



Flora's Story...

I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord...

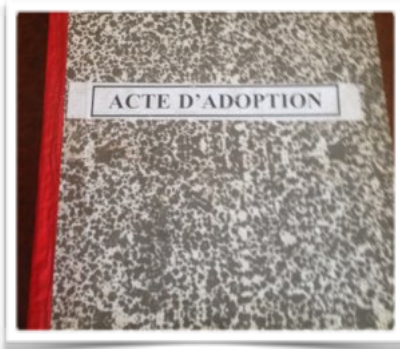
2nd August I signed the book....



It was the 2nd of August 2015 when I had my commissioning service to come to Rwanda. Exactly one year later on the 2nd of August 2016, little did I know that I would be signing for a life time commitment of adopting a little girl.

Everything just fell into place...

I was invited to a birthday party on Sunday night in the last weekend of May. I was hesitant to go because we had been out all day and at that time Flora was asleep at night by 6pm. When we were at lunch that day Serg told me that at church that morning the Pastors wife mentioned to him, "why can't Michele just adopt her?"



Anyway, that night I went to the party and I met a lady who had heard about Flora two weeks earlier. Throughout the night I chatted to this lady and we had a few laughs, and when I was leaving my friend Fred told me that she was a lawyer. I told her I needed a lawyer to try and get a passport for Flora - she asked me why I wouldn't adopt her? I told her I was of the understanding that adoption was not allowed in Rwanda, since they didn't sign the Hague convention back in 2008. She mentioned that there is a law that states every child has the

right to a loving family - and she would go to court with that as part of her case. As I was leaving she talked me into making an appointment to come and see her.

Without too many details, I met with her, both Fred and I cried at the thought of this little girls life changing forever, then I asked to meet with Serg my team leader - because without his blessing I was not going to pursue this any further. Serg also cried and said, "this is what I have been praying for!" I asked Serg to speak to Flora's father and he too was happy and said that even if he was to re marry he knows that he could not provide for her, how she is cared for now, so he has been more than co-operative in making this happen. We had to go to the hospital together to get another copy of the death certificate of her mum and then four visits to the Sectors office to finally sign the Acte D'Adoption book. (Photo above is with Flora's Dad)



So much joy!

Throughout the month of September all the Judges in the country were on holidays so we had to wait until they returned before we could lodge our case and wait for a court date. Our day in court was Thursday 20th October at 8am. When we arrived we were told that the computers were down and so the Judge couldn't access my file online, I did offer for him to use my internet, but no we had to wait for the high court IT guy to come and get us back online. It was about 10:20am (after several cups of tea - with Fred in the cafe across the road) that my lawyer emerged from court and told me Imana Shimwaye - praise be to God - you're a Mumma to Flora!

Flora's Health...

When Mumma Flora passed away it was due to complications, that whole time of Flora's life was....well....complicated. What I have known since December was that the complications her Mum experienced were also from being HIV positive. So from the age of six weeks Flora has been having blood tests and has been on antibiotics every day. Every month we have been to the Doctors to have check ups and watch her progress - actually thrive. Last month she had another blood test which like the three before it came back negative and so she was taken off her antibiotics and is now safely HIV free. She will, however, need to have one more blood test at 18months just to make sure - but its fairly safe to say she is HIV free - praise God! Life is looking up for this precious little girl!