

Extrait du MINEDUC

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Achievements (2003 - 2010)

- mineduc - MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS -

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MINEDUC

In Rwanda, education is a top priority because we consider it the key for unlocking our development objectives. All studies have shown that investments in human capital have invariably produced high economic returns. We have no doubt that education empowers people, enlightens them, and in the end creates wealth for them. - President Paul Kagame, 2010.

President Paul Kagame sees a free education for all as the single most important element in reducing poverty in Rwanda and elevating the country's economic and social status. Long gone are the days when education was something only the elite could access in Rwanda, where illiteracy rates stood at 50 per cent and there was only one university in the country.

Rwanda is now leading the way on education reforms in Africa, offering nine years of free schooling, training teachers in greater numbers and to a higher level than ever before, while also building up partnerships with prestigious institutions around the world.

In signing up to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), the Government of Rwanda committed to creating 'Universal Education for All' and Pillar One of Rwanda's Vision 2020 document emphasises the importance of quality education.

All aspects of Government have put a renewed focus on education since 2003, when the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) devised a national curriculum policy for primary and secondary education, to be implemented in a six-year plan, and stated that primary education should be free and mandatory for all children.

The following are achievements according to the government's seven-year programme (2003 - 2010)

NINE YEARS OF BASIC EDUCATION FOR ALL

In 2003, President Kagame made universal basic education (primary and secondary) a major priority. 2009 saw the introduction of Rwanda's radical Nine Year Basic Education Programme (9YBE), which offers six years of primary and three years of secondary education to all Rwandan children free of charge. Before the programme was implemented, many Rwandan youngsters were unable to access education, hampering their chances for a good start in life. As well as promoting universal primary education, the programme hopes to reduce the numbers of pupils having to repeat years, and the numbers of those who drop out.

Rwanda is close to reaching universal education; today primary school enrolment stands at 97 per cent for boys and 98 per cent for girls - some of the highest enrolment rates in the region according to the United Nations' Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). Secondary education is also nearly universal, with a rate of about 92 per cent this year, according to Rwanda's Education Minister, Dr Charles MURIGANDE.

This programme gained momentum following a recent schools construction campaign which saw thousands of new classrooms built across the country. Nearly all of the new classrooms were built voluntarily by parents, students, security forces, and government officials.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS - Anna MUKANDAHIRO, Craftswomen, Nyamata "When I was very young, my family fled the country and lived as refugees. As a refugee, I was not able to attend school. Then when I returned to Rwanda, I was still not able to go to school because my family could not afford it. My children are able to attend school because of the Government of Rwanda's nine-year plan. Now I do not have to worry about paying my children's school fees

because they can attend school for free. I am very proud of my government. I would have been very sad if my children were unable to attend school, like me. Now I do not worry because even though I don't make enough money for school fees I know they will be educated. Were it not for the government education programme, my children would not be able to go to school."

TERTIARY EDUCATION

In addition to making impressive strides in universal basic education, the Government of Rwanda has also made tremendous progress in increasing access to universities. Back in 1994, Rwanda had just one university; the National University of Rwanda (NUR) in Butare which was founded in 1963. In the 30 years after it opened, NUR had produced approximately 1,800 graduates.

There are now 16 universities in Rwanda, seven public and nine private, which boast a combined population of 57,000. The public universities enrol over 44,000 students in undergraduate, graduate, certificate and diploma programmes. The nine private institutions, which are accredited by the High Education Council (HEC) to award Bachelor's degrees, enrol more than 13,000 students per year, a number which is rising due to the growing levels of part-time students.

The monitoring and standardisation of Rwanda's universities has been helped enormously by the creation of two bodies. The establishment of the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) in 2005 has helped to ensure that Rwandan universities meet international standards and many institutions have upgraded their standards as a result of its scrutiny. To ensure that students are all judged on a fair and equal basis, the Government established the Rwanda National Examination Council (RNEC) in 2000 to standardize and mark national examinations.

