

# 2008 National Test results for 5 village schools in Rwanda: Does RSVP's aid work?

## I. INTRODUCTION

Bugarama, SW Rwanda, has 5 village schools, namely Mihabula, Muko, Ryankana, Kigangira and Bugarama-cite'. The first 4 schools are owned by Christian Churches whereas the last one is Muslim owned. In May 2007 RSVP started working with Mihabula School and plans to include other schools as funds grow.

## II. METHODS

A National Test at age 12 is used to select pupils who move into secondary education. These tests are set and marked by the central government. Since 2007, National Test results official notifications for Mihabula School are photocopied and posted to UK. The results from other village schools are collected from reliable sources. Since October 2008, RSVP stays in touch with pupils who pass this test every year through "summer" holiday lessons.

## III. RESULTS

In 2008, 13 (42%) of the 31 children from the village who achieved the grade required to go to secondary school came from RSVP's partner school- Mihabula (Fig 1). This is from a school that accounts for only 15% of the total number who sat the test. Solange, who is featured on the charity video is one of them. Mihabula obtained 44% of the total First Class and 27% of the total Distinction awards achieved by all the 5 village schools, whilst only 5% of its pupils fell into the Fail category. Astoundingly, 20% and 25% of Mihabula pupils achieved First Class and Distinction Awards, respectively (Table 1).

Furthermore, as in 2007, Mihabula registered an increase in the number of children they send into secondary school (Fig 2). Up from 10 in 2007 to 13 in 2008, which is a 30% increase. Table 1 also indicates Mihabula sent 33% of its total final year pupils

into secondary education in 2008. Other Village schools have managed only 13% (Muko), 12% (Ryankana), 10% (Kibangira) and 3% (Bugarama). Unlike other Schools, Mihabula's progress has been steady since 2005 (table 2).

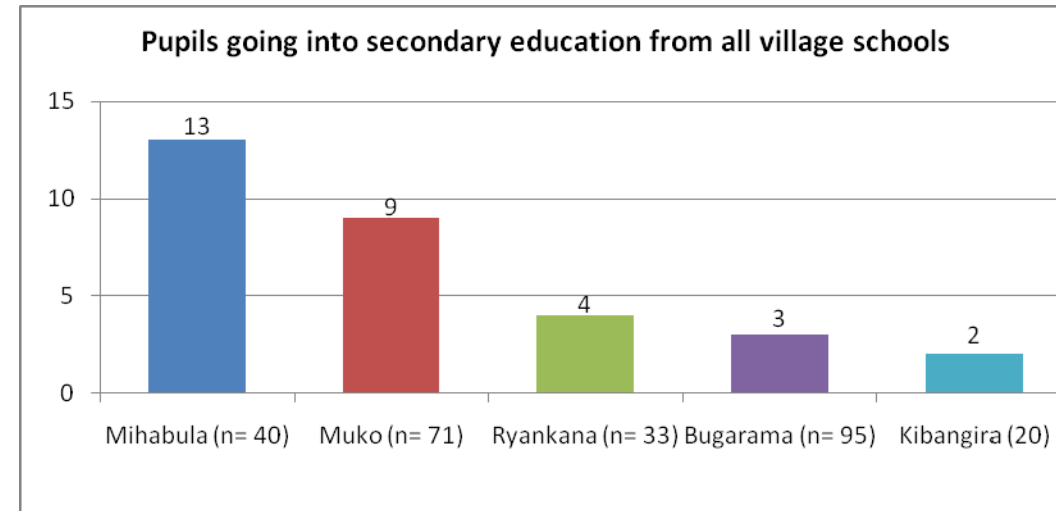


Figure 1: 13 pupils from our partner school, 5 males and 8 females, are going into Secondary school. Mihabula School makes up a third 42% of the deputation from the village.

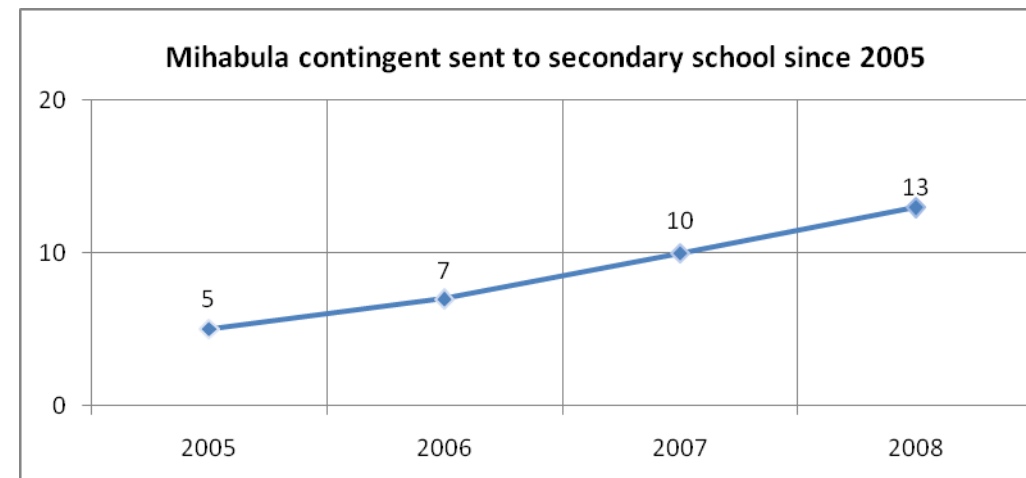


Figure 2: 43% (n=10) and 30% (n= 13) increase in 2<sup>ndary</sup> school places recorded in 2007 and 2008, respectively.

