

NEXUS

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Ordinary people can make an extraordinary difference

PARTNERING WITH THE WORLD

~Connie Gerwing~



Rainbow of Hope for Children (ROHFC) is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) that began its work in Central and South America over 40 years ago. An NGO is a non-profit, citizen-based group that functions independently of government. NGOs are organized on community, national and international levels to serve a purpose, and are cooperative rather than commercial in nature. NGOs provide services that fill gaps left by the private and public sectors. They are increasingly significant in international development. While some NGOs support paid staff, ROHFC relies on volunteers.

The types of projects we get involved with include building schools, medical centers and other community focused structures. For example, we recently built three classrooms, a staffroom and head teacher office at Nzavoni near Kinyambu in Kenya. Sometimes we rebuild

after disasters. Two good examples of this are the homes we rebuilt in Peru after the earthquake in the Chinchabaja area in 2007, and rebuilding schools in Nepal after their earthquake in 2015. We also have many projects where we provide support and supplies such as a current one in Ghana where we partner with a group called PAMBE (Partnership for Mother Tongue based Bilingual Education). You can read about this in the spring 2019 NEXUS.

ROHFC works with government organizations, national and international NGOs, and organizations on the local level.

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PARTNERING WITH THE WORLD cont.

Working with local organizations:

Rainbow of Hope for Children has always worked closely with organizations in the countries where we operate. However, all the projects ROHFC undertake must meet some requirements: they must have local committees, proposals must be made, and there must be trust among partners.¹

When we first consider working in a developing country we find a group with local expertise and knowledge and establish a relationship with them. Proposals for projects are made by this local group following a format developed by Rainbow of Hope. The board of directors then reviews this, often goes back for more information and detail, checks on the viability of the project, and either approves it or not. It is essential that what we do meets community needs and working with a local organization is the best way to ensure that we are being effective. These groups are carefully chosen and monitored to ensure that they continue to help us complete our projects. Our focus is mainly on community-based, non-profit organizations without any religious or political affiliation. Our most important relationships are with these local groups.

In Central America we have worked in Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador for much of the 40 years of our existence. El Salvador provides some great examples of local groups with whom we have had long-standing relationships. The two main groups are COMUS (Association of United Communities of Usulután), and CIS (Centro de Intercambio y Solidaridad/Center of Exchange and Solidarity). COMUS was founded in 1990 after the El Salvadoran civil war to help communities meet their basic needs. Usulután is the capital city of a region of the same name on the Pacific Ocean. It has rich agricultural areas but was badly damaged in an earthquake in 2001 and a hurricane in 1998. CIS has a variety of different projects with a number of organizations. With Rainbow of Hope providing funding they have a scholarship program for students from a remote island community who need to attend school on the mainland. We are now in the process of helping CIS

with a housing project which the new government of El Salvador is developing.

In South America we have worked in both Brazil and Peru. In Brazil there have been several different organizations over the years, many of them initiated by Al Gerwing. Since 2010 we have worked with the School of Family Agriculture in the dry north east of Brazil. The school was established in 2004 on eight hectares of land in the Municipality of Antonio Gonçalves, in the State of Bahia. There are currently six teachers, an agronomist, and support staff. Students learn about vegetable and fruit gardening, pigs, poultry, goats and beekeeping. The school strives to keep the curriculum close to the small family farm operations that most students come from. Staff also visit their farms to provide specialized help.

African projects are quite new for Rainbow of Hope, less than 10 years. We now work in three different countries, Kenya and Tanzania in East Africa, and Ghana in West Africa. In Kenya we partner with the Nzavoni Kinyambu Self Help Group (formerly KRECD) in the Kinyambu area. This is a small non-governmental organization formed in that community to work on development projects. We have mainly done small building projects there but are embarking on a project to teach children and their families better ways to raise chickens.

Tanzania is one of the poorest countries in the world and we work in

Tabora and Igunga districts, mainly in the community of Ussongo but now in the larger town of Tabora also. We have built classrooms for the local Ussongo Primary School in partnership with the community. We have also partnered with the Daughters of Mary, a group of Catholic nuns, who operate a small school to teach in English, and to provide kindergarten and primary education as well as a vocational program for young women. In Tabora we are now working with the School for the Deaf to fund some water tanks.

