



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Children borrowing textbooks from their class teacher. Photo by Martin Tindiwensi for USAID Rwanda.

RWANDA

LEARN: IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Rwanda has achieved notable success in the education sector, boasting one of the highest net enrollment rates in Sub-Saharan Africa with 95.2 percent of children enrolled in primary school.

The remaining challenges include increasing literacy and numeracy levels and reducing the school drop-out rates. To meet its development goals and to strengthen the necessary human capital, Rwanda needs to increase the quality of basic education service delivery.

In close partnership with the Ministry of Education, USAID is increasing equitable access to educational support for marginalized students, such as persons with disabilities and young women.

OVERVIEW OF USAID SUPPORT

USAID partners with the Ministry of Education to increase the quality of foundational learning so that children read better in the language they know and understand best - Kinyarwanda. USAID also extends support to youth workforce development training to ensure strong educational outcomes for all.

USAID programs deliver support for quality teaching and learning in every public and government-aided pre-primary and primary school in Rwanda, as well as at the community level throughout the country. These strategic investments in teacher training, teaching and learning materials, assessments, and school-community partnerships ensure that all children learn to read within their first few years of schooling, and that these skills translate into improved opportunities.

FOUNDATIONAL LITERACY SKILLS

USAID focuses on improving the literacy skills of children in the Kinyarwanda language in grades one through three, as well as on improving pre-reading skills among children at the pre-primary level. As a result of intentional and continued interventions since 2011, the percentage of children in grade two with strong oral reading fluency doubled from 2018 to 2022 (from 16 to 32 percent), and during that same period, the percentage of students in grade two who can read and understand a simple text increased by 21 percentage points. This significant gain was achieved in Rwanda while the rest of the world registered a learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

USAID programming includes the development and distribution of locally produced student texts and teacher guides in Kinyarwanda, training on literacy instruction for teachers, advocacy for literacy, development of reading assessment tools, and systems strengthening. As a result of these combined efforts, 78 percent of teachers exhibited essential teaching skills in 2021, compared to only 21 percent in 2019.

In addition to improving reading instruction in schools, USAID is supporting national efforts to empower and encourage adults to read with children in their homes and communities, with the aim of building a culture of reading in Rwanda. Literacy-related messaging reached 3.5 million parents, resulting in an increase in the number of parents who support their children's literacy learning from 59 percent in 2018 to 84 percent in 2021. Programming in these areas is currently continuing through a new set of activities: Tunoze Gusoma, Uburezi Iwacu, and Ibitabo Kuri Twese.

SPECIAL FOCUS ON YOUTH AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

USAID creates pathways to stable employment for Rwandan youth by encouraging entrepreneurship and creating linkages to continuing formal education, paid internships, and jobs. Interventions strengthen the efforts of local youth-serving organizations and the Government of Rwanda's Technical and Vocational Education and Training Board (RTB) and Rwanda Polytechnic Institutions.

Youth also receive training in basic life skills and work readiness through a "soft skills" curriculum that includes leadership, teamwork, communication, financial management, and goal setting. From 2009-2022, USAID trained nearly 53,000 youth, 79 percent of whom reported improved skills, and 63 percent of whom found employment following this training. USAID continues to invest in youth skills and employment through agricultural value chains and related sectors.

2024 BUDGET: US \$14.8 million

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