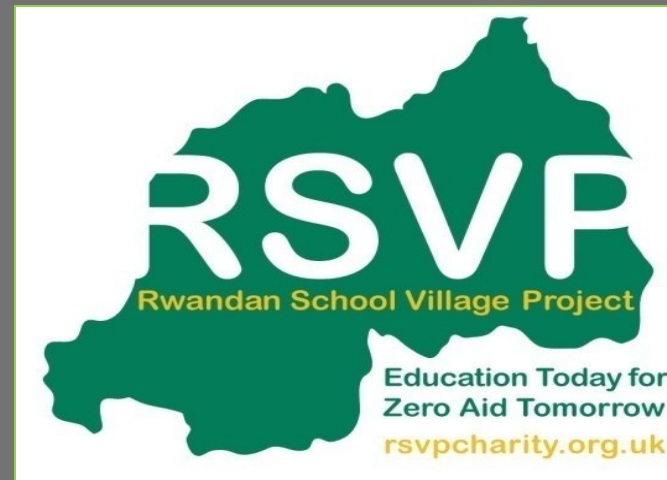


Newsletter:

August 2009



CONTENT:

- School Meal Figures and Cost: Feb - Jun 2009
- School Desks: Update
- Menu changes from August 2009
- Curriculum Books: From metal containers to shelves!
- Starter Packs for Sponsored Children
- Oct 2009 Visit and Gift Ideas

School Meal Figures and Cost: Feb – Jun 2009

Table 1 indicates 13 036 meals were served up until June 2009 with 12 328 meals paid for. The served to paid meal ratio helps to accurately work out the absenteeism rate. So, from Feb to Jun, the absenteeism rate was 1.56%.

Interestingly, this time last year 9 217 were served and 9 457 were paid for, and this corresponded to an absenteeism rate of 2.54%. Since no correction factor is applied to take into account permitted or illness related school absences, the quoted absenteeism rate is expected to be on the pessimistic side.

Table 1 also shows providing a daily meal to P6, P5 and P4 children (n= 30, 41 and 76 respectively: total n= 147) who attended school between Feb and Jun 2009 cost 4,908,960 RFW or £5,381 ^[1]. This cost includes 398 teachers' meals.

It is worth highlighting that, since only pupils on afternoon shift get meals every day, the 147 children are only half of the total class size. Suggestions on how to provide a snack to pupils on morning shift are currently being evaluated, especially the issue of cost and practicality.

Meal Dates	P4 AB Class	P4 CD Class	P5 AB Class	P6 AB Class	Total Claimed	Total pupils Catered for	School Attendance	Teachers Meals	Pupils and Teachers' meal Cost (RFW)
1 st Term									
05 Feb – 27 Feb 09	644	633	656	504	2,437	2,495	97.68%	74	2,569 x 360 = 924,840
02 Mar – 01 Apr 09	798	795	951	717	3,261	3,276	99.54%	84	3,360 x 360 = 1,209,600
2 nd Term									
21 Apr – 22 May 09	880	905	1,042	708	3,535	3,589	98.50%	115	3,704 x 360 = 1,333,440
25 May – 26 Jun 09	1,005	991	1,044	763	3,803	3,878	98.07%	125	4,003 x 360 = 1,441,080
Total meals	3,327	3,324	3,693	2,692	13,036	13,238		398	4,908,960 (= £5,381) ^[1]
Average							98.44%		

13,036 meals were served between Feb and Jun 2009 and 13,238 were paid for. 398 meals were served to supervising teachers. Total cost is 4,908,960 or £5,381. The average school attendance is 98.44%. [1] www.xcurrencyconverter.com accessed on 27 August 2009.

The cost in GBP (£) par meal did fluctuate with the exchange rate during the economic downturn. Now that the £ is picking up, RSVP is paying around 40p par meal. The weekly menu shown below proves the catering competition is a great value for money option.

School desks: Update

A contract for 100 school desks, kindly financed by Kitchen Table Charities Trust, was signed early August 2009 and work is already underway.

These desks will save the youngest children (P1, P2 and P3 who are aged 7, 8 and 9 respectively) from writing on their knees.

