



NEWSLETTER

TRANSFORMING THE BONEZA, RWANDA COMMUNITY

Our Mission

To positively transform the community of Boneza out of extreme poverty by focusing on education, clean water, healthcare, Pastoral care, and economic development.

Our Vision

A thriving Boneza, Rwanda, with Christ centered, educational leaders and residents creating hope, health, and sustainability for all people.

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A Whole New Era at Arise Rwanda!

The first Trimester of 2026 has launched Arise Rwanda Ministries into a whole new, exciting era! We know that we can never out give our Great and Faithful God! He has proven this time and again by blessing the ministry beyond measure through you, our faithful partners. Your prayers and generosity make each new and exciting phase of growth, expansion, recognition for excellence and transformed lives possible.

The hard-working team on the ground continues to grow and excel. The school, staff, students and facilities are all being recognized for their excellence and achievements. The following stories are provided by local staff and visiting team members from the U.S. Be inspired, encouraged and perhaps motivated to plan for a visit yourself! For sure feel greatly appreciated! You are a key reason these stories can be written and all of this great news shared.

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Let's start with Kivu Hills Medical Center (KHMC) and our newly hired Medical Director!



By God's faithful grace and goodness, Arise Rwanda is excited to announce that KHMC has hired Dr. Divin as our Medical Director.

Praise be to God for His generous provision to make this amazing milestone occur. After a long search and many interviews, we trust God has provided Dr. Divin to lead KHMC into the future health care for the community of Boneza and beyond.

There has been diligent, patient commitment to work through this process. There is much to be grateful for in seeing construction completed, hiring Dr. Divin and gaining the full support of the KHMC Board. We encourage prayers for Dr. Divin as he steps into this new role. May he continue to be dependent on God's guidance, wisdom and strength in all of his new responsibilities and decisions. The KHMC Board and Dr. Divin will be working together to hire more key leaders in the days ahead. The Ministry of Health recently visited KHMC and expressed their approval and excitement about the opening and operations, and pledged their support wherever possible.

What Student Life Looks Like at Kivu Hills Academy

1. Kivu Hills Academy Celebrates 3 District Trophies for 2025 School Sports Competitions

Kivu Hills Academy (KHA) proudly celebrates a remarkable achievement after receiving three

prestigious trophies in recognition of its outstanding performance in the 2025 district school sports competitions. The trophies were awarded by the District of Rutsiro in collaboration with the Schools Sports Organization to honor the academy's exceptional success in multiple sporting disciplines. Kivu Hills Academy emerged as the best-performing school in female basketball, male soccer, and male basketball across the entire district, marking an important milestone for the school's growing sports program.

These achievements reflect the dedication, discipline, and teamwork demonstrated by the students and coaching staff throughout the competitive season. Each team showed

exceptional commitment during training sessions and competitions, enabling them to outperform other schools in the district. As a result of their impressive performances, the three teams earned the honor of representing Rutsiro District at the provincial level in the Western League, where they



competed against other top schools from the region.



The male soccer team continued their winning momentum even at the provincial

level. Through determination, teamwork, and strong tactical play, the team successfully emerged as the best team in the Western League, bringing additional pride and recognition to both the school and the district. This victory further highlights Kivu Hills Academy's ability to compete successfully beyond the district stage.

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The trophies were officially received by the school's coach, Vincent Abayisenga, on behalf of the players and the school administration. Coach Vincent expressed his gratitude to the district



leadership and the Schools Sports Organization for recognizing the hard work of the students. He emphasized that the awards are not only a celebration of victory but also

a symbol of the strong sports culture that the school continues to build.

Students who participated in the competitions were extremely excited and proud to be recognized by the district authorities. Many of them described the recognition as an encouraging moment that motivates them to continue improving their performance in sports while balancing their academic responsibilities.

The captain of the girls' basketball team, Paullette, shared her enthusiasm after the team received the trophy. She stated that the award serves as a great source of motivation for her and her teammates. According to her, the recognition proves that their dedication and teamwork have paid off. She also expressed hope that the team will continue striving to compete not only at the district and provincial levels but also at the national and East African regional levels in the future.



