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Dear Friends,

As we say in Rwanda, Mwiriwe, or Good Afternoon! I am writing to you from Rwinkwavu, the site of MSI's first schools. It's the rainy season here, but Rwinkwavu is a bit hotter and dryer than most of the country. A few days ago I was invited by the



Rwinkwavu community to present MSI's plans to 150 local leaders. It was an amazing experience. The meeting was led by Hubert, the 25 year old executive secretary of the sector. The lively community meeting first discussed local issues of the village, including setting the amount each person should pay per month to a fund for village projects (They decided on 100 Rwandan Francs or about 2 cents.). After I was introduced with a song, I proceeded to tell them that I wanted to build two secondary schools in their community. The hall was filled

with loud cheering and clapping. Faces around the room lit up as what I was saying was translated into Kinyarwanda. It was especially evident in the women, who had a tranquil look as if their prayers had been answered. I told them that while the schools would have to limit their capacities to 60 boys and 60 girls in each grade, no students would be turned away because of money. We are committed to transforming the lives of the entire community, and the cornerstone of that effort is reaching the poorest of the poor.



After my presentation, there was time for all the villagers to ask questions. Before each question was a profuse outpouring of gratitude. They wanted to know more about how students would be admitted and if it would be a school for the wealthy, which I assured them it would not. Perhaps most moving was when I was asked if the school would have books. I stressed that each student would have their own textbook for each subject and that the school would have a well-stocked library which would also be available to the community.

I have also been working with our amazing Rwandan architect on our building plans.

Because we will start with 120 7th graders and grow into the full capacity of 720 students, we will be building the school in a number of phases. The cost estimate for Phase I of construction can be found on the "Get Involved" page of our website by [clicking here](#).

I am very grateful to all of you who are helping MSI bring quality education to Rwinkwavu. We need your continued support now more than ever. I will leave you with a quote from Baganineza Jeanne, a peasant woman who attended the meeting. "As parents, we are so happy at the project. We had no school near us... This school comes as an answer to such a problem. This is a miracle God has done to us."



All the best,

Brendan P. Kennealey  
Mission Schools International



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