

Cornerstone

Newsletter & Magazine May 2014

A Family of Friends - Developing the Cornerstones of Africa's Next Generation

BETTER TOGETHER

There is an African proverb that says: *"If you want to go somewhere fast, go alone. But if you want to go somewhere far, then go with others."*

This saying goes to the root of a culture that we have worked to develop in Cornerstone over the past 25 years. It is based on a 'priority of relationships' in our work - rather than the 'typical task orientation' that many corporate organizations tend towards. It is the intention that what we DO should flow out of who we ARE - which is reflected in the opening line of our mission statement: *"To be a family of friends in the spirit of Jesus..."*

To this end, we think of every employee, donor, and friend of Cornerstone as a "partner" in a shared vision, working towards interests that are mutually fulfilling. So, it's common to hear our staff saying, "We don't work 'FOR' Cornerstone, but rather, 'WITH' Cornerstone."

With this orientation, over the years we have developed a reputation for our 'open arms' approach toward others - that is, our willingness to work with a wide range of other like-minded individuals and organizations. We recognize that we are really not building the "kingdom of Cornerstone" but instead we are building the Kingdom of God.

We have also come to structure Cornerstone as sort of a vertically integrated partnership organization - a place where all kinds of people, who share the heart concerns of Jesus, can work together in mentoring and developing young leaders. And, like Jesus, are investing deeply in the few who will in turn influence the many.

We see these partnerships as not being about *compromise* but about being *better together*. When uniquely gifted people work together, they are not only able to fulfill each others' interests in a win-win way, but they also open up a space for innovation and synergistic outcomes that would not have been possible independently. Cornerstone is not just Cornerstone the organization, it's become a community and a culture that makes special things happen by bringing all kinds of people together under a common vision. And, the fact that these people come from diverse backgrounds is what has made Cornerstone unique and dynamic.

We have partners who come from different religious backgrounds, different ethnic backgrounds and who hold differing political views. But the one thing that transcends these differences is finding our common ground in the simple principles, precepts and person of Jesus. In this spirit we love and honor all who are part of this big *"Family of Friends - Developing The Cornerstones of Africa's Next Generation."*

So, the theme of this newsletter explores this whole idea of partnerships, especially - how the various departments of our work have achieved this ideal of working together with a common purpose and towards a common vision.



Inside



and...

- * Updates on new work in South Sudan and Uganda
- * Centerfold Pictorial
- * Thoughts from Tim



Cornerstone Development Africa

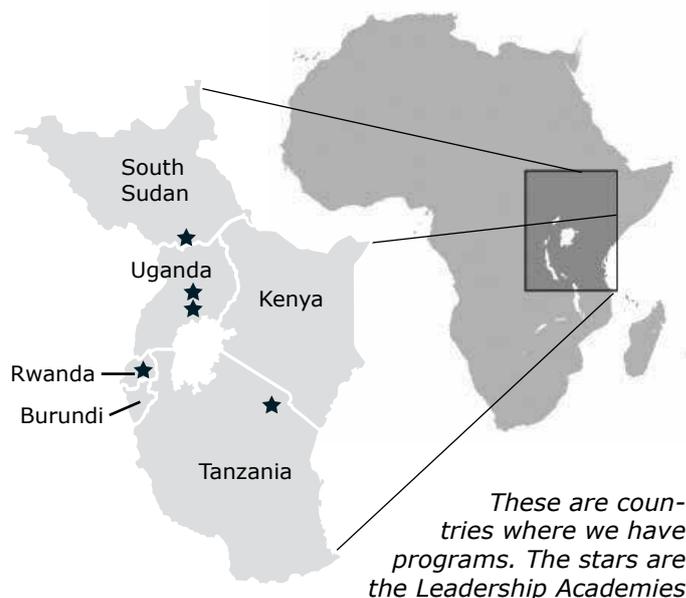
We are a family of friends in the spirit of Jesus committed to:

- * Equipping and advancing a movement of servant leaders with a shared vision for the positive transformation of their communities, nation and region.*
- * Compassion for the poor with a focus on young people.*
- * Working across the lines of culture and faith differences.*
- * Maintaining a long-term partnership with each other.*
- * Loving God and neighbor.*

Cornerstone Development was established in Uganda in 1988 to help in the rebuilding and development of the nation as it was emerging from a turbulent past. In recent years we have expanded to Rwanda, Tanzania, Burundi and Southern Sudan. All our programs are directed towards helping under-privileged children, with a special emphasis on youth leadership development. Since its inception the work has steadily expanded to include over 2,000 young people today- in a variety of programs including five schools, ten homes for homeless kids, 4 homes for university youth and sports programs - all designed for providing love, education and character formation.

Our core focus is on "Developing the Cornerstones of Africa's Next Generation". That is, to raise up future leaders with a shared vision of positively transforming their communities and nations, as an outgrowth of their own personal transformation. Our approach involves creating loving, family-like environments in our schools and other programs for under-privileged young people, while empowering them with education and character formation in order for them to become leaders. Furthermore, the young people

2 coming through our programs are forming a movement that seeks to make a contribution to the betterment of



society while promoting reconciliation across all that is dividing humanity. We as a community are a living model of this kind of unity in diversity, in that we are composed of all the different tribes, nationalities, cultures and religious backgrounds found in this part of the world.

In our character development curriculum we teach the timeless, universal principles of forgiveness, honesty, integrity, compassion, kindness, hard work, humility, and of service to the less fortunate, as exemplified in the teachings of Jesus and the perennial wisdom of all traditions, but without affiliation to any one institutional religious group.

See more online:
www.CornerstoneDevelopment.org

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Our core focus is 'youth leadership development' in the model of Jesus - so in addition to the schools, all the various programs we run serve this focus by providing a practical "training ground" where the graduates of our schools can learn to serve and pass on to others what they have received. Each year we put out two magazine's like this one. At the end of last year we highlighted some of the People in our work, and this magazine will highlight some of the Programs of Cornerstone.

STAGE ONE

In our Stage 1 Programs, we seek to create a life transforming learning environments that will mold young men and women into future leaders whose lives fully reflect the character qualities and leadership principles embodied in the life of Jesus. We mentor young people coming from humble backgrounds, but with high potential, into responsible leaders in all fields and disciplines who will be able to serve society beyond their own self interest. It is a program that brings in youth from various religious and tribal backgrounds, to learn to live together and love one other, as a foundation for a movement of integrity and virtue.

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STAGES TWO & THREE

Stage 2 and 3 Programs aim at cultivating long-term relationships with the students who have graduated from our schools and have joined post secondary institutions of higher learning (Stage 2) - or have graduated university and are now living life out in the 'real world' (Stage 3). This is done through holding regular fellowships, maintaining intentional relationships, providing appropriate skills development workshops, and continual mentoring. We believe that the real impact of all the schools will be measured by where all these graduates end up in life as they stay together to make a difference in their nations.

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YOUTH MENTORING

The vision of this program is to empower the young men and women whom we have invested in at the schools, to reach out to the next generation and pass on what has been given to them. It is a practical training ground where they can begin exercising their leadership potential, and cause real meaningful change in communities of at-risk youth. These consist of more than a dozen homes in various locations that provide homeless children with a sense of family while meeting their basic needs of love, food, shelter and guidance.

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STAGE 1 - 3 OUTREACH

These programs are avenues that we take our leadership empowerment and discipleship material to a wider audience by empowering our young people to reach out to their broader generation of peers. At the heart of these programs is the dream that African leaders will know how to reconcile relationships, speak the truth without being religiously divisive, see people without labels or stereotypes, and ultimately love each other and those whom they lead. We work in 37 of the main universities in East Africa with student leaders who represent a total student population of over 250,000 young people. Due to the grass-roots nature of this work, it has been one of our fastest growing programs in recent years.

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Molly sharing about mentoring at our Monday morning office fellowship

HEAD OFFICE

Kampala

KUTESA, KUTESA, KUTESA?

This year, Cornerstone marks 25 years of work in East Africa. This is something to celebrate as we recognize the tremendous fruits of our partnership with one another, working together towards a common purpose.

Reflecting on the early years brings back to memory John Riordan, who together with Tim Kreutter and Michael Timmis pioneered this work. John was headmaster of the Cornerstone Leadership Academy for Boys in Uganda during the formative stage when Cornerstone was still defining its identity. Back then, everything seemed like a negotiation to us because we had a school culture that did not involve ‘school rules’ – so every time someone acted inappropriately, or wanted their way, a process of ‘negotiations’ ensued in order to determine appropriate consequences. John would sit with the students for many hours negotiating this or the other cause of action, as well as the teachers, and non-teaching staff, in order for everyone to feel a part of the decision making process.

The word “Kutesa” (literally translates as ‘to negotiate’ in Luganda as well as other Bantu languages, but it has a deeper meaning of *‘reasoning together’*) became a joke to satire the often tireless work required in leading a team by consensus building. It was no surprise to us that, years later, John gave his son the middle name Kutesa as a fond memory of this culture.

Today, our organizational culture is much more streamlined, and although we may have much less ‘Kutesa’ at every turn or bump in the road, we still highly value the philosophy that each member in our work is a synergistic partner in achieving our greater vision with, and

through each other. What this looks like practically, is a culture that is built on “together spaces” – a term that refers to formal or informal meeting times where ideas are weighed and discussed until they are distilled into shared values within a shared vision. This continues to be a critical aspect of our effectiveness.

These gatherings can look like forums, fellowships, or just plain fun times that we have together, and they take place in our offices, fellowship halls, around fire pits, in homes, or at hotels. All our departments and offices have regular and consistent times where they agree to put everything else aside and sit together, have a few songs, share a few jokes, pray or reflect on a topic of interest presented by a member. This is the glue that holds our ‘partnerships’ together, and out of this, comes the fruit that is our work.

Of course, this people based approach can be really messy – especially as we keep growing year by year! The same tactics that worked with 20 team members no longer work with a team of 200 people, and to this end, our informal theme for 2014 has been to place special emphasis on structures and strategic planning to ensure that despite the ‘negotiations’ that occur along the way, we are still tactically charting our path in the direction of our intended goals.

- To highlight some of the developments this year:
- We have opened several new rooms in our Kampala Head Office and brought on additional key staff to address the administrative needs of our continual expansion throughout the region.
 - We are experiencing continued academic successes in our Leadership Academies, most especially in Rwanda where we are ranked the top Advanced Level High-school on the national exams and in Uganda where we were

ranked in the top 1.5% nationally.

- Early this year, we opened our Leadership Academy of South Sudan in partnership with East African Ministries.
- In Tanzania, our first class of alumni joined university.
- In Uganda, we launched a new program called the High School Leadership Development Initiative that impacts student leaders in Secondary schools around the country.
- We are hoping to expand our Africa Youth Leadership Forum into the D.R. Congo as the next frontier of our work in East Africa.