As the school celebrates these achievements, the administration encourages students to continue working hard and representing the academy with pride and integrity in future competitions. The trophies symbolize not only victory but also the school's vision of nurturing

well-rounded students who can excel both in the classroom and on the playing field.

Similarly, Shyaka Savant, the captain of the male soccer team, appreciated the strong competitive spirit displayed by his teammates throughout the season. He acknowledged that the team's unity, commitment, and perseverance played a key role in their success. Shyaka also commended Coach

Vincent Abayisenga for his guidance and leadership, which helped the team remain focused and disciplined during both training and competitions.

Furthermore, he expressed gratitude to the school administration for its continued support of sports activities. According to him, the administration's investment in sports equipment, training opportunities, and encouragement has greatly contributed to the development of talented athletes at Kivu Hills Academy.

The success of the three teams demonstrates that Kivu Hills Academy is not only committed to academic excellence but also to the development of students' talents in sports and other extracurricular activities. The school believes that sports play an important role in building discipline, teamwork, leadership skills, and confidence among students.

With this remarkable success, Kivu Hills Academy looks forward to even greater accomplishments in upcoming competitions at the district, provincial, national, and regional levels. The entire school community remains proud of the athletes who have raised the academy's flag high and demonstrated that dedication and teamwork can lead to extraordinary achievements.

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2. Educational Visit of Level Five Students to Kigali International Airport and Nyandungu Eco-Park

On 27th January 2026, the Level Five (Grade 12) students of Kivu Hills Academy participated in an educational visit to Kigali International Airport. The purpose of this visit was to give students practical exposure to airport services, airline operations, and the general travel process. For many students, this was a unique opportunity to observe and understand how air travel works beyond what they had previously learned in the classroom.

Upon arrival at the airport, the students were warmly welcomed by members of the airport staff, who guided them through the different stages that passengers normally go through when traveling by air. The tour began with an explanation of the security check procedures, where students learned how passengers and their belongings are screened to ensure safety before entering the departure area. The staff emphasized the importance of security in aviation and explained the technologies and procedures used to protect travelers and airport personnel.

The students were then taken through the luggage registration and check-in process. During this stage, airport staff demonstrated how passengers present their travel documents, weigh their luggage, and receive boarding passes. Students observed how baggage is labeled and transported through the airport system to be loaded onto the appropriate aircraft. This part of the tour helped them understand the organization and coordination required to manage thousands of passengers and pieces of luggage every day.

Another important stage of the tour involved learning about passport verification and immigration procedures. Students were shown how travelers present their passports and other



documents for inspection before proceeding to the waiting areas. The airport staff explained how these procedures help maintain national security and regulate international travel.

After completing these steps, the students visited the waiting lounge and boarding gates, where passengers relax while waiting for their flights to be announced. Here, they learned how boarding announcements are made and how passengers are directed to the correct gates before entering the aircraft. The staff also explained the roles of airline personnel, airport authorities, and ground service teams in ensuring that flights depart safely and on time.

For the students, this visit provided a valuable opportunity to connect their classroom knowledge with real-life experiences. Many of them had previously studied topics related to transportation systems, tourism, and travel procedures only in theory. Seeing these processes in action allowed them to better understand the complexity and efficiency of airport operations. It also inspired some students to consider future careers in fields such as aviation management, tourism, logistics, and international travel services.

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Following the airport visit, the students continued their educational trip with a visit to Nyandungu Eco-Park, one of the major eco-tourism and environmental conservation sites in Kigali. At the park, students had the opportunity to explore the natural environment while learning about conservation efforts aimed at protecting wetlands, plants, and wildlife.

During their time at Nyandungu Eco-Park, the students walked along the park's trails and observed various plant species and birdlife found in the restored wetland ecosystem. They also learned about the importance of environmental protection, sustainable tourism, and the role of green spaces in improving urban environments. The visit helped students understand how environmental conservation projects contribute to biodiversity protection, climate resilience, and community well-being.

The trip to both the airport and the eco-park created a balanced learning experience that combined technology, travel, and environmental awareness. It allowed students to appreciate how modern infrastructure such as airports supports global connectivity, while natural spaces like Nyandungu Eco-Park help preserve ecological balance.

