



Right To Play in Burundi

EDUCATING AND EMPOWERING BURUNDIAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Right To Play has operated programs in Burundi since 2008, partnering with the government to build the capacity of community organizations and sports federations to successfully implement peace-building initiatives. Right To Play uses structured play, including sport, to drive peaceful interventions in communities by providing children and youth with positive social, emotional, cognitive and physical life skills, inclusive of cooperation, self-esteem, communication, confidence and empathy.

Right To Play is committed to improving both access to and quality of education in Burundi, in alignment with the government's medium-term transitional education plan (2018-2020). In 2018, Right To Play formalized its partnership with the Ministry of Education and Vocational and Professional Training through a Memorandum of Understanding.

In 2019, Right To Play reached
60,000 children and youth
in Bujumbura and Bujumbura Mairie provinces.

The challenges faced by children and youth in Burundi

In 2019, Burundi was ranked 185 out of 189 countries and territories on the Human Development Index, a reflection of persistently high levels of poverty and demographic pressures as well as periodic political unrest and local level conflict. While overall human development indicators remain low, Burundi has significantly increased access to primary education since 2005 with the introduction of free primary education. Gender parity was achieved at the primary level in 2012.¹ Nevertheless, significant gaps remain in the equity and quality of education.

During the 2018 education sector review, the Ministry of Education and its stakeholders identified several causes of high drop-out and repetition rates including insufficient school materials and infrastructure, large class sizes, the absence of in-service training, lack of support for students by teachers, parents and child protection committees, as well as gender-based violence, pregnancy and early marriage.²

- Only 1 in 5 adolescent girls and 1 in 4 adolescent boys are enrolled in secondary school.³
- There are an average of 92 children per class in the first cycle of basic education, grades 1 and 2.⁴
- Of children enrolled in primary school, only 59.5% complete grade 6.⁵
- 31% of Burundians are between the ages of 10 and 24.⁶



Achievements

TEACHERS HAVE IMPROVED PEDAGOGICAL SKILLS



After a 12-month program, **85%** of Right To Play supported teachers reported practicing play-based learning methodologies in their classrooms.⁷

ENHANCED PEACEBUILDING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS

Dealing with Conflict:



Composite Score:



Children demonstrated an overall **20** percentage-point increase in their peacebuilding and conflict resolution skills.⁸

YOUTH LEADERSHIP IN PEACEBUILDING



By 2018, Right To Play had established **150** youth peace clubs nationwide, with youth skilled in leading community dialogues.⁹

¹ World Bank, "Early Grade Learning Project Appraisal Document", 2018.

² Ministry of Education and Vocational and Professional Training, "Education Sector Review 2018, Aide Memoire".

³ UNICEF, <https://www.unicef.org/burundi/adolescent-employment-and-community-resilience>

⁴ Ministry of Education and Vocational and Professional Training, "Education Sector Review 2018, Aide Memoire".

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Educating Children in Crisis, End of Project Report, 2020.

⁸ Sport and Play-based Youth Peace Education in Burundi, Final Evaluation, 2015.

⁹ Sport and Play-based Youth Peace Education in Burundi, Final Report.

Program Overview



IMPROVING THE DELIVERY OF QUALITY EDUCATION

Right To Play is working in partnership with the Ministry of Education to integrate active, child-centered, play-based methodologies into teaching practice. In 2018, Right To Play trained a cadre of 27 Ministry master trainers on play-based learning, positive learning environments, and coaching and mentoring. Right To Play is now supporting these master trainers to roll-out the training to teachers, head teachers and District Education officers in Bujumbura and Bujumbura Mairie provinces.

Recognizing that poor quality infrastructure impedes learning and can be a cause of drop-out, Right To Play has responded to the request of the Ministry of Education to improve school infrastructure, particularly sanitation facilities. In 2020, with the support of the Government of Canada, Right To Play is extending its work to Ruyigi province where it will enhance the quality of education for children returning to Burundi from refugee camps located in Tanzania and for children of the communities that are receiving repatriated Burundians.



ADDRESSING THE BARRIERS THAT LIMIT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN

Right To Play addresses the barriers that hinder the demand for and access to education, particularly for girls. Material support and training is provided for improved menstrual hygiene management and making reusable pads. Reporting mechanisms and referral pathways are strengthened to respond to child protection issues including gender-based violence. Right To Play works with school management committees to address school and community-based barriers to children's education.

Right To Play promotes the agency of girls, including their capacity to influence decisions that affect their education and learning. Girls' clubs, both in the school and in the community, are one of the key platforms that Right To Play uses to develop confidence and self-esteem in girls. In these clubs, trained teachers and community coaches lead girls and boys in play-based activities to build understanding and skills around children's rights, gender equality and leadership. These clubs are also a platform for sharing knowledge and skills related to sexual and reproductive health and rights.



EMPOWERING YOUTH AS CHANGE AGENTS AND PEACE BUILDERS

Together with local civil society partners, Right To Play trains community coaches to use play-based activities to develop skills in youth for positive communication, leadership, conflict resolution, empathy and financial management. These youth then apply their new financial literacy skills to group savings and loans. In 2019, 102 youth savings and loans groups were supported by Right To Play and its partners.

Each youth group is encouraged to choose an issue facing their community, which is discussed following several group activities. Youth are then supported to lead community-wide dialogues spanning a range of topics such as non-violent communication, tolerance, human rights, rumor management, and peaceful coexistence. These ongoing dialogues often produce community peace memorandums which make commitments based on the specific concerns that arise during the dialogues.



With Right To Play's monitoring and support model, the barriers between the director and the teachers have been broken; there has been a change in behavior and the mode of collaboration has improved. We are no longer feared as there is no visit in a class which is not planned together before and no specific and agreed upon observation that is not jointly prepared.

- Primary school head teacher¹⁰



Right To Play International

Right To Play is a global organization that protects, educates, and empowers children using all forms of play – games, sport, poetry, performance, dance, art and music. We work with children in some of the most difficult and dangerous places on earth, empowering children with the knowledge and skills to drive change in their lives, their families and their communities.

In 2019, Right To Play transformed the lives of 2.35 million children in 15 countries around the world, working in collaboration with teachers, governments, communities, and parents.



Children reflect on each play-based activity and connect it to their everyday life.

Supporters



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