



## **Interior Health Employees return from Kahama, Tanzania**

In February, 2013 a team of five other Interior Health employees and one Penticton doctor travelled with me on a **self-funded trip** to Kahama, Tanzania. Our team consisted of Pene Berthelson, RN from Summerland, LeAnne Davies, RN from Ashcroft, Twyla Burgoyne RN, Anna Toon RN, Nancy Comeau Psychologist and Dr. Glen Burgoyne all from Penticton. This would be my seventh time visiting the project areas of our organization, **The One Person Project**.

**Founded in 2007, The One Person Project** is a Summerland/Penticton based, volunteer-driven organization committed to establishing an enduring connection with two communities in East Africa. We largely provide support in Kahama, Tanzania but also support some smaller projects in Muhanga, Rwanda.

Kahama is the only town in a district of almost one million people. In Kahama, there is one public hospital and up until recently, there was only one GP. Now there are three doctors, assisted by medical officers who do the work of physicians but have half the training. Many of the women in Kahama District give birth at home but even so; Kahama Hospital has between 9000-10,000 births a year.

Most non-profit organizations focus on one or two areas of need; One Person has chosen to develop five distinct projects: Children & Families, Education, School Sports, Medical and Sustainable Business. This fits in with our unique community-to-community concept of utilizing the diverse interests and specialities of one community to help provide sustainable support for a specific community in need.

We regularly ship equipment and resources to support these projects. We also recruit professional and non-professional volunteers to ensure that we are on track, to identify needs, distribute items and provide training in our sponsor communities.

This year, the volunteer trip coincided with the arrival of a 40' shipping container filled with over 10,000 books, teaching resources, sports equipment, tools, medical equipment and other items which support existing projects we have on the ground in Kahama. Many of the medical items were donated by **IHA** and staff members and included, an ultrasound machine, examination bed, delivery table, medication cart, physiotherapy beds and equipment, 15 hospital beds with mattresses, scrubs, stethoscopes, BP cuffs, medical books, medical equipment,

OR supplies, crutches, walkers, and 60 boxes of OR linens.

The team spent time working with the staff in the Kahama Hospital to help us better identify their challenges and needs. We met with representatives from many of our other projects and made plans for the future. We distributed 168 bins of household items, school supplies, etc. to our Amani children and their families. This group of 150 children have HIV and attend a clinic at the Kahama Hospital where we helped establish a clubhouse for them to meet in and run programs out of. We distributed items to our two orphans groups and took a portion of our uniforms and balls to eleven schools in 11 remote villages.

We purchased four Ambu bags, 5 boxes of Hemocues and 2 delivery kits for the hospital with \$1000 that was raised and donated by former IHA employee Elizabeth Ross from Kaslo, who was part of the 2008 medical trip. IHA employee Nancy Comeau, who was part of this year's 2013 team, donated \$1000 to our Muvuma Orphanage project to help with construction of the new building. We gave \$1000 of donated \$ to help start up a chicken coop which will help support vulnerable families from our Amani group. We gave \$400 to help purchase shelving for our some of our books, \$300 to help support a pig coop for HIV women in Rwanda, \$100 to help with school fees for some of our Faraja Orphan's group kids, \$900 towards the education of a young Tanzanian man who has been such a valuable support to us and donated cash to various causes on the ground there. Some of this money was contributed by IHA employees and BCNU.

The 2014 and 2015 trips are in the planning stages and our forth container is currently being filled. Please check out our website at [www.theonepersonproject.org](http://www.theonepersonproject.org) for ways to get involved with The One Person Project. To read about any of my seven trips and see Photos go to [Planet Ranger](#).