Overall, the educational visit was a memorable and enriching experience for the Level Five students. It not only expanded their knowledge but also provided them with practical insights that cannot easily be gained in a classroom setting. The students returned to school inspired and more informed about the world of aviation, tourism, and environmental conservation.

Kivu Hills Academy continues to encourage such experiential learning opportunities because they help students develop curiosity, practical knowledge, and a broader understanding of the

world around them. The school believes that combining academic learning with real-world experiences prepares students to become informed, responsible, and globally aware citizens.

3. Short-Term Training Students Take Part in School Development Project

Kivu Hills Academy (KHA) has introduced short-term vocational training programs aimed at empowering young men and women who did not have the opportunity to pursue formal education. These programs are designed to equip participants with practical skills that can help them secure employment or start their own small businesses.



By offering these opportunities, the school is actively contributing to the fight against unemployment in the community of Boneza and surrounding areas.

The training programs currently focus on two important technical trades: welding and masonry. These fields were selected because they are highly practical and in demand in many communities, particularly in growing areas where construction and infrastructure development are ongoing. Through these programs, participants receive hands-on training that prepares them to apply their skills directly in real-life situations.

The current group of trainees is already playing an important role in the development and improvement of the school's infrastructure. Students in the masonry program are actively contributing to the construction of retaining walls in several parts of the school compound.

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These structures are particularly important because they help enhance safety and prevent possible landslides that could occur due to the heavy rains commonly experienced in the Boneza area. By



participating in these projects, the trainees are not only learning valuable construction techniques but also contributing to the protection and improvement of the school environment.

In addition to the retaining walls, the masonry trainees have also been involved in the renovation of the Valmark arena within the school. Their work has helped improve the appearance and functionality of the space. Furthermore, they are currently participating in the construction of a new parking lot, another important development that will improve accessibility and organization within the school premises.

On the other hand, students enrolled in the welding program are also making significant contributions. As part of their practical training, they are helping with the expansion of the school workshop, which will provide more space and better facilities for future technical training activities. The welding trainees have successfully built metallic trusses and constructed the structural framework for a new section that will accommodate welding classes in the future.

Beyond these large projects, the welding students have also demonstrated their skills by producing several metal windows and



doors. These products have real market value and show that the trainees are already capable of producing quality work that can generate income. In addition, they have assisted in carrying out numerous welding repairs within the school, further demonstrating the usefulness of their training.

These initiatives reflect Kivu Hills Academy's strong commitment to community development and youth

empowerment. By providing practical vocational training, the school is creating opportunities for young people who might otherwise



struggle to find employment. The hands-on projects carried out during the training not only strengthen the students' skills but also allow them to gain confidence and real work experience.

The school community believes that these programs will have a lasting impact. With the skills they are acquiring, these young men and women will be able to improve their own livelihoods, support their families, and contribute positively to the economic development of their communities.

Through initiatives like these, Kivu Hills Academy continues to demonstrate that education can take

many forms and that practical skills training plays an essential role in building stronger communities. The success of this program gives hope that the participating youth will use their newly acquired skills to transform their futures and become active contributors to the development of society.

Kivu Hills Academy Strengthens Agricultural Projects to Promote Self-Sustainability

Kivu Hills Academy continues to work toward becoming a more self-sustainable institution through the development of various school-based projects, particularly in agriculture. Recognizing the importance of practical farming and food production, the school has invested in agricultural activities that not only support the institution but also provide valuable learning opportunities for students.

On approximately 10 acres of land, the school operates a growing agricultural project that combines both crop farming and livestock keeping. The farm currently supports a variety of crops including plantain, maize (corn), soybean, beans, and several types of fruits. These crops contribute to the school’s food supply while also helping students understand modern agricultural practices and the importance of sustainable farming.

In addition to crop production, the school has been expanding its livestock farming activities.



During the first season of the 2025/2026 agricultural year, Kivu Hills Academy made significant progress by acquiring two Friesian dairy cows, which are known for their high milk

production. These cows are expected to help increase the availability of fresh milk for the school community while also contributing to future income generation.

The piggery project has also experienced remarkable growth. At the beginning of the initiative, the school had only three pigs, but the number has now increased to eight mature pigs and twenty piglets.

