

St. Luke's UMC Hope Companion Partnerships, Rwanda, January 2016 - December 2018

Abanyamurava "Brave" Working Group with St. Luke's Serve Ministry;

Tuzamurane "Lift One Another" Working Group with the Allen and Thomas Family Foundations and Ann Eppinger and Scott Davidson;

Ubumwe "Unity" Working Group with the Crump Family

The following reports highlight the activities and achievements of families from the three working groups which began meeting in January 2016 and are associated with St. Luke's UMC. Although each child is unique, most of the families in these working groups have faced similar challenges and are making comparable progress through the ZOE empowerment model. The first report includes some general information about ZOE's "Dream" approach to helping children set their goals.

Tuzamurane Working Group

Head of Household: Chantal (19)

Dependents: brothers Jean Claude (18) and Christian (8)
(sister Clarisse (17) is not currently living with the family)

Challenges

Even when their parents were alive, life was difficult for Chantal's family. But the death of their father in 2011, followed by the mother's death in 2015, left the children without any resources besides a house in disrepair. Clarisse left the family to look for better opportunities. Chantal stayed to take care of her younger brothers. By working general labor for their neighbors they could earn a bit of money or some food. But they were generally exploited and rarely had more than a single daily meal of a sweet potato. Sometimes they had to resort to begging. Christian suffered from intestinal worms and malnutrition.



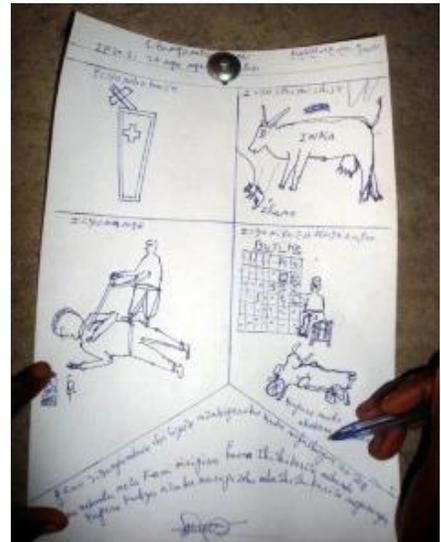
The family had become so isolated from their community that the children received no outside assistance, never had visitors, and did not feel comfortable attending community events. They felt that even God had abandoned them.

When ZOE invited Chantal to join the Tuzamurane Working Group, she and her family began their journey out of extreme poverty. And it started with a dream.

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 program facilitator 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 ZOE program facilitator. To the right 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 program facilitators 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. As they progress through the empowerment program they will often update their Dream.

The following are Chantal's most recent responses to the Dream questions:

- What makes you feel sad? *Death of my parents.*
- What makes you happy? *Drinking banana juice and eating bananas.*
- What happens in the community that you do not like? *Feeling insecure because of a lack of adult protection.*
- What is your dream for the future? *To be trained in tailoring and own a sewing machine.*
- What will be your guiding principles to achieve your dream? *Patience, hard work, self-confidence.*

Family Specific Achievements Because Of Your Partnership

Food Security

Within the first couple months Chantal and her brother had planted both a kitchen garden and a crop of sweet potatoes. In May 2016, they received a grant of a pig and were able to purchase four hens with their own money. The hens are providing eggs for their own consumption and to sell, as well as fertilizer for their garden. Today, the family regularly eats two meals a day featuring potatoes, beans and a variety of vegetables.

Income Generation

In April 2016, after attending small business training, Chantal received a grant of money and began buying and reselling vegetables. She contributes produce from her home garden to increase profits. Additionally, she is participating in the group's tomato farming project which brings in a small income. The group has a merry-go-round fund into which all the group members contribute a small amount of money during each meeting and then rotate the full balance of the kitty among each other. It was very likely this money which Chantal was able to use to purchase the hens.