Our most recent collaboration is with the High Himalayan Community Project run by Harikrishna Devkotah. They work to rebuild schools and other infrastructure in the Langtang Valley of Nepal. You can read more about them in the fall 2018 NEXUS.



On one of their visits to the island in El Salvador, Charles Matt and George Bunz, with Leslie Schuld, the CEO of CIS, brought a boatload of lifejackets for the use of students travelling to the mainland to school.

¹ The ROHFC has its mission statement on the website: <https://www.rainbowofhopeforchildren.ca/> where you will also find past NEXUS newsletters.

PARTNERING WITH THE WORLD cont.

Working with National and International organizations:

Sometimes the Rainbow of Hope partners with other non-governmental organizations from the developed part of the world. One example of this is the John Fawcett Foundation (JFF) from Australia. They work with needy people in islands around Bali, Indonesia mainly in sight restoration, blindness prevention, and cleft palate surgeries. They set up mobile clinics to screen patients, do surgeries, and provide glasses and other vision-related medical services. They have screened over a million people so far. Rainbow of Hope provided funds to support some of their mobile clinics. In their most recent newsletter they indicated that they had issued glasses to 477,247, treated 582,478 for infections and did 52,701 cataract surgeries. Thirty-six people received artificial eyes, custom made for them.



Cataract patients in Bali waiting to have their bandages removed.

We also work with groups such as Rotary International who have been great supporters for many years. We also make a point of visiting Rotary Clubs in different parts of the world as we travel to visit the projects.

Working with governments:

A major role of ROHFC is to raise funds for our projects. One way we do this is by applying for government grants. We have worked with Global Affairs Canada and the Alberta Community Initiatives Program AB-CIP also provides assistance for developing our capacity. For example, they provide resources to assist NGOs to work with the UN Sustainable Development Goals that we now include in our project agreements. This demonstrates our work in solidarity with international

organizations to improve living conditions and the environment worldwide by 2030.

Rainbow of Hope also partnered with COMUS in El Salvador and received funding from Global Affairs Canada to develop a successful sustainable coffee growing project which you can read more about in previous issues of the NEXUS newsletter on our website.

Partnering with government agencies involves an added level of accountability which strains our volunteer resources so we choose carefully when we apply for matching grants. We sometimes work directly with the governments of the countries where we have projects. For example, Joe Gubbels, one of our directors, has been working for some years to turn the Tony Gubbels Public Education Complex in Peru over to the education department there. This has generated much bureaucracy and many meetings.

Partnerships are essential for a small NGO like Rainbow of Hope to be productive in what we do. Learning from other groups, working together on projects, and spreading the ideas we find or develop to others is a huge part of what we do. We have volunteers with wide experience in various areas and we can be helpful with ideas or information on how to do things that we have encountered elsewhere. For example, Joe Gubbels was working in Peru in an area that had been severely damaged in an earthquake. People needed housing and cheap ways to cook and keep their areas clean. Eco toilets and eco stoves were set up there and this idea has been taken by other groups that ROHFC works with and adapted for their use. We have also shared a model for a stronger school desk that we found in Tanzania for use in our Kenya projects. (See article from the Spring 2019 NEXUS). This ripple effect is one of the intangibles of working for many years in various developing countries. We bring ideas and knowhow from Canada and also from all the other countries we have visited and worked in and we learn new things from them as well.

