

Volunteer JENNIFER STEEL

Partner organisation Association Dufatanye Inshuti z'Abana | RWANDA

Chartered accountant Jennifer Steel was keen to use her sabbatical from KPMG as an opportunity to experience new countries and cultures first hand. She felt it was important to seek fresh challenges and share her accounting skills with a good cause. Volunteering with [Accounting for International Development \(AfID\)](#) seemed a perfect way to combine these aims. After considering opportunities in four African countries Jennifer agreed on a two month assignment supporting a Rwandan charity called Association Dufatanye Inshuti z'Abana (DIZA). DIZA provides education to vulnerable children and orphans. The charity began by supporting orphans of the 1994 genocide and has now expanded to support other vulnerable children in the community, specifically those suffering from or affected by HIV and AIDS.

THE ASSIGNMENT

Eric, DIZA's only paid member of staff, looked after the day to day running of the charity; administering funds to children, contacting donors and managing the office finances. Jennifer was to help Eric set up new systems that would allow the organisation to have more control over its financial activities and simplify budgeting and donor reporting. DIZA was in the process of constructing and opening a new local school. There was still some building work to be completed when Jennifer arrived and a lot of equipment still to buy; therefore a decision had to be made as to whether it could be opened. To aid that decision, Eric and Jennifer needed to prepare budgets to get the school ready for opening and to fully understand the impact of all the running costs.



"I've had a great time in Rwanda working with DIZA! The school is open! It opened last Monday and 20 children came on the first day. There were 35 children there today, so it seems to be popular. I am glad I could assist them with their financial management specifically budgeting & reporting for the new school."

Jennifer Steel

"I would like to thank Jennifer for her support. She was very kind to our organization as well as very active and sociable. She always had good ideas during our staff meetings and we really appreciated the methods she used in training."

Rubayiza Faustin, Director of DIZA

WHAT WAS ACHIEVED?

A detailed budget was prepared for 2011 and reviewed by all members of DIZA. The accountant received training in preparing budget to actual comparisons. Since Jennifer's placement, Eric is presenting the results of budgeting to other members of DIZA on a quarterly basis. There was a clear focus throughout the placement on pricing expenditure and planning income to cover this. Jennifer was able to help DIZA with the design and preparation of a brochure to send to donors and an advert for the new school. She also compiled registration forms, set up a financial recording system for the school and an information sheet for future volunteers.

LOCAL IMPRESSIONS

Jennifer: Whenever I went outside it took about one minute before I heard a child shout Muzungu! The very little ones smiled at me from a distance and if I walked past them they ran over and hugged my legs. Slightly older children would grin and giggle, and waited till I've just walked past before shouting "Good Morning, How are you?" When I replied they dissolved into laughter and shouted it again and again. All were very cute and amusing.