Through these small income activities Chantal is learning how to handle money, manage a business and is gaining confidence so that in the next two years she will be prepared to start a tailoring business. Already, the money she is earning has made it possible to buy food and clothing. As she notes, *"It was my first time to have enough food at my home."*



Health

The formal training on hygiene and disease prevention was conducted in July 2016, but even before then steps were taken to improve the family's health and living conditions. First, ZOE made sure Christian received medical attention for his infection and malnutrition. Then, a home visit by ZOE's program facilitator helped identify what actions Chantal could take to improve the home environment. With help from the other group members she made minor repairs and cleaned up around the home. The family still needs to construct a proper latrine, which the other group members will help them do once they have the necessary construction resources.

The training in July taught Chantal how the family could improve their personal hygiene to avoid illnesses and to achieve better status in the community. She also learned how to treat and seek assistance when sick. ZOE helped her sign up for medical insurance and encouraged her and her brother to participate in voluntary HIV testing this past November.

Community Connections: Education and Faith

The ZOE program facilitator notes that Chantal and her siblings no longer experience the negative stigma of being destitute orphans. Jean Claude and Christian received school materials so they could go to school regularly and the family started attending church. *"It was hard for me to believe in God until I met ZOE and experienced how God's love is amazing. Sending ZOE to help was an amazing blessing and I am convinced they play well a parenting role,"* said Chantal

The family asks that you pray for their sister Clarisse to reunite with the family.

Abanyamurava Byimana Working Group

Head of Household: Thacien, 19 **Dependent:** sister Olive, 16

Thacien was only three or four when his father died and not even a teenager when he lost his mom, yet it became his responsibility to care for himself and a younger sister who was often sick. Thacien is a strong and hardworking young man, but because of his low status in the community as an impoverished orphan, he often faced abuse in the form of low or even withheld wages for the work he did. He and Olive often survived on three meals a week and those meals usually consisted only of cassava. The home they shared was falling apart, neither could attend school and Olive could not get treatment for the asthma, bronchitis and hepatitis from which she suffers.



The following are Thacien's most recent responses to the Dream questions:

- What makes you feel sad? *Death of my parents.*
- What makes you happy? *Eating meat.*
- What happens in the community that you do not like? *Child abuse.*
- What is your dream for the future? *Buying a motorcycle.*
- What will be your guiding principles? *Aim for the best, work hard, save, behave, obey God.*

Achievements

As with Chantel in the Tuzamurane Working Group, Thacien has attended a series of trainings on food security, business development, health and hygiene, and child rights. The first actions he took were to plant his kitchen garden and crops of sweet potatoes and beans. He received a pig as an early grant and later bought two more with the money he earned from his small business. Additionally, he received both a hen and a rabbit from his working group's merry-go-round fund. He is breeding his animals and selling eggs.



Thacien has done remarkably well with his small businesses of selling produce and running a "canteen." His business even requires him to employ another person to procure goods from a nearby city. With money he has earned he has continued to expand his income activities, *"I bought a cassava farm for Rwf 60,000 on my own; never had I dreamt of having such money before,"* remarked Thacien.



Already, after only one year in the program, Thacien and Olive have made improvements to their home and are eating two meals a day of cassava, beans, vegetables and porridge (corn or sorghum). With ZOE's help, Olive was provided with school materials and reintegrated back into school. She also received medical attention and ZOE is currently helping her obtain the monthly medicines she needs. The family now has insurance and also knows what actions they can take to safe guard their health.

Whereas before they felt abandoned by God, now they attend church joyfully because they feel God's love. They live their faith by inviting others to church and sometimes feeding people who are in need. *"If I give, it is not because I have a lot, but because I feel compassion for others who are struggling as I did before. God has fulfilled my needs that's why I cannot close my eyes when it comes to helping others,"* Thacien said.

Thacien's prayer requests include: for Olive recovery, business and family progress, and for dream achievement.