As part of the Government's effort to support the growth, the expansion and modernisation of the Rwandan Higher Education system and at the same time maintaining financially sustainable Higher Education, the Government decided to create the Student Financing Agency for Rwanda (SFAR) in July 2003. SFAR has introduced a Student Loan Scheme for Higher Education which among other things requires the participation of individual students or parents in meeting part of the cost of their education and the obligation of the loan beneficiary to pay back the loan after completion of the studies. The official launching of the student loan scheme took place in November 2007.

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Amid reforms to the delivery of education, the Government of Rwanda has also prioritised a previously unrecognised educational option; vocational and technical education. Keen to link training programmes with actual work, the Government approved an integrated Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Policy in 2008. In 2009, the Government established the Workforce Development Authority (WDA) to oversee the implementation of TVET policy.

The TVET system focuses on vocational training in spheres such as building and construction, plumbing, tourism and hairdressing. The system has multiple entry and exit points, allowing students to join and leave at different stages depending on their experience, and aims to empower them with hands-on skills that directly respond to industry needs. The newly adopted system allows students to upgrade from the vocational training level to technical education, and from diploma to degree level. According to the WDA Director General Albert Nsengiyumva, "The beauty of this system really is that after every level, a student is skilled enough to join the labour market, or he or she may decide to upgrade up to the university level." Most importantly, he observed, TVET is not a reserve for only those without university education. The new system also provides a window of opportunity to university graduates who wish to acquire practical skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

The Rwandan government is making a name for itself internationally using cutting-edge ICT technology and

programming across all of its ministries, and education is no different. Recently the RNEC has emerged as a leader in the Government's ever growing commitment to turning Rwanda into an ITC led country. Candidates, parents and school heads can now access exam results without even leaving their homes. Students can access exam results through both the RNEC website and through SMS on their mobile phones. According to the Secretary of the RNEC, John Rutayisire, "Head-teachers and parents used to travel long distances to pick results for their children/students and they ended up spending a lot of money on accommodation, transport and food, on top of wasting valuable time. Now they are able to access results online and by SMS feeds with ease." In a related move, the National Curriculum Development Centre says it will also soon digitise national curricula.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS: Flora Muganza, 22, Student, Kibungo "I sat my senior six examinations in 2009 at the Group Scolaire de Nyandungu. After the exams for me I went back home in Kibungo to help my mother in our banana plantation. Our results were due to be released in February 2010. My mother was worried how we would get my results from school, which is about 50 kilometres away from our home, because she did not have enough money for transport. But I assured her that all we needed was about RWF 500 (\$1) to put airtime on her mobile phone, and we would receive the results. How, she demanded? She got cross that I was turning it into a joke! After she had given me the money and we loaded the airtime, I typed in my personal code, sent it off, and there, amazingly, my results were displayed on the phone screen. And I had passed! I will never forget the look of disbelief on my mother's face! Then she started praising the government and IT, I hugged her fiercely, reminding her that she should congratulate me first."

MINEDUC's ICT-in-schools programme is also making great strides. Some primary and secondary schools, particularly those identified to serve as 'centres of excellence' in scientific education, are now furnished with internet-connected computers, which help both students and teachers in their research work. Alternative energy sources are also being considered for schools that have no electricity to help widen access to ICT.

In 2005, President Kagame met with the One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) initiative founder, Prof. Nicholas Negroponte and struck a deal that saw 8,000 laptops distributed to 18 Rwandan primary schools countrywide by 2009. A further 100,000 laptops are expected to reach other schools in the near future meaning even more Rwandan youngsters will have access to the life-changing possibilities that the internet and computer skills can bring.

President Kagame claimed in a New Times article: "Our goal is to continue finding means and ways to provide all primary school children in Rwanda with this important learning tool. We are going to turn the dream of all our children owning computers into reality - it is possible to achieve this."

