

For Immediate Release

April 25, 2016

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Conference to Focus on Early-Grade Literacy in Rwanda

Waltham, Mass.: EDC will facilitate a national conference on the progress made toward early-grade literacy goals in Rwanda during a two-day event in Kigali May 4-5. The event, a culmination of more than five years of investment to strengthen literacy rates across the country, is hosted with the Ministry of Education, Rwanda Education Board (REB), and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Keynote speakers will include Rwanda's Minister of Education, Dr. Papias Musafili, and the Director General of the Rwanda Education Board, Janvier Gasana, U.S. Ambassador to Rwanda Erica J. Barks-