



The real results are even better than all of the rumors
Steve Vinton, October 17, 2007

Today we got the official results of the mock national examinations for our students at Madisi and Sawala and, well, it's really hard to imagine that it can be true, but the real results are even better than all of the rumors that had leaked these past weeks from the examination center. Everyone in the government offices had been all abuzz for weeks now and every where we went people were talking about it but we just had to smile and wait because well you never know for sure. Until today!

Our two schools did better than every single one of the government schools in the entire district -- including the four government schools which are considered "national" schools in that their students each year are selected from among the best kids not just from our district but from all around the country! It still seems a bit unreal. Almost impossible! The only schools which did better than ours were the three really top quality catholic seminaries (which of course only take the cream of the cream from around the country) and the big wonderful school run by the big multinational company Unilever which takes in the kids of their expatriate and upper management workers. How it could be possible that our kids -- the poor, the orphans, the kids who went to the lousy primary schools, who never have enough to eat, who are always struggling and who will always struggle -- how it could be possible that they managed to outperform all of the other kids is something that I just have to shake my head and marvel at. I can't stop marveling at it.

But the news just kept getting better. I looked at the list of the results from our school at

Madisi. Our top student was a girl! And so while my heartfelt thanks go to each and every person over the past three years who ever made bricks or carried stones or gave money so we could build this school and have desks and blackboards and books, I really want to express a special word of thanks to everyone who has ever given a nickel to that scholarship fund of ours for girls.

Yasinta's victory is a victory for all of us.

Thanks.

And now I'm on my way to Dar to get on a plane to America. How I wouldn't love to just turn around and be there when Janerose, our dear lovely Janerose, that student of ours years ago, who struggled so hard to get through school, gets to stand up in front of all of those kids and tell them the good news. And not just the good news that they all did incredibly well compared to all of the other students in the district. The good news as well that a girl -- yes a girl -- had scored the highest on the exams. I have to believe that when God is looking down at all that is going on in this world somehow He is getting some special pleasure out of seeing these kids work their hearts out, study so hard, and to reap so wonderfully.

And for those of you who might be wondering which of our schools did better, Madisi or Sawala, we decided that since the one that did better literally did so only by a whisker, it simply would never be worth talking about. The difference is statistically insignificant -- and also totally meaningless. Both schools won. They won together.

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