



CASE STUDY · NATIONAL FEATURE STORY

● REC · RULINDO · MUSANZE · KAYONZA · UNICEF RWANDA

From access to learning.

How we told the story of Rwanda's education system transformation, from remedial classes and safer classrooms to school kitchens and data, through the learners, teachers and cooks who live it.

A learner in class. Photographed with consent.

AT A GLANCE

A national reform, told school by school.

CLIENT UNICEF Rwanda	PROGRAMME GPE System Transformation Grant	LED BY Ministry of Education and REB	SUPPORT UNICEF technical assistance
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THE BRIEF

Show what system transformation means in practice. The Government of Rwanda, through the Ministry of Education and the Rwanda Basic Education Board, is implementing the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) financed System Transformation Grant, with technical support from UNICEF. The programme strengthens education quality and equity through better teaching and learning, learning environments and education data, so that schools can identify and address barriers early.

The challenge: turn a national, technical reform into a story people care about, without losing a single fact.

THE QUESTION AT THE HEART OF THE STORY

“As enrolment expanded, a deeper question emerged: were all children learning, progressing and completing their education?”



Learners on their way to school.



Break time at a school with improved classrooms.

THE REFORM IN NUMBERS

What the story had to carry.

840,525

learners in Primary 1 to 5 reached by remedial classes

3,227

schools in the August–September 2025 holiday programme

68.3%

of participating learners reached the benchmark for promotion

20.4%

P1–P5 repetition in 2024–2025, down from 29.7% in 2022–2023

313

pre-primary classrooms completed across 30 districts

324

toilet facilities completed

12,000

children expected to benefit from better learning conditions

244

energy-saving stoves for school feeding

Programme figures as reported in the feature story, from the Ministry of Education, REB and UNICEF.



A school meal served on time.



Back to work after lunch.

 OUR APPROACH

Four reforms, four human stories.

We built the feature around people in different districts, each one carrying one part of the reform, so readers meet the change before they meet the numbers.

Remedial learning

01

Learners who were falling behind get focused support during the holidays, guided by assessment results. The figures show who it reached and what changed.

Safer classrooms

02

A Primary Five learner in Rulindo and a head teacher in Musanze describe lessons that once stopped every time it rained, and classrooms that now stay open.

School feeding

03

In Kayonza, an energy-saving stove means less firewood, less smoke in the kitchen and meals ready on time for afternoon lessons.

Data that leads to action

04

A school leader shows how records on attendance and assessment help teachers notice a child who needs support before it is too late.



A Primary class during a lesson.



A cook beside an energy-saving stove.

IN THEIR WORDS

“Our lessons are no longer interrupted when it rains, and we can remain in class and concentrate.”

A Primary Five learner, Rulindo District

“Cooking is now faster and easier, and there is much less smoke in the kitchen. We use less firewood, and the meals are ready earlier.”

Groupe Scolaire Cyinzovu, Kayonza District

IN PICTURES

Classrooms, kitchens and playgrounds.



Listening in class.



Energy-saving stoves in a school kitchen.



Lunch at school.



Learners at their desks.



A full classroom, ready to learn.



Break time.

 WHAT WE DELIVERED

A feature built to be published.

- Field reporting and photography in schools across several districts, including Rulindo, Musanze and Kayonza.
- Interviews in Kinyarwanda with learners, head teachers, school staff and school leaders.
- A long-form human interest feature, "From access to learning: How Rwanda is building a school system that works for every child", written by Théoneste Iyakaremye.
- Edited, captioned photographs for the story, reports and digital channels.
- Every programme figure checked against the partners' data, and reviewed with UNICEF before publication.

 WHY IT WORKED

We write and photograph as one team, so the pictures and the words tell the same story. We speak the language of the schools we visit, we respect children's privacy, and we turn technical reforms into stories that a parent, a donor or a minister can all read.

 THE CLOSING LINE

"Every child is not only present in school, but safe, supported and able to learn, progress and fulfil their potential."

HAVE A REFORM OR PROGRAMME TO EXPLAIN?

Let's make it human.

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