July – December 2019

Newsletter

Rukundo INTERNATIONAL

RukundoInternational.org **info@RukundoInternational.com** 9601 Shadow Oak Drive, Gaithersburg, MD 20886

Spreading the Rukundo (Love) with Goats

Join us in celebrating the launch of our goat project! The 22 women enrolled in our Mushroom Cooperative were rewarded for their diligence and hard work with one female goat each! Goats provide a reliable source of supplementary income from milk and improved nutrition. Goats are advantageous because they require low initial investment, have rapid reproduction rates, and they are easy to maintain. They thrive on readily available vegetation, even during unfavorable weather conditions.

As part of our program requirements, when each gifted goat bears its second and fourth kids, those goats are given back to RI. The sale of the first round of goats will provide financing to make this program completely sustainable. The second round of goats will be gifted to other women in the community who need a hand up, repeating the cycle of giving.

The recipient will graduate to full autonomy from the program (with full ownership of her goats) after the goat bears seven children (two for the program upkeep, and five to keep). We are so excited for the long-term impacts that this project will bring to these families. Huge thanks to those of you who donated a goat to kick-start this program. It was such a hit that even the local news and political authorities attended the giving ceremony!

First FREE Medical Clinic was a Huge Success!

In October, we hosted our first FREE medical clinic for our neighbors surrounding Rukundo Preparatory School! Our school was transformed into a clinic for HIV, malaria, diabetes, cervical cancer, STI, UTI, and blood pressure screenings, dental extractions, and basic medical care. 346 community members received services **and** a free meal. Medical care is almost nonexistent or unaffordable in rural communities, including the one near our school.

Over 60% of the patients we treated were elderly.This care provided a huge relief for them. The attendees were appreciative for the services provided. Thanks to all the donors who chipped in to make our first clinic a huge success. We can't wait to do it again! *Love your neighbor as yourself Mark 12:31*

Reusable Pads Keep Girls in School

This year we expanded the scope of our Girl's Empowerment Program (GEP) to include training on how to make reusable sanitary pads. More than 250 girls and 20 teachers, across seven rural schools, were trained. Adolescent girls in Uganda can miss up to 60 days of school each year due to lack of sanitary products during menstruation. This leads to higher school drop-out rates, because girls can't catch up on missed school work.

The training also included health education on menstrual hygiene and management. At the conclusion of the training, girls of menstruating age were given materials to make 2-3 pads each. We hope this will keep more girls in school and further reduce dropout rates. We believe empowered girls empower their communities!

Microloans Pave the Way to Financial Independence

We support our older Scholars to become financially independent by providing small loans so that they can gain valuable business experience and life skills. Our Scholar, Sam, is an example of how these small loans can make a big difference. While he was awaiting his test results to apply for medical school, we awarded him a small loan to start a snack shop in his village. He honored each of his monthly payments in full, with a small interest.

Sam reported that he's very grateful for the opportunity and that he gained a lot of experience and business skills. With his profits, he was able to buy the clothes he needed to begin his University career. We are prayerful that all of our scholars learn from Sam's example and work ethic. Thanks so much to our donors who make these important life experiences possible for our students.

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Construction Update and Funds Shortage

We received some news earlier this year that significantly affected our 2019 budget. Originally, we were told that the expansive concrete slab that will eventually support our entire three-story primary building would be stable indefinitely until we were ready to build on it. This building will eventually house all of our classrooms from 1st-7th grades, plus a computer lab, library, toilets, and more. However, our senior engineer informed us that if the slab was not protected from the elements within the year, it would begin to degrade and our large investment in our student's futures would be compromised.

Though we celebrate the fact that this project is now complete, we need to replace the $12,000 in funds that were used to complete this project - funds that were earmarked for other programs. In addition, we've learned that each subsequent slab for the remaining 2nd and 3rd floors, will also need to be covered in a timely manner, and that we should complete the entire building as soon as possible (a project that we were originally planning to take seven years to complete). That's why our holiday campaign this year is more important than ever! Would you pray with us and send us referrals to anyone who you think might be able to help us with our construction needs? The future of our school and the education of our students depends upon us meeting our fundraising goal.

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Will You "Do Good" This December?

If you haven't already, Rukundo International invites you to participate in our second annual "Do Good December."

We ask you to give to our holiday campaign each year because our mission is so important to the communities we serve. Your donation goes directly toward the life-changing work we do, and not only helps us educate and feed at-risk children, but gives them the hope they need to dream of a better future for themselves.

As you wrap up your end of year giving, we encourage you to "Do Good" this December and include a gift to Rukundo International. Long after the wrapping paper is cleaned up and the tree has come down, your gift to these children is an investment in their future that will create a positive impact for years to come.

Thank you and Happy New Year!

RukundoInternational.org/DoGoodDecember