

A young girl in a school uniform, including a white shirt, a red vest, and a red and white striped tie, stands in a classroom. She has a large, tan-colored backpack on her back and is looking towards the camera with a neutral expression. Her hands are clasped in front of her. The classroom is filled with wooden desks and chairs. In the background, there is a chalkboard with some faint writing on it. The lighting is warm and indoor.

Advancing the right to read in Rwanda

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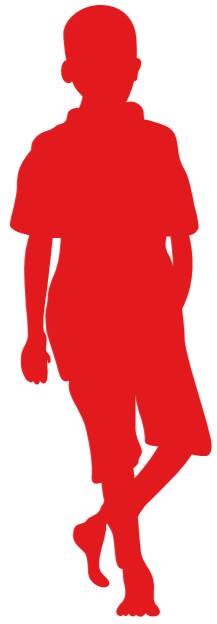
How can we reverse the learning crisis?

Our big idea

Our four pillars

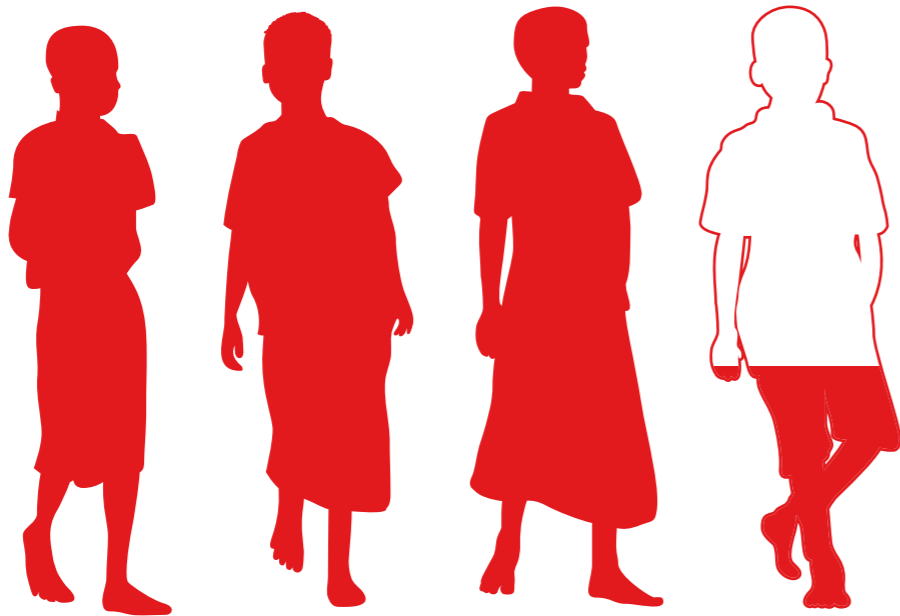
Achieving wider change

The global learning crisis



61 million

children still out of school



200 million

children attending school in
developing countries struggle
to read basic words

Learn to read: Read to learn

Children who fail to read in the early grades fall further behind each school year, because reading ability is progressively used as a tool for acquiring other types of knowledge.

Poor performing students struggle to catch up and some of them drop out from school.

The state of education in Rwanda

Significant success

- 93% Net enrolment – 94% for girls, 92% for boys
- Completion rates (P6) have doubled to 75%

Big challenge

- 13% of P4 students could not read a single word of a Kinyarwanda P2-P3 level text.
- 13% of them could read less than 15 words correctly in a minute.
- 40% of P4 students could not answer even half of the comprehension questions relating to the passage they just read.


How can we reverse the learning crisis?

1. Start earlier
2. Ensure children master literacy in the early years

Our big idea

Provide a continuum of services for children aged 0 – 9 focused on supporting learning outcomes and early grade literacy

Our four pillars



Children have
the skills, support
and materials
necessary to exercise
their right to read

Close the ECCD services gap

Support family learning for parents and children aged 0-3 and increase the quality and coverage of centre based services for children aged 3-6



Children have the skills, support and materials necessary to exercise their right to read











Closing the gap in early years services



Two approaches

A A comprehensive family learning programme which works with parents to support the physical, cognitive, social/emotional and expressive development of their children through age appropriate play and interaction.