When you think of the three stages of our work (High School, University and Career) - there is no doubt that our effectiveness is tied to these "together spaces" where members are allowed to voice their concerns, excitements, wishes, priorities, goals, frustrations... etc.

For example at the first stage where we seek to create life transforming communities of love for the youth in our programs, it would not happen well if the teachers and mentors did not take time to "be together".

At the second stage the campus fellowships keep students together while the coordinators and executive have regular retreats to reflect strategically on the big vision of creating a life long brotherhood of friends in Christ. Indeed, "excuses to think, play, pray, cry and dream together" are key.

5 Tips on Building Strong Inter-Personal Relationships:

(Continued from Tim's article on back cover)

1. You will only develop strong friendships by intentionally investing in them - by spending quality time with a few other like-minded friends.

- You might have 1000 friends on Facebook but you can't be good friends with 1000 people - social media does not enable quality time together.
- Good friendship don't happen accidentally - they happen when people choose to make them a priority in their lives.

2. You will form strong, long-term friendships by making strong, long term commitments. If possible even verbally like the marriage vows a husband and wife make to each other.

- Commit to a few others to be there for one another for the rest of your life - in good times and bad - 'till death do us part'. It's a promise, a commitment that we must make to one another.

3. You will only make strong long-term relationships by putting in an element of 'self-sacrifice.'

- Building high-quality relationships will surely require you to sacrifice your time, energy and resources to helping out one-another, in small ways and in big ways - during times of difficulty. In life's big events: Weddings, Jobs, Births, and Deaths - we all need friends around us.

4. You only form strong, long-term relationships if you are trust-worthy.

- Relationships are based on trust and trust can only be earned by being Trust-worthy.
- In other words, people need to know you will not betray them. People need to know that they can confide in you and the story won't appear in Wiki-leaks, Facebook, Twitter or whatever. You need to be reliable, consistent, faithful and dependable for people to put their confidence in you.

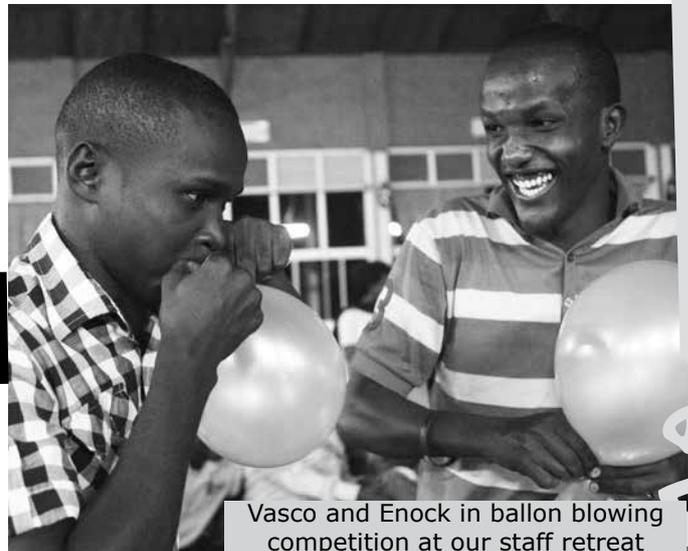
5. You will only build strong, long-term relationships if you are capable of forgiveness.

- All of us at times, offend one another and the only way to repair the relationship is to apologize and ask for forgiveness. Sometimes you have to do this even when you feel it is the other person who should do it first.
- You have to learn to work with imperfect people - because there is no other kind of person out there. (Ourselves included)
- To maintain strong relationships there are times when you have to be kind instead of "being right."

Finally at the third stage where we need to see influence in five spheres: Politics, Economy, Religion, Social life, and Media. (These five outlets consciously or unconsciously today influence everyone in a country.) Our members are continuously meeting through social media and physically to inspire each other for greater influence.

It is really only by being intentional about consistently meeting together that we built up a high degree of 'buy-in' and 'ownership' towards our vision. By respecting the perspective and value of each person, we have been able to develop ways of solving problems and making decisions organically. Ultimately this translates into an extremely high level of personal investment towards 'developing the Cornerstones of Africa's next generation' who are already making their contribution towards bringing their world more into alignment with Jesus' vision of the Kingdom of God coming on earth.

By Phillip Ojok & Eric Kreutter



Vasco and Enock in ballon blowing competition at our staff retreat



The first class of students in Nimule

Leadership Academy

South Sudan

A New Nation - A New Beginning!

As most of you know, Cornerstone Development Africa has been operating in Uganda since the late 1980's to help in the rebuilding and development of the nation as it was emerging from a war torn past. In recent years, Cornerstone Development has grown its work into Rwanda, Tanzania, Burundi, Kenya and South Sudan. Our programs are directed towards empowering under-privileged youth – with a special focus on youth leadership development in the spirit of Jesus.

The theme of this newsletter is very fitting for such a report on this new leadership academy considering that it is a product of a great partnership between Cornerstone Development Africa, and East African Ministries.

East African Ministries (EAM) has existed in South Sudan since 2009, “practically demonstrating the love of Christ by promoting sustainable solutions for clean water, health care and leadership development to unreached communities in East Africa”. Their experience working in the South Sudanese context has been an invaluable resource as we have been building the school in the last 2 years.

As I have been working in the middle of this partnership, I have been inspired by the words of Thomas Paine, the English-American political activist (1737-1809) who said, “*We have in our power the ability to begin the world again.*” And indeed, South Sudan needs a new beginning!

What can we do about the injustices, indifference, mediocrity, cruelty, lack of discipline, selfishness and egotism that's eating our world? We can choose to live our lives and invest in counter measures that bring higher values, such as those championed by Jesus, in to our world so as to create it anew! This, I believe, is what Jesus meant when he asked to pray that the Kingdom of God would come on Earth.

The recently opened Leadership Academy of South Sudan (LASS) can be described as: An innovative, international, post-secondary (S. Sudan only has ordinary level high-school), university preparatory academy that invests in South Sudanese scholars through Academics, Professional Skills, and a Leadership Empowerment Discipleship Curriculum. The name and legal categorization (as an international school) is a bit different than the other Cornerstone Leadership Academies

in East Africa due to the governments own national education system – but in spirit and culture it is no different!

Following the same model as Cornerstone's other leadership academies, a selection of 50 students shall be taken in each year for this two-year program from across the country without discrimination of tribes, sex or religion. For the first 2014 intake however, we are blessed with a total of 39 students (13 female and 26 male) from six states out of the 10 states in the country. Despite all our best efforts to get balanced representation of ladies, it just wasn't possible considering the conflict that erupted shortly before the school opened that caused considerable travel and security issues.

So far, we can't say that we have done a lot – we have just barely gotten off the ground! But we successfully reached all the ten states of this new nation (South Sudan) during the time of recruitment, and we have laid a good foundation with the government of the country. Everywhere we go, people who hear about our work have continually been inspired to keep pushing us forward in the capacity they can.

We consider a “priority of relationships” as the foundation for work at LASS, putting the “relationship orientation” over “task orientation” that most other schools are bogged down in. Quality relationships are the building blocks and concrete (promoting reliability, dependability, honesty, hard work, responsibility and trustworthiness) that determines the strength of the house. Tasks represent the methods of how we will build the house – but you see, you can't have later without first determining the strength of the former! High task performance happens where there are good working relationships. This ensures that each one will carry out any given assignment without having to be micro-managed. And in the end effectiveness becomes matched with efficiency and maximum impact is achieved.

It has been said – “*A candle loses nothing by lighting another.*” **Our school is one candle that has been lit by Cornerstone, EAM, and the other Leadership Academies in East Africa, and we hope to play our part in passing on that flame.** And in some other way, I believe that we are all candles, who have been lit by others who have invested in us – let us therefore nurture these flames that we have and work towards lighting up those who God brings to us.

By David Ojok Oyite

A Life Transforming Learning Environment

This year, both the CLA boys campus and the CLA girls campus in Uganda ranked better than they ever have, coming in 15th and 16th out of over 1,000 schools on the national UNEB 'Advanced' level exams! This comes in a historic year of the schools marking 20 years of existence for the boys and 10 years of existence for the girls.



Students at CLA Girls

BOYS CAMPUS

Here at CLA boys, we really try to create an environment that has something more than what you would expect in the average school. Ours is not just a center for academic excellence, but it is also a life transforming learning environment. Teachers are not just here to lecture in the classroom, but they are here to be involved in the student's lives, as mentors, so that our school actually feels more like a family than an institution.

This is a 24/7 culture that students are immersed in for their two years with us - where we strive to equip them with character qualities and life skills that will empower them to go out into the world and be change agents who positively influence their communities.

One might ask, how do we create such a life transforming learning environment? To begin with, it is not about the CURRICULUM... it is about the COMMUNITY; it is about a CULTURE of people working synergistically with each other, reinforcing each other's highest and best values, and inspiring one another to show up each day and do the best with what they have been given.

I have always liked the quote by Robin Sharma in his book, "The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari": "Stop spending so much time making a living and spend more time creating a life."

I feel like this is the spirit amongst our staff here - we are all working together, not just drawn here because of the salary we make, but more because of the life that we have chosen. It is a life dedicated to a higher vision than just ourselves, and it is a vision that we could not achieve without each other. Ultimately, it is a pursuit of the LIFE TO THE FULLEST, that Jesus' tells us is possible if we follow him while loving God and loving neighbor.

This culture of partnership amongst our staff team is reinforced by many things, but I would just like to illustrate two such activities here. The first is that we have a rotating staff dinner, where every time we get together, we are hosted by a different member, in their home. This really boosts the spirit of fellowship, where we get to share our lives with each other and really bond with one another on a personal level, beyond just our day to day school duties. The second is our commu-

nity service as a staff, where we have visited several of the elderly people living around our community, loving them in the spirit of Jesus. This strengthens the sense of partnership we have as peers in our staff team, but also strengthens the sense of partnership that we have with the community around us.

GIRLS CAMPUS

We are indeed very proud of the school for the excellent performance by our students this last year. Their success was not an accident, but it was the product of hard work and intentional relationships. The hard work comes on the academic side of things, which is obvious in a school setting, but on the other hand we can learn a great lesson from our students in that their success comes from really investing in building relationships and studying with each other to bring an overall excellent result to the school.

As teachers, we always want the best for our students as we know that when THEY are successful, then WE are successful. It is our desire, just as a Father or Mother would, to nurture these young ones in all sphere's of life: spiritually, academically, socially, equipping them with leadership skills as well as any other areas of personal development.