This growth reflects the school’s commitment to proper animal care, improved breeding practices, and better management of livestock.



Looking ahead, the school has set ambitious but achievable goals for the continued expansion of its agricultural activities. It is expected that the number of dairy cows will increase from two to four cows by the end of the year. At the same time, the piggery project is projected to grow significantly, with estimates suggesting that the pig population could reach about sixty pigs by the end of 2026.

The steady increase in both livestock and crop production demonstrates the strong effort being made by the school administration to transform agriculture into a profitable and sustainable venture. Beyond generating income, the farming projects also contribute to food security for the school and serve as a practical learning platform for students who are interested in agriculture and agribusiness.

Through these initiatives, Kivu Hills Academy is not only strengthening its financial sustainability but also promoting a culture of hard work, innovation, and responsible resource management. The continued success of these agricultural projects gives the school confidence that farming will remain an important pillar in supporting its long-term development and sustainability goals.

Arise Rwanda Visiting Teams

Visiting Teams are always considered a huge blessing in Boneza. So many strong bonds of friendship have been forged over the years. It is a Rwandan saying that, “No one visits Rwanda only once!” That has proven to be true. Hearing the stories and updates from visiting teams brings a sense of joy.

The first update comes from Jennifer and Paul Woods. They are U.S Board members of Arise Rwanda Ministries. They have lived and served in Rwanda with their family. While now back in the United States, they are ever anxious to travel annually with their pastor and church family friends to see the progress, to encourage, teach, pray and serve, Enjoy their update!

Highlights from Jennifer and Paul Woods

We recently had the privilege of going on an amazing trip to Boneza in February with a team of



10 from Grace Community Church in Loveland, Colorado. Our pastor, Erik, has been to Boneza six times and has led pastors’ conferences on each visit. This time,

we hosted a two-day pastors’ conference as well as a women’s conference, about 30 people in each group. The pastors were taught on the topics of marriage and family, while the women learned about their great value in Jesus and how to study the Bible for themselves.

We also had the opportunity to see the growing impact Arise Rwanda has on the community. While there we participated in a community workday, helping to replace the roof on a widow’s home. Arise purchased the metal for the new roof and the community helped to replace it. It was a beautiful thing to watch the community come together to

serve her, followed by a meaningful community meeting afterwards.



One of the highlights was visiting the home of a woman who had received a Bible through Arise Rwanda. She warmly welcomed us inside, read from her Bible, and shared how she is now serving others in her village. She offers free daycare for young children and provides them with porridge made from the milk of the cow she received through the Arise program. It was deeply encouraging to see her generously caring for others even though she has very little herself.



We were very impressed during our tour of KHA with the high quality of education the students are receiving.



The students shared what they were learning, we observed a computer class, and we enjoyed a wonderful cultural presentation by the tourism students.



The KHA Farm continues to grow and thrive. We were given a personal tour by the principal, Claude. The pig program is doing

especially well—there were two new litters of piglets while we were there, bringing the total to 15. The cows looked healthy, and the crops were flourishing.



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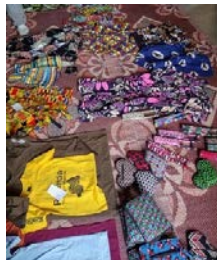


We also took a memorable boat ride to the island to visit the preschool. The children were overjoyed to welcome us and greeted us with big smiles.



Another highlight was visiting two different microfinance groups. One group was busy weaving beautiful baskets for a wedding, and we enjoyed watching their skilled craftsmanship.

We also visited the sewing group, where we shopped and purchased many wonderful items—including bags, skirts and aprons.



We were excited to tour the new medical center. Our medical team members were especially eager to return and serve once it opens.



Finally, we thoroughly enjoyed the two church services we attended, along with the crusade held at KHA.

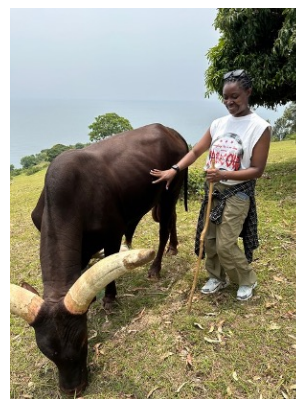
We went hoping to bless and encourage the people there, but in the end, we were the ones who left feeling deeply blessed and encouraged ourselves.



