



Winter 2010

Newsletter

Twins!

Theodore & Christine Mbazumutima are the proud parents of two new arrivals, Kerry & Danny, who were born on September 22nd.



We thank God for their safe delivery and pray that Mum & Dad get some much needed sleep!

Sally's Visit

[Sally writes...]

It was good to be able to visit Rema Ministries in Burundi in October.

I am so aware of the many challenges facing those I met as well as many blessings. Praise the Lord the rains came to enable planting of beans and maize, if a little late and unpredictable. There are amazing testimonies of peace building through the work of Rema. The team is made up of some very special people who all send their greetings.



Sally's visit cont...

I was able to visit the Rema clinic in Nyembuye, Rutana province, which we officially opened last year – an area with few facilities and many returnees. It is going well and very respected in the area by the government and users! It was good to see gutters in place this year to catch any rains that come. The next phases include a more sustainable water supply



and houses for the staff. In partnership, the local people have cleared and levelled land and collected stones but we need funds to start building.

HIV/Aids remains a major issue in Burundi. I was aware of the lack of knowledge and stigma but began to really understand the link to poverty – *'if I don't know how I am going to feed myself or my family tomorrow, why am I concerned about dying of a disease in 10 years time?'*. Rema have awareness and education programmes for pastors and youth, encouraging testing especially pre marriage; testing and counselling are available at the clinic; and Rema have 3 vocational programmes for those who are found HIV positive.

Rema's Mission and Evangelism Department are being invited to help facilitate many seminars for pastors (across denominations) in all parts of Burundi. The feedback and evaluation from previous seminars has been very positive in preparing for peace building, reintegration and community development. Funds are needed to enable the Rema team to facilitate such seminars. Local churches are encouraged to pay



Sally's visit cont...

for the costs of local attendees. I have felt privileged to take part in Bible distribution at churches attended by returnees from Tanzania. To see the tattered scraps of



bibles
pastors
have
brought back from many



years in exile and to see the joy at receiving a whole bible was truly amazing!

Rema are also seeking advocates for returnees, and research has been completed highlighting the issues related to integration. The land issues are a major and complex - but so key to stability. Rema are seeking funds to run further seminars bringing those affected and government officials together to grapple with the issues....

We are so grateful for your prayer and monetary support. As the team say 'God is good all the time and all the time God is good' Do remember our friends in Burundi as we celebrate God's love, joy and peace this Christmas.

Sally Botteley (chair Rema UK)

Training Leaders



Working in partnership with the United Methodist Church, Rema ran a 4-day leadership conference in Murore, Cankuzo province [*the far east of Burundi*] for 45 church leaders, also working both on development and good stewardship of the environment.

Feeding the Five Thousand

[*Felibien writes...*] "Later in the day, we had an open air convention with about 5000 people. We explored the theme of holiness for true life in this post-conflict context. Hundreds of attendants recommitted their lives to the Lord and many pledged to live a transformed life in the midst of non believers."

Focus on Makamba

Rema Ministries, in partnership with CMS and CMS Africa conducted a vision conference for 19 different denominations in Makamba province. Burundi is still slowly coming out of war and the local church is being challenged to offer a holistic ministry.



HIV/AIDS in Makamba

Rema Ministries carried out a follow up trip on different community projects initiated by ten different denominations in order to sensitize people against the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Churches have initiated serious campaigns and the community around them are taking encouraging steps like knowing their status through free testing, and changing their behaviour.

Training Church Leaders

Rema Ministries in partnership with Entrust had



a graduation ceremony after one and half years training in Leadership and Biblical exposition. The training was accompanied by practice by these

pastors in their respective churches. We got the opportunity to evaluate and celebrate together the work done. According to these leaders, this training was very helpful as it helped them to understand how to preach the Gospel in their context.

Hope for Scotland

A team of 9 people from Mission International in Scotland visited Hope centre, a children's home which Rema helped establish and continues to help in its management. It was wonderful to have people who have donated generously to improve the lives of orphans in Burundi come and visit. This gave both of us the opportunity to evaluate how the Hope Centre is being run, and to take new strategies towards the improvement of the lives of those children.



Getting down to Business...

Working in partnership with local churches in Nyanza-Lac and Muyange, Makamba province [*southern tip of Burundi*], Rema helped 12



vulnerable women to develop some income-generating activity to help them feed their families and educate their children. This combination of training, financial support (through interest-free loans) and follow-up has helped them to establish and project-manage their businesses.

This is a really successful strategy, and Rema also trained at our office a group of 10 women from the Kirekura church to start or develop small businesses. These loans are already beginning to be paid back so that another group can be started.



A stitch in time... saves a family! Barthelmy had just returned to Burundi but couldn't find a job. Rema



donated a sewing machine, which is enabling his family to eat and pay their rent. It often doesn't take much to make a big difference...

Land Grab

Some time ago Rema were given the opportunity to obtain a small parcel of land near Ruziba [*on the shore of Lake Tanganyika*] which is earmarked for the construction of an income-generating headquarters and conference building. Since some people were spotted surveying this land, Rema has now taken steps to avert the risk of being seized by people working in concert with crooked officials.

One day...



More from the Clinic

Onwards and upwards! There's just more and more to do, and to prevent the staff from sinking under the load, Bosco has relocated from looking after the office in Bujumbura to join the staff at Nyembuye, and this has now enabled the clinic to run more laboratory services, including malaria and HIV tests.

Another new service covers Family Planning: the average number of children per family is seven - this is now recognised as unsustainable.

Payment for treatment is another difficulty, but we are encouraged that people are making a great effort (which helps us secure ongoing service provision) and the free treatment for pregnant women and under fives is going well - although the Government is slow in paying up.

Rema repositioning

We're going through a change in emphasis, away from just a focus on working through church leaders to include more direct support for refugees, returnees and IDP's [*Internally Displaced People*]. Supporting such communities directly, and seeking to influence Government policies on integration will better improve the prospect of sustainable peace in the country.

Rema UK to visit

Rema UK trustees are planning to visit next June to follow up on an initial strategic planning visit in 2007 and help develop a common vision for the next few years.

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