In this partnership, we hope to help the girls develop the self-confidence to face life's challenges and to bring out their true potential. But the difficult thing is that sometimes students are not always willing to work with teachers in order to use their time effectively. Fortunately, the class of 2013 was one of the best classes we've had as far as good working relationships with teachers and staff is concerned.

This really enabled them to work together as a team, and instead of creating a disruptive learning environment, they built a peaceful environment where they ultimately prospered in their personal goals. So, let us learn a lesson from the class of 2013, and intentionally invest in the relationships that God has around us so that we might work together towards our shared vision. We all need each other as each person has a role to play as we strive to build God's kingdom on earth.

By Kenneth Tumwine & Sarah Mwesigwa



Cornerstone Leadership Academy

Rwanda

Success Comes from: **...WORKING TOGETHER**

At CLA- Rwanda, we constantly remind ourselves that as teachers we are transformational agents not just knowledge givers – we are mentors, not just lecturers. Because, in-as-much as we are committed to academic excellence, we are well aware that the most important part of our vision is the transformation of the heart – and this happens through immersing our students in a holistic, life transforming learning environment - based on the principles, precepts and person of Jesus.

However, for this kind of a strong organizational culture to be established the staff must have ownership of the vision. And when it is established, such a compelling and clear vision results in the fulfillment of all the members, both benefactors and the beneficiaries. I have personally witnessed, that whenever members of our community find personal fulfillment in pursuing our shared vision – they will continuously take the initiative in looking for new ways for us to be more effective.

This orientation makes us approach our work with the passion of serving a bigger purpose than our individual needs. We are working together towards developing the Cornerstones of Africa's next generation – as we work together to nurture a new breed of leaders, disciples in the way of Jesus, we are also investing in our own personal development and future.

With joy I share some good news from our team here at CLA Rwanda. First off, we want to congratulate the most recent graduating class that produced excellent results on the national exams with many of them topping the country in different subjects.

8 For the first time ever, five of our students were given the prestigious presidential scholarship to different

universities in the United States. In addition, one of our students, Maurice Mwiseneza, represented our country in the East African Community essay writing completion and ended up number four in the entire region.

Maurice received a cash prize of \$1,050 and CLA was given a photocopier and a lap top computer as a gift. Another success story from our recent graduates is that three of our girls were recognized by the Imbutu Foundation (First Lady's Foundation), and received awards from the First Lady for their top performance in sciences. They were given laptops and cash prizes to encourage them to save and start small businesses.

And in terms of infrastructure, we are excited to announce that we have finally begun working on our school fence. It has surely been a long time coming!

We would like to extend a great thank you to the team at the Kampala head office, the team at the Rwanda office, the COSA Rwanda alumni, the other leadership academies around the region, and the big Family of Friends around the world. Without your wonderful support and generosity, our achievements would have remained mere dreams. To me, this is a display of synergy in action - when each one does their part towards a common purpose, the result is something beautiful, and ultimately better than the sum of their parts.

In the words of Henry Ford, *"Coming together was the beginning, staying together is progress, working together is success."*

To this end, I am excited that this year there is also more involvement of the COSA alumni community in not only frequently visiting, but also teaching discipleship at school. Thanks to William, Jenina and others for availing their time to us, and facilitating other COSA members when they want to visit.

By Sam Birondwa



Partnership Requires Friendship

I remember how Madam Monica (the pioneer Headmistress of CLA Girls) used to always say, "A child will never crawl forever." It is a very straightforward adage, that I can only assume she learned during her many years as a teacher working with young people...meaning: young people mature with time.

These simple words have stuck with me as I have evolved over the years in my own responsibilities, first at CLA boys in Uganda and now at CLA Tanzania, because they really do reflect the attitude that we have at Cornerstone regarding our work. We handle our students as young adults, not as children, and we also realize that as young adults, the best way to influence them is by building genuine relationships with them. We instruct them not as authorities seeking to control them, but as friends trying to coach them in a better way to live... to empower them on to reach their potential.

Most school teachers treat students as minors - and that influences the way they behave! Young people won't develop well unless you help give them a healthy and mature sense of themselves- to live up to. In our work as teachers here at CLA, we see that we are actually partners with our students, working towards mutual success. The result is that this is more of friendship, where time and time again as staff we invite students into our homes. Some have even become good family friends. This acts as a continuous process of positively influencing their lives, through inspiration rather than intimidation.

One of the topics that we teach at school is the principle of Synergy: mutual helpfulness, where the whole product is actually greater than the sum of its individual parts. This is not only a lesson in class, but it is taught by emersion in the entire culture of the school!

Once a visiting Inspector of Schools came around to inspect our campus, academically and in terms of infrastructure. But, what he was so impressed with was the character of the students and he asked how we got them to all behave so well. The truth is, that all our students were on their own and doing their own things, but he just saw that they carried themselves with more respect and dignity than students in other schools, and he commented that they were radiating good self-worth. I replied that this comes by virtue of the way that we

treat their opinions and presence - almost giving them the same respect as staff... and the effect is they begin living up to how we treat them.

This is practical evidence of the potential of synergy - when give each other the space to bring out the best of ourselves and then we work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect. The out come is a life-transforming learning environment!

On the side of the teachers, we could ask, "What motivates them to keep doing this?" For example, in 2011, some teachers were traveling to a remote up-country location to interview potential students for our recruitment. In the middle of their long journey the bus broke down in the middle of nowhere. They could have just stayed there and given up, but instead they used the only means they could to get to the interviews on time - they hitched a ride in the boot (trunk) of a small car that came along!

So, what motivates people on this team to go the extra mile? I believe it is the sense of ownership over the vision that pushes them towards such service beyond self. This is partially because many of our teachers came up through other CLA's, but also because in some way they feel a sense of 'calling' about their work. And so we work together, in partnership, towards this greater vision that we have.

One thing that I hope people see when they visit us here is a caring spirit and a strong commitment to relationships. We love to host people in our homes for meals, and really invest in one another at a deeper level. We do this for our own benefit, as well as to be models for those we are mentoring. Our students will be leaders of true significance if they learn to appreciate the value of developing meaningful relationships while at CLA and life afterwards.

By Julius Ejalam



Ekitangaala Transformation High School

What Creates Unity On Such A Diverse Campus?

At Ekitangaala Transformation High School (ETHS), the year 2014 started very well. The numbers of students that we have enrolled has kept on adding and as I write this we are about to reach our optimum student population. When we operate at this optimal level, everything seems to work better due to the financial stability we have with good numbers.

I am also happy to tell you that our staff team is stable after having made a few changes at the end of last year, and the team spirit among the staff is growing steadily. The attitude and behavior of our students is improving year after year as the majority of our students are catching up with the disciplinary standards and our character development values.

On the academic side, we recently received our exam results (UCE and UACE) from the students who sat at the end of 2013 and I can say they were very good - this has motivated both the staff and the students to work harder this year for better grades and character of students. Slowly but surely we are moving to higher levels.

As per the theme of this newsletter, Working Together as Partners Towards a Common Purpose, I could say that there can't be many groups who do it better than what I have seen at Cornerstone. Being that the size of our school (nearly 400 students) is more like the normal public schools in Uganda than the Leadership Academies, there is a tendency to always drift towards what is normal procedure out there in the world. But I have always been encouraged by the leadership team at Cornerstone and our alumni who constantly bring ETHS back to our unique ideals and strive to bring us into alignment with the Jesus centered spirit and culture.

The truth is that this family of friends is a very unique one - it's made up of people from different races, ethnicities, colors and languages. Yet, we live together as friends and share the same vision of building God's kingdom in our different capacities. Given the fragility of our society where the ethnic lines and tribalistic sentiments are clear, without such a shared vision, the Cornerstone family of friends would not be making any serious progress. The staff would just be in the school to earn money and the students would be only interested in getting an education and thereafter

go away. There would be no transformation in them. There would be no long-term movement created.

In a large school, it is surely not easy to keep everyone on board and behaving in a constructive way in line with our greater vision. Without divine values such as love, patience, forgiveness, etc. that keep us united in spirit, pursuing a common goal in our family could be nearly impossible.

I believe that is why we come back to them every week in our leadership empowerment and discipleship classes - the promotion of these values is woven deep into the fabric of our culture as a community. For this, we can thank the founders and vision bearers of this wonderful family of friends. Being founded on unity in Jesus, despite our diversity is the only thing that I see which explains why this family is growing year after year despite the challenges the world throws at it.

A noble common goal can't be achieved by a group of people if they are not bound together with some kind of philosophy and ideology. A group with no focus and bond of togetherness cannot reach a common destiny and so it would be just, "A gathering by coincidence." But nothing of great value in this world has come about by just coincidence! It takes the dedicated service of a few people who have laid down their lives to make it happen.

As for my teammates and me here at ETHS, we are determined and committed to cultivating better team spirit and working together as partners, for it is the only way we can achieve our goals for the school. We can look at a case in point: the performance on last year's UCE and UACE exams. We worked together as a team in the strategic areas for improvement of academics, discipline, and fellowship / prayer and the outcome was academic excellence. The school was able to shine, when its leadership worked well together and nurtured a life transforming learning environment on our campus for our students to blossom.

As I conclude therefore, I challenge my colleagues in this family of friends not to give up on the habit of working together as partners in our noble service of building the Kingdom of God. We all have our part to play, and so we are all just working alongside each other on something that is greater than we may ever fully know. The work ahead of us is enormous and we need one another for encouragement, prayer and wisdom as we serve to fulfill our purpose on earth.

By Katagira Charles

High School Leadership Development Initiative

Uganda



Program coordinators Edmond and Binta

Our motto for this program (as well as AYLFI) is "Furthering a new breed of African leaders." We use the word "Furthering" because we know that we are not alone in this work. We know that a journey of leadership development involves many partners along the way. Each one of these 'partners' provides a learning opportunity for the young people, and they slowly grow in their abilities the more they are exposed.

A Leader's Development Requires Many Partners Along The Way

The High School Leadership Development Initiative (HSLDI) was launched at the end of last year with a Vision Conference that we held at CLA Girls' campus in November. We hosted 340 student leaders from schools all over the country, in a 5 day intensive program, led by a variety of inspirational speakers and personalities. It was a huge success, and since then, we have been working hard to follow up with each of the schools that attended to help them start chapters on their own campuses.