Arise Rwanda has an amazing staff and office!



And Yvonne, KHA Student Director, is adorable too! We enjoyed all these precious women.



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Highlights from Ashley Norton

While on our missions trip to Boneza, my husband and I were blown away by the incredible impact that Arise Rwanda is having on the community.

Whether it is Kivu Hills Academy, the vocational school they operate; Kivu Hills Medical Center, the soon to open hospital they've built; or any of a number of other ministries they work through like micro finance groups, pastor's training, and preschools, Arise Rwanda is doing amazing work that is unapologetically and unmistakably Christ centered and motivated.

We were very blessed to be able to participate with them on our trip and will definitely be supporting them moving forward as we wait to plan our next trip!

From Carrying Bricks to Building Dreams

From Gilbert, a Kivu Hills Academy Student

My name is Nshimiyimana Gilbert, and I am 19 years old. Today, I am a student at Kivu Hills Academy, a place I once only dreamed of. But my journey to get here was not easy. It is a story of struggle, faith, and the power of hope.

I grew up under the care of my grandmother, a gentle but aging woman who gave me all the love she could, even when life gave her so little. She was my only family my mother left for the city soon after I was born, and my father disappeared too. When I was three years old, my grandmother took me to school. She wanted me to be somewhere safe while she went out to find food. I loved being at school not only because I was learning, but because we were given porridge. Many days, that porridge was all I had to eat until the evening, when we shared a small meal together. Despite



our poverty, I worked hard. I loved learning. But as my grandmother grew older and weaker, things got worse. We had no money for school supplies, and sometimes no food at all. I had to leave school to find work even though I was still a child.

Every morning, I carried bricks under the hot sun, fetched water for neighbors, and cut grass for their animals. For ten bricks, I earned a less \$1; for carrying five jerry cans of water, I earned a less \$1. For cut grass I earned a less \$1. On a good day, I made about \$1 just enough to buy a small meal and save a few coins for my dream of going back to school. After almost a year of hard work, I finally returned to school. I studied with determination and passed my national primary exams with good grades. But when it came time to go to secondary school, I faced the same obstacle again there was no money. My grandmother told me I had to stop school for good. But I refused to give up on my dream. For that year I dropped out, I used my coin saved to buy chickens and I raised them and I sold them to buy my uniform, notebooks, and pens. I went to register for school with only \$1 and some cent. The school told me it wasn't enough, but I begged them to let me start and promised to bring the rest later. At first, they said no, then by God's grace, they finally agreed. But two weeks later, I was sent home again for unpaid fees. I felt hopeless until I decided to look for official documents showing that we were a vulnerable family. I brought them back to school, but the school still couldn't help.

Then something happened that changed everything. The school director called me to his office and asked me a simple question: "If I let you study, will you work hard and make us proud?"

I looked him in the eyes and said, "Yes, sir. I will."

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From that day on, he became my biggest supporter. He paid my school fees and provided my supplies on one condition: that I would always work hard and never fail. I made him a promise that I would never let him down. I studied day and night. I knew that education was my only way forward. I performed well in all my subjects and eventually became the top student in my school. I especially loved science and technical studies. I started creating small projects, like generating electricity from biogas projects that reminded me that innovation can grow from even the humblest beginnings. But when I finished the first cycle of secondary school, another obstacle appeared money. The schools that offered the technical courses I loved were too expensive. I almost gave up again... almost.

One day, I gathered all my courage and went to Arise Rwanda Office. I told them my story about my grandmother, my struggles, and my dream of studying technology at Kivu Hills Academy. They listened with compassion and told me they would visit my home. When they came and saw how I lived, they made a decision that would forever change my life.

They chose to sponsor me. Today, I sleep on a mattress. I eat three meals a day. I have books, teachers, and a community that believes in me. I no longer wake up wondering what I will eat, I wake up thinking about how I can learn more, do better, and make my sponsors proud. Every time I walk through the gates of Kivu Hills Academy, I

remember the days I carried bricks and fetched water just to survive. Now, I am carrying something else: HOPE. I am building my future, one lesson at a time.