Ubumwe Byimana Working Group

Head of Household: Claudine (20) (second from right in photo)

Dependents: sisters Chantal (19), Delphine (13), and Vestine (11); brother Eric (17)

Challenges

Claudine takes her role as the head of household very seriously. Along with her sister Chantal, she has sacrificed education and even food so that the others could have a slightly better existence. Even though they have lived with an aunt since the death of their parents (mother in 2003 and father in 2009), they still suffered the hardships and stigma associated with their poverty and being orphans. Claudine and Chantal worked to earn food and money, but they were often cheated out of their wages. The family usually ate no more than five meals of cassava per week and the two older girls suffered from malnutrition.



The following are Claudine responses to the Dream questions:

- What makes you feel sad? *Death of our parents.*
- What makes you happy? *Sharing food with my siblings.*
- What happens in the community that you do not like? *Abuse.*
- What is your dream for the future? *To help Chantal complete vocational training and start a business.*
- What will be your guiding principles? *Work hard, pray, save, and follow advice from ZOE staff and fellow group members.*

Achievements



Chantal and Claudine had both dropped out of school, but now Chantal has begun attending vocational training. The family has planted their kitchen garden and crops of potatoes and tomatoes. Additionally, Chantal participates in the group's tomato farm. They now have a pig provided by ZOE and two hens from the merry-go-round fund. Chantal is earning an income by selling vegetables and weaving baskets. No longer does the family face daily hunger and the health consequences of poor hygiene and malnutrition. Surrounded and assisted by her working group friends, Chantal no longer experiences labor abuse or the isolation of being stigmatized. While once they were angry with God, now they regularly attend church and joyfully share and forgive others.

Summary Report on First Year Groups in Rwanda, October 2016

The following report was written by the ZOE staff in Rwanda. It provides an overview of the activities and achievements all working groups have experienced since their first meeting in January 2016. Following this information is some general background material about ZOE's empowerment approach to achieving income and food security.

In January of this year, 19 working groups, with 530 households encompassing a total of 1,663 children, began their three year journey of transformation through ZOE's empowerment program.



Members of several working groups attend a regional training session on hygiene.

TRAININGS

- **Family Dream (i.e. Action Plan), January/February.** During these first meetings, the children learned how to develop an action plan for their family using the “Dream” approach where they express what they want to achieve in the near future, what they like about life in their community, what they don't like, what makes them sad, and what will be their guiding principles to lead them to make their dream true. (More specific information about ZOE's “Dream” process will be provided with the first case study report.)
- **Income Generating Activities, March/April.** The heads of the households learned about generating business ideas, conducting feasibility studies, marketing, small business plan development and implementation.
- **Food and Nutrition, May.** The children learned about different types of nutrients, how to create balanced meals, what it means to be food secure, and about malnutrition and its consequences. They also set their own goals for food security and nutrition based on instruction from ZOE. Specifically they learned: it is important to build up stores of cereals and other similar foods which are diet staples; legumes and animal products are needed for protein; fruit tree and vegetable gardens are necessary for vitamins and minerals.
- **Hygiene and Disease Prevention, July/August.** These training sessions covered which diseases are caused by poor hygiene and how to prevent illness. The children discussed and then agreed to standard conditions of hygiene which include: clean body, clean home, use of a toilet with agreed adequate conditions (covered floor and roofing), use of boiled and clean drinking water, bedding raised above the floor, use of a dish drying rack, weeding around home, and not sharing the home with domestic animals such as goats, pigs, cows, rabbits, or poultry. Additionally the groups took action by helping each other construct toilets and clean their homes.

FOOD SECURITY: There have been two farming seasons, one starting in February/March and a second starting in September. Families in all 19 groups planted kitchen gardens in both seasons. ZOE provided them with vegetable

seeds and agriculture tools. During the months of May, June, and July, all 530 households received pigs. These pigs contribute to the family's food security by providing manure for the farms and offspring to raise for income.



