

Title: Building a Bridge to Rwanda

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Abstract:

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

—Margaret Mead, Anthropologist

Vision

God is doing something special in Rwanda. We are inspired by the vision that Rwanda can be a demonstration to the world of forgiveness, reconciliation and what God and the human spirit can do together.

We seek to create a new generation of well educated, entrepreneurial, servant leaders in Rwanda — committed to Jesus, excellence, their country and to one another. We believe that building such a fellowship is the only means of transforming a nation. We’re all about results. Over the last five years, we have partnered with Rwanda’s leaders to mobilize individuals and organizations to establish one of the country’s top academic boarding schools and the nation’s largest bank for the poor. We bring practical marketplace experience to this mission and a passion to see Rwanda become a light to Africa and the world.

Initiatives

Our approach to creating educational and economic opportunity for Rwanda’s future leaders focuses on four core initiatives:

- Establishing and supporting schools committed to academic and professional excellence, entrepreneurship and building a fellowship of servant leaders modeled after Jesus.
- Building sustainable businesses that provide essential products and services, train new professionals and spawn other businesses and jobs.
- Mobilizing individuals and organizations from the US and other developed countries to visit, study, work and invest in Rwanda.
- Providing scholarships for orphans and students who otherwise cannot afford to attend school

“We are not educating job seekers, but rather job creators!”

—Bishop John Rucyahana, Anglican Church of Rwanda - Shyira Diocese

Sonrise School was launched by Bishop John Rucyahana in 2001 to be a “light on a hill.” Based on recent national exams, it now ranks among the top academic schools in Rwanda. It also serves as a demonstration that Rwanda’s neediest children are redeemable. Today, the Sonrise School has over 900

students in primary grades 1-6 and secondary grades 1-4. Approximately 60% of the students are orphans. Adding a grade a year, our first secondary 6 class will graduate at the end of 2010.

Muhabura University of Technical Entrepreneurship will be a private, accredited Rwandan institution of higher learning. Muhabura's mission is to prepare talented and dedicated students for extraordinary lives as principled entrepreneurs and servant leaders modeled after Jesus. Students will learn how to build profitable businesses through work/study programs with for-profit teaching businesses in their academic field of study. Each student will be disciplined to live a life of integrity and character and to pursue excellence in all study and work.

Muhabura University's initial academic fields of study have been chosen to address Rwanda's and Africa's greatest needs and to ensure that our graduates are equipped to provide services that are in high demand. The Faculty of Business will include schools in entrepreneurship, accounting, banking, hospitality management and healthcare management. The Faculty of Technical Sciences will include schools in construction management, mechanical engineering, ICT/electrical engineering and medical equipment technical services.

Rwanda Presidential Scholars – In 2007 four of Rwanda's top high school graduates were awarded four-year scholarships to attend Hendrix College, a well respected liberal arts college near Little Rock, AR. In 2008, twenty-five of Rwanda's best and brightest high school graduates were selected to receive four year scholarships for their undergraduate studies at several central Arkansas universities. The students are required to return to Rwanda after their studies.

Urwego Opportunity Bank of Rwanda (UOBR), the country's largest bank for the poor, was created in July, 2007, when four global, faith-based nonprofit organizations joined in an historic partnership. Urwego Community Bank, a ten year old nonprofit microfinance institution, owned by World Relief, World Relief Canada and Hope International was merged into Opportunity International's new Rwandan commercial bank. The combined operation has offices in 27 of Rwanda's 30 districts, more than 29,000 loan clients and over 6000 savings clients. UOBR has \$4.0 million in equity capital and a loan portfolio of \$2.0 million. One of the bank's goals is to make finger-print accessible savings accounts available to every Rwandan family. Dale Dawson, Bishop John Rucyahana and representatives of all four nonprofit shareholders serve on the bank's board of directors.

"Let's build a bridge from here to Rwanda and transform lives at both ends"

—Dale Dawson, Bridge2Rwanda Founder & CEO