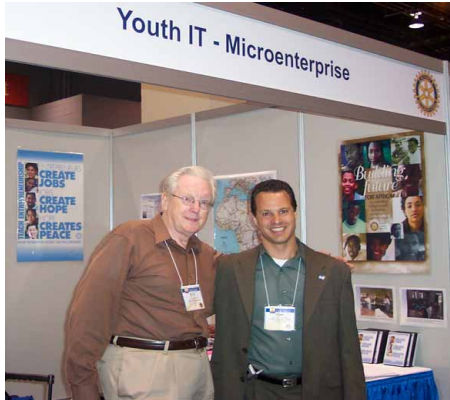


AFRICA - On Poverty Awareness, Live-8, G8 and Chicago

by C. Ray Carlson

Awareness of Poverty in Africa? Who can say that they are unaware, especially after the Live 8 concerts around the world



Tony Bloome and Ray, wait for the crowd.

seen by more than 1-billion TV and Internet viewers? With mega-super stars like Bono, Paul McCartney, Madonna, and 160 bands and artists performing at eight concerts in Tokyo, Moscow, Berlin, Paris, Johannesburg, Philadelphia, London, and Toronto, with non-stop live coverage by MTV and re-broadcasts by ABC, we can assume that Planet Earth knows the need in Africa. The G-8 Summit meeting in



Ray welcomes the first Africans to sign up

Edinburgh July 6–8 substantially reduced Africa's debt and promised \$50-billion in aid. But what will happen at the grassroots level?

Before all that, our club and district's booth at the Centennial RI Convention in Chicago, focused on Africa. We had an objective — Eradicate Poverty by teaching *entrepreneurship* that leads to JOB creation. That is the overriding need in Africa — JOBS. Most other problems can be resolved if people have jobs and can pay for their own health care, education,

water, food, and can gain a better way of life that is satisfying and peaceful. There are many well-educated Africans with access to water, food and health care — but they still can not find jobs! So they migrate to Europe and America — we now have 1-million African immigrants in the US! And they brought their education and skills with them, all desperately needed



Sisters from Ethiopia, eager to take Youth IT home

in Africa. Who can blame them? My parents emigrated from Sweden to find a better future in America.

We had hoped that our presence in Chicago would enable us to find Rotarians from African nations who would want us to bring our successful Youth IT Microenterprise program to their country. And they did — more than 20 nations signed on! We had hoped that we would find Rotary clubs/districts outside Africa that would *adopt* an African nation or re-



Dr. Alan Roberts, UCLA, answers questions

gion of the larger ones. And they did — more than 50 clubs/districts signed on! We gave out 300 DVDs of our '04 Peace Conference which gave all the basic information of why entrepreneurship education is so important to job creation and pov-

erty eradication.

Tony Bloome came from Washington DC to stand in the booth and explain Youth IT. He and I have worked together since 2001, when the World Bank invited Aladena Rotary to participate in the first Youth IT program in Uganda. Professor Allen Roberts from UCLA's African Studies Center came and stood with us in the booth, after giving a rousing speech at the all-African breakfast in English, then French, then Swahili. The Africans roared with appreciation, and many came to our booth to meet him. Bloome also spoke to that breakfast of the World Bank's role in



Tony Bloome encourages an African to sign up

launching Youth IT together with our club. Alan Weirick, San Marino Rotary, came day after day and signed up many to join in our Africa thrust.

I met so many lovely African ladies who were excited about our program and vowed to make it happen in their countries. A PDG from Rwanda (remember the movie *Hotel Rwanda*?) offered to help in his and surrounding countries of his district. Nigerians by the hundreds, it seemed, came by and signed up.

Now we have the task of following up all this effort in Chicago. Tony Bloome is ready to go. Al Roberts is ready to go. And the many others who believe that we have a plan that will work. We ARE aware of the poverty in Africa! — Even before Live 8 or G8. We intend to **do** something about it. And we **will**.

Will you join us? Contact me at <admin@rotapreneur.com>. ○