

# Africa- Indian Ocean Division

some statistics from Rwanda are absent for 1994 due to unprecedented disturbances in that country, the growth factor is even more pronounced. Recent word from Rwanda indicates that 33 of our 34 primary schools have now reopened. This makes 563 elementary schools in the AID today, a 30 percent increase over 1990. The number of teachers and students has also increased significantly.

The immediate goals for primary education include the division-wide inauguration of Bible textbooks in both French and English. Continuing to increase the percentage of Adventist teachers, creating a deeper spiritual impact in each school, and improving the physical infrastructure and classroom conditions of the schools are important goals for the next quinquennium.

## **Secondary Education**

Secondary education in the Africa-

## *Significant Growth and Expansion*

**T**he significant growth in Adventist education in the Africa-Indian Ocean Division (AID) testifies to the abundant blessing of God during the past quinquennium, despite the conditions of war and economic instability in various parts of the division. In order to highlight these developments more clearly, this report has been subdivided into three main areas—Primary, secondary, and tertiary/postgraduate education.

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## **Primary Education**

During this quinquennium, the number of primary schools in the AID increased from 391 to 530. The growth has been particularly pronounced in the West African, Zaire, and Sahel unions. Considering that

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*Student from elementary school in Niamey, Niger.*

*Robert G. Pierson*

Indian Ocean Division has experienced victories and challenges during the past quinquennium. The number of secondary schools has grown from 32 to 52, including 17 more schools in Zaire and six more in the West African Union. It is also significant that the church recently opened its first boarding secondary school in Nigeria since the state takeover of all private primary and secondary schools in 1970. Encouragement from the government has brought a new day in Nigeria and on October 25, 1993, the church opened its first school at Owerrinta, in eastern Nigeria. In Burundi, where the Adventist Church was banned for many years, the Kivoga Secondary School was reopened under Adventist management in 1993.

Unfortunately, the three secondary schools in Rwanda are still closed, having undergone serious trauma during the 1994 crisis. However, they are due to reopen soon. At Mugonero, eight of the 24 teachers were killed and all but one fled as refugees to neighboring countries. The buildings and school equipment were seriously damaged or stolen. Of Gitwe's 27 teachers, only four remained, with others fleeing as refugees. The campus was taken over as a military base during the war, causing significant damage to the physical plant. Rwanderi was more fortunate, although it lost most of its teachers as refugees.

**T**he immediate goals for secondary education are similar to those of the primary schools. However, we hope that several schools will reopen with specialized programs and/or local industries. Some will serve as GED training centers for French and English programs, enhancing the education of our pastors and teachers.

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*Visiting government ministers commended this sewing program as a model for the nation of Madagascar.*

### **Tertiary and Postgraduate Education**

At the tertiary level we have four institutions—the Adventist Seminary of West Africa (ASWA), the Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA), Valley View College (VVC), and Asekore Teacher Training College. Enrollment of ASWA reached 536 at the beginning of the 1994-1995 school year. AUCA had 462 students at the beginning of the second (spring) semester in

1994, but has been closed since the crisis in April 1994. VVC had 119 students at the beginning of the third quarter, 1994.

The past five years have brought significant growth and expansion at ASWA, which has become the division's principal postgraduate training center. We hope it will soon become the Adventist University of West Africa, which should produce a period of significant growth.

**S**ince 1984 when the Adventist University of Central Africa opened, the school has grown from a handful of students to having 462 enrolled in 1994. AUCA was the first SDA institution of higher education in Africa to gain government recognition and is the only school serving the continent's vast francophone constituency. Unfortunately, war brought AUCA's rapid development to an untimely end

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*Students from a school in Cote D'Ivoire line up for class.*

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*Classroom at Soamandrany Secondary School, Madagascar.*

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*Students coming to school at the SDA community center in Gambia, where a new school complex will soon offer space for 400 primary children, as well as adult education facilities.*

*A student searches a well-equipped library at one of the Africa-Indian Ocean colleges.*

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*Students at Phoenix Secondary School in Mauritius.*

when some 500 people, largely villagers, were killed on campus. Two Rwandese teachers and their wives are presently starting to put the school back in shape. An interdivision family has moved to Kigali to represent the interests of the school and to pave the way for reopening.

**D**uring the past quinquennium, Valley View College has moved from rented quarters on the outskirts of Accra, Ghana, to a rural site near Oyibi, some 19 miles north of Accra. The school has struggled to get a limited physical infrastructure in place, but now has a new classroom block with a spacious library on the first floor and an eight-inch water main from the Greater Accra water grid. VVC is beginning to feel more like a boarding school as families move into new homes on campus.

In addition to the three principal institutions of higher education, the division operates several Griggs University Theology Extensions in Mauritius and Zaire to help fill the urgent need for well-trained church administrators, Bible teachers, and pastors. Another extension program is due to start soon in the Cameroun. These theology programs will help fill the need for well-trained French-speaking workers. Valley View College in Ghana also includes a Griggs University theology program, but this is designed primarily for the English-speaking community.

**P**olitical and economic instability across the AID are forcing the church to re-examine its approach to higher education. Smaller, financially independent institutions will enable more students to obtain a Christian education throughout the widely scattered unions of our division. We pray for peace that the educational work can function unhindered during this crucial time in earth's history.—*Robert G. Pierson, Director of Education, Africa-Indian Ocean Division.*

# How One Name Saved Two People

**C**ome with us!” the soldiers commanded, and Stella-Monique froze. How could she trust people she didn’t know? Stella-Monique was a student at the Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA), located in a beautiful mountain region of northwestern Rwanda. The war in Rwanda had been raging for more than three and a half years, but violence had dramatically escalated with the death of the country’s president in a plane crash.

