



SCHOOLS FOR AFRICA NEWSETTE

Official Project of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International

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Includes: **FOCUS ON RWANDA** ... information on this country and materials for an update to share with your chapter on the SFA program in Rwanda

UNICEF/InfoByCountry Site: A Brighter Future for Rwanda's Girls

This month's newsette focuses on a UNICEF/U.S. Fund blog posted by Jenny Clover on January 16, 2012, that shares Rwanda's latest work toward transforming local schools into child-friendly schools. UNICEF blog postings at <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry>, such as the one shared below, are timely and personal. Special thanks goes to the UNICEF/U.S. Fund for granting permission for use of this material/photo.

“On the outskirts of Rwanda's capital (Kigali), a UNICEF-sponsored child-friendly school is helping to transform the way girls access education. Rubingo Primary School in the Gasabo District is one of 75 schools in Rwanda being overhauled with UNICEF support to become ‘child-friendly.’ Child-friendly schools take a holistic approach to improving education quality in schools, including refining teaching methods, improving school infrastructure, and making sure girls feel as welcome and comfortable as their boy classmates. Rubingo opened in 1958, but became a UNICEF-supported child-friendly school in 2004. The school now has 1,207 pupils, 591 of whom are girls.

Claudine's Story

“Twelve-year-old Claudine is a student at the school. She originally enrolled in a primary school when she was eight, but dropped out when her mother could no longer afford to educate any of her nine children. Claudine was forced to stay home to help around the house, caring for younger siblings and cultivating the land. ‘I didn't like it because it was hard work, and I had really enjoyed school,’ said Claudine. Fortunately, her family was reached by a local campaign to enroll all out-of-school girls in the area. ‘My mother didn't want me to go back to study, but someone from the parent teacher association [PTA] at the school came to visit and encouraged my mother that it would be best for me to go to school and told her that I wouldn't have to pay any fees. She accepted.’

“Claudine is now catching up in her studies at Rubingo. ‘I really like going to school,’ she said. ‘I wasn't sure that I would ever be able to go back, so I am very happy. I don't want to leave again because I like to study and it is important. If I continue studying, maybe one day I can become a teacher.’



Boys and girls in colorful uniforms smile from inside the Rubingo Child-Friendly School in Rwanda © UNICEF/RWAA2011-00175/Shehzad Noorani

Increasing Girl's Attendance

“Rubingo Primary School – like other child-friendly schools – boasts a range of measures to encourage girls to attend school and to receive a quality education. Statistics for primary education in Rwanda show gender parity in the numbers of students enrolled, with 96 % of girls and 94% of boys enrolled in 2010. However, the drop-out rate, though decreasing, is still high, and girls in particular tend to miss school as they get older and more demands are placed on them at home. It is also common for girls to stay home while menstruating because they don't have proper sanitary supplies or because schools lack appropriate sanitation facilities – especially, UNICEF research shows, sex-separated toilets. These missed classes are reflected in exam results showing that boys still out perform girls. To combat this, Rubingo offers free sanitary materials to girls, and with support from UNICEF, now has 45 new latrines with separate facilities for boys and girls. Two water tanks provide running water.

THE CORNER SWAP SHOP

You will find a gallery of 20 pictures taken at a school in Rwanda (with captions included) at the SFA link on the DKG Web site. They are a great resource to use when you showcase RWANDA at your next chapter meeting.

Equality Good For Everyone

“UNICEF child-friendly schools also feature Tuseme Clubs – ‘tuseme’ means ‘speak out’ in Swahili. Here, children are urged to discuss personal issues each week. Members work to find ways to help each other. These clubs provide crucial peer support... and importantly, they are helping all boys and girls realize they are all capable – and equal. ‘We encourage equality between boys and girls...This is good for everyone.’”

FOCUS ON: **RWANDA** ...Facts about this African Nation



Use these facts as you prepare a SFA spotlight for an upcoming chapter meeting.

Location: Located two degrees south of the equator, Rwanda is a landlocked country in central Africa bordered by the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Uganda, Tanzania, and Burundi.



Area/Population: 26,338 sq. km., slightly smaller than the state of Maryland, USA; population of 10.7 million (est. 2011); median age 18.7 years; life expectancy 58.02 (total), male 56.57, female 59.52; most densely populated country in Africa.

Climate/Terrain: The climate is mild and temperate with two rainy seasons; a terrain of uplands and rolling hills lends itself to small farms. There are also areas of rugged mountains and a chain of volcanoes to the northwest.

Economy: Rwanda produces coffee, tea, and some minerals: gold, tin ore, tungsten ore. Eco-tourism, focusing on mountain gorilla trekking and safaris, is an increasingly important source of revenue.

Capital: Kigali, population 1 million (est.)

Languages: Kinyarwanda, French and English are the official languages. English is the language used in schools.

Infant Mortality Rate: 64.4 deaths/1,000 live births; 25th highest in world

Literacy (2009 est.): Definition/age 15 and over can read and write ... 63% (total pop.); Free basic education will be extended from 9 to 12 years beginning in 2012, but it is estimated that no more than 5% of the current adult population received secondary education through 1996.

Major Diseases: HIV/AIDS and malaria are the major diseases among the population.

History: The indigenous population of Rwanda consists of three groups or ubwoko: Bahutu, Batutsi, and Batwa. Beginning in the 15th Century, there was a monarchy headed by a Tutsi king, but after World War I, Rwanda became a territory of Belgium and then achieved its independence in 1962. Kayibana was the first elected president. He formed a Hutu-friendly/anti-Tutsi government. In 1973 a military coup led by Gen. Habyarimana continued the anti-Tutsi policies, forcing 500,000 people to leave the country. In April 1994 a plane carrying President Habyarimana and the president of Burundi was shot down. This led to the genocide that left 800,000 Tutsi and Hutus dead. The war ended in 1996.

Today's Government: Rwanda is a republic with 10 registered political parties. Paul Kagame has been president since 2003. The Constitution of 2003 provides that women hold at least 24 seats in the Chamber of Deputies. Currently, women hold 45 of the 80 seats in this body.



RESOURCES:

- Information from www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2861.htm AND www.cia.gov
- Flag image from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_of_Rwanda
- Map courtesy of CIA World Factbook, 2007
- Picture on this page courtesy of UNICEF/US Fund ... © UNICEF/RWAA2011-0011/Shehzad Noorani

FUND-RAISER FOLLOW-UP

Toby Worthington, a DKG MU Chapter member in Nash County, North Carolina, set up a competition to collect funds for UNICEF between her high school classes and another teacher's classes during the month of October. Both teachers recalled doing this activity when they were in school. The students donated their total collection to MU Chapter so that the chapter could forward the money to the Schools for Africa project.

Forward your fund-raiser follow-up ideas to Cathy Daugherty at emerita07@comcast.net