

## Twizere and Umucyo Working Groups Partnered with Buncombe Street UMC, 2014-2016

Six month report on the 26 first-year working groups in Rwanda, July – December, 2014

**FOOD SECURITY:** In July, all households harvested food crops from the previous season which included beans, potatoes, corn and vegetables from individual plots. In August, children started collecting manure and loosening the soil to prepare their farms so that between September and October they were ready to plant new crops. In November, the children continued with weeding and adding fertilizer to their individual crops. At the same time five working groups planted corn as a group project and four groups received land and planted bananas. These have been their first group projects. ZOE provided seeds, chemical fertilizers and truckloads of manure for these projects. Additionally, for the banana plantations, the group members received special training in crop management, as pictured to the right.



**INCOME GENERATION & FINANCIAL SECURITY:** Using grants supplied by ZOE, many working group members run small businesses buying or growing and selling things like sorghum, beans, bananas and avocados. They also generate income from raising small livestock like chickens, rabbits and pigs.

### HEALTH, HYGIENE AND DISEASE PREVENTION

- ZOE paid the health insurance costs for the children who needed coverage, but could not afford it. Insurance in Rwanda is prorated based on earnings. Once families have a regular source of income they are able to cover this expense themselves and are proud to do so.
- In some cases, ZOE provided support for medical treatment fees for illnesses which were not covered by health insurance. If needed, ZOE helps with transportation and food for those admitted to a hospital.
- Materials and uniforms were provided for anti-AIDS clubs.

### GENERAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Between August and November, ZOE worked with community leaders to help the group's homeless members, who did not have other options for housing, construct homes. ZOE provided iron sheets, nails, doors and windows. Fellow ZOE group members helped make the bricks and participated in construction to reduce the cost. With housing secured, some of the families whose siblings had been separated were reunited.
- Children who had dropped out of school, which often happens when the parents have passed away, were assisted by ZOE to reintegrate. Some were provided resources to attend vocational school and then provided start-up kits upon graduation.

- During this first year, children in the programs have been able to cease begging, stealing or working for unfair wages in order to survive. Instead they now have a more self-sufficient approach to food security. They have also learned how to discuss and find solutions to the challenges they face.

### **TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS**

Health, Hygiene and Disease Prevention. September trainings focused on proper hygiene and HIV/AIDS. The hygiene training covered basic topics like boiling water, not keeping animals in the house, and the importance of using mosquito nets. Training also included educating the children as to the importance of keeping themselves and their homes neat and clean as a way of countering the negative stigma often associated with poverty, and especially with being an orphan.

Many of the young people who enter ZOE's empowerment program do not fully understand how HIV is transmitted nor the importance of being tested and taking antiretroviral drugs. To counter this, the training on HIV/AIDS is extensive, covering topics from myths and causes to prevention and treatment. The youth also take pledges to protect their health and the health of others by making good personal choices and by helping each other make good decisions.

Child Rights. Ignorance of child rights is the main cause of child abuse and exploitation in their communities. During September, the children were trained on child rights in accordance with the United Nations' Rights of the Child. ZOE also trained members on child abuse prevention and taught them how to defend their rights. At the same time, ZOE educated community leaders who are sometimes ignorant of these rights.

Faith Cultivation. In addition to praying weekly during their group meetings, the ZOE program facilitators introduced the children to scripture readings to guide them in their empowerment journey.



*A presentation during the exchange visit.*

**EXCHANGE VISIT:** Representatives from one of the 2014 working groups were provided transportation and food in order to visit and view the activities of ZOE groups that had begun in 2012 and 2013. The representatives witnessed the application of ZOE's empowerment program and learned about various projects. They then brought this information back to the children in their region. Community leaders also participated in this observational visit and after noting the success of these advanced groups, were more committed to providing resources like land to support working group projects.