INCOME GENERATION AND MONEY MANAGEMENT:

All 19 groups created group mutual funds which they use to loan money to group members for the creation of new projects. Thanks to this mutual fund, all 530 households received a loan to buy either a chicken or a rabbit. During the period of April through August, ZOE also provided grants so that all heads of households could start small businesses as individuals or in small groups. The following are what they choose to do:

- 127 members started food store projects
- 160 sell fruits and vegetables
- 110 breed and raise livestock (goats, pigs, hens, or rabbits)
- 89 focus on animal trading (buying and selling)
- 22 make and sell banana juice
- 22 weave baskets to sell
- 5 work as barbers
- 8 are involved in canteen projects
- 4 grow and sell mushrooms
- 6 operated bicycle taxi services
- 5 sell fire wood and charcoal



A young ZOE business person trading in rabbits.

MEDICAL CARE ASSISTANCE: ZOE assisted 900 children with health insurance and paid the costs for nine children to be admitted to referral hospitals and for special medication beyond what health insurance would cover.

HOUSING: During the months of July, August, and September, ZOE supported six families with house construction and provided materials such as nails, iron sheets, and doors. ZOE also paid for the skilled labor of builders while the associated group members contributed their labor to the projects by carrying bricks, water, and stones.

EDUCATION: ZOE supported 22 children in secondary school with school fees and materials while an additional four received vocational training and start-up kits in haircutting and dressing.

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS:

- There have been cases where children were abused by their relatives. ZOE assisted these kids in taking those cases to government agencies in charge. In addition ZOE assisted these children in the court prosecution against those abusing them.
- Since many girls have had unwanted pregnancies, ZOE is talking with health clinics to organize a specific training and education program for girls.



Boys growing mushrooms as a business . . .



and trading in chickens.



Youth operating a bicycle taxi service.

Becoming food secure and generating an income are usually the most urgent needs of the children identified for ZOE. The information below discusses ZOE's empowerment approach to overcoming these challenges.

Focus On: Food Security

Children entering the ZOE empowerment program struggle every day to alleviate their hunger. Usually they try to find work, but because they lack status or an adult advocate in their community, they are paid extremely low wages or small amounts of food. They might try growing their own food, but they do not have the resources or knowledge to succeed. It is not unusual for these children to go two or three days without eating. Occasionally they must resort to begging or even taking from a neighbor's field just to survive. Even those children who do manage to eat daily suffer health consequences from the poor nutritional value of their meals.

With guidance from ZOE program facilitators, new working groups learn what foods they need to eat as well as explore different ways to attain a stable food source. Because ZOE is an empowerment program, the children are not told what to do, but are instead given options and training so that they can devise their own approach to becoming food secure and self-sufficient.

Children in rural areas who can access land will learn about the best agricultural practices for their region and then be given the seeds, fertilizer, and tools to begin vegetable gardens and/or plant crops like corn. Other ZOE households might start with raising small animals, like rabbits or chickens, after learning about animal husbandry. All children are encouraged to begin earning money as soon as possible to increase their food security.

Focus On: Income Generation

Young family leaders are encouraged to develop multiple income sources. Working groups usually take on a joint business project, like growing a cash crop, raising small livestock, even running a restaurant. These projects will produce profits that all can share. Individual households also start small income generating-activities like buying and reselling food items, phone calling cards, clothing, etc. Later, ZOE helps the children dream larger dreams about how they can provide for themselves and their siblings in more secure ways. For example, ZOE may help a child enroll in vocational classes to start a trade business (like tailoring, auto mechanic, or hair styling), open a kiosk business to sell dry goods or enlarge their farm or livestock breeding to produce surplus they can sell. It is typical for an ambitious young person in the ZOE program to run several income-generating activities simultaneously.

Before being given resources to start these small businesses, ZOE trains all working group members on how to craft a business plan and manage money. After this training, the group takes the following steps:

- Discusses what businesses could succeed in their community and how they can cooperate to serve the market if multiple children want to try the same business.
- Creates individual and group business plans, presenting these to the group for discussion.
- Votes to approve the proposals or help the members create a better plan.