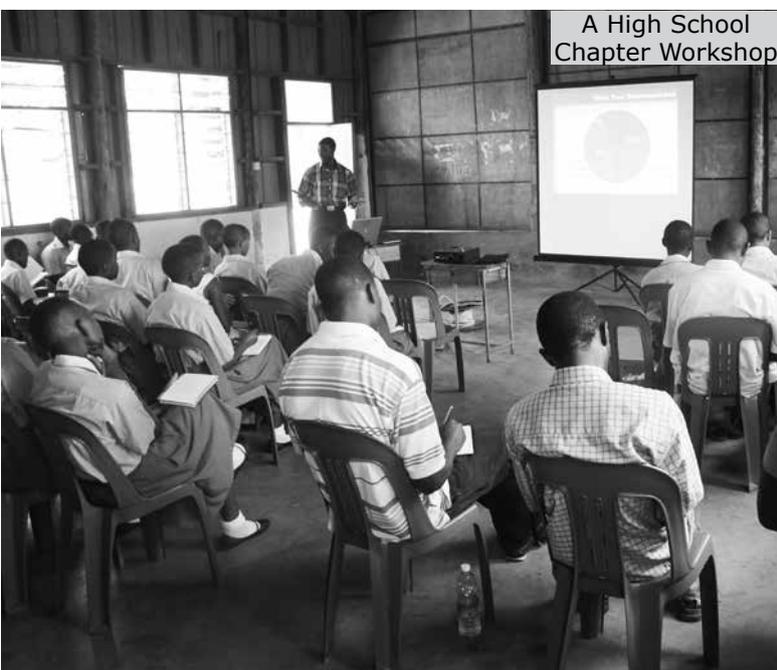
This 'movement' which influences High School Student leaders across the nation, is a natural out-pouring of Cornerstone's broader vision and focus on youth leadership development. In essence, this work at the High School level will provide a natural inflow to our AYLFI (Africa Youth Leadership Forum) programs which reach out to University student leaders. Both of these programs also provide avenues for the young people coming through our Leadership Academies to reach out and influence their peers in this emerging generation.

To this end, we seek to be as open and inclusive as we can be, without compromising our core values and moral foundation. We want to pull together a critical mass of like-minded people in the country who find shared values and vision around the principles, precepts and person of Jesus.

There are many programs out there working with young people, and there are many people trying to empower them with relevant skills and resources. What makes us unique? One is that we develop people movements more than 'projects.' This creates ownership of a shared vision. It is based on an attitude of working WITH others - getting them to buy in to the vision and then bringing them along in the process of their own development as they influence others.

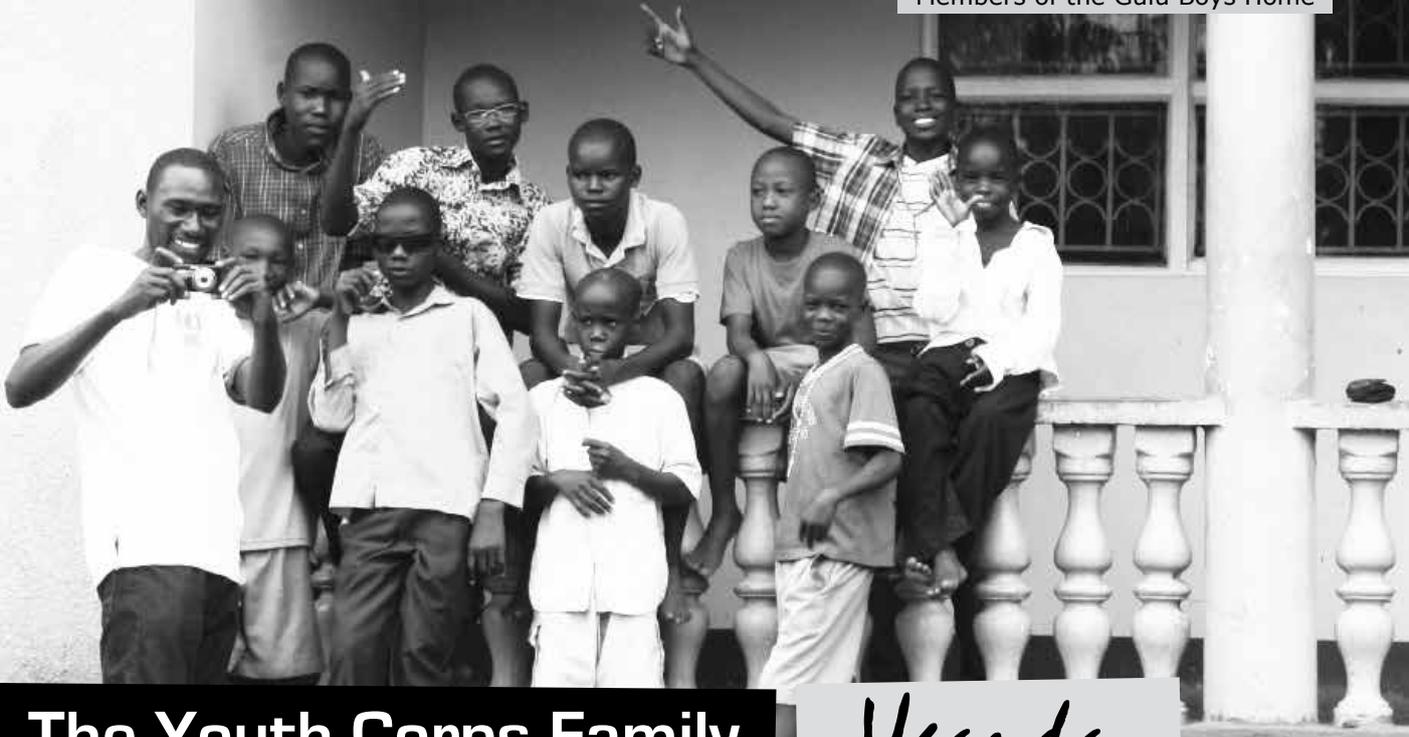
We know that our work will probably be most effective as long as it stays a grassroots movement that taps into a real need that young people have these days. That need we have found, from both High School and University student leaders, is simply to be equipped with leadership skills - as most of them have had no formal training in leadership studies.

At each of our partner schools there are patrons on staff as teachers who are taking up ownership of this vision. This dimension is fundamental to our success - not because they host our work, but because they share our passion of investing in these young people. They have a desire, as much as we do to make sure this work is sustainable in their own setting. This sometimes requires putting aside what we think they need, and taking time to understand what they and their students are really asking from us. When we do this well - we constantly maintain our relationships in a mutually respectful way, our partnerships flourish as we work together towards our common goal of making a better world in our generation. That God's Kingdom would come on earth as it is in heaven.



A High School Chapter Workshop

By Edmond Elasu and Brenda Binta Acen



The Youth Corps Family

Uganda

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed it’s the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead

Nothing changes by accident, it takes a lot of intentional hard work to make any impact in this world. Many people may try to do this alone, but I doubt that many really succeed- for change that involves anyone apart from one’s self implies partnership at many levels with others. In Youth Corps, we work with young people who are ‘at risk’ or have ‘fallen through the cracks’ in society. Groups of mentors create loving homes in local neighborhoods and through this, we hope to empower these young people to first of all positively impact the outcome of their own lives, but also influence the communities around us by sharing the love of Jesus.

A backbone of the Youth Corps family has always been strong partnerships that have seen it grow from just 2 homes in around 1999 to 10 homes today in Uganda. On one hand, partnerships exist between local leadership, the surrounding community, the mentors and the children; on the other, partnerships exist between the mentors, the Head Office coordination team and our financial partners who make our work possible resource wise.

Our most notable partners abroad are with the HALO foundation and Restore International. Both of these relationships work to compliment different areas of speciality in our program implementation - for example, briefly; HALO has more specific interest in the wel-

fare of the children, while Cornerstone has more specific interest in the process of mentoring. All of these partnerships forge an intricate web of relationships, through which we all work together towards a common vision.

The biggest news in our program this year is that we recently opened up a tenth home in Kyambogo- located in the areas around Kireka near Kyambogo University. It is managed by four great women, Ankunda Brenda, Karungi Robbinah, Ingariat Sarah and Akwango Juliet. They are now recruiting girls for the home and this tough work is done through the teamwork and partnership with the local councils and police posts in different suburbs of Kampala.

The nine other homes in Uganda continue to exist and thrive with the great support of our funding partners and well-wishers. These homes are: Mengo, Bukesa, Makerere, Ntinda, Kibuli, Lungujja, Gulu girls and Gulu boys. This year, the homes saw two of their promising students; Kato Cyrus and Stella Kembabazi join Makerere University after excelling in the UACE exams. Cyrus is doing a degree in electrical engineering and Stella is doing a degree in population studies. They are among those who have been impacted through the Youth homes and will soon be out to change others.

The end of 2013 saw our long serving mentor coordinator Mwau Counsellor get introduced to his fiancée Barbra Kwagala and they were subsequently married at the start of 2014. After which, he decided it time to move on and make an impact elsewhere in the nation, and as a result Edube Simon who had been a mentor in three different homes came in to replace him.

The rest of the Youth Corps coordinators are still available and steering the homes to greater heights. Now Edube Simon is the homes coordinator, Mary Pryse is the HALO ambassador to Uganda, Wilter Ololia is in charge of health, Molly Nalunga heads the resettlement of children and Asimwe Venansio serves as an accountant and supervisor of the Youth Corps homes. In the homes too, several old mentors have moved on while others new ones have come in.

In seeking to enhance a great spirit of teamwork among themselves, the coordination team holds weekly meetings to plan and work together. We know that we must work to complement one another if we are to achieve greater results. As the following saying goes,

***“You can do what I cannot do,
I can do what you cannot do.
But together we can do great things.”***
- Mother Theresa

Through the principle of synergy, we learn the need to trust, listen, and give equal opportunities to each other so that we can achieve greater results. Benjamin Franklin also emphasized that “We must all hang together or most assuredly, we will hang separately”, which demands that

we built better teams that can synergize to bring about better and most desired results.

At the end of 2013, in one of the Mentors Fellowships, we held a planning session where we aired the concerns of the mentors and the results indicated that we needed to improve the relationship between the coordination team and the home mentors. This year, we decided to start meeting with each individual home at a time, hang out with them, and grant them the time and space to express themselves freely to the coordination team. This is expected to bridge the gap between the two groups and therefore make our bond stronger.

In addition, we know there is always room to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the mentoring process if we are to achieve greater results. This moved us to make a change in our mentor recruitment process this year. We now require those from the Cornerstone High Schools intending or wanting to mentor in our homes to express their interest in an application letter submitted to the Youth Corps Coordination office. We on our own will seek approval or recommendation from their former head masters or teachers. They then have to undergo an interview process and the best candidates are then selected and allocated homes.

In our work, we want to ensure that in each home the mentors are working together in harmony and that there is real teamwork and a strong spirit amongst them. To this end, the mentors in each home are required to meet every single week to analyze their work, correct one another, plan activities and also ensure that they are on the same page as far as the home is concerned. To us, the true meaning of TEAM is ‘Together Everyone Achieves More’ which coincides with the definition of synergy.