The Church will also be delighted their benches will be more likely to last a bit longer; that is because each morning and evening they were carried to and from the Church hall and apparently some do not survive this journey!

Menu change from August 2009

In June 2009, the caterer's menu was evaluated by Mr Eric Nzamwita, who is a nurse with a special interest in nutrition and HIV. The new menu (table 2) has taken effect from the start of the third term.

Week day	Old Menu	New Menu
Monday	Rice + Beans + Cabbage+ Fried potatoes (akin to chips)	Maize fufu + Beans + Green vegetable (Imbogeri, which are akin to spinach in taste)
Tuesday	Plantain + Beans + Cabbage	Rice + Beans + Potatoes
Wednesay	Maize fufu + Beans + Intoryi (akin to aubergine but smaller)	Plantain + Intory + Beans (to be replaced by small fish at times)
Thursday	Sweet potatoes + Beans + Cabbage	Sweet Potatoes + Imbogeri (akin to spinach) + Small fish
Friday	Cassava fufu + Meat + Cabbage	Cassava fufu + Meat + Cassava leaves (Isombe)

Table 2: Old and New Menu showing children have a meat dish once a week. Changes were recommended by Mr Nzamwita who is a nurse with a special interest in Nutrition.

Menu change from August 2009 (continued)

2 brief comments about the New Menu:

- ❖ My best day, which I think might be the children' favourite, is Friday. Normally, except a handful of children, meat is only a New Year's Day treat. So, I think very few pupils miss school on Friday!
- ❖ Second, the caterer provides fruits but only at their right season.

Curriculum books: from metal boxes to shelves!



This picture was kindly taken by our head teacher (Japhet) during Hannah's visit in June 2009.

It shows, despite the lack of head teacher's and teachers' office, they somehow stalked books on shelves in a room that is also used by the Church. A good sign they could manage a library if given books and office!

Starter Packs for all sponsored children



Odette who attends Mururu Teachers Training Center looks nae bad to me in her school uniform

Further support for the 6 sponsored children (Jean Damascene, Olivier, Anaclet, Odette, Godelieve and Solange) has been agreed. That is in addition to fees, which cover their accommodation, meals and tuition bills.

This was to comply with Pasteur Emmanuel Uwambaje's recommendation, also corroborated by Mr Eric Nzamwita in June 2009. They both stated "children sponsored through RSVP stood out from the crowd and looked poor (...)". With the exception of Godelieve of Nyamasheke, each child was visited during the first and second term.

What's in a Starter Pack? Since children go to boarding schools from different home environments, boarding schools make a compulsory list of items to take. They include stuffs for personal hygiene, bedding, etc.

Starter Packs for all sponsored children

To settle the Starter Pack issue, the head teacher met each child together with their parent/guardian and went through the compulsory list. Items were added to the shopping list until the cumulated total hit 20,000 RFW. Parents and their children went together to buy the requested items and brought receipts to Japhet, a move to ensure things are done as agreed.

Although it would be utterly inappropriate to list all items claimed by each child, I noted with interest that Godelieve, who attends a school run by nuns asked for the Holy Bible, which cost 4,500 RFW (about £4)!

October 2009 visit and gift ideas

4 people are visiting the project in October this year. In accordance with the charity's voluntary policy, they are all kindly paying their own expense

In response to our Supporters' queries, a few gift ideas for selected institutions are herein included. Other gift suggestions and the specific expected trip outcomes will feature in the September Newsletter.

- ❖ **Mihabura School:** A Computer tops the list because it will be used to prepare and print course material as well as playing teachers' training DVDs. A printer together with a voltage and spike surge adaptor would understandably also be very helpful.
- ❖ **Hospitals and Health Centres:** For now, the most recent BNF would be helpful pending the needs assessment in October. Good quality digital thermometers are other helpful easily transportable gifts.
- ❖ **Church:** Minister's most essential books are welcomed. The giver will hopefully be kind enough to clarify how important the book for the correct understanding of the Scriptures. Language isn't a problem because he who would normally read a book written in French will eventually soon be able to read in English: Rwanda is "anglophonizing" rather very rapidly...!