

Gakenke District



In collaboration with:



Welcome Note

Welcome to Gakenke District's first health newsletter, a publication that is sponsored by the Access Project. This newsletter will act as a forum to highlight health related events and information in Gakenke District, as well as to explain ongoing collaborations between the Access Project and Gakenke's health centers. The goal of this newsletter is to keep the community regularly informed of the district's progress toward reaching its health goals and of the initiatives and programs being undertaken to continually build a healthier Gakenke. This inaugural issue provides an overview of the progress of health initiatives made in the last quarter in Gakenke District, with a special focus on water and hygiene.

The Access Project would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who have worked so hard and dedicated much time and effort to improving the health of the people in Gakenke District. We at the Access Project look forward to deepening our collaboration with Gakenke's health centers to continue to improve the quality of health care provided in the district.



School children washing their hands

Global Hand Washing Day to Highlight Importance of Hand Washing

October 15th is Global Hand Washing Day. This is the perfect occasion to raise community awareness about the importance of hand washing. Diseases that thrive on poor hygiene represent one of the leading causes for consultation in health centers.

Pneumonia, diarrhea and intestinal parasites are just a few of the diseases caused by poor hygiene. Everyone should wash their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds after going to the bathroom and before eating or preparing meals in order to reduce risk of contamination. Rather than using unclean towels—which can cause recontamination—hands should be shaken dry. Proper hand washing practices should be taught in schools and in health centers. It is proposed that for Global Hand Washing Day health centers organize awareness raising sessions in the waiting rooms of the health center with demonstrations on how to wash hands properly.

Congratulations Karambo Health Center

According to the Access Project's audit, Karambo Health Center improved the most last year. An awards ceremony was held on June 17, 2010 to acknowledge the accomplishments of the health centers that have excelled in the past year. The ceremony was attended by Access Project Country Director, Dr. KARIBUSHI Blaise, Gakenke Vice Mayor in Charge of Social Affairs, TWISHIME Hyacinth and Gakenke Health Director UWAMAHORO Janvier. These honorable attendees expressed that the health centers that have excelled in the past year have done so because of strong leadership by their managers.

Water installation Projects

Coko is the first health center in Gakenke District to benefit from the funding provided by Appropriate Projects, an initiative of the American non-profit organization Water Charity, which funds projects initiated by U.S. Peace Corps Volunteers and their communities. Coko used the \$500 grant it received from Water Charity to install water in the health center's VCT/PMTCT building, which had 7 sinks but was not connected to a water source, and . to install three new sinks in consultation rooms. Water Charity continuously provides grants up to \$500—an ideal dollar amount to install running water in consultation rooms and maternity buildings. Please Contact Gakenke Peace Corps Volunteer Kitty Hall if you are interested (kittyphall@gmail.com).

Water Technology Training Session for Health Center Maintenance Staff

In September, one member of the maintenance staff from 18 Gakenke health centers participated in a two-day training session. NYANDWI Faustin led the training session and taught basic maintenance and minor reparations of toilets and sinks. The health centers should now be able to keep their sinks and toilets, many of which have been installed recently, clean and well functioning. Many of the maintenance workers returned to their health centers and immediately began making repairs. Certain health centers like Coko and Gatonde have installed running water in the last few months, making this training particularly pertinent for the sustainable maintenance of this valuable new equipment.



NZAMURAMBAHO Vincent, director of Coko Health Center, and Peace Corps Volunteer Kitty Hall in front of the PMTCT/VCT/ARV building that was just connected to a water source thanks to an Appropriate Projects Water Charity grant

Access Welcomes a New Addition to its Gakenke Team

Kitty Hall is the newest addition to the Access Project team in Gakenke. Kitty is a U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer and will spend two years in Gakenke, where she will focus on planning and coordination and infrastructure in the health centers. Kitty holds a Master's degree in Engineering of Health Care Systems in Developing Countries (Faculte de Medecine de Marseille) and will try to support the health centers in any way possible.

About the Access Project

The Access Project improves the health of poor communities by applying a business management approach to public health systems, improving health infrastructure and increasing access to life-saving drugs and quality care. The Access Project works in partnership with the Rwanda Ministry of Health (MOH) to improve the health of poor communities through three major initiatives:

- Advancing Health Center Management
- Developing Health Infrastructures
- Controlling Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)

For more information please go to: www.theaccessproject.com