During the war, the university had experienced three evacuations, but each time conditions permitted a rapid return and classes continued as usual. However, in January 1993, the situation in northwestern Rwanda took a turn for the worse.

Reports of ethnic cleansing, killings, and house burnings abounded. From the university, one could see the night sky illuminated by the blazing rockets of mutinous soldiers. Still, all classes continued as usual. Finally, the university felt the sting. In February 1993, soldiers kidnapped three students from campus. The pastor narrowly escaped, but the young men have not been seen since.

When school opened in the autumn of 1993, Stella-Monique was offered a work scholarship to help her continue her studies. The fall semester was difficult. Unsettled conditions and wide-

spread killings in neighboring Burundi destabilized Rwanda, including AUCA. Stella-Monique earned the wrath of some as she endeavored to obey school rules while tensions ran high. Rioting, tire slashing, and grenade throwing brought school to a close for about four days. But then, classes resumed and life carried on as before.

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*Classroom block, Adventist University of Central Africa, Rwanda.*

**T**he death of the president on April 6 unleashed a holocaust from which the country may never fully recover. Estimates range as high as one million people killed in the ensuing slaughter. In the vicinity of the university, the first evidence of the massacre started about noon on Thursday. The air was heavy with the smell of smoke as hundreds of homes

went up in flames. Occasional shooting could be heard in the surrounding area. On campus, the reality of the war struck home that evening. First to die was the son of the minister of agriculture, who was bayoneted in the quadrangle of the men’s dormitory while trying to run for his life. Students huddled in fear on the veranda of the administration building rather than sleep in their dormitories Thursday night.

**D**uring most of the night, frightened villagers sneaked onto the campus. They hid in the orchards, classrooms, or wherever they could get out of sight: By sunrise, there were probably a thousand villagers on campus trying to hide. In the past, the campus had been a city of refuge, but not this time.

Shortly after sunrise, another group of villagers, aided by a sprinkling of soldiers, came on campus with spears, knives, clubs, and grenades. The killing started at about seven o’clock and continued throughout the morning. The dead or dying lay all around the administration building. Some 200 bodies were taken out of the science building alone.

On Friday, the soldiers came for Stella-Monique. She thought the end had come. Running to the dean of student affairs, she asked what to do. He warned her of the danger, but told

her she would have to make her own decision. By a strange coincidence, her last name was the same as one of the soldiers. “We’ll take you to our family in Gisenyi and protect you,” they said. Stella-Monique hesitated, but agreed to go.

All day Sabbath there was intermittent killing on campus while school authorities tried unsuccessfully to get a military escort for an evacuation. Neither the French nor the Belgians would help. Finally, U.S. marines stationed in Bujumbura, Burundi, agreed to come. Many students had already left. Others left in university vehicles Saturday night. On Sunday morning, the helicopters were being readied on the runway in Bujumbura when suddenly the wife of a Belgian teacher went into labor. Knowing that she must be delivered by Caesarean birth, the university officers contacted the Belgian military just down the hill in Gisenyi. When they learned of the situation, they sent a small group to help evacuate the remaining faculty.

All university administrators and faculty members survived the ordeal. However, about two weeks later one of the Rwandese teachers was killed while defending his wife, one of the minority tribe. They died together, leaving a baby girl.

But the story wasn’t over yet. In September, while eating lunch at the ADRA headquarters in Goma, I heard a familiar voice. It was Stella-Monique. “How did you survive?” I asked. “People told me you had been killed in the wheat field near campus.” Her story was almost unbelievable.

The soldiers had actually come for another Stella-Monique—one they

definitely would have killed. But instead, they found the Stella-Monique of our story. They dealt roughly with her while on campus, but since she had the same last name as one of the soldiers, her life was spared. They even took her to Gisenyi and let her stay with one of their families.

But the neighbors weren’t sure

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*Classroom scene, Adventist University of Central Africa, before the recent civil war.*

about Stella-Monique. Was she really who she claimed to be? More and more people questioned her origin. Finally, the soldier who rescued her from the university came to inquire.

“People say you’re of the enemy tribe,” he growled. “Can you prove who you really are?”

“Take me to visit my family,” she replied. “You can see my parents yourself.”

“I’ll take you to your home. We’ll see who you really are, and if you’re one of the enemy, I’ll kill you myself.” The soldier cradled his rifle menacingly. His bayonet and grenades hung at his side.

It was a long way to Stella-Monique’s home. They drove all day. Stella-Monique feared taking the soldier to her home might endanger her

whole family. She prayed much of the way. The roadblocks were unusually time consuming, and the main road leading to her home had been captured by unfriendly forces. Finally, the young soldier saw there was no hope of making it to her home that day. They found a place where Stella-Monique could spend the night. It

turned out to be the home of an Adventist deacon. The soldier left, warning her he would be back to take her to her parents’ home the next day.

Stella-Monique prayed for help and guidance. She remained at the deacon’s home for about three weeks, fearing to go outside. But for some reason, the soldier never returned. During this time, she learned from a friend that all the members of her family had been killed. “There’s no one left on your hill,” he said.

Stella-Monique made her way with thousands of

refugees to Bukavu, a city in neighboring Zaire. At last she felt safe. She knew no one in the massive throng of refugees, so she sold bananas and firewood to earn a living. From Bukavu, she made her way to Goma and friends. Now, Stella-Monique is back in school preparing to serve the Lord. “I’m living on borrowed time,” she says, “and I want to thank God for saving my life.”

Interestingly, the real Stella-Monique—the one the soldiers went to the university to kill—also survived. Since the soldiers found the “wrong” Stella-Monique and took her to Gisenyi, the other Stella-Monique was forgotten and left on campus. God had used one name to save two people.

—Robert G. Pierson, Director of Education, Africa-Indian Ocean Division.