Once the business plan is approved, the individual will receive a micro-grant and/or a start-up kit to begin. Throughout this process the ZOE program facilitator is available to provide guidance, but not to tell the group what to do or make decisions for them. In this way the children begin to learn how to make their own decisions while assisting one another so they may continue this process beyond the three-year ZOE program.

A ZOE TRIP OF HOPE TO RWANDA, FEBRUARY 2016

Pastor Jenn Williams, St. Luke's UMC



Saturday, February 6: Today was the hardest but most joy-filled day. We had the privilege of meeting two of the three working groups St. Luke's and St. Luke's families have agreed to support. (The third group is going to be in the same "cell" or community but is just being recruited.) Our groups are located around the area north of Butare. The two groups represent 52 households and currently 115 orphaned, vulnerable children. We had the opportunity to meet the leaders of the households who range from 15-20 years of age. I will be honest, I did not know what to expect, or how I would react. We walked into a school room filled with young people on benches, dressed in their best clothes. They were crammed in this small space and they looked as if they did not know what to expect either.

We walked to the front of the room and the chairperson of the group stood and welcomed us through Epiphanie's translation. Then they had us stand with them as they sang a song of welcome and gratitude for our visit, followed by the most beautiful prayer by one of the young men named Thacien. It was at that very moment I looked up and was overwhelmed by this feeling as if I had known these young people all my life. They come from a different world with different experiences, and yet, I felt as if we were in a community of St. Luke's in the middle of Rwanda. These 52 strangers suddenly became a part of our church family.

We spent the next two or three hours with them. The working group was recently identified by ZOE and are only in their fourth meeting of a three year process. They have begun to share their stories with one another, their fears and frustrations, but also their dreams. Six brave young people stood among us and shared their stories. It was not sharing to be heart-string pulling or manipulative, it was a time that allowed them to continue their own healing processes. The more they share their story, the less claim the hurt has on them and the more hurt is replaced by hope. The chairperson explained they knew they could share their stories with us because we are their friends and we will support and pray for them.

Each was timid as Epiphanie translated. The deeper and more pain they revealed, the more quiet they became as they told stories of abandonment, abuse, hunger for days on end, sickness and a desire at times for God to just spare their suffering and let them die. One boy kept clutching his stomach and when Epiphanie asked what was wrong, he admitted he hurt not only from hunger, but from recently having malaria. Malaria has broken out again in Rwanda because mosquito nets have come in under or untreated. At one point Jean Baptiste was able to get

together money to find the medicine, however, did not have enough money for food and the medicine made him ill. These are the difficult choices these young people have to make, not only for themselves, but their siblings and sometimes a disabled parent for whom they, at ages 17, 18, 20 years old are now responsible. Most work day labor jobs in exchange for food, but the food is often not enough to feed their siblings, so they go hungry. One whose father had mental illness, which is discriminated against heavily in these villages, was called “Mad Girl” and shunned as an outcast.

But these young people have dreams. They dream of owning a cow, a home, being able to sell food in order to have enough food for their family. They want to send their siblings to school and live in safety. For us these seem like small dreams, but for them each dream is a road to empowerment and being able to feel like a human with dignity. Choking back our own tears, John stood and shared what he tells his students at Palm Lake Elementary. He told them to have PRIDE: Purpose, Respect, Integrity, Determination and Excellence. Later one of the young men stood and said how inspired he was that someone thought he could live out those words. I welcomed them as part of our St. Luke’s family on your behalf and told them they were beautiful, brave, and loved by God. I also shared our saying at St. Luke’s – “it’s not the same without U”, and let them know that now we included them as a part of the “U” of our community.