One of the biggest difficulties in working in the many poor countries throughout the world is that the needs are so great and our funds are so small. Without partner organizations we can't even hope to sort out which needs are most deserving of our support. Our partners also help us ensure that we are using our funds wisely, getting the most for our money and not falling prey to scams or corruption. One of the most important aspects of our work is with local communities, helping them with needs that they identify and which fit with our objectives. We do what we can. We can't help everyone but we can help someone. ☺

PERU PLAY AND LEARN TEC-BUS CLASSROOM

~ Joe Gubbels ~



Tec-Bus Classroom

In the primary and secondary education sector in the region of Ica, Peru, there are 2,508 schools and 233,013 students. An estimated 220,000 adult citizens in the region of Ica have not completed secondary education. Approximately 5,500 students are taking Adult Basic Education to complete primary and secondary education. For this reason, the Ministry of Education wants to promote dynamic projects to motivate primary and secondary education students to continue in school rather than dropping out. However, rural students have major disadvantages in the pursuit of their education, because of the lack of accessibility to technical equipment in schools and, above all, low level of family income from employment in the agriculture industry. Many students drop out of school at a young age to work rather than continuing their education.

In Peru, the regional director of education initiated mobile learning classrooms to satisfy the need for innovative education services that would encourage students to continue their education. The first mobile unit was a library. Following the successful experience with the mobile library, the director of education solicited the assistance of Rainbow of Hope for Children Society (ROHFC) and Telefonica Peru to establish a Tec-Bus Classroom. Telefonica Peru agreed to provide 14 laptop computers, audio visual equipment, materials and its installation, and ROHFC provided a truck chassis. The regional Ministry of Education provided a truck box converted to a classroom, furniture, two teachers and a chauffeur. After many meetings with educational staff, Telefonica Peru, and members of Amigos de Siempre (the organization in Peru representing ROHFC), they developed a curriculum and a schedule for school visits.

The “Play and Learn Tec-Bus Classroom” project provides a mobile computer classroom that can move from school to school on a regular schedule to meet the educational needs of rural primary education students. It enables the good use of technical resources, reduces the digital knowledge gap between rural and urban students, and provides a way to improve the quality of teaching and learning Communication, Mathematics and the Social Sciences programs. It responds to the new demands for the ability to use information technology effectively in the modern era and assists students to development themselves within their society.

Since the Tec-Bus has been in operation, it has served an estimate of 2,100 students in 8 schools and 167 teachers in the region. It is evident that the students are eager to attend classes in the Tec-Bus. The experience is stimulating and fun and promotes confidence and self-identification. It confirms the studies that the best form of promoting learning is through creativity, play and diversion. It provides knowledge of other opportunities



The Tec-Bus mobile computer classroom

TEC-BUS CLASSROOM cont.

for further studies and encouragement to pursue them. In addition, the implementation of the Tec-Bus Program has stimulated the participation of parents, news media, cultural and political organizations, business, and industry in the holistic education of rural students. This innovative education initiative is resulting in positive changes in families, communities and the Peruvian society.

During the process of developing the Tec-Bus, the planning committee developed a mobile Ecological project. This project is a response to the national

legislation of Peru mandating ecological teaching in all schools.

Although ROHFC was not directly involved, the Ministry of Education placed the ROHFC sticker on the Ecological unit as an acknowledgment of the support to this mobile unit project. Since October 2018, the Ecological program has served an estimated population of 1,251 students and 390 adults.

The Ministry of Education staff is grateful for the financial and academic support for the mobile projects and other projects promoting the education for children and adults. ☺



The Mobile Ecological Project

UPDATES FROM CURRENT PROJECTS

Kinyambu Poultry Project, Kenya—We have had to wait to begin this as our partner organization needed to renew their licence to operate with the Kenyan government. Funds are in place and the project will begin as soon as a new agreement is signed with the Nzavoni Kinyambu Self Help Group.

Tabora School for the Deaf Water Tank, Tanzania—The agreement for this project has been signed and the funds are in the process of being sent. Fr. Fabian Mkama, head of the school, has advised us that it will take about six months to complete the huge cement tank and they are moving into the rainy season which means the total time to complete this will be about a year.

School of Family Agriculture, Brazil—The instructor and students have started working on irrigation plots and planting as the project develops.

El Sauce School Mini Farm, El Salvador—The only organic school garden in El Salvador is making good progress. A series of photos of the garden and the students is now on our website under Current Projects.

