

Notes from School

A report on Project Hope & Charité Hand-in-Hand Orphan Schools



In Awe...

Five years ago, every Sunday afternoon Teacher Emmanuel, our first Hand-in-Hand (HnH) teacher, would mount his bike and ride 30 miles on a bumpy dirt road. Hours later he would arrive at the Pama Church where he would spend the next four days teaching in the first HnH school. Early the next morning he would ring the church "bell" and 50 dusty, barefoot kids would pour out on to the road, with slates in hand and their excited chatter filling the morning air. Arriving at the church building, they would line up and march single-file into an experience they had never known until that time: school.

A lot has changed in these five years. Fifty orphans have become 1700. One school has become 41. Teacher Emmanuel is now Coordinator Emmanuel, who directs a growing staff of Central Africans working together to ensure that HnH churches are successfully nurturing, educating and feeding orphans in their community.

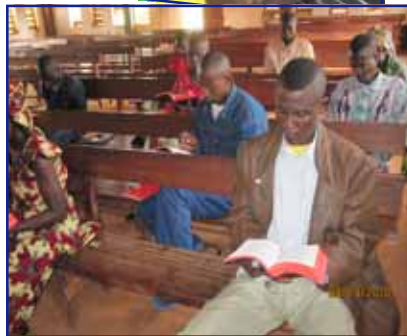
That first little church-based school and all that have followed, as simple and primitive as they are, are a source of wonder and amazement to the heavens, and to us, for they represent the best of what the Church is all about - love, mercy, and the Golden Rule.

God alone knows the future for HnH schools situated as they are in a turbulent region of Africa. But if three wars and as many evacuations in 15 years have taught us anything, it is that, if it's important that a ministry continues when missionaries are gone, it's essential that it be designed, directed, and run by Central Africans. By this standard, the future looks bright for HnH schools.

We are in awe of where we are, thrilled at where we are going, and humbled to be working with such amazing local churches *on both sides of the ocean*. Through our efforts together, God is blessing a lot of needy kids who, because of us, have hope for a future. ~ Barb



A first year teacher who received one week of intense teacher training in September 2010.



Upper level HnH teachers attended a week of Walk Thru the Bible training in August. They took the "oral Bible" back to each of their HnH schools so that now all HnH orphans have an "oral Bible"!



HnH students learn not just the 3Rs, but also about Jesus. Prayer and Bible lessons are an essential part of a HnH orphans' education.



In Level II HnH schools, orphans learn to write in cursive and start learning French. In Level III most instruction is in French.



In October, 2010 the HnH Team of four visited many up-country HnH schools and were impressed with how the teachers were teaching and the children were learning.

Road Hazards: Goats, Chickens, & Nuts



Emmanuel Bouyette

Driving on African roads is risky. The poorly maintained roads serve not just as a highway, but also a walking path for people and any number of animals, keeping drivers on the alert for darting goats, chickens, pigs and even cattle.

Imagine driving on motorcycle on these roads! Africa-Based Hand-in-Hand (HnH) Coordinator Emmanuel Bouyette, who has traveled thousands of miles on his cycle, often expresses his gratitude to God for the safety he has enjoyed these past three years. But perhaps his gratitude was never more heartfelt than after his experience last month.

In December 2010, Emmanuel was riding to Bangui for his regular end-of-the-month meeting with Africa-Based HnH Director Ginger Hock. After almost two hours of traveling at speeds approaching 50 mph, he decided to stop at the HnH school at the Gbamian GBC. As his motorcycle rolled into the church yard and slowed to a stop, the rear wheel of his cycle fell off! Somewhere along the way a nut came off and little by little the axle was dislodged.

Ginger reported, "Instead of complaining about the problem, Emmanuel was praising God for His protection. The pastor of the Gbamian Church and school then took the parts off of his own motorcycle and gave them to Emmanuel so he could continue his journey to Bangui. I praise God for His protection on Emmanuel, and also for this highly competent and godly worker who is such a blessing in our ministry to orphans." 🙌

Pastors Band Together for Orphans' Health-Care

Ginger Hock, Africa-based HnH Director

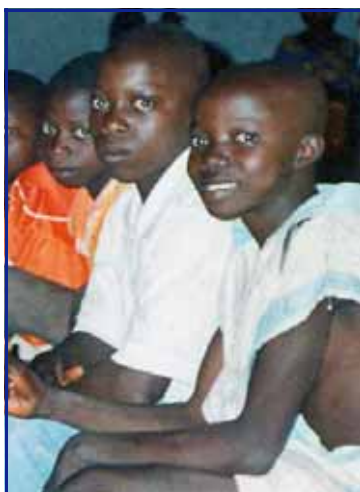
While the Hand-in-Hand program helps local churches in serious, traumatic and urgent health needs of orphans in HnH schools, the day-to-day health care needs orphans in HnH schools falls more to the local church hosting the HnH school.

In the region of Bossangoa, where we have ten HnH schools hosted by six local churches, the pastors decided this year that they could provide more and better medical care for their orphans if they would partner together. So they drew up a plan which is providing a small pharmacy where meds they buy are stored. Though some of these meds cost only pennies per dose - malarial medications and meds for other parasitic infections, aspirin, worm meds, etc, - they can literally make the difference between life and death.

Each church is responsible to purchase medicine and help oversee the administering of meds. We praise God for pastors who care about orphans in their community and who are mobilizing their congregations to fulfill what James 1:27 describes as "true religion." 🙌



HnH Schools in War Zone



Orphans in Boguilla

The HnH staff has had a growing burden in the last couple of years to help orphans in war zones or areas of the highest insecurity. It is these children who, among all destitute kids, are at greatest risk and have the least opportunities, yet without our being able to visit and monitor the situation on the ground, hosting a full HnH school is impossible.

With God's help, two HnH-like schools were started by local churches in two high risk areas. We (HnH) provided training and materials for two teachers in those areas, gave them all the materials they needed to start a basic HnH school, and set them loose with best wishes and prayers.

Since that time, HnH Coordinator Emmanuel Bouyette has received occasional reports from these schools, and those reports are profoundly encouraging. The last couple of times he heard from the school up in Paoua (close to the Chad border) was via a cell phone call. Each time the teacher has called, at the end of her report she takes the phone outside where the kids are enjoying recess so he can hear how happy the children are now that they can go to school. Only God knows the difference these children will make in these areas that time, the Central African government, and the UN have forgotten. 🙌

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2010-11 HnH School Year Schedule
Sept 1: half payment for school year
Jan 1: remaining payment for school year
Feb: Winter Notes from School Newsletter
Feb-May: Video Updates
May: Spring Notes from School Newsletter