

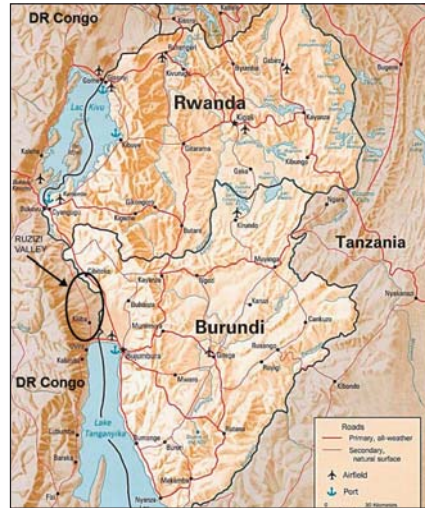
One key factor to be addressed by appropriate technology is energy. Currently, gasoline in Congo costs \$12 per gallon, but the annual income is only \$100 per person. This makes petroleum-powered agriculture impossible in most places. Instead, men and women struggle to farm the land using hand tools. In this situation, the introduction of an appropriate technology such as ox power can dramatically improve productivity and



ease the burden on the workers. In addition, oxen can be used for village trade and transport. The necessity for ox powered farm equipment and wagons will generate an expanding range of jobs for other villagers.

Immediate Plans

In addition to introducing ox power, WVI's plans for the immediate future include expanding the irrigation system, planting trees for lumber and food crops, and building the houses that will be the beginning of the vil-



lage. Each of these projects will involve training workers in a range of different skills.

Villagers won't have to wait for the project's completion to see improvements in their standard of living. The most tangible change so far has been the increase in food production and quality. Villagers who had little to eat are now enjoying over 60 different varieties of organically grown crops. By spring 2008, WVI hopes to be feeding 1000 people per day using sustainable farming techniques. Says Working Villages's founder and president, Alexander Petroff, "Our goal is to foster community self-reliance and economic independence."

Make donations payable to

WORKING VILLAGES INTERNATIONAL
40 Main St, Topsham ME 04086 U.S.A.

Working Villages International has been granted tax-exempt status by the IRS. Under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, contributions are deductible for computing income and estate taxes.

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Learn more about our project! Visit
www.workingvillages.org



Working Villages International / Villages de l'Avenir was established for the purpose of promoting the development of sustainable communities. Stressing low cost appropriate technology and the use of local materials and skills, our goal is to raise the standard of living and to improve the quality of life of the people living in these communities. WVI's promotes practices which emphasize agricultural independence and community self-sufficiency in conjunction with sound environmental practices.

Working Villages promotes:

- Self-reliance and sustainability
- Nurturing community growth through teamwork and cooperation
- Meaningful employment and vocational training
- Environmental responsibility

Currently WVI is working to build a self-sufficient eco-village in Congo's Ruzizi Valley at the northern tip of Lake Tanganyika. Nearly 5.4 million people in the Democratic Republic of Congo lost their lives in a conflict which former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright termed "Africa's First World War." Our project focuses on the needs of people who are still suffering from the effects of the past decade of war, as 1200



Congolese per day continue to lose their lives as a result of economic collapse, hunger, disease, and homelessness.

Starting from Scratch

Working Villages International was established in 2005. The project in Ruzizi started in 2006, when a village chief donated a roofless, dilapidated Belgian plantation house to use as the project headquarters. Local villagers, eager to see development, energetically joined WVI's staff in fixing up the headquarters. Within just a few weeks, they skillfully put up a roof, renovated the interior, cleared land, and began cultivating crops. Within just three days, they built a ½ mile long road – by hand!



Community Support

One key ingredient in the project's success so far has been our skilled staff, starting with our Project Manager, Fiston Malago, a highly trained agronomist originally from the local area. Under Fiston's guidance, villagers are becoming expert in sustainable farming techniques such as composting, mulching, and using raised beds – most of which are seldom seen elsewhere in central Africa. Workers are producing an abundance of nutritious crops. Just as importantly, they are learning techniques

Since then, with strong support from local officials and the community, the project has continued to flourish and grow. WVI is committed to using local resources and skills as much as possible. Hundreds of villagers in the Ruzizi Valley have been involved in the project so far, both as paid staff and volunteers. The remarkable energy and commitment of the staff in the valley has produced amazing results: what was once abandoned grassland has been transformed into lush, productive cropland, feeding several hundred formerly starving people.



which guarantee that the land will not be ruined by the erosion and desertification which has devastated so much of Africa.

Another key ingredient in the project's success is our carefully cultivated relationship with the community and its leaders, which guarantees that local inhabitants have a meaningful voice in the development of plans. This has resulted in a strong feeling of teamwork and dedication as the project goes forward.



The local government has donated one square kilometer of land to Working Villages. Using this land, WVI will build houses, workshops and public buildings, as well as set up pastures and cropland for farmers. WVI's plan is to provide each inhabitant of the village with skills training, a job and a house. The trained workers will be given ownership of their house and land. It is estimated that the project will take ten years to complete. Development will take place in stages, and by the time the village is complete, management will

be turned over to the local government, who will have played an active role in the development from the beginning stages.

Energy & Appropriate Technology

Throughout the process there will be an emphasis on job training for all the village's future inhabitants. Focus on the development of small scale appropriate technology will insure that there is plenty of work for everyone, while at the same time substantially improving the quality of life.