B First Read: a combination of book gifting and peer support designed to provide parents with the skills, confidence and materials to aid the development of emergent literacy.

Led and delivered by our national civil society partner Umuhuza.

Improving the teaching of reading in early primary



Literacy Boost

Focuses on the five core skills that research shows are central to learning to read:

- letter knowledge
- phonemic awareness
- vocabulary
- reading fluency
- comprehension.

Literacy Boost

Literacy Boost holistically pursues the goal of literacy through three program elements:

- 1 Using assessments to identify gaps and measure improvements in the five core reading skills;
- 2 Training teachers to teach national curriculum with an emphasis on core reading skills; and
- 3 Mobilizing communities to support children's reading.

Learning at school isn't enough

Children need encouragement and support to acquire and practice their reading skills.

Developing a culture of literacy and reading



We will

Create opportunities outside of the classroom for children, their parents and the communities in which they live to practice and enjoy reading, including by:

- Giving parents the knowledge and confidence to support their children's learning
- Providing regular, facilitated opportunities for children to read
- Increasing the availability of books outside of school

Led and delivered by our national civil society partner Umuhuza.

Creating a rich literate environment



No use in having **skills** and **support** without the **material** needed to use them.

We will

Improve the availability, accessibility and use of appropriate, quality reading materials.

Address both supply and demand

Supply

Support local publishers to produce, high quality, graded, local language material by:

- Offering training and capacity building to the local publishing industry and its constituent parts, authors, illustrators, editors, publishers
- Produce guidelines, toolkits and standards
- Provide bespoke advice to publishers and pre-approve proofs

Demand

Guarantee demand by:

- Purchasing an agreed number of titles that we will distribute to beneficiary schools
- Require publishers to print a larger quantity to stimulate the supply chain
- Developing and implementing other measures such as partnerships with other development actors, increase in school based capitation grants
- Supporting local book sales, including through books festivals, linking publishers with retailers, exploring the potential for micro enterprise.

The Rwandan Children's Book Initiative

We will establish a new independent not for profit civil society organisation to perform these functions.

Achieving wider change

We want to show in Rwanda and to the world that reversing the learning crisis through our four pillars:

- Delivers results
- Is possible at scale
- Is cost effective
- Can be implemented by government and communities

We will achieve change by

Implementing four activities

- Evidence production and dissemination
- Generating a policy consensus
- Mobilising supportive actors
- Direct policy influencing

Occurring

- At the sector level
- At the district level
- Nationally
- Internationally

Prove it!

We want to use the signature programme to prove:

- The gains that derive from a continuum of activities for children aged 0 - 9
- The added benefits for literacy acquisition and retention of community action

What we'll have achieved for children

- Direct change for children, their families, teachers and responsible adults
- Children have new skills and support and materials to use them
- Teachers, heads and officials have new, skills, knowledge and confidence
- Parents have improved skills and knowledge and support to use them
- The local book chain's capacity has improved

What we'll have achieved for our partner organisations and ourselves

- Umuhuza is implementing innovative work with communities at scale
- Civil society's knowledge, skills and confidence has grown
- Save the Children's capacity has increased, we're using the evidence of this programme to achieve change elsewhere and we're regarded as a global leader on the learning crisis

What we'll have achieved in policy terms

Government of Rwanda

- Pre and In-service teacher training policy and practice improves
- Has policy and funding for out of school action in support of learning and literacy
- Has policy and funding that supports quality, local language children's literature

International actors

- Policy and financial investments support out of school action for learning and literacy
- Policy and financial investments support increased availability of and access to quality, local language children's literature

A world of opportunity

Growing international interest in and recognition of the problem together with the emergence of early grade reading and literacy in Rwanda combine to create a unique opportunity for us to demonstrate that our innovative approach works and to influence policy and practice nationally and internationally with those findings.