



Special education and  
vocational training



At Umutara School for the Deaf, there are currently 150 students enrolled in the current academic year, with 15 in nursery and 81 in grades 1 through 6.

Additionally, there are 54 students attending our technical school and learning professions such as sewing, construction, and hairdressing. The past academic year ended in May 2022 with students in grade 6, taking their final national exams, 8 out of 10 students passed, despite having limited access to information and resources that most other students have.





*Of the students who graduated from the vocational school, 17 have found employment, with some working in Construction, Sewing, Hairdressing, and others still searching for job opportunities.*



## Deaf and blind children outreach

The Children Outreach Program is one of the initiatives of Friends of Handicaps that focuses on visiting families with children with disabilities, particularly in rural areas of the eastern province of Rwanda. **This program aims to provide education and equal opportunities for children who are often stigmatized and not valued in their communities.**





***The outreach program is conducted twice a year and has successfully brought 9 out of 27 children in nursery and first grade to the schools.*** However, many of these children's parents do not participate in their education and some children end up dropping out of school due to financial difficulties and negative attitudes towards disability within their families.





## **Gentle teaching training & Sign language courses**

In October 2022, Dominique Ndagijimana, president of Friends of Handicaps (FHR), and Mrs. Eleanie Kamana traveled to Sweden to visit the Manillaskolan School for the Deaf.

The purpose of this trip was for both schools to share about deaf education in Rwanda, explore ways to increase cooperation in education, and work together on advocacy for private deaf schools in developing countries.





As a result, FHR identified a need for more sign language and gentle teaching training for staff at the Umutara School for the Deaf, motivated by the Manilaskolan school. In January 2023, FHR is planning to provide this training and we are currently raising funds and gathering volunteers to support the program. During their trip, Dominique and Eleanie visited a Baptist church in Aschaffenburg, Germany to seek support for the sustainability of the Umutara School for the





**The church donated four cows that will provide a source of income for the school through the sale of milk and fertilizer, and will also supply milk to young children at the school to improve their nutrition.**



**Benjam visits the friends of handicap activities**



In November 2022, **Benjamin Kubwimana**, our **development lead at FHR**, visited our schools in the eastern province of Rwanda.

In September of this year, he implemented a **child sponsorship program** to help families provide education and support for students at our schools and community centers.



During his visit, he met with the families of the 51 students still on the waiting list for sponsors and was encouraged to continue working on securing their enrollment for the next academic year. Many of these families have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflicts in Ukraine, which have disproportionately affected children with disabilities.





While in Rwanda Benjamin was accompanied by Angeli buttner, a new friend of Friends of handicap in Rwanda who was in the country for a water project with the German embassy. Angeli, a professor from Berlin. Specializes in Landscape and water management infrastructure. We thank her a lot because she was able to offer some donations to the children with hearing impairment in the nursery and in the primary one.



## Acknowledging our partners and donors



-In this newsletter ,FHR extends its gratitude to the DeafReach trustees from UK for providing relief Assistance to support Umutara School for the Deaf(UDS) because of Covid-19 effects and the war in the Ukraine which affected the economic situation around the world. The first phase of this grant was provided in September and the second phase is expected in February 2023.

- We acknowledge A better world Canada as FHR/ UDS/KDBC main donors .they have done a lot to build the constructions , we were very glad how they came to visit FHR activities After long period of Covid-19 pandemic. We had good discussion about the projects of 2022 and also discussed about the future projects of 2023.



-We would like to thank Sayap Africa from California for continuing to support FHR/UDS in advocacy and help people who want to donate in Child sponsorship program.

- in this news letter also let us to thank Isobel Blakeley with her friends for the effort they continue to use in order to help FHR/UDS to keep running in this hard situations and search all ways how FHR can develop its activities and reach on goals.

- we acknowledge Jolanda Harrewjin's Family for their Annual support and the ways she keeps to recognize the effort used in order to develop FHR since 2010/2011 when she was a volunteer in Rwanda.

-we would like to thank a lot Suzanne Van for her kindness and how she always organize the way of collecting money to support the Umutara school for the Deaf.



**FHR congratulates our Director  
Dominique Ndagijimina on his  
graduation**



On December 9, 2022, Rev. Dominique earned a master's degree in non-profit organizational management and Community Development, which will be beneficial in improving the quality of life in the areas where Friends of Handicaps operates and will positively impact the level of professional work with both employees and donors.

We congratulate Rev. Dominique on this accomplishment and the effort he put into advancing his profession.







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