



# Right To Play in Rwanda

## PROMOTING LEARNING FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

Right To Play has been working in Rwanda since 2003. Initially focused on promoting life skills for youth in the community, Right To Play began introducing play-based learning into schools in 2014. With the release of Rwanda's Competency-Based Curriculum in 2016, Right To Play accelerated its support to the development of core competencies such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, literacy, and numeracy in alignment with government priorities.

Right To Play engages closely with a variety of national level partners including the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC), the Rwanda Education Board (REB), and the University of Rwanda-College of Education. In 2018, Right To Play and MINEDUC entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to guide their ongoing collaboration. REB chairs the National Steering Committee that provides strategic oversight to Right To Play's flagship initiative, Gender Responsive Education And Transformation.

Right To Play works with non-governmental partners as well, including international and local civil society organizations, and sports federations. Through a partnership with the International Basketball Federation, Right To Play is supporting the National Basketball Federation of Rwanda (FERWABA) to increase their social impact on children, using sport to promote gender equality, strengthen child protection mechanisms, and enhance life skills.

In 2019, Right To Play reached over **79,000 children**  
in Bugesera, Kayonza, and Ruhango districts.

# The challenges faced by children and youth in Rwanda

Rwanda has one of the fastest growing economies in central Africa, and was one of the few countries to achieve all of the Millennium Development Goals. Over the past decade, the Government of Rwanda has undertaken major policy reforms aimed at increasing access to, and improving the quality of, basic education. But while universal primary education has been achieved, large class sizes, and outdated teaching methods hinder the success of Rwandan children. There is also a need for continuous teacher training to support the implementation of the new curriculum.

Rwanda has achieved gender parity in education at pre-primary, primary, and secondary levels<sup>1</sup> but girls still face negative attitudes and norms that discourage them from continuing school and limit their access to technical and science education. Girls also face gender-based violence, insufficient sanitation facilities in schools, and drop-outs due to early and unwanted pregnancies.

- By grade 6, 85% of children in the education system have repeated a grade at least once.<sup>2</sup>
- There are, on average, 57 children for every teacher.<sup>3</sup>
- Half of all second graders cannot read a single word in their own language, and by age 18, a young person has received the equivalent of only 3.8 years of schooling.<sup>4</sup>



## Achievements

### CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS ARE ENHANCED

Confidence:



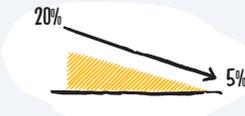
Communication:



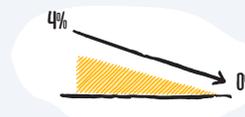
Significantly more children demonstrated confidence and communication skills after participating in Right To Play programs.<sup>5</sup>

### DECREASED USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Female Teachers:



Male Teachers:



After participating in a Right To Play program for one year, fewer teachers used corporal punishment as a form of discipline.<sup>6</sup>

### GIRLS ARE TAKING LEADERSHIP

Girls in Leadership:



Boys in Leadership:



In child-led clubs supported by Right To Play, girls as well as boys are taking on leadership roles such as president and vice-president.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> UNICEF, Situation Analysis of Children in Rwanda, 2018.  
<sup>2</sup> MINEC/UNICEF, Understanding Dropout and Repetition in Rwanda, 2018.  
<sup>3</sup> UNICEF, Education Budget Brief, 2019.  
<sup>4</sup> USAID, Rwanda Country Aid Development Strategy 2020-25.

<sup>5</sup> PADE, Endline assessment report, 2017.  
<sup>6</sup> GREAT, Year 2 annual report, 2020.  
<sup>7</sup> PADE, Endline assessment report, 2017.

# Program Overview



## STRENGTHENING THE EDUCATION SYSTEM FOR BETTER LEARNING OUTCOMES

Right To Play works in partnership with REB to support teachers, supervisors, and other education officials to enhance the quality of pedagogy in primary school. Right To Play's comprehensive in-service teacher training program aligns with the national curriculum to enhance teachers' use of child-centered, active learning approaches and their ability to create positive, inclusive, and gender-responsive learning environments. National trainers and sector and school-based mentors are supported to train teachers on play-based learning. These teachers are then guided by school-based mentors and school subject leaders who have been trained by Right To Play to use coaching and mentoring for supportive supervision. Through peer exchange groups, trained teachers discuss their teaching experiences and share best practices.

At the invitation of REB, Right To Play participated in the national revision of the pre-service curriculum for new teachers, helping to integrate play-based learning into the curricula for Foundations of Education, Teaching Methods and Practice, and Physical Education and Sports. Right To Play is supporting REB to roll-out the new curriculum by training tutors and providing resources to teacher training colleges across the country.



## FOSTERING PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Right To Play uses a variety of strategies to engage parents, community members, and local civil society organizations in addressing the gender-specific learning needs of girls and boys. Through participatory gender analysis and action planning, Right To Play supports community members to identify and address the major barriers that prevent girls and boys from succeeding in their studies.

Through training on leadership, gender equality, and child protection, Right To Play strengthens the ability of School General Assembly Committees to influence school decision-making and to more effectively participate in their children's education. Together with local civil society, Right To Play enhances opportunities for children to continue their learning outside of school by establishing community-based reading clubs and supporting reading at home.



## ENCOURAGING CREATIVITY AND LEADERSHIP IN GIRLS AND BOYS

Right To Play creates platforms for children to advocate for education and to develop their leadership. Through children's clubs, girls and boys are empowered to challenge gender stereotypes and to hold awareness-raising events for parents and caregivers on gender-specific learning needs. Boys are encouraged to display positive masculinities and to take a stand against gender-based discrimination.

In a partnership with Jantje Beton of the Netherlands, Right To Play also encourages children to create their own play materials and design their own playgrounds. By upcycling discarded materials and imagining their play spaces, children build, experiment, learn from failures, and invent new things. Right To Play has worked with REB to align this initiative with the Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET) curriculum for grades 4 and 5 and developed a teacher guide for making play, utility, and learning materials for use by SET teachers.



*The communication between students has improved, especially for girls, before the program, I had many girls who were less confident and shy but with the program they became active and everyone wants to be part of the discussion, by giving opinions and thoughts.*

– Teacher, Muhororo primary school<sup>B</sup>



# Right To Play International

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Right To Play is a global organization that protects, educates, and empowers children using all forms of play – games, sport, poetry, performance, dance, art and music. We work with children in some of the most difficult and dangerous places on earth, empowering children with the knowledge and skills to drive change in their lives, their families and their communities. In 2019, Right To Play transformed the lives of 2.35 million children in 15 countries around the world, working in collaboration with teachers, governments, communities, and parents.

In 2018, Right To Play launched the Gender Responsive Education And Transformation (GREAT) program with the financial support of the Government of Canada provided through Global Affairs Canada. Active in three countries, Ghana, Mozambique and Rwanda, GREAT uses Right To Play's play-based learning approach to remove barriers to education, especially for girls, and to build teacher capacity to improve learning outcomes.



Making their own play materials unlocks the creative potential of children.

## Supporters

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Government of Canada  
Gouvernement du Canada



**RIGHT TO PLAY**  
PROTECT. EDUCATE. EMPOWER.

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