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Milkshake Interviews: 'Children Are The Future Of Rwanda'

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By Katy Kelleher



[Imbabazi Orphanage](#) offers more than just shelter and food to the displaced children of Rwanda -- it also offers education, skills and training, and a refuge from the outside world. In a country where 95,000 children have been lost or orphaned, Imbabazi is, in their own words, "a home for hope."

We were honored to have a representative from Imbabazi at our first ever Milkshake Global Bazaar. We were so moved by the story of the orphanage, and its inspiring founder, Rosamond Carr, that we decided to sit down with Devon Kuntzman, Executive Director of the Imbabazi Orphanage, to talk about her work with the organization, her

memories of Roz, and her dreams for Rwanda's future. Learn more -- and find out how you can help -- in our Q&A, below.

Why is this cause so important?

Rwanda is a country of great hope. Eighteen years of reconciliation and hard work from every Rwandan has helped this country heal and develop, and children are the future of Rwanda. It is our mission to help children reach their fullest potential by providing them education, skills training and enhanced education environments.

What makes your organization unique?

Imbabazi was founded by an America lady named Rosamond (Roz) Carr (1912-2006). She lived in Rwanda for nearly 50 years. For many years, Roz helped people in the local community by treating the sick with basic first aid and medicine and paying school fees for children. She was forced to evacuate her home at the onset of genocide in 1994. Four months later she returned to Rwanda -- just before her 82nd birthday. Not only did she decide to rebuild her home and personal life, but also build a home for lost and orphaned children. Her only regret in life was not having children. Roz said that she found her purpose in life when she became a mother to forty children and helped them heal from the trauma they experienced. In the years of turbulence that followed, Imbabazi was home for more than 400 children. Today we have 51 resident children and support several other children that have been reunited with family.

What has been the most inspiring moment working with Imbabazi?

My most inspiring moment was when I met Roz on my first trip to Rwanda in 2005. This meeting changed my life by awakening my desire to work in Rwanda and help children. It is an honor to be continuing Roz's work. I continue to feel inspired on a daily basis as I watch our children finish school and start their independent lives in the community. As our children move on, we will begin education projects for the children in our community such as a early childhood development center, English and computer skills training center, and enhancement of local schools. Every day I see children in our community that will benefit from our future projects and help them build a bright future.

What are three things that bring a smile to your face?

One -- When I child writes me a note thanking me for working hard to ensure they have their needs met and are able to attend school.

Two -- The smiles of pride when our children learn a new word in English and when they bring home their report cards showing they are succeeding in school.

Three -- When visitors come to Imbabazi and witness the great work of Roz Carr and what we are doing to preserve her legacy, continue her work and help the families and children living in our surrounding community.

Want to get involved? [Imbabazi](#) is always looking for donations, but if you want to give your time rather than your money, Devon is currently seeking a volunteer to work with them for five to seven hours a week on event planning, grant writing, and donor outreach. If you are interested, email us at Hi@Getmilkshake.com and we will pass your information on to Devon.

Katy Kelleher is the editor of Milkshake Global. For more good news, sign up for our daily emails at GetMilkshake.com.

Image courtesy of Devon Kuntzman