

● REC · NYAGATARE · GICUMBI · UNICEF RWANDA

Childhood begins while parents work.

Two days at the market-based and cross-border early childhood development centres of Matimba and Rushaki. One field mission, turned into a documentary, social films, a photo library and a human interest story for UNICEF Rwanda and its partners.

AT A GLANCE

Cross-Border and Market-Based ECD.

2

ECD centres: Matimba, Nyagatare and Rushaki, Gicumbi

2

field days, 16 and 17 July 2026

3

films: 3:30 documentary, 60 and 30 seconds

5

voices: mothers, caregivers, CHWs, IZU, supervisors

CLIENT

UNICEF Rwanda

WITH

Government of Rwanda

SUPPORTED BY

China Aid

IMPLEMENTED BY

ADEPE

THE BRIEF

Document how quality early childhood development services help young children learn, grow and thrive, while mothers engaged in market and cross-border trade earn a living with greater peace of mind. The material had to serve donor visibility, publications, digital platforms and a human interest story, all from one two-day mission.

THE MISSION

15 July

Travel from Kigali to Nyagatare, recce and planning.

16 July

Matimba ECD Centre, homes and Matimba market, then travel to Gicumbi.

17 July

Rushaki ECD Centre and family homes, then return to Kigali.



Growth monitoring at an ECD centre.



Songs and clapping in class.

THE STORY WE FOUND

The question every working parent asked.

Who will care for my young child while I work?

In market and border towns, parents leave home before sunrise to trade. Before the centres opened, many carried their youngest children to crowded markets, or left them with older siblings who should have been in school. The story had to show that choice, and what changes when it disappears.

“Before this ECD, you would have seen me leaving home before sunrise with my child tied on my back. Some days I carried her all the way to the market, because there was nobody to leave her with.”

A trader at Matimba market, Nyagatare District



A trader at her market stall: the working day the ECD centres make possible.



A mother and her child on the road.

Inside the centres, the day is built around early learning, nutrition, health and hygiene, child protection and parenting support. Our job was to show all of it through people, not slides: a caregiver counting fingers with a child, a Community Health Worker reading a growth chart, a volunteer on a home visit, a parent leaving for work with peace of mind.

 OUR APPROACH

From sunrise to the afternoon pick-up.

The film and the photographs follow the rhythm of a working family's day, because that is where the change is visible.

01 Plan from the brief.

We turned UNICEF's creative brief and interview questions into a shot list and interview plan for each centre, and travelled the day before to start at sunrise.

02 Follow the real day.

From homes in the early morning to the centres, the markets and the border, and back to the afternoon pick-up, without staging a single scene.

03 Listen to every voice.

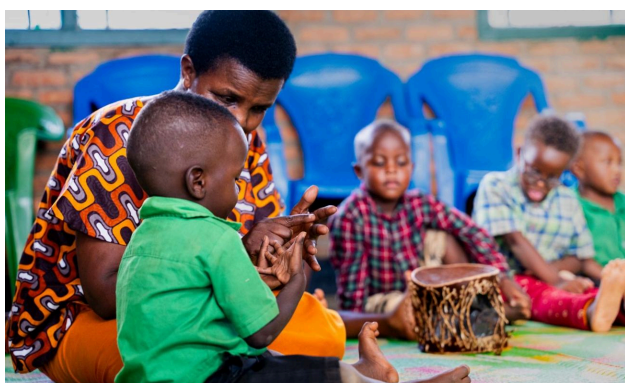
Interviews in Kinyarwanda with mothers, caregivers, Community Health Workers, Inshuti z'Umuryango (Friends of the Family) and Sector ECD Supervisors.

04 Protect the children.

Written consent from parents and guardians, explained in Kinyarwanda, and no child's name paired with their location in our own materials.

05 Edit for every channel.

One crew for film, photography and writing, so the documentary, the social cuts, the photographs and the written story tell the same story.



Counting together with a caregiver.



A Community Health Worker with a mother and child at a health post.

IN PICTURES

Classrooms, health checks and markets.



Music time in class.



A routine nutrition check.



Playtime at the ECD centre.



Joy at home.



A UNICEF colleague joins playtime.



Setting out the day's fruit at the market.

VOICES FROM THE FIELD

The people who make it work.



Portrait at the ECD centre.

“Every child grows when given patience, care and the right environment.”

A caregiver at Matimba ECD Centre

“When children are thriving and parents believe in their future, you know the change will last far beyond the ECD centre.”

Inshuti z’Umuryango volunteer, Rushaki Sector

“Today, each morning, you see children happily walking towards the ECD centre, where they know they will meet friends, learn through play and receive proper care.”

Sector ECD Supervisor



Playtime at the ECD centre.



Children at play at an ECD centre.

Interviews conducted in Kinyarwanda for the documentary and the human interest story.

WHAT WE DELIVERED

One mission, every format.

3:30

Documentary-style film for donors, events and the web.

0:60

Social media version for LinkedIn, X, Facebook and Instagram.

0:30

Teaser to open campaigns and launch the story.

Photos

High-resolution edited photographs for donor visibility, publications and digital platforms.

Story

A written human interest story, with photographs, ready to publish.

Raw

All raw footage and photographs, organised and handed over with consent forms.

WHY IT WORKED

A Kigali-based team that knows the roads to Nyagatare and Gicumbi, interviews in Kinyarwanda, and works as one crew across film, photography and writing. UNICEF and its partners received one consistent story, ready for donors, publications and social media.

FROM THE HUMAN INTEREST STORY

“Every morning, they leave home to earn a living. Every morning, their children begin another day of learning, playing and growing.”

HAVE A PROGRAMME TO DOCUMENT?

Let's tell it with care.

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