To Arise Rwanda, thank you for seeing potential where others saw poverty. Thank you for giving me a chance to learn, to grow, and to dream again. I promise to keep working hard, to make you proud, and one day to help other children who are living the same story I once lived.

Because of you, I have learned that dreams do come true and that sometimes, all it takes is someone to believe in you.



Gratitude and Resilience

A Story From Valentine, a Boneza Local

My name is Mushimiyimana Valentine. I am 54 years old, a widow, and a survivor of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi and I am a mother of two sons. Before 1994, my life was filled with joy and peace. I was married to my beloved husband, Iyamuremye Diddas, and together we built a home full of love, laughter, and dreams for the future. We believed in tomorrow. We believed in growing old together as we raised our children.

During the Genocide against the Tutsi, my husband was killed. In a single moment, my world collapsed and I was still young because I was 37 years old. The man I loved, the father of my children, the one who stood beside me in everything was gone. I was left alone with two young boys, and a heart broken beyond words. As a widow, I carried the heavy responsibility of raising my sons alone. There were days when finding food was a challenge, when I did not know how we would make it through the next day. I lived with constant worry, fear, and deep sorrow, yet I had to remain strong for my children. They were my only reason to keep going. My sons, Marc and David, were still so young.

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In 1995, a light began to shine in the darkness. The FARG program helped me by building a house for my family. That house was more than walls and a roof it was safety, dignity, and hope. It became our refuge, a place where we slowly began to heal. For nearly 30 years, it protected us and carried our memories.

But in 2024, tragedy struck again. Strong winds came and destroyed my home. The roof was torn away, and once again, I found myself without



shelter. It felt like reliving loss all over again. At my age, after everything I had already endured, I was left with nothing. For an entire year, I lived in someone else's home, depending on the kindness

of others. It was not easy. It was painful to feel like a burden, to live without privacy, without a place to truly call my own. Many nights, I lay awake wondering when life would become stable again.

Today, my heart overflows with gratitude. I want to deeply thank Arise Rwanda, who saw my suffering and chose to stand with me. When I had lost hope, they came into my life as a blessing. They are now building a new house for me a place where I will finally feel safe again, a place I can



call home. This is more than help. It is restoration. It is dignity. It is love in action. I thank God for using them to change my story. Their compassion has touched my heart in

a way I cannot fully express. I pray that God continues to bless them and use them to bring hope to many others who are suffering, just as I was.



I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my neighbor. When I had nowhere to go, he opened his home to me. He welcomed me with kindness and gave me shelter during one of the most difficult seasons of my life. I will never forget his generosity. He became a source of comfort when I felt lost. To everyone who has stood by me, thank you. You did not just help me; you gave me hope again. You reminded me that even after so much loss, life can still begin again. Special thanks to Arise Rwanda and their visitors that did their best to make my house the way it is now.





Our mission is to partner with the Boneza sector to make the programs sustainable and integrated into the fabric of the community. God is at work in this amazing land, and we are privileged to be part of His work there. We give God the glory for all that is being accomplished in His name. Join us in prayer for the success of the mission and for the people we serve.

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Follow our progress and learn more about our programs, impact, and how to get involved at ariserwanda.org or on Facebook.

All donations are tax-deductible. Arise Rwanda Ministries USA is a US 501 (c)(3) charity, EIN 88-3306938

Donations can be made online or sent to:

Arise Rwanda Ministries USA, Inc.

c/o Jayson Denton

9613 Old Farm Road

Woodway, TX 76712-6402



Thank You from Arise Rwanda

In Boneza, the needs are many. The depth of poverty can be alarming and heart breaking. The dedicated ARM team is often made aware of extremely difficult situations. When possible ARM will work on an outreach event and love seeing transformation take place. It is also great for the students to learn the importance of serving, giving, sharing and remembering that we are blessed to be a blessing!

Thank you for being a part of this journey. Let us remain steadfast in faith and work, building a better Rwanda together. For it is by God's grace that we are building skills, confidence, faith, and a future that empowers everyone. So let's continue to work, pray and give together - as we walk toward a future of trust, peace and shared dignity in the community of Boneza. Thank you for all you have done to make this amazing vision come to life! We need and appreciate you.



[Click here to learn more about Boneza](#)