Paso Puente, El Salvador—The new government of El Salvador is focusing on upgrading housing in slum areas. They are paying to build the basic shell of a home for families there and CIS, our partner, has asked ROHFC for funding for additional things like running water and some finishing of the interiors of the homes. This is near the community of Romero where we've done lots of work. Over 50 homes will be completed with the help of various NGOs in partnership with CIS.

Casa Ambrosina - Empowerment of young women, Alagoas, Brazil: This project has been going for just over a year. They are teaching communications, providing some therapy and teaching English to young women in the Maceió area. Their target group has few job prospects and have often had trauma in their lives. The Al Gerwing Foundation is a supporter of this project.



School of Family Agriculture, Brazil



ROHFC Annual Report 2018-19 Fiscal Year

~ By Charlie Matt, President~

Greetings to all.

I am pleased to inform you that the projects that the Rainbow of Hope for Children (ROHFC) has been supporting are progressing along quite nicely and many have been successfully completed and are gratefully being used to the fullest potential by the beneficiaries. Our Directors are reviewing new proposals with the intent of setting up a project and finding support to carry out these projects. ROHFC has implemented the principles of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals in all new projects

Our projects are quite varied, and, in my experience, provide interesting discussions with others eager to hear about them. Our Directors, in short, manage classroom additions and school building projects; organic gardening education and cultivation projects; adult basic education and technical training, clean water management, and scholarship projects to help students to complete high school and university.

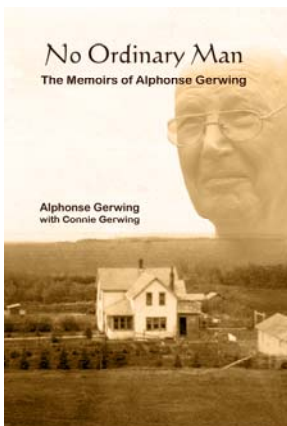
Much of the benefit of these projects does not

only go one way. Many of the students who have received help and support, in turn give back to their community after their graduation. They often come back to their home community and provide clinics, training, or help out where they can. It is such a good feeling knowing that the hand up provided to them in their time of need has turned out to be more hands giving back more than they received.

On another note, last November ROHFC was selected for an audit by the Alberta Government and then in December for an audit by the CRA. This is not unusual for registered Charities, as each one in turn will be selected for an audit from time to time. I am pleased to advise you that ROHFC met the standards of both audits with some recommendations for a few small improvements, which we are currently implementing. These audits affirm that we are doing things right. They also affirm the confidence in ROHFC by both levels of government.

Thank you for your continuing confidence in ROHFC and support. It is appreciated at many levels.

You can read more about our past Brazilian projects in Al Gerwing's memoirs.



★ *No Ordinary Man* The Memoirs of Alphonse Gerwing ★

Looking for a special Christmas gift for a special person? Consider the memoirs of Al Gerwing (Tomas in Brazil). Al was a director of Rainbow of Hope for many years, and dedicated to Brazil and social justice wherever oppression existed. The memoir is an interesting mixture of family history, anecdotes and social commentary--a story well-told, informative, and frequently hilarious.

You can purchase a copy for \$20 online at www.mcnallyrobinson.com or by emailing Ted Gerwing in Saskatoon at tedgerwing@sasktel.net. It is also available at the Lake Lenore Grocery and the Humboldt Museum. Funds go to the Alphonse Gerwing Foundation which supports ROHFC projects.



INSIDE RAINBOW OF HOPE FOR CHILDREN

RAINBOW OF HOPE FOR CHILDREN SOCIETY Statement of Revenues and Expenditures Year Ended March 31, 2019

	2019	2018
REVENUES		
Donations (Note 9)	\$ 183,401	\$ 235,938
Provincial government grants	25,000	38,730
Federal government grants	-	154,685
	208,401	429,353
EXPENSES		
El Salvador	98,390	107,818
Project monitoring	49,644	17,503
Nepal	33,090	15,749
Kenya	19,000	36,825
Public participation	15,287	8,749
Project administration (Note 8)	15,185	24,284
Tanzania	13,900	29,755
Peru	10,000	68,000
Brazil	10,000	1,500
Africa	-	6,000
	264,496	316,183
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES FROM OPERATIONS	(56,095)	113,170
OTHER INCOME		
Interest income	5,766	4,349
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	\$ (50,329)	\$ 117,519