Our mentors are working hard to impart good morals and values that can enable our children to develop into future leaders who can bring about a positive change in their communities. A number of the young people who have passed through our homes have now become partners in the vision of reaching out to mentor other young people, such as: Kakeeto David, Alitia Paul, Seruyange Ronald, Namyalo Oliviah, Byarugaba Charity and Arinaitwe Collins.

Youth Corps has demonstrated the principle that if we work together as a team that trusts each other, God can use us to cause a change in the world we live in. We are proud to work with Cornerstone in this, in partnership with HALO, Restore International, and several other individuals, to reach out to kids in need and turn them into people that will positively impact others.

By Simon Edube



Cornerstone

Newsletter Pictorial



The COSA West Nile Mini-Retreat



Spotted at the COSA KLA Monthly Fellowship



Youth Corps girls presenting a cultural dance



Mwau and Barbra get married!



Vision Conference (HSLDI) follow up at Rubaga Girls



A Celebration Cake for CLA performance



Global Grassroots program at CLA Girls - Uganda



Dani & Flavia at the Let's Talk show



Fellowship at the Leadership Academy of South Sudan



Mary visits with Jeninah and others in COSA Rwanda



Allan, Zac & Bigz in Washington, D.C. with Shaka Ssali at Voice of Africa



COSA Valentines Day Dinner



Party For Recent University Grads

A Family of Friends!

COSA Chairman Richard Kirabira at the Kampala Monthly COSA Gathering enjoying comedian Pablo.



C.O.S.A.

Uganda

Failure often comes because of what I did...but success usually comes because of what WE did.

It has often been said in our circles, that we like to think of Cornerstone as more of an Organism, than an Organization. The nature of an organism is that it adapts and grows. It is flexible, it is dynamic, it's alive and it reproduces itself. It does not become irrelevant, for it constantly adapts to meet the shifting demands of the shifting environment around it.

An organism exists in symbiotic relationships with all it is composed of, and hopefully all that surrounds it as well, and an organism is more productive when these relationships are healthy and mutually supportive. In our work, this means that we have to put a priority on our relationships, and allow our tasks to flow out from there. We believe that due to the nature of our unique vision, this approach is more effective than the traditional Organizational approach used by most corporate institutions.

One thing that we have really focused on in this past year is providing more platforms for our young people to go out and share more with the world around them. In doing so, we see that we are reproducing our over-arching vision 'through them'... and it helps them to develop the mindset that they are not an end in themselves, but that they are to pass it on.

This is being done through our monthly activities that are organized by the University Students in which they reach out to the different community stake holders and work with them. This shift in our strategy has seen a gradual process of our members taking more ownership of the vision, as people are more directly aware of the added value and how this responsibility is cultivating growth within them.

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This new approach is working because of its simple symbiotic nature. People take more ownership over

something when they are given an opportunity to invest in and be fulfilled through their input. So, I could really say that this is a key part of the success of Cornerstone to date – it is not that the leaders make things happen because of their extensive experience and highly developed technical abilities. But rather, it is because we have made it easy for many people to get involved that this creates partnerships at every level and draws out people's best contribution toward our shared vision. When we come together, we are able to leverage the different skills and talents of all our members.

While it seems very nice and easy on paper, the reality is that in COSA this is much harder than it may seem. You

see, our association is not made up of one tribe, one political orientation, or even one religious view, nor is it even made up of people who speak the same language! Legally, we are an association of men and women who have graduated from Cornerstone schools, but in spirit we are much deeper than that: We are a community committed to the precepts, principles, and person of Jesus, and we are a community committed to each other. Strangely, this unity in diversity actually makes things easier at times, because we just brush past all of our differences and focus on the main thing – love for God, and love for neighbor.

In COSA we do not all get to choose who joins our movement – this is up to the recruitment team and the CLA's. But we all can choose what we are going to do about our relationships.

It can be a challenge, as people often join the group with conflicting personalities, visions, or agendas for the group. This means, especially for the coordinators, we have to do the hard work of patiently going deeper with each one – to understand why they do what they do. It requires embracing the different personalities represented in our group with compassion, it requires being empathetic with peoples' challenges and observing their tonality in communication – which is a result of underlying emotions.

You might think this is too exhausting for anyone to keep up with, but the truth is that this type of relational work, in the end, is actually self-rewarding. At the beginning it looks like a sacrifice but instead you gain energy from it. Because, as time goes by we see the growth in maturity of our members as they become more and more dedicated to maximize their personal effectiveness so as to make their contribution for the benefit of others.

In our COSA vision, we believe our relationships are actually our partnerships in implementing our ultimate vision. We believe that these trusting partnerships that are built on respect are the heart of both individual success and organizational effectiveness. With this I salute all the COSA family members that have worked tirelessly to promote more healthy and productive relationships within our community – each one of us is part of the purpose of why we exist!
By Vasco Musinguzi and Mary Nabuma



C.O.S.A.

Rwanda

COSA Rwanda
leadership team

Making It “OUR” Thing!

The last 4 years have been quite a journey for us in Rwanda. We started our COSA fellowships in 2010 with 37 members, and now have over 200! It is such a blessing to be able to watch this community grow as the years go by and to watch the individual members mature year after year as we seek to realize our vision of positively influencing Rwanda.

It is truly amazing how the COSA vision has caught on in this country – it seems like everywhere you go, somebody knows something about Cornerstone or has something good to say about one of our alumni. We can only attribute this to the exemplary conduct portrayed by COSA members out there, they are the real ambassadors of our vision, and they are the salt and light of Rwanda’s next generation. If there is one reason I am inspired to continue this work, it is because of them.

Each month, when we have our monthly meetings in Kigali, we have consistently had very high turn up rates. When you attend these meetings, you really get the sense of how much ownership our members take over the work we are doing. Everyone feels like this is ‘their thing’ and everyone understands that our success is dependent on their contribution!

People feel like this is ‘their thing’, when they see how their lives are positively affected by the relationships we have forged with one another. They see how they are able to hold each other accountable to be the best they can be, they see how they are able to connect each other with new opportunities for growth, and they see how they are able to inspire one another reach greater and greater heights. That is something VERY FEW other Rwandans have – and it is what makes them really stand out and succeed in their respective capacities.

In order to continue striving towards helping our members develop more effective, mutually supportive relationships of this nature - we are constantly looking for ways to keep them together – because ‘iron sharpens iron’ as we seek to live by the teachings of Jesus in our lives. For example, last year we opened a few new houses for university students which enables our members to share the cost of accommodation as they live together. We now have such houses in Butare, in Kigali, and in Dar es Salam. These houses provide a meeting point and venue where not only residents but also like-minded friends can join in on fellowships and

events that further our collective goals as a group.

Many of our members are also involved in the Africa Youth Leadership Forum on their respective campuses. This is a platform where they can reach out to other students, and positively influence university students leaders by building relationships and helping to teach leadership materials from our own curriculum. And, also study the writings of authors such as Steven Covey, John Maxwell, Rick Warren, and others.

After graduation from University, we continue to keep up with these relationships through what we call the Africa Leaders Professional Network – it is a group that operates alongside COSA but is more involved with the corporate world and partners with us in this great work to develop the Cornerstones of Africa’s next generation. Whereas these initiatives are more about partnerships with peers, we also recognize the value of forging strong relationships with the younger generations who are following in our footsteps. To this end, the COSA community in Rwanda has always maintained a very active relationship with the Cornerstone Leadership Academy (CLA) that we all passed through. We know that it was the beginning of all our journey together and realize that it is the beginning of those who will be following in our footsteps. So, our members are regularly going back to CLA to teach discipleship and leadership lessons, as well as just spend time informally hanging out - in order to pass on some moral support to the students and staff members. We see this as a way of ‘giving back’.

It is this attitude of commitment to one another, and commitment to the vision entrusted with us that has become the foundation of our success. And, such an attitude would not be as deeply rooted in our culture if it wasn’t for the tireless efforts of our class coordinators and campus coordinators, but most especially individuals like Ntaganda Modeste, Uwingabire Jenninah, Mutijima Phillip among others. These members have really laid down their lives to see that we realize this vision of working together in partnership, for the betterment of our own lives, and the peace and prosperity that we believe can exist in our nation’s future. We know it is possible if we can only set aside our differences and selfish desires, and work together for the Kingdom of God.

By William Kinunu



C.O.S.A.

Tanzania

Realizing the COSA Vision Requires the Productive Contribution of EVERY Member!

This year marks the first year of Cornerstone Old Students Association (COSA) Tanzania's existence. Since graduating from the Leadership Academy in 2013, almost all of our 40 students have started up at University now – only three have yet to join. Our members are enrolled in 10 different universities that are scattered across the country from east to west and north to south, which, considering the size of Tanzania, presents a much bigger logistical challenge than we ever experienced in Uganda or Rwanda. Despite this complication, weekly fellowships have begun on each campus for all our members enrolled there, and the spirit of COSA is high!

In Tanzania, we decided not to do monthly gatherings for ALL our members like they do in Uganda and Rwanda, because the travel distances really make this impractical, so instead we have our gatherings quarterly. Our next all-inclusive COSA gathering will be at CLA from July 10-13th, then we will have another one in October. One notable success that we have already registered is that one of our members, Steven Barnaba, has already become the Vice President of St. Augustine University in Mbeya!

As we have been striving to implement our overarching vision of COSA here in Tanzania, I have really seen how the strength of our work lies in the diligent contribution of every member. It is not something that can be commanded by our leaders, but it has to be taken up and championed by our members.

This movement is one that strives to be a family of friends drawing people together from different religious and tribal backgrounds, committed to supporting and lov-

ing one another in the spirit of Jesus. To do this, each one of us is responsible for finding common ground with the others, and creating a culture of love in unity and reconciliation across whatever lines of division there may be between us.

In doing so, we invest in one another's potential, and prepare ourselves to be ready for the great and noble cause that God has destined us in the next generation. That is why we always come back to Jesus, and that is why we spend our time in the weekly campus fellowships at University – it is to strengthen one another by holding each other accountable to our highest and best ideals, and in doing so, unleash the true potential we have been invested with.

It's true that all have strength and weaknesses. But, if each of us can learn to partner with others who have different ways of looking at things and ideas than we do, then each of us working together will be more effective in all that we do. Where I may be weak, another person may be strong. If we can see this and allow each other to function in his or her area of strength, we will make a greater impact as a group. Plus, this process helps us to respect and value other people's opinions and ideas – not just thinking that our way is the best and only way.

