

Dear Friends – I have the greatest of pleasures in sending this special newsletter to you, written by members of the Friends of Rwandan Rugby charity reg no 1113179 who have visited us on many occasions bringing gifts of kit and helping us widen opportunities for our students. As a rugby fan I have been especially pleased to see how the children have developed their skills.

Here are accounts from Clive and Jack with photographs from Tina and Jack from Friends of Rwandan Rugby and from the project staff and volunteers.



Our trip to Rwanda was finally going ahead after the pandemic and five of us were going to experience something that many others have had over the years. It did not disappoint. After a full - on week in the various schools culminating in the tournament which was a great success Friday, our last day was to see us visit the Kinamba Project and this turned out to be a morning that Jack, Tom, Suzanne, Colin and myself will have wonderful memories of for many years to come. Mary, Glyn and Mike Jones were with us and after an introduction about the project from one of the teachers we then made our way up to the playing area where the young children were waiting for us.



What followed was an amazing hour engaging with them in passing the rugby ball and then playing tag which they thoroughly enjoyed. Before we left the children performed a dance which was superb. It was a wonderful way to end the visit to Rwanda. Clive



Still fairly fresh off of the plane, the Friends of Rwandan Rugby (FoRR) playing squad got the opportunity to visit the Kinamba community project on Friday morning.

We walked through the blue iron gates to be warmly greeted by welcoming smiles. Brightly coloured buildings were adorned with drawings and nestled under the shade of tall green trees, as the kids huddled together around their teachers. We introduced ourselves, and received an enthusiastic welcome from the country director who explained the purpose of the project.



Suddenly the kids disappeared, before reappearing in their dance troupe traditional outfits – beautiful blue and yellow dresses for the girls, and the boys in wonderful headdresses. The dancing and singing were fantastic, and you could tell the kids were absolutely loving being able to perform for others. They were clearly a happy and close group who shared smiles and rhythm as they brought us into the dance (we displayed slightly less innate rhythm!).



Following the dance, we took some rugby balls up to the playing fields, passing through the main complex. The Kinamba project has classrooms, sandpits and all manner of facilities geared towards providing education, security, and community to the most in need. The kids guided us by hand to an open space at the top of the complex which had beautiful views over the rolling Kigali hills.



We began to get some balls moving through the hands, much to the excitement of the kids. They really threw themselves into catching and passing with a simple, infectious joy. We created some large circles and passed around in various directions, with every dropped ball or accidental mishandle being met with rapturous laughter from participants. We were smiling, the kids were smiling. Perfect.

We organised a game of two teams lining up and passing a ball down the line over heads and under legs.

The competition raised the noise levels through the roof, and excitement of both the volunteers and students reached a crescendo every time one team got near to winning.

For many of the volunteers, this was their first taste of Africa, and engaging with a community project like Kinamba. Having recently visited the Genocide museum, the smiles, joy and trust that shine from each and every child within the project were a reminder to all the FoRR volunteers about what we should be aiming for in our lives. It also showed how much happiness sport and activity can bring, and perfectly captured why FoRR and 'The Meg' are so worthwhile. If the Kinamba project is about fostering hope and opportunity, it certainly seems to be working. Jack



We are so grateful to the Friends of Rwandan Rugby charity who have helped open so many opportunities for us and below I attach photographs of another session with Kamanda who is employed to develop rugby by FoRR and here a picture of our senior students helping the primary children during holiday club. Thank you!



Fit and healthy children enjoying life, what could be better? Love and peace to you. Meg