

Report 115
September 1, 2009

Documentary: Icyizere: Hope

Patrick Mureithi has just finished his 1 hour and 35 minute documentary, "Icyizere: Hope," on the Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) workshop which was developed by AGLI in Rwanda and Burundi. (NOTE: read HROC as "HE-rock".)

In August 2005, Patrick Mureithi, a young videographer in Springfield, MO – he was born in Kenya – came to the St Louis Friends Meeting. This is during the time I was living in St Louis and at that meeting for worship I spoke about Solange Maniraguha, one of the HROC staff in Rwanda. On the first day of the genocide, April 7, 1994, she was 13 years old. Her parents must have been on the list of Tutsi to be exterminated immediately. The *interahamwe* ("those who work together", the youth militia that did much of the killing during the genocide) broke through the roof of her house. She watched as the *interahamwe* killed her parents with machetes. Then they were supposed to kill Solange and her two younger sisters, but one of them turned to Solange and her sisters and said, "Run, run". So they ran. In other words, Solange was saved by the person who killed her parents. Such is the ambiguity of good and evil in the world.

Patrick came up to me after meeting and introduced himself. When I heard he was a videographer, I immediately told him that we needed someone to film a HROC workshop. He asked to be placed on the AGLI mailing list. I did not hear anything from Patrick until early in 2007 when he told me that he would like to make a documentary of the HROC workshop. So in August/September 2007, he went to Rwanda and video-graphed a HROC workshop in Gisenyi Friends Church near Lake Kivu. He quickly made a moving 5 minute teaser and posted it on YouTube. You can see this teaser on the AGLI webpage, www.aglionline.org. If I have the proper equipment I show it whenever I speak and have found it to be extremely effective.

By March 2008 he had a Kinyarwandan version which he showed in Rwanda during their film festival. At the same time he got permission to film outside the workshop and visited the homes of some of the protagonists in the documentary. Patrick then revised the film for an international audience. At one time he asked me for a three minute neutral history of Rwanda from the beginning to end – it would have been easier to write a much longer history. Then in March of this year Patrick was back in Rwanda showing the film again, this time with English subtitles to make sure that everything was accurate. He made his final edits and "Icyizere: Hope" (ich-yee-ZEH-ree) is complete. AGLI would like to circulate this documentary as widely as possible and we want your help. There are three possibilities.

1. You can buy a copy of the documentary for \$20 plus \$5 shipping for personal viewing.
2. If you would like to arrange a group presentation of the documentary – at your home, church, meeting, school, civil organization, or local cable TV – we will send you a copy

of the CD along with background material and donation envelopes. If you raise more than \$25 for AGLI you can keep the CD, if you like, or return it to AGLI for use by others.

3. Patrick himself would like to tour with his documentary. He particularly would like to give presentations at colleges and universities. To do this he would need travel reimbursement, accommodation, and an honorarium. I think he would be a great role model because he is in his early thirties.

Patrick comments:

"It might help if you mention that I am the Artist in Residence at Missouri State and Drury Universities in Springfield, MO, and that the film has been shown at the 2009 Rwanda Film Festival, on Rwanda Television, at the National University in Butare, and at Gisenyi Central Prison (both in Rwanda) where one of the subjects of the film was imprisoned for his crimes during the genocide. In Kenya it has been shared with medical staff and students at the Aga Khan University Hospital, the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, the Nairobi Peace Initiative, and the Great Lakes Parliamentary Forum on Peace. It has also been shown during the 2008 Convocation Series at Drury University and at the 2009 Public Affairs Conference at Missouri State University. It has been scheduled for screening at Knox College in late October."

If you are interested in any of these options, please email me at dave@aglionline.org. We would truly appreciate your help with this endeavor as it presents a great opportunity to speak to a larger audience about the ground-breaking work that the Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities is doing in the Great Lakes region of Africa. [NOTE: If you "reply" to this email it will not reach Dave. Please type in the email address above.]