I believe that one of the real secrets of successful people is emotional intelligence, that is, they know how to put into practice creative and constructive cooperation in their dealings with others. What better way to learn this skill than to start here and now with the diverse relationships we have in COSA?

Some people think that when partnering with others, individual success is diminished. But this is not true in our case, as our success in COSA does not come at the expense of others. Instead, we look for situations where we can succeed while not climbing on top of others to get there. In organizational relationships long-term effectiveness is largely achieved through the cooperative effort of the committed members who own the vision of the organization. In our case, such a vision is easy to buy into since it is aligned with spiritual values that have eternal rewards.

As I serve God in a small way in this department I know very well that the success of this work is intertwined in my personal growth and accomplishment. In this way, you could say that it has become my personal work, not Cornerstone's work. Jesus says in Revelation 22:12, "Behold I am coming soon, and my reward is with me, to give to everyone according to what he or she has done!" So I count myself blessed to be doing this work, for it is work that I will personally reap the fruits of when I am asked to account for my life before our Creator. I believe that there is no greater work than to be working along side my brothers and sisters, furthering God's Kingdom on earth.

By Sanya Sam



The Ekosa Admin Team

Ekitangaala

Old Students Association

Setting aside our differences in order to work together.

I joined the Cornerstone family of friends in 2007 when I started school at Ekitangaala Transformation High School. Back then, my focus was on only two things: To get educated and then to leave!

Initially, I thought that the school was the same as the other schools that I went to before where everyone just minded their own business, and teachers were only interested in academics. But, I soon realized that this school was different. People didn't just keep to themselves, but they really engaged with you, even teachers were interested in my life on a deeper level. Through all the leadership development and discipleship lessons I began to get interested in more than just education alone. I grew interested in the wider, long-term vision of Cornerstone that was holding people together in a way that helped them realize their potentials, stay true to their highest and best values while positively impacting this nation. In the context of my school this was being done through the vision of Ekosa (Ekitangaala Old Students Alumni/ Association.)

Last year I was elected as the Chairman of Ekosa and this has enabled me to spend more time around the Cornerstone head office and learn more about this vision that we are working towards. I have seen that a spirit of "togetherness" is one of the focal points in this community- it is based on the approach of Jesus who said that we are all brothers for we have one Father. (Mt.23:8-9). There are many things that are dividing us in this world, but this vision of Ekosa, and Cornerstone at large, seeks to transcend these divisions, and help people come together with love and unity.

Before I became the chairperson of Ekosa, I thought there was a gap between COSA (Alumni from the Leadership

Academy) and EKOSA (Alumni from Ekitangaala T.H.S.), but the reality is there should be no difference at all! We are united under a common vision, and we can work together to see it realized - for the truth is that we are both working towards developing the cornerstones of Africa's next generations, one life at a time.

The Ekosa association now has 7 generations of graduated classes, 3 of which have graduated now from University and other institutions of higher learning, this puts our number at around 300. As the years pass and the momentum builds, I have noticed that our members are growing in their passion for this movement. I believe this is because we have not only been around each other in the times of joy but we have always been there to give compassion and support

to our members in the times of sorrow. Much of this happens through our monthly fellowship that we often combine with COSA for logistical purposes.

In addition to this, we have small group meetings for our members who cannot access the joint fellowships and these include; Kakooze fellowship, and Kampala University fellowships all of which seek to promote unity, friendship, and solidarity in the spirit of Jesus.

In recent news... we would like to congratulate Eve Kisakye, Mbabazi Amina, Alice Naweri, Lwabwera Robert, and Kakwezi Agnes on their recent marriages! Last year these people brought us joy when their spouses joined our community and we look forward to the many upcoming weddings planned for this year as well!

My work with Ekosa has also shaped my understanding of what team work means in life. EKOSA and COSA activities are frequently interrelated, but often, people want to think they are different; so, I have had to learn skills in networking and negotiating with all Cornerstone departments because I know we need each other to accomplish our respective tasks so as to meet the organizations goals and objectives. I have realized that when we join our efforts towards our common vision, we end up accomplishing bigger tasks and using less time and energy in the process.

There is a quote that I like which says, "*Coming together is a beginning, Keeping together is progress, and Working together is success.*" Ever since I came across this proverb, it has made me learn that we need each other if we are to reach our purpose in life. We need strong relationships in our life in order to: re-energize us, motivate us, give us hope, support us, inspire us, comfort us, give us direction and to mentor us. Therefore I urge all friends and partners reading this to consider ways to collaborate, coordinate and work together in our common vision for a better world.

By Emmanuel Bwanga



Africa Youth Leadership Forum

East Africa

Some tend the mango tree, others stop by and eat the ripe fruit.

In January of 2008, I joined the team at Cornerstone as a student worker - I came to office at 9:00am up to 12:30pm and then left for school at Makerere University. Before this I was involved with COSA as one of the campus coordinators at Makerere and also as one of the mentors for the boys in Makerere home. When I graduated, I naturally started taking on more and more responsibilities with Cornerstone and eventually began to head up the new Africa Youth Leadership Forum.

Over the last couple of years, AYLFD has grown into 6 countries in East Africa, on 37 different university campuses. I recently returned from a 2-week trek across Tanzania where we have set up many new chapters in partnership with the recently graduated class of the Leadership Academy there. This work of nurturing a new breed of African leaders by focusing on our common ground in Jesus, is indeed spreading like wild fire across the region, and it is amazing to have witnessed its growth from the beginning.

Over these years I have always viewed my work at Cornerstone as a relationship rather than an obligation. I don't feel like I ever applied for a job, it all just occurred organically as I put forth my best effort, and took up any responsibility with an open heart. I remember, because of this attitude, in the early days Tim used to call me a 'jack of all trades', but to avoid being 'a master of none', I had to focus on one project (AYLFD) and grow with it. Due to the nature of AYLFD's work cutting across many different Cornerstone programs, I have had to work in close partnership with almost

everyone at Cornerstone - not to mention the many partnerships we have had to forge outside with other people and groups. In this process of sharing our vision with, and working, alongside different people, I have come to see two different groups of people: First, those who take in a vision and take ownership of it, and Secondly, those who see it as 'other people's work'.

Those who take ownership over a vision will eagerly view it as 'my work.' They will connect with how they will personally be better by fully engaging with it or they will see how it is a good and noble idea that will be of benefit to our world, in furthering God's kingdom.

Using the analogy of a mango tree; this group will tend this mango tree whether they get fruits from it or not. They see it as something worth nurturing - they like to spend time to tend to it. Others pick up on this spirit and are inspired by them to join in their work. They might bring fertilizers, or they bring water to the tree in the dry season, or they may come to prune the tree in the wet season.

Lastly, there are those who see it as 'other people's work' - they don't take any ownership over the vision, no matter how good or noble it is for humanity. They see it as just another mango tree by the roadside. But during the ripening season, they will come by and pick mangos from it - though they will not stay to nurture this particular mango tree. They do benefit from it but their efforts are focused on cultivating other pursuits.

I know you might think I am going to say that the first group is better than the second group but, no, for the case of this example, I believe that both these groups play some

role and their meeting under the mango tree in the ripe season is in fact very important. Why? What happens?

Because even a one time meeting sparks conversations that blossom into friendship – and in the case of AYLIF, it is these friendships that have sustained our ‘tree’. After all, there is not enough work for EVERYONE to tend to the tree, others have to go out in the world and tell others how sweet the fruit is otherwise there would be no market and thus no demand for those who tend the tree! I hope this analogy explains some thing about the way we view the nature of partnership, and the process of working together towards a common purpose.

Since 2007 when the AYLIF was launched at Imperial Beach Hotel in Entebbe, many people have joined the movement, some stayed strong with us and some moved on. Yet we are all working on our relationships... these are life-time investments and even those who move on, still move on as friends. Wherever they go, they are our friends, and we all carry a piece of each other with us.

Today, AYLIF is operating actively in Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Burundi and DRC. In the past we have made start-up investments in South Sudan - although our involvement in South Sudan is still slow because the instability there, and the poor state of their university institutions. But, with the opening of the Leadership Academy of South Sudan, we hope to grow with those students in the region.

On each of our 37 university chapters, we have small groups of student leaders that meet in small groups at least

twice month, working through a curriculum of leadership empowerment and discipleship. In addition, we carry out special workshops, seminars, conferences, community clean-ups and outreaches. Three years ago, we started organizing the Junior Prayer Breakfast (JPB) events in Burundi and Rwanda. The JPBs are modeled after the National Prayer Breakfast movement, world-



Burundi Jr. Prayer Breakfast: Alan & Chris with the Runyutus

wide. This is an opportunity for student leaders in those countries with no National Prayer Breakfast of their own or where the student leaders have limited access to be a part of such movements. Those who have stayed to water the tree, to fertilize it, to prune it, and care for it have partnered well with each other.

As I interact with AYLIF leaders at all levels; the senior mentors and friends in countries (patrons of this vision/idea), country coordinators, and University small group coordinators, I am fascinated by three things that have sustained our working together: (1.) their humility, (2) their willingness and (3) their availability.

It is an honor to work with such great partners, who care about reaching out to the next generation of African leaders. I feel constantly encouraged as I see their commitment and faithfulness to this vision, to the people in it and their stewardship over the resources (faithfully using the small things we have building something bigger than us all). I can't ask for greater partners than you all. You are second to none! You are incredible! For posterity we serve!

By Allan Byarugaba

Important Dates Ahead:

Nairobi Gathering: May 28 - 31

Francophone Gathering: Aug 14 - 17 (TBD)

Kampala Gathering: October 7 - 11

Kinshasa Gathering: November 10 - 11 (TBD)

Vision casting with students in Tanzania



C.O.S.A. Uganda

Stage 3



A microcosm of the National Demographic in one class! (Class of 2000 Reunion)

“We seek to create a lifelong brotherhood and sisterhood of friends united in Jesus who will love and support one another while advancing a movement of men of integrity and women of virtue within Uganda and beyond...”

This is the mission statement of the Cornerstone Old Students Association (COSA), and it is the vision that’s on all of our hearts. Over the years we have marked slow and steady steps towards implementing this mission as our Alumni position themselves in different sectors of responsibility and influence across the region.

But as our number keeps growing each year, it becomes more and more of a challenge to keep members connected with other and in touch with our mission. Every day, the world we meet out there, tempts us to live lesser lives. So, to keep us on track we need the inspiration and accountability of others to remind us of our higher values such as: integrity, excellence, servant hood, generosity, and unity across all that divides us.

Our work from the administration side of COSA therefore centers on constantly innovating new ways to add value and deepen our relationships. We are continuously fine-tuning old programs and trying out new things that leads towards greater effectiveness in this common vision of our family of friends that exists now across the world.