Ann had a wonderful idea, which had led us to the market a few days before to find Rwandan fabric. We asked each of the young people to come forward and let us trace their hands and sign their names so we could bring it back to you. This was the turning point. All of the shyness quickly disappeared as they each came forward and placed their hands on the fabric. We smiled and laughed with them, getting a chance to speak to each of them personally, offering handshakes and hugs. Our friends on the team took selfies of them – allowing them to see themselves smiling. We shared cokes and bread with them and some of their little siblings who had been peering through the windows the entire time. There was laughter as I taught them how to fist bump and we made them laugh for pictures. Community was built, sorrow turned to joy, struggle and fear to hope and promise. They gave us thank you drawings to bring back home to you. We sang another song, I wept through a prayer for them (not surprising to any of you), and then the leader shared one

last word. ***“We thought we were below humans and that God didn’t care about us. But today you have showed us that God is real and loves us. We can live our dreams.”***



The Gospel according to St. Luke was written for the outsiders, the outcasts, the forgotten, the widows and the orphans. It shows a Jesus walks with, eats, touches, and heals those who are the least and the last and continually lifts up the poor and marginalized as the blessed, for to such belongs the Kingdom of God. This is what St Luke's was named for over 30 years ago. This idea is the foundation for everything we do, our purpose, our core values, and the foundation of the 4D World Changing Idea to Meet Jesus on the Road and lift children out of poverty and the way we serve with dignity. In the same tradition of all the powerful mission work we have been a part of in our history, in the same hope with which we work in our own city and East Winter Garden, today we started a new journey of empowerment, walking alongside these young people to help them reach their dreams. We will support them, learn from them, pray for them, support others if we can and consider them a part of who we are as a congregation. Today, we again, lived into our namesake and lived out the gospel, letting these children know God's love for them is real. I was so proud to represent you in this heart altering moment. Well done, good and faithful servants.



P.S. Here's the truck we promised a picture of and an apology. This truck was actually purchased by our Mission Endowment Fund. Blame it on my head not my heart, or jet lag, which could be the case as well. Inside the truck are John, Epiphanie and Germain, one of the amazing social workers! They are so thankful for this vehicle and the funds donated to purchase it.

Focus On: Group Formation

When ZOE first enters a community to help children, we begin by engaging the local leaders. ZOE staff members explain how ZOE is an empowerment program, helping the children to help themselves. Although different from the usual relief approach, it resonates with leaders who want to see sustainable change in their village. Since staff are indigenous to each country in which we operate they understand local customs, challenges, and resources available so when they meet with the community leaders they quickly gain trust and support.

The children in your working group began their amazing journey of transformation in January 2016. During the first meetings they experienced understanding, compassion, and acceptance from the other children. They elected leaders, made rules to guide their meetings, chose a group name, and decided when and where to hold weekly gatherings. Within the first six months, the children began training on the topics of food security, health and disease prevention, business management, and child rights. If they had access to land they were provided seeds to start gardens and plant crops. If siblings were not attending school, ZOE provided uniforms and other resources to get them back into classes. Children who had skills were provided grants so that they could start small businesses, others began vocational training. Most importantly, all began to experience God's love and realize that though many are orphans, they have a Father in heaven who loves them.

Name List: ZOE staff members make home visits to record information about the children, their dependents and caregivers. They assess if any emergency interventions are required to alleviate health issues, abusive conditions, or inadequate shelter. Once they have confirmed who is eligible for the ZOE program, and have allowed children who are not interested to drop out and others to join, then the staff creates a name list of the children. Please note, children joining the ZOE program often have no parents or birth documentation, and have suffered multiple traumas in their young. Sometimes they are suspicious of the outsiders asking questions. For these reasons, the children occasionally provide erroneous information which we later correct.

On the following page is the list of names and a picture of your specific working group. The names in bold are heads of household, followed by their siblings and dependents. Although ZOE records both first and last names, we use only first names in public lists to preserve the privacy of children in the program. The ages of the orphaned and vulnerable children in the ZOE program range between infant and college age. Some of the children live with an elderly grandparent or disabled caregiver (names in italics). Most often such arrangements include shelter only and the caregiver is unable to provide food, education, health care or other support which children need. Child rights is especially important in such situations so that the children are not abused.