TEACHER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT With the recent introduction of the 9YBE and higher student enrolment, teacher demand has increased. Many existing teachers need additional training (professional and upgrading) in order to meet the new standards imposed by the government. The Ministry of Education has developed a Teacher Development and Management (TDM) Policy, which sets out to enhance the image and the status of the teacher as a qualified dedicated expert, and a vital engine of nation building and development. As a result, the Kigali Institute of Education (KIE) was established to produce more teachers for upper secondary level, two Colleges of Education (CoE) were created to produce teachers for lower secondary and eleven Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) were also established to produce primary school teachers. 600 teachers have also graduated from a distance learning programme introduced by the government. In July 2008 the Government secured RWF 2.6 billion from the British government to open two more TTCs. It is expected they will result in up to 1,400 new teachers being trained by 2012.

Teachers regularly receive training in various skills to enhance their capacity, through different specified programmes. 40,000 teachers have been trained on the Rwanda English in Action Programme (REAP); 3,775 have been trained on the Strengthening Maths and Science in Secondary Education (SMASSE) programme and by the

end of 2010, 6,735 administrative staff will have been trained on the VVOB's School Management Project.

In March this year Education Minister, Dr. Charles Murigande, announced that poorly-trained teachers would be retrained on the job. He said: "The biggest numbers of our teachers in primary schools (91%) are qualified, but these teachers qualified with inadequate training, that is, why we want to start training them while they are serving. We want all the teachers to continue upgrading their education until they all attain degrees [or equivalent] in education."

THE INTRODUCTION OF ENGLISH

In October 2008, the Government declared English to be the official language of instruction, opening Rwanda up to a world of new opportunities. The switch came after Rwanda became a member of the East African Community, and member states embarked on the process of harmonising their education curricula, with English the shared language of instruction. It was also a precursor to Rwanda joining the British Commonwealth, in November 2009. The change was also planned to help ease future Rwandan workers into the international business and finance community, where English is the most dominant language, as well as to provide a gateway to the global knowledge economy, so as to fulfil Rwanda's 2020 Vision.

For the new policy to succeed, however, the Government needed to move quickly and successfully train teachers in English. As such, and under the auspice of REAP (Rwandan English in Action Programme), school teachers have been undergoing intensive face-to-face English language training courses during the main school holidays. In November 2009, 60 national trainers and 600 district trainers received training in learner-centred classroom methodology. By January 2010, the trainers had delivered level English language tuition to over 40,000 primary and secondary school teachers. 250 school-based mentors have been trained to provide support to their teaching peers.

French, a language spoken by a considerable proportion of Rwandans, remains one of the official languages in the country, and schools continue to include it as a subject. The existence of both French and English in Rwanda will provide its citizens with a clear advantage in the competitive business markets.

LITERACY

Six years ago MINEDUC's Non-Formal Education Unit (NFE) established a national policy to address Rwanda's serious problem with illiteracy so that more citizens could take part in the economic and social transformation of their country. In 2000 the national illiteracy rate was extremely high, at around 50 per cent, but because of the NFE's improvements it has reduced to 25 per cent and is likely to decrease significantly in the coming years.

In a bid to further tackle the blight of illiteracy in the population MINEDUC has started a radical new programme to pair senior students with illiterate members of their communities. The campaign was due to be rolled out across the country at the end of June and will involve more than 8,600 youths who will give their time on a voluntary basis.

MINEDUC, within the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) framework, has set a target of having 85 per cent of men and 80 per cent of women literate by 2011. Achieving this would mean that Rwanda would be in line to meet the Millennium Development Goal of cutting the illiteracy rate by half by 2015.

DISABLED STUDENTS

In June this year, the Government pledged to prioritise the education of children with disabilities including blindness and hearing impairments. Young people with disabilities still face difficulties in getting a proper education because of a lack of qualified teachers. However, in line with the Millennium Development Goal of attaining education for all by 2015, the government has now resolved to prioritise the education of these children.

In 1997 a special education department was set up in the ministry to train specialist teachers. Mary Kobusingye from

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the Ministry of Education said: "Since the department was established, a lot has been done, and we now have some of these children being able to make it up to university."

The Vice Rector for Academics at the Kigali Institute of Education (KIE), Dr James VUNINGOMA, has announced that the institute is currently training some students in specialist teaching for deaf and blind pupils, and that plans are in the pipeline to introduce a specific special needs training programme.

[Incamake yibyagezweho muki nyarwanda \(2003 - 2010\)](#)