So you can see, our strategy is heavily dependent on creating opportunities for our members to maintain and deepen the friendships they have with each other. In this way we are able to hold each other accountable to our shared values, inspire one another to greater heights and forge partnerships with each other.

Partnerships are collaborative relationships between different individuals with a shared vision or venture. These strategic alliances, if you will, are only successful where there exists high levels of trust, equality, mutual understanding and obligations. These kinds of values can be found among those who share common ground around the principles of Jesus. And, I could say it

is for this reason that we have been as successful to the degree we have in staying connected despite our diversity of backgrounds.

As we collaborate together with the different stages of our work here at Cornerstone, our major focus looking ahead is:

- To strengthen the sponsorship and mentoring program that COSA Stage 3 (those who have finished university) are providing for COSA Stage 2 (those still in University).
- To enhance the lifelong commitment to brotherhood and sisterhood of friends through meeting and sharing around the teachings and precepts of Jesus.
- To create space and time for interactions that deepens the support and love for one another along common interests and localities. Each of us has certain talents, interests or abilities that can be enhanced by sharing with others who are like-minded. These interactions provide an opportunity to our Alumni to network among each other and other practicing professionals.
- To facilitate the career and skills development of our graduates through the use of our short-term internship program and other various trainings.

One of our greatest assets as God’s children is that we have brothers and sisters in Jesus. Because of this, we have an enormous international family that loves us and with whom we are called to live in fellowship. One of the key tasks we have as members of this family is to partner together to bring the kingdom of God here on earth - this is one of greatest desires of our Cornerstone community.

This is why we place so much value on fellowship, and this is why we need each other as co-workers and joint stewards for every resource and relationship we are presented with. Indeed, in this partnership there are aspects of sacrificial “giving and receiving” (Philippians 4:15) as we relate to others by meeting their spiritual and physical needs. But if we commit our lives to it, this partnership is the only win-win solution to a better world for all of us.

By Michael Eluku



Mary Pryse

A Perfect Partnership: The HALO Foundation & Cornerstone

Partnerships have been vital to HALO's operations and the key to our success. HALO works in the United States and five other countries around the world. Uganda is only one country where HALO runs programs. Although our programs are spread out around the world we have a common theme that dictates all our programs and that is our use of partnerships. Just like HALO partners with Cornerstone in Uganda in the Youth Corps Program - we partner with similar organizations in all the countries we work in including the United States.

These partnerships are the backbone of HALO; they are our spine and without them we would cripple and fall apart. It is my hope that in the near future more organizations in Uganda will set aside their petty differences and come together to work towards their common goal. There are 267 youth support organizations in Uganda and very little collaboration between these organizations - it doesn't make sense! It is neither effective nor efficient. HALO is probably supporting three times as many children in Uganda as they do elsewhere in the world because of our partnership with Cornerstone; without Cornerstone I would guess HALO could only operate two youth homes, but with Cornerstone we support five. As a team we are more effective than we would be as two separate organizations.

A partnership is a complex relationship but when executed carefully partnerships, in all forms, can be some of the most rewarding and enriching experiences. It was successful partnerships that gave us Apple, Google, Twitter, and many other products and companies used and enjoyed around the world. It was a successful partnership that allowed me to work in Uganda. In almost all of my life experience it has been true that success came when I collaborated, teamed-up, or even just asked for help and guidance from others.

It is very easy for me to focus on how HALO and Cornerstone are different and how I am different from most others in Uganda. It is easy for me to see all the ways in

which our organizations and our cultures do not work well together. It is easy for me to see the problems. But I know focusing on differences will only drive people, organizations, cultures, and countries apart; they will not bring us together. Knowing this I put aside my differences and HALO and Cornerstone put aside their differences in order to come together, focus on what we do agree on, and make change happen. Alone HALO could not operate in Uganda and alone Cornerstone could not run Youth Corp but together we can. Together, in partnership, HALO and Cornerstone and you and I make change happen.

One of the most beautiful aspects of the HALO-Cornerstone partnership, and one of the most important factors, is that we both - believe in, support, and want to be a part of the other's mission. We both know and understand that we share a common goal and we will serve the greater good we when work towards our commonalities rather than picking at our differences.

When two or more organizations are working together they will each have their own unique vision, mission, and methods of achieving goals. While the broader cause many be the same, for example helping children in the greatest need, each organization will have something unique that sets them apart from other organizations. That uniqueness is essential to that organizations success because it is the thing that makes them different and the thing that attracts donors and/or business. The organization will not want to compromise their uniqueness. So, we have to find ways to work together and to make compromises without compromising our organization's integrity. Effective and frequent communication is a good way to ensure a partnership is on the right track and that neither side feels put down or left behind. Both organizations should feel valued and supported by their partner.

As I get ready to end my time in Uganda I know I will leave as a very content person because I know HALO and Cornerstone will continue their partnership for years to come and that the wonderful Cornerstone family will embrace the new HALO Ambassador with open hearts and open minds. It is also comforting to know that although I am leaving this family for now my partnership with each and every one of you will continue. I may not have directly worked with you but we have an unspoken partnership. We are in an unspoken partnership as citizens of this world who are coming together through our mutual faith in humanity, and from 12,813 kilometers (distance from Uganda to my state of Missouri) away we will continue to work together to make the world a better place.

By Mary Pryse



THE JABULANI HOSTEL

Jabulani: Come & Bring Happiness!

Soon after we started working with university students almost 20 years ago, we found a consistent problem: the students who most commonly drifted off of our shared principles based on the teachings of Jesus or got themselves into trouble - were the ones who had for one reason or another become separated from their brothers and sisters in the COSA alumni movement. We realized this was because they had less peer accountability and were less connected to the various fellowships and workshops we give our students while at University. There is no doubt, for all of us, a big part of successfully walking life's spiritual journey involves doing so with others.

So, at first, we started helping our members arrange joint accommodation options where several members would share the cost of renting a large house. Later on we made 'living together' a requirement to access our student loan program. Then in 2008 we began pursuing the dream of building a facility to accommodate all of our University students at the largest University in Kampala. The idea was that this would be an intentional community of common values, allowing our university students to live together and continue investing in one another - as we supported them with fellowships, workshops and trainings to fuel their personal development along the way.

That dream is now a reality and is known as the "Jabulani Hostel - A Family Of Friends." Jabulani was officially launched at the end of last year by Art Reimers, who partnered with us on the project from conception to completion. It is located on the North side of Makerere Hill, and at full capacity holds nearly 100 students - most of them COSA members, but also students from Restore Leadership Academy, and a few other like minded partner organizations.

We envision this hostel as a learning and caring community that edifies and inspires each one to reach their full potential. This is a concept that is actually intrinsic to many African cultures, as the saying goes, "It takes a village to raise a child."

All across Sub-Saharan Africa, one can find the concept 'Ubuntu' - it is a word that, in essence means, "We are one, because we are human," or "I am, because we are." It is really the philosophical foundation for the caring interpersonal relationships that are rooted deeply within the people of Africa.

At Jabulani Hostel we seek to uphold this noble, traditional African value of Ubuntu - while matching it with the best of what the modern world has to offer in terms of education and technology. And finally, above all, to support each other spiritually to live consistently with the ways of Jesus.

The Jabulani Hostel, needs to be self-sustaining in terms of electricity, water, city council taxes, security, maintenance and cleaning costs -as we do not have any outside budget for operating expenses. This means students will have to pay something to stay there. But, at the same time we want to keep it affordable, so students will be paying about 30-50% less than similar hostels of its standard and location.

Jabulani will be an academic place as well as social learning space for our students. This means there will be study rooms, healthy entertainment options and a conference Hall (that can sit 200) for fellowships, trainings, workshops and social gatherings. This will help our students to exchange and discuss ideas related to both academics and personal development. It will also provide a venue for us to reach out and influence fellow students at the University.

Finally, we envision that the whole community will be a place for spiritual growth and support. *We believe that it is both inherently African AND part of the message of Jesus for people to learn and grow through community.* Living together brings up all kinds of daily experiences that force us to face and transcend our weaknesses.

Committed friendships can provide us with three things: Accountability, partnership and encouragement. The culture of Jubulani will embrace all three of them. In the Zulu language the word means 'Come bring happiness to everyone.' ... it is a fitting name for such a community, as it is the very the atmosphere you will find every time you visit.
By Alfred Edakasi

EKITANGAALA RANCH

Ekitangaala Dairy Ranch is a project of Cornerstone Development that was established with the purpose of generating income to support the work of Cornerstone with young people - especially the ranch schools. The ranch workers and their families make a total of about 200 people living and working together as a family of friends. However, the entire community, including the Cornerstone Leadership Academy, Ekitangaala Transformation High School, Ekitangaala Primary School, African Children's Mission and AHI - means that the daily population of the ranch community is around 1,200 people! To add to these numbers, the population of this community is probably the most ethnically diverse group within a 3 square mile area in Uganda- with the exception of maybe Kampala! Our members represent almost every district and all of the 45 tribes in the country.



so far since the rainy season began have made a drastic increase in volume of water in the valley dam. The dam capacity was also boosted by carrying out de-silting manually when the water level went down.

With last year (2013) being our most profitable year to date, we continue to strive to make the Dairy Ranch financially resilient to these ups and downs experienced during drought. A number of strategic changes have been made which include among others the collection of 100 heads of breeding cows from 3 existing kraals (i.e. Friesian, Boran and new kraal) that have capacity to produce at least six plus liters of milk a day into one particular dairy herd. The rest of the herd has been turned into a beef project by selecting poor milking cows and old ones.

We therefore now have 4 Herds these are, (1) the Friesian Herd, which are the highest milkers, and where much attention and care is needed in regard to extra feeds, water supply, and medical treatment, (2) the Heifer Herd, (3) the Early Weaners, and (4) the Beef Project.

We want to continue stocking superior Friesian bulls in order to uplift the required genetic potential for milk production as the current genetics of the herd has gone more toward the beef side. There are already positive trends with this new system and a reduction on expenditures especially on labor force, pasture maintenance and veterinary drugs.

In general, all our animals are in good health- the whole herd has been immunized against skin lumpy disease which is a boost to our herds. We hope to carry out deworming and other immunization once the rains have stabilized. We've continued to transport our milk to Luwero and Wobulenzi where the prices are relatively much higher as compared to unreliable milk vendors.

We're still faced with a challenge of 'lantana camara' which is a weed that had spread into our paddocks but we're trying to eradicate it. Also, milk production and price fluctuations has been a big challenge as it affects our cash flow but with these various improvements, we hope to realize a better income and make 2014 our best year ever.

By David Mwesigwa



Our recently refurbished tractor is back on the road!

