

26th July 2014

Dear friends,

It has been a week now since I arrived here in Kigali and we have been all over the place around Kigali, networking and finding out useful information. We have made important contacts and made significant progress.

Yesterday we went into the country and visited 3 couples with cows. It was very interesting. At the first home we were invited in and they had also prepared food for us. Cassava, beans and avocado. It was freshly prepared and warm. We ate from two dishes and had forks. The children sat on mats, we had a small table and benches to sit on. The story was very moving as we could see how the trust between the survivor and offender had been restored and you could see how the offender, a muslim, understood the concept of forgiveness and he said that if you are truly sorry, God will forgive you. The wide smile on his face was evidence that he had been set free!

They gave me a dish with bananas and avocados as a gift and walked us to the car. On the way to the car the smallest boy told his father he wanted to thank me for making it possible for them to have a cow. It is moving, just as I write, to have a little boy say thank you! All those hours behind the computer, it's worth it!

We also visited the land of the farm that CARSA has bought last year. There is a little house on it and a family of which the father is employed to work the land. So far there are pine apples, cassava and mandarin trees and some bees. We are working on and discussing the plans for the next step.

We had a major break down with the car on the way back, but managed just to reach a garage. There they spotted a break in the bracket which keeps the engine in place and managed to weld it. Amazing how they just by the side of the road can fix cars! We kept ourselves busy on Whatapp (there is internet everywhere in Rwanda) and taking pictures of pedestrians and interacting with the children (giving them banana's instead of money). We got home late and were very tired but satisfied!

Next week we will visit Kirinda, in the country side, the school and vocational training facility that Colette and her family support. We will also take some time to do planning at the Lake Kivu. We didn't manage to get the medium priced hotel, so now we are in the cheaper one. We thought 130 dollars was a bit steep for one night.

Thanks again for your support during this time!

rgds,

Shirley Hutter

The CornerStone Foundation

www.cornerstone-foundation.org

Writing from Rwanda