Abanyamurava "Brave" Working Group - St. Luke's Serve Ministry

29 households and a total of 84 children



Marguerite 18 Immaculée 16 Donatille 12	Jean Pierre 18 Berthe 16 André 14	Eric 19 Angelique 17 Henriette 13	Jean Marie Vianney 20 Eustochie 17
Amina 18 Rachel 17 Claude 16	Audace 17 Justine 12 Vestine 12 Nepomscene 6	Emmanuel 18 Jacqueline 15 Vestine 12 Donat 9	Evalde 16 Léon 19 Jean D'Amour 16 Léonce 13 Christella 9
Sylver 19 Sylvain 17 Cecile 16 Ludoviko 14 Winifred 18 Cleoface 20	Brigitte 19 Eric 19 Clémentine 17 Charlotte 14 Charles 11	Emmanuel 16 Joseph 12 Bosco 11 Eduard 5	Appolonie 19 Charlotte 18
Delphine 17 Anatalie 12	Evode 18 Théonille 14 Gervais 2	Emmanuel 18 Dieudonné 16 Patrick 14 Delphine 11 Belise 9	Flavianne 20 Giselle
Thacien 19 Olive 16	Chantal 16 Peruth 10 Léa 8 Alodie 2	Emmanuel 17 Patrick 14 Elizabeth 8 Baptiste 7 Eugène 6	Theogene 18 Eugenie 20
Jean Baptiste 18	Jean De Dieu 17 Emmanuelie 11 Adeline 6	Severine 19 Clarisse 17	Lea 20 Delphine 18 Gabriel 11
Vianney 18 Appolonie 14 Bernadette 9			Uwitonze 18 Nyandwi 14
Asinathe 20			