**Table 1: Summary of 2008 National Test results from all the 5 village primary schools.**

	Mihabula (n= 40)	Muko (n= 71)	Ryankana (n= 33)	Bugarama (n= 95)	Kibangira (n=20)
<b>A. First Class grade</b>	8	5	3	1	1
1. First class (% of total village's 1 <sup>st</sup> class grades)	44	28	17	6	6
2. First class (% of each school's final year total pupils)	20	7	9	1	5
<b>B. Distinction grade</b>	10	8	8	8	3
1. Distinction (% of total village's 1 <sup>st</sup> class grades)	27	22	22	22	8
2. Distinction (% of each school's final year total pupils)	25	11	24	8	15
<b>Total Pupils going into 2<sup>nd</sup>ary school according to "Aggregate points".</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
1. Contribution from each of the 5 village schools (%)	42	29	13	10	6
2. Proportion per school size (%)	33	13	12	3	10
<b>C. Satisfaction grade</b>	11	13	8	3	4
Satisfaction (% of each school's final year total pupils)	28	18	24	3	20
<b>B. Pass grade</b>	9	34	8	31	9
Pass (% of each school's final year total pupils)	23	48	24	33	45
<b>C. Failure grade</b>	2	11	6	52	3
Failure (% of each school's final year total pupils)	5	15	18	55	15

Table 1: 18 Pupils from Mihabula pupils obtained First Class and Distinction Award, compared to 13 in Muko, 11 in Ryankana, 9 in Bugarama and 4 in Kibangira Schools. Due to the changes brought in by the government in December, not every eligible child got a place in secondary school. So, "aggregate points" were used to select those who go into secondary school. Only 5% of Mihabula pupils fell into the Fail category compared to 15% in Muko and Kibangira and 18% in Ryankana. Mihabula contributed 42% of the total village contingent sent into secondary education.

## IV. DISCUSSION

In 2007, 40 pupils in their final school year at Mihabula School had their first lunch in May. Curriculum books and HIV school trip weren't organized until May and September, respectively. The promised target-based school teachers' incentive payment [10,000 RFW (+/- £10) for the first 9 pupils going into secondary school + 2,000 RFW for each additional pupil] was paid in March 2008. Interestingly, the National Test results registered a 43% increase from the year before.

However, it is important to stress the benchmark for a pass was only 38.30%, i.e. every child who obtained 38.30% or above went into secondary school; and the top mark for Mihabula School was only 47%.

By contrast, in 2008, 123 pupils in the penultimate and final school years at Mihabula School received their first meal in January. The curriculum books used by their seniors were available for use from day one and an additional stock was delivered in March. Also in March, all key players, i.e. pupils, teachers, caterer and Rwanda officials, had an RSVP's policies seminar. The HIV school trip was organized in June and a partner company conducted a day training session for all teachers in August. The formula for the teachers' incentive was revisited and agreed as 50% more than in 2007 [that is 15,000RFW (+/-£15) for the first 12 pupils going into secondary school plus 2,000RFW for each additional child]. Astoundingly, 20% and 25% of Mihabula pupils (n= 18) achieved First Class and Distinction Awards, respectively (Table 1).

Unfortunately, in December 2008, the government adopted radical changes in the education system. Resultantly, half of the pupils who obtained between 70-80% in 2008 did unfortunately not get a place in secondary school.

Disappointingly for the teachers, pupils and parents, passes did not match the fantastic National Test results. Hence, the secondary school places only rose by 30%, from 10 in 2007 to 13 in 2008 (Fig 2). In order to comfort teachers, who could really not have done their job any better, the incentive payment was calculated based on the 18 pupils who were eligible.

**Table 2: National Test Results for all 5 village schools since 2005.**

Village School	2005	2006	2007	2008
Mihabula	5	7	10	13
Muko	-	-	-	9
Ryankana	7	7	5	4
Bugarama	13	8	4	3
Kibangira	3	3	5	4

Mihabula has recorded a steady rise in the National Test results. Muko figures unavailable.

## V. CONCLUSION

The 2008 National test results indicate that supporting pupils and teachers increases their performance. Would these results further substantiate the expansion of the charity's projects first to all (n = +/-900) Mihabula pupils and then other village schools? Since Muko School, which has "good" infrastructure, ranks second, would these results also substantiate RSVP's building project? Without the generosity and dedication of our supporters and partners, this incredible progress would quite frankly have been unachievable. Nonetheless, for "Education today to equal zero aid tomorrow" RSVP must indubitably continue to identify, and determine the evidence basis thereof, any others factors which would help village pupils reach their God-given-life potential. Such factors include household poverty, which translates into inhumane homes, inadequate meals and high morbidity etc.