England. God's provision is amazing!



Although he is 6ft 2 and looks like he's in his 20's, the thought of moving to live in a different continent at age 16 is quite a scary prospect for Josiah. Please pray for him during the coming 9 months, that by the time he leaves he is at peace, and excited about the new chapter he is beginning. Josiah will be sitting his IGCSE exams in May/June next year, so prayers for those would also be gratefully received.

**Abigail** is the most relaxed A-level student I have ever met. She was not phased at all to be sitting her exams in a new country in a school where she knew no one. Abi was so pleased to get her results and has passed all 3 subjects - Sociology, Psychology and Geography.

Although Abigail is adopted in Burundi, she does not have any rights to UK citizenship, so attending university in the UK as an international student (with no access to government student loans) is cost-



prohibitive. After spending months searching for universities all over the world she applied to and was accepted to study Psychology at Oklahoma Christian University in America. Two of the young people from CRIB where I work, studied there in the past and I was very impressed with the university when I visited in 2018.

Abigail has been granted a partial scholarship, which is fabulous and wonderful friends have donated to help support her, but at the moment she is approximately £7000 short per year, on what is needed to cover all university costs. This is a real faith venture for both Abigail and us. If anyone would like to contribute towards her costs, that would be awesome – details of the account, which was opened for Abigail by my Mum and is in her name, are at the bottom of this letter.

**Bethany** has had a challenging few years, periodically struggling with depression and anxiety and having found this particularly challenging in the few months before we arrived, it was really good to spend 3 months in the UK with her to be able to see what help was available. Having grown up in Burundi with bright sunshine for 12 hours a day, dark and gloomy English winters were especially challenging for her. A combination of vitamins, counselling and prayer has helped Bethany to emerge out of this difficult season and it is awesome to see her back to being the happy young woman we know and love. She has a love for travel and has visited Italy, France and Monaco with friends. Praise Jesus for cheap flights to Europe! Bethany continues to excel at university and looks forward to graduating in 2025 with a Master's degree in dual registration Adult and Mental Health nursing.



I can't quite believe that this is our last year having our children at home and that next year we will be 'empty-nesters' - surely that is a phase of life for old people! In my head I still hold the title of 'Youngest missionary in Burundi' - maybe it's about time that I accepted the fact that I'm now the longest serving missionary here and when grown adults call me Mum, they are not just being respectful, it's because it is now numerically possible!

Honda hit a major milestone in October when he turned 50 years old. When I first came to Burundi the life expectancy for men was 43.5 years, so I'm glad he passed that! Thankfully life expectancy has risen, and Honda's grandparents passed away in their late 80s, so I'm not worried that he will be departing any time soon!



This has been the hardest year we have faced as a married couple and for many months I was not sure that our marriage would survive. We have an enemy who is committed to stealing, killing and destroying, and children of the King are his favourite target. He knows that Psalm 133 says that where there is unity, God commands a blessing, and so he is determined to bring division into families, ministries, churches, pretty much anywhere that he can. We are so grateful for friends and family who stood with us in prayer and refused to allow the enemy



to destroy our marriage and family. In November, Honda and I went to Kenya for some counselling and to have a break and God did what only God can do and has turned our situation around. There is no explanation other than God's miraculous intervention. Please remember to pray for the marriages of those you know in Christian ministry, and marriages in general – in these days, with divorce rates among Christians being similar to those outside the church, we need to live alert and aware of the enemy's plans, praying and standing in the gap for each other.

Once again, thank you so much for all your prayers and financial support. You are a vital part of all that we are able to accomplish here, and we thank God for your partnership in extending His Kingdom here in Burundi.

May God richly bless you in every way and may He fill you with His peace and joy this Christmastime.

Much love,

**Honda, Libby, Bethany, Abigail, Josiah and all our extended RoH Family**

**XXX**

If anyone would like to support the work of Restoration of Hope, our charity bank account details are as follows:

Bank: Metro Bank

Sort Code: 23-05-80

Account Name: HOPE IN BURUNDI (HIB)

Account Number: 47530970

Please specify if your gift is for Christmas, the Sewing Project, schooling, or general Restoration of Hope running costs so that it is used correctly.

If anyone would like to help Abigail to be able to take up her position to study Psychology at Oklahoma Christian University, the bank account which is specifically for that is as follows:

Account name: Laurene Ford

Sort code: 09-01-29

Account Number: 88022473