A copy of the full audited statement is available from Treasurer Cherry Dumalagan at 604-308-7783 or dumalagancherry@gmail.com

In addition to the above, the amounts donated back by Rainbow of Hope directors and monitoring teams were:

Administration:	\$ 1,640.00	Net administration is	\$ 5,825.44
Monitoring:	\$ 43,068.63	Net monitoring is	\$ 9,547.40
Public Engagement:	\$ 7,188.86	Net public engagement	\$ (5,026.02)



Let us remember: One book, one pen, one child, and one teacher can change the world. Malala Yousafzai



This Christmas the gift you give can change the world.



PROGRAMS OF THE RAINBOW OF HOPE FOR CHILDREN SOCIETY

Your support is requested and appreciated for the following projects:

Program Description	Funding Goals	Program Description	Funding Goals
Casa Ambrosina, Gender Equality and Empowerment of Young Women, Alagoas, Brazil	\$20,500	Paso Puente Dignified Housing, El Salvador	\$12,000
School of Family Agriculture, Bahia, Brazil	\$20,200	PAMBE Health, Nutrition, and Sanitation, Ghana	\$7,500
El Sauce School Mini-Farm & Organic Agriculture Training, El Salvador	\$25,000	Public Education Complex, Chinchá Baja, Peru	\$11,000
CIS Scholarships, El Salvador	\$26,500	Future Schools, Nepal	\$54,000
Tabora School for the Deaf Water Tank, Tanzania	\$17,000		


Projects Under Development

We are accepting donations towards the following projects that we plan to implement in the near future:

Eye Health Care, reducing avoidable blindness, Indonesia	\$10,000	Kinyambu & Area- Classrooms, Kenya	\$60,000
PREDA, protecting children, Philippines	\$10,000	Disaster Relief Fund	\$10,000
PAMBE Future Projects, Ghana	\$21,500	Hospital, Itasy, Madagascar	\$26,500

The Rainbow of Hope For Children Society (ROHFC) attempts to maintain as low as possible operational costs. The Society allocates 6% of revenue towards these costs. All ROHFC Board members are unpaid volunteers who donate their time and expertise towards these projects. There is no paid staff.

RAINBOW OF HOPE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE SUPPORT OF



Thank you to all our donors, and

- Several Rotary Clubs, the Knights of Columbus, Edmonton Community Foundation, and the Al Gerwing Charitable Foundation.

A special thanks to:

- Sharon Romanow and her leadership students at Blessed Sacrament School in Wainwright for helping prepare the NEXUS mail out.
- The Peter Van Winssen Professional Corporation, Wainwright, Alberta for donating the cost of the NEXUS mail-out.

We thank you for offering a gift to one of these projects and are pleased to acknowledge your donation with an income tax deductible receipt. Kindly send your donation to:

RAINBOW OF HOPE
WAINWRIGHT, AB T9W 1S7
PO BOX 2883

Registered Charity No: 889160172-RR0001
www.rainbowofhopeforchildren.ca

Donations of securities is a significant tax advantage; to donate shares please contact our Treasurer at dumalagancherry@gmail.com or 604-308-7783.

NOTE: When making a donation using a credit card be sure to include the 3-digit security code on the back of your card. That number is now required by the credit card companies.



OFFICERS

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SOMETHING TO WATCH FOR

José Cícero Pinto dos Santos, a long-time friend of ROHFC, has completed his Masters of Education thesis where he used ROHFC as a case study. He has analyzed its role as an actor and catalyst of International Cooperation for Development in Education. In future newsletters we will look closer at Cícero's work.

NEXUS: Produced and edited by Connie Gerwing and Jan Schmitz in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan and Rainbow of Hope's Head Office in Wainwright, Alberta, Canada. The expressed views of the authors are not necessarily the views of the NGO.