



As part of our 'Advancing the Right to Read' programme in Rwanda, Save the Children is implementing the Rwanda Children's Book Initiative (RCBI). RCBI is a unique, whole-system approach that addresses the unavailability of books by intervening at every stage of the local book chain to develop a self-sustainable market and industry for high quality children's storybooks. The initiative is carried out in close cooperation with the Rwanda Education Board (REB) through training and capacity building of authors, illustrators, publishers and teachers, as well as the provision of books, bookshelves and mats to schools.



TEACHER TRAINING - Teachers sharing their experiences

RCBI works in all 90 schools in Burera district in the northern province of Rwanda and has since early 2013 provided all P1-P3 classrooms with a set of books, a bookshelf and a mat to facilitate and promote reading. RCBI has also carried out a training of all Kinyarwanda teachers on different methodologies and techniques that can be applied when teaching reading.

The teachers at GS Gitare school received their initial training in September 2013. During the refresher in August 2014, the teachers shared their experiences of how RCBI has improved the culture of reading in their school.

The common notion was that the teachers themselves have become better readers and storytellers, and the students are more excited about school now that they have access to books and can read with their teachers and peers. Several teachers pointed out that students have also developed their critical thinking skills imagination as a result of reading a wide range of stories.



“Because of RCBI’s interventions, the children I teach now learn how to read more easily than those I have taught previously.”

UWIMANA IMMACULEE

Immaculee teaches Kinyarwanda in Primary Grade 3 (P3) in GS Gitare and has been a teacher since 1979. She radiates the type of confidence that only a teacher with more than 30 years of experience can. At the same time, she humbly admits that the training has given her new tools to use when teaching Kinyarwanda and deepen her knowledge on how to teach children to read.

Immaculee emphasises that she used to be the main ‘reader’ in the classroom, but now – due to the availability of bookshelves, storybooks and mats – students can better participate in reading. She also explains how the new techniques have both improved student-teacher relationships and brought students closer together as they enjoy reading more when they can sit together on the mat. Her students like it when she reads to them but they particularly like to read by themselves. “They are more excited when they can hold the books in their own hands,” she says.

Several times during the conversation, Immaculee stresses the significant changes she has observed during the past year. She illustrates this by highlighting that her current students can write their names, which most students she has taught previously couldn’t. “The P3 students never fail Kinyarwanda now,” she says. “There is a big difference in performance in comparison with before RCBI interventions.”

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Save the Children works in more than 120 countries. We save children’s lives. We fight for their rights. We help them fulfill their potential.