With so many different groups and projects working alongside each other, it is no wonder why we attach so much value on healthy working relationships and team spirit. Any one who visits the Ranch can pick up on this spirit in the air - it is not something that we can mandate or impose, but it is something that must be cultivated in the hearts of each individual starting from the leaders. Since the beginning of the year, we endured an extraordinarily long dry season in Uganda. The ranch was really affected by this drought and water levels in our valley dam had reduced drastically but we thank God that the rains have now started, the dam has refilled and the pastures are alive again with new growth!

Much has been done this year to ensure that "water harvest" into the valley dam is done perfectly. All the rain water from the Frisian Herd side, Ekitangaala Primary School, CLA and the surrounding areas is now directed into drainage channels that lead the surface run off into the dam. The central drainage channel in the swamp has also been boosted by extending it nearly up to the base of the swamp below the Boran kraal. The few down pours that we've had

DIGGING DEEP WELLS

Continued from page 28 (back cover)

program, became the most popular video among all their resource materials. And, we have taught the 7 Habits extensively in all of our programs to thousands of young people.

Looking back now I can see that these concepts of: **Synergy** (when the combination of multiple elements produces an effect that is greater than the sum of their individual effects) **Win-Win** (seeking the good of the other as well as your own in dealings with others) and **Interdependence** (a condition where partners successfully leverage mutual reliance so as to achieve more than if they were independent) - helped to give us the **Paradigm Shift** (new way of thinking) and helped lay the foundation needed for the success of our vision.

Today as we continue to inspire, equip, mentor and fire-up vision in the emerging leaders of East Africa we are drawing into our circles highly motivated and visionary young people (like many of you reading this). They tend to be highly ambitious and high achievers but often find it hard to learn to partner and develop a shared vision with others. Not surprisingly, this situation is also seen in the national politics of this region - where leaders tend to hold all power without strong partners nor do they want to mentor successors.

Yet, human history repeatedly bears witness to the powerful influence of what a few like-minded individuals can do when they commit themselves to remain together and support each other over the long run in a shared vision. Those who have achieved much or impacted the world greatly have always been the kind of people who knew how to form strong bonds with others while pursuing a shared vision.

If you analyze closely the lives of many influential people you will discover that virtually all of them were not alone in their pursuits. In all fields of human endeavor, the principle of synergy through partnership as a key element of success or influence can be found:

- *Jesus of Nazareth and his disciples.*
- *William Wilberforce and the Clapham Group* (Abolition of Slavery in UK)
- *Plato, Socrates and Aristotle* (The philosophies of these three close colleagues laid the foundations of Western thought and the Greek language in which the New Testament was written.)

*And old saying:
"If you want to draw
water you do not dig
six one-foot wells.
You dig one six-foot
well."*

- 26 - *David and Jonathan, Ruth and Naomi, Paul and Timothy* (In the bible)

- *St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi*
- *Rolls-Royce* (British car and aero-engine manufacturing company founded by Charles Stewart Rolls and Henry Royce.)
- *Wangaria Maathai and Vert Mbaya* (Greenbelt tree planting movement in Africa.)
- *Mercedes-Benz* (Merger of Karl Benz's and Gottlieb Daimler's companies)
- *Hewlett-Packard* -(Computer giant.)
- *Apple* (Began with a partnership between Steve Wozniak and Steve Jobs)
- *Black & Decker* (Power tools)
- *Ferdinand & Isabella* (Spanish Royal Cousins who started the Golden Age of exploration - paid for Columbus' voyages)
- *Gilbert & Sullivan and Rogers & Hammerstein* (the most successful musical theatre production songwriters)
- *Lewis & Clark* (Great American explorers)
- *Romulus & Remus* (Mythological Twin brothers who were the founders of Rome)
- *William & Mary* (Cousins who married and jointly ruled as king and queen of England from the Stewart dynasty)
- *British government in World War II* (was a coalition.)
- *The United Arab Emirates* (A collection of small groups into a unified nation that is a key player on a global stage.)
- *The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries* (OPEC)
- *Sears & Roebuck, Procter & Gamble, Barnes & Noble, Ben & Jerry...*the lists are endless.

Richard Saul Wurman the creator of the highly popular "TED Talks" - one of the most influential media forces shaping the thinking of American young people today...has spent much of his life studying the true nature of innovation and argues: "*From the time of Ancient Greece to today's digital age, our most significant breakthroughs are frequently rooted in a "partnership of ideas" - a simple but ultimately powerful exchange between individuals.*"

He says of innovation, "*Ninety per cent of all breakthroughs are in conversations between two people. And what is a conversation between two people - but a partnership of ideas?*"

It's not the things we already have that are interesting but those that have yet to come. But you can be certain of this: that everything that follows will be the result of a conversation - a partnership. "

In ages past, all around the world, there was a phenomenon called “blood brothers” referring to a practice where two or more guys would make a pact in a ceremony whereby each would make a small cut on their finger or arm and then the two cuts were pressed together – with the idea of each person’s blood now flowing in the other’s veins. The whole process was to create a heightened sense of commitment and attachment to one other.

Of course in the modern era, with HIV etc., this is no longer think-able. So really, the only kind of relationship we have left that carries such a high degree of commitment, beyond family kinship loyalties, is the marriage ceremony: Two people, often with little prior connection to each other, pledge to stick together through all the ups and downs of their entire lives. And, when it works well something significant and enduring emerges, a family, that neither of the two individuals could create on their own and which has formed the foundation for societies everywhere.

But why is it that today it is so hard for people to imagine bringing some degree of the power of deeply committed relationships - to contexts beyond marriage? Why are we so quick to separate with co-workers, business partners and other colleagues of this nature when things don’t go well? Why is it that most people totally accept that this can work in a marriage but don’t try to apply the same degree of commitment to other relational contexts?

That is something our Cornerstone community has worked to live out. The mission statement of our Leadership Academy alumni contains these words: “To be a life-long brotherhood and sisterhood in the spirit of Jesus.” And we champion this same concept of long-term, committed relationships with our national High School outreach initiative, our Africa Youth Leadership Forum at the University level as well as in the Prayer Breakfast movement for national leaders.

I always teach that we are here on earth for basically two reasons:

1. *We are here to learn various lessons.*
2. *We are here to carry out various missions.*

And, a big part of both of these is worked out within the framework of our relationships with others.

1. Friends and family offer us some of our greatest joys in life – but it’s also the area where many of our toughest life lessons are worked out. Such as, the hard lessons of patience, forgiveness, keeping commitments – all aspects of developing a more self-less kind of love.

2. The ability to form working relationships and partnerships with others - will also largely determine our effectiveness in achieving our goals and fulfilling our mission in life.

There is no way to avoid it – we have learn to work

with people. And we have to learn to work with irregular people – because there is no other type.

There are only two precepts of Jesus that he said constituted: “*The sum of all the law and the prophets*” and they are quite similar:

1. *Love God and love your neighbor as your self.*
2. *Treat others the way you would want to be treated.*

Here too, it’s clear that our highest spiritual ideals involve the quality of interactions with our fellow human beings. And the standard is sacrificial, unconditional love. This how the Master put it. “*Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.*”

The love of God is manifest in the earth through those that are kind, one to another. One of the most spiritual things you can do is just be thoughtful and kind: “*I love you*”, “*I’m sorry*”, “*I appreciate you*”, “*I’m proud of you*”, “*Please, forgive me*”, “*Are you ok?*”

“*Spread love everywhere you go: first of all in your own home. Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God’s kindness; kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile, kindness in your warm greeting.*”

- **Mother Teresa**

“*The simplest acts of kindness are by far more powerful than a thousand heads bowing in prayer.*”

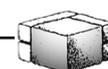
- **Mahatma Gandhi**

“*I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; I needed clothes and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.*”

- **Jesus of Nazareth on the final judgment**

In conclusion, we can ask ourselves some questions:

- How am I doing in my relationships with my family and friends?
- Who gives me a sense of family or community?
- Who are my true friends & partners?
- To whom am I accountable, spiritually? (Who holds you accountable – to your highest and best ideals and values?)
- Who is with me through the mine-field of temptations in this world to ensure that I don’t damage my health, my reputation, my integrity through the pursuit of pleasures that are ultimately destructive to body and soul?
- Who have I allowed to speak into my life?



For 5 Tips on Strong Relationships, see page 5!

DIGGING DEEP WELLS

Thoughts from Tim

Twenty five years ago I met Michael Timmis and John Riordan in Kampala Uganda. Our personalities were so different that I sometimes think had we met in the U.S. we would have never become friends! In the end, the diversity of our personalities actually became our greatest strength as we forged a shared vision together that transcended our own egos and personal agendas.

With the backing of Michael's family and other friends - the three of us laid the foundation for Cornerstone by working very closely together over a 7-year stretch and we are still friends up to today. There is no doubt in my mind that it would have been impossible for any one of us, on an individual level, to create this movement which now has nurtured a few thousand young leaders in this part of the world. And, it continues to expand - as many others develop ownership and a sense of partnership in this vision that has been entrusted to us.

When I began working in Africa, I thought I would be changing jobs and work locations frequently from one country to the next - working with different agencies under one to three year contracts. This is the norm for international development workers.

But, then I came into contact with mentors from the circle of friends behind the "Prayer Breakfast" movement worldwide who advised me on a radically different concept of investing in long-term relation-

ships. I would summarize this as follows:

"Instead of digging many shallow wells all over the place, focus on digging deep wells with a few committed friends - wells that will not easily dry up over time."

I also began to discover there is a spiritual principle behind this kind of thinking, of forming strong bonds with a few others, that accounts for greater influence in life. In the ancient scriptures we find various texts that point to this, such as:

1. "One person can chase a thousand of them, but two people can put ten thousand to flight."
- Deuteronomy 32:30
2. "Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."
- Ecclesiastes 4:12

Jesus also stressed this principle when he said: *"Truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."* -Mt:18:19

In this passage the word 'agree' in the original Greek text is 'symphonia' - from which we get the English word "symphony" - describing a musical context where all available instruments are in harmony with each other.

The meaning is clear, to tap into the spiritual power of shared agreement that Jesus is talking about; a high level of harmony must first exist among the partners. When we are in a place of harmony and agreement with others, for a noble purpose, we will become aligned with God's ways of doing things and we experience His support.

This year also marks the twenty five year anniversary of a book called 7 Habits of Highly Effective People which put the words and concepts of: Synergy, Win-Win, Paradigm Shift and Interdependence - into common usage today. The book was revolutionary when it came out and still ranks on best sellers lists today, having sold more than 25 million copies.

Cornerstone has had a long connection with the book's author, Stephen Covey and his organization, that began when a video they shot many years ago called "Stone", about our inner-city soccer