Tuzamurane "Lift One Another" Working Group – Allen, Thomas, Eppinger & Davidson

30 households and a total of 96 children



Florence 18

Béatrice 19
Emmanuel 17
Dominique 65

Francine 17

Liberata 65

Victoria 19

Claude 18
Cansilde 17

Colette 19

Edouard 18

Claudine 20

Emmanuel 18
Anastasia 16
Immaculée 13
Bernadette 16

Fils 19

Pierrine 17
Josiane 11
Irène 3

Renatha 17

Vestine 18
Xavier 20

Chantal 19

Jean Claude 18
Clarisse 17
Christian 8

Diane 17

Innocent 10
Claude 80

Ernestine 19

Ernest 19

Aimable 20

Evariste 16
Liliane 14

Emmanuel 18

Jean Luc 5

Jean Claude 19

Agrippine 16
Evariste 11

Immaculée 20

Delphine 19
Gilbert 15
Théobald 7

Patrick 19

Protais 17
Jean Baptiste 14
Pacifique 13
Vivine 12

Appolinarie 18

Aimable 13
Vanessa 7
Justine 3
Justin 1

Evode 19

Jean Pierre 15

Placidie 20

Garcan 18
Olivier 11
Olive 8

Anastase 19

Edouard 18

Agnes 19

Clémentine 16
J. Marie Vianney 12
Diane 7

Vestine 19

Liliane 16
Modeste 15
Esther 100

Idrissa 18

Edmond 16
Vedaste 12
Arcad 4
Peruth 2

Jean Baptiste 19

Anysie 17
Pascal 15
Rita 12
Marie Rose 9
Aline 8
Ariane 8

Fils 19

Reverien 18

Aimable 19

Christella 17
Eugène 16
Garcan 15
Ange Marie 7

Clémentine 18

Eric 8

Félix 19

Daniel 13
Clémentine 11
Jean de Dieu 9

Aimable 18

Ernest 13
Solange 10
Prince 6

Delphine 17

Ubumwe "Unity" Working Group Working Group – The Crump Family

29 households and a total of 80 children



Ernestine 19

Alexis 14
Obed 12

Ildephonse 18

Diane 16
Thérèse 85

Donatille 20

Stanislas 19
Emmanuel 18
Joseph 17

Vincent 18

Laurent 16
Emmanuel 14
Louis 12

Eric 18

Joseph 17
Pacifique 16

Irène 17

Bénjamin 16
Vital 15
Jotham 9
Dionise 70

Marie Chantal 19

Généreuse 20

Marie Agnes 17
Marie Claire 14
Josiane 10
Placide 7

Charlotte 19

Clementine 17
Patrick 16
Liliane 12
Theoneste 7
Theoneste 56

Jacques 19

Solange 13
Delphine 15
François 60

Samuel 18

Jonathan 15
Gad 10
Theoneste 65

Israel 16

Theoneste 57

Emmanuel 19

Oreste 17
Pascal 14

Agnes 16

Vestine 14
Leonidas 8
Evaliste 57

Carine 17

Irène 17
Frabrice 13
Celestin 63

Thamar 19

Aaron 22
Noël 14
François 66

Damien 20

Henriette 16

Claudine 20

Chantal 19
Eric 17
Delphine 13
Vestine 11

Dismas 19

Mugisha 8

Delice 14

Emeline 12

Elianne 19

Francoise 17
Louise 18

Regis 17

Chris 15
Christian 18

Theophile 19

Olivier 16
Elisa 10

Jacques 19

Jean Gaga 16
Blaise 14

Gregoire 19

Antoine 18

Josephine 17

Bruce 14

Judith 20

Jacqueline 18
Celine 12

Focus on: Faith

Often the isolation that the children feel when they begin the ZOE program extends to their thoughts about God. Because they are abused and discriminated against by their community - and often this includes Christians in their village - they believe God has also abandoned or even cursed them. At other times they believe that maybe God does not exist, or if God does exist that they are somehow beyond God's love. In the very first meeting the staff often address the Lord's prayer with the children, and talk about what it means, as an orphan, to call God "Father." They learn that they are not truly orphans because they have their heavenly Father who loves them.

ZOE shares the gospel with these children, but this sharing goes beyond words to deeds. The children both hear and see the very best of the Christian message, and often respond to this in inspirational ways. At each meeting they begin with Scripture readings, prayer and devotions given by a group member, but while this is available to the children they are never coerced into the Christian faith. ZOE's program is religiously non-restrictive, but offers a compelling view of the love Christians show to others.

One of the most powerful parts of the empowerment program is the way these children put their faith into action in their own community. They forgive those who have harmed them; feed others who are even poorer than themselves; adopt other children and share their resources and knowledge with them; pray and care for one another; and pay fair wages to those who had once taken advantage of their situation with hard labor and poor pay. These children return good for evil and can be examples to all of what it means to live our faith.

Focus on: First Connections

One of the biggest disadvantages orphans and vulnerable children face is isolation from peers and the larger community. Struggling on their own, the children lack moral support, access to community resources, and a network of people to help them progress and face challenges. ZOE creates connections.

Peer group. Even though there may be hundreds of orphans and vulnerable children living in a community or village, they often self-segregate because of the conditions of their poverty, disease, and/or the stigma of HIV/AIDS. When each new member tells their story during the first working group meeting, they are greatly encouraged to find that there are others who share their same struggles. Then ZOE introduces the children to young people who already graduated from or have made significant progress through ZOE's empowerment program and the new ZOE participants are inspired and energized to begin the work of transformation.

Program facilitator and mentor. Each working group is assigned a program facilitator/social worker. These ZOE staff members usually speak the mother tongue of the region, hold a diploma in social work or related fields and have experience working with children. Additionally, the working group members select a person from the local community to serve as a mentor and advocate for the children within the community. Mentors receive training from ZOE and then attend weekly meetings, make home visits and help ZOE resolve challenges the group may face in the community.

And a powerful connection is you! All ZOE working groups know the opportunities they receive are from God, through the love and concern coming from their partners far away. They are amazed that you would care for them without ever having met them. This powerful connection is further strengthened when a Hope Companion visits the children to witness what they have achieved. In many ways you stand in place of their parents, and to hear that you are proud of what they have accomplished is transformative for these children. Thank you for being a part of building God's Kingdom in this way.