The first reports of children from the Twizere and Umucyo Working Groups primarily focus on the challenges the children must overcome and the dreams they have for their future. Both of the families highlighted below came from similar situations. They generally ate no more than one meal per day. They did not have the knowledge or resources to cultivate land and had to resort to begging when they could not find work or were paid unfair wages. Their homes are in disrepair and they find it difficult to pay the expenses of schooling.

One of the first actions they took after joining their working group was to create a Dream document as explained in detail below. Next they attended training where they learned how to successfully grow crops, take care of animals and create a balanced diet for better health. They received hoes, seeds and goats to begin moving towards food security and self-sufficiency. These two families serve as examples of what others in your working groups are experiencing as they begin their journey out of extreme poverty.

### Focus on: The Dream

Most orphans and vulnerable children entering the ZOE empowerment program face a daily struggle to survive. With their energy consumed by the need to find food for themselves and their siblings, there is neither time to think about the future nor reason to hope for something better. But through ZOE and your partnership, the children learn to imagine a new life and prepare to make it a reality.



During one of the early working group meetings, the ZOE social worker leads members through an exercise called the Dream process where they explore their current situation and then consider what they want and how to get it. After discussing hopes and goals with their siblings, the family leader creates a poster of responses to a standard set of questions from the social worker. To the left is an example of the Dream document.

The head of each family presents their Dream to the rest of the working group members who express support and give feedback. These Dream documents help the social worker better understand the conditions of the children's lives so they can address specific needs or traumas suffered. The family keeps a copy of their Dream, often displaying it in their home to provide daily motivation as they strive to create their new life.



**Head of Household:** Denyse, 20    **Siblings:** Alice, 18; Sandrine, 16; Cecile, 3; Lisianne, 4  
**Members of the Umucyo Working Group**

Their parent's death left Denyse, Alice and Sandrine with very little. They dropped out of school and struggled to get enough food for a daily meal. They even suffered abuse from relatives. Yet they still had hearts large enough to adopt two young children, Cecile and Lisianne.

In addition to starting their kitchen garden, Denyse has received training in how to start and manage an income generating activity. One of the children had an eye problem which has now been addressed through medical treatment. Over the next two and a half years, your partnership will provide these determined young ladies a chance to improve their lives and achieve their dreams.

1. What makes you feel sad? *Death of parents*
2. What makes you happy? *To eat meat*
3. What happens in the community that you do not like? *Murder*
4. What is your dream for the future? *To return siblings to school and improve the house*
5. What will be your guiding principles to achieve your dream? *Saving, using fertilizers*

**Head of Household:** Odette, 16

**Brothers:** Muhayimana, 14; Habimana, 12 and Uswimana, 9

**Members of the Twizere Working Group**

Odette's mother died 2007 and although her father is still alive, he is unable to provide for their care. There are no relatives available to help nor does the family participate in community activities. They did not even attend church, because they felt that they did not have appropriate clothing to wear. Your partnership will dramatically impact the lives of these children.

Already the children have left their isolation behind by being welcomed into the Twizere Working Group. Not only do they now have friends to help them face their challenges and celebrate their accomplishments, they also have a faith community with whom they will pray and grow in love of God.

1. What makes you feel sad? *Loss of their mother*
2. What makes you happy? *Food, especially meat*
3. What happens in the community that you do not like? *Starving*
4. What is your dream for the future? *Selling sweets*
5. What will be your guiding principles to achieve your dream? *To work hard*



## **Twizere and Umucyo Working Groups Partnered with Buncombe Street UMC, 2014-2016**

### **Focus On: Working Group Formation**

Poverty often means a life lived in isolation, unconnected even from those who share the same struggles and challenges. A ZOE working group provides orphans and vulnerable children a community where they experience understanding, compassion and acceptance. Together, they begin their journey towards a better life.

To form a working group, ZOE social workers first contact community leaders and local officials to educate them about the empowerment approach and to ask for their help in identifying children. During the first meeting, the children and their young caregivers learn how they will change and improve their lives within three years. Then ZOE takes a step back.

Working group members elect their own leadership, make rules to guide their meetings, choose a group name and decide where to hold weekly gatherings. These once-marginalized children learn from ZOE staff that their community and their Hope Companion partner have faith in their ability to succeed.

The eldest child from each family attends weekly meetings to discuss their activities, both achievements and challenges, and to share in prayer and reflection with each other. Additionally, ZOE's staff and selected community members host regional training sessions covering food security, health and disease prevention, business management and child rights.

One of the first actions the group takes is to select a project, such as a group farm, which they undertake together to quickly secure food and generate income. Because of your support, ZOE is then able to provide the basic training and resources they need to begin.

### **Name List and Group Photo**

Below is a group picture (some members are missing) and the list of names recorded by our ZOE social worker during group formation; **there are 65 households and a total of 198 members**. The first name in bold is the head of the household, followed by their siblings. ZOE works with orphaned and vulnerable children ages infant through college age. Many of the families have an older person living in the household (indicated by italics) who is unable to provide for them due to age or illness. Although ZOE's original name lists include both first and last names, ZOE uses first names only in public lists to preserve the privacy of children in the program.

Please note, children joining the ZOE program are living in extreme poverty situations. Often they have no parents or birth documentation and have suffered multiple traumas in their young lives. Occasionally the children give conflicting information on their names and ages. Additional orphans are frequently adopted by the group, and a small percentage of children will leave the group due to family reunification or other reasons. ZOE strives to keep the list as up-to-date as possible. All the names on this list represent real children in need of your prayers.



**Twizere Working Group, 25 Households, 73 Orphaned and Vulnerable Children**  
*(Picture taken on the day members received grants of goats)*

**Afissa 13**  
 Amza 9  
 Upendo 3  
*Aisha*

**Ananie 20**  
 Kevine 17  
 Delphine 16  
*Elevanie*

**Anathalie 16**  
 Desire 13  
*Gaudance*

**Anitha 16**  
 Divine 10  
 Denise 7  
*Berthilde*

**Boniface 16**  
 Nkundahose 12  
*Gaudance*

**Claver 16**  
*Léonie*

**Celine 20**  
 Joselyne 18  
 Adeline 13  
 Bosco 8  
*Xaverine*

**Chantal 18**  
 Fidèle 17  
 Solange 15  
 Aline 13  
*Verene*

**Claude 20**  
 Jeanine 15  
 Angélique 10  
*Dativa*

**Ernestine 17**  
 Providence 14  
 Chantal 12  
 Joseph 9  
 Kwihangana 2  
*Valentine*

**Etienne 16**  
*Cyprien*

**Faustin 15**  
 Anitha 13  
 Vumilia 12  
 Philbert 8  
 Mary 12  
*Emmanuel*

**Jean Claude 16**  
 Vestine 13  
*Emilienne*

**Jean Claude 20**  
 Yvonne 18  
 Sandrine 15  
 Germaine 11

**Jean Damascène 18**

**Jean Félix 18**  
 Josiane 16  
 Christine 13  
*Immaculée*

**Jeanne d'Arc 15**  
*Julienne*

**Kanyabikari 16**  
 Bapfakurera 13  
*Innocent*

**Marie Hyacinthe 16**  
 Beatrice 17  
*Frédéric*

**Odette 16**  
 Muhayimana 14  
 Habimana 12  
 Uwimana 9  
*Eugène*

**Prince Ishimwe 12**  
*Souzane*

**Sylvie 20**  
 Mbarushima 18  
 Ntirenganya 16  
*Verene*

**Yvonne 16**  
*Stéphanie*

**JeanMarie Vianney 20**  
 Carine 16  
 Aimée Pacifique 2  
*Annonciata*

**JeanMarie Vianney 20**  
 Gaudance 19  
 Françoise 19  
 Solange 17  
 Celeverien 10  
 Nyiramugisha 6  
 Musabende 5  
 Hakizimana 4  
 Amizero 3  
 Manzi 1  
*Janvière*



**Umucyo ("Warmth of Sunshine") Working Group  
40 Households, 125 Orphaned and Vulnerable Children**

**Adeline** 21  
Joseph 10  
Jean de Dieu 1  
*Clémentine*

**Alexie** 19  
Janvier 17  
Olivier 14  
Eric 11  
*Innocent*

**Alphonse** 20  
Odette 16  
Séraphine 14  
Claudine 12  
Joselyne 10

**Alphonse** 16  
Mbituyimana 12  
Marie 8

**Anitha** 16  
Rachel 12  
Robert 7  
Lea 6  
*Marie*

**Bernadette** 21  
Leodomir 20  
Innocent 14  
*Speciose*

**Bonaventure** 22  
Clémentine 21  
Joseph 14  
Kévin 9  
*Francine*

**Clair** 16  
*Séraphine*

**Clarisse** 20  
Hakorimana 16  
Iragena 11  
*Florence*

**Clarisse** 12  
Emmanuel 10  
Gaudence 8  
Obama 6  
*Xaverine*

**Claudine** 21  
*Beatrice*

**Claudine**  
Odette 12  
Ishimwe 10  
*Belancille*

**Clémentine** 14  
Jean Claude 12  
Emmanuel 9  
Jean de Dieu 6  
*Christine*

**Denyse** 20  
Delphine 15  
Diane 13  
Patrick 8  
*Bernadette*

**Denyse** 20  
Alice 18  
Sandrine 16  
Cecile 3  
Lisianne 4

**Didacienne** 16  
*Stephanie*

**Dieudonné** 21  
*Patricie*

**Egidia** 19  
Nadine 18  
Eric 17  
Adeline 14  
Alexandre 12  
Ernest 7  
*Prudencienne*

**Emmanuel** 19  
Egide 14  
Gilbert 14  
*Mecthilde*

**Emmanuel** 21  
Jean Berchimas 19  
Guard 18  
Jean Pierre 13

**Fulgence** 15  
Berthilde 13  
*Mujawabega*

**Hadidja** 18  
Hardi 12  
Issa 6  
Charif 6  
*Marianne*

**Génoviève** 21  
Christine 19  
Claudine 17  
Jean Paul 15  
Innocent 13  
Marie Claire 1  
*Isaïe*

**Génoviève** 11  
Nsanabandi 4  
*Annonciata*

**Hycinthe** 21  
Marie Claire 20  
*Anastasia*

**Irene** 1  
*Odette*

**Jean Baptiste** 14  
Niyodusenga 12  
Uwimbabazi 10  
Nisingizwe 8  
Niyogisubizo 5  
*Mary Grace*

**Jean d'Amour 20**

Florence 9  
*Esperance*

**Jean de Dieu 17**

Esther 16  
Solange 12

**Laetitia 15**

Frederic 16  
Claudine 10

**Sandrine 18****Jean Népomsène 16**

Josianne 14  
Izabayo 8  
Mbarwanayo 6  
Nizeyimana 10

*Frodouald*  
*Epiphanie*

**Marie Claudette 21**

Ndayisenga 14  
*Astherie*

**Leopord 20**

Xavera 18  
Jean Bosco 16  
Théogène 14  
*Emilienne*

**Liberatha 20**

Dominique Xavier 16  
Olivier 11  
Hakuzimana 10  
*Verene & Pierre*

**Lucie 19**

Hycinthe 15  
Tumukunde 16  
*Marianne*

**Pacifique 20**

Sandrine 14  
Twiringiyumukiza 10  
Muhawenimana 4  
*Séraphine*

**Rebecca 15**

Rachel 18  
*Annonciata*

**Thacienne 20**

Niyonsaba 14  
*Alphonsine*

**Théogène 20**

Claudine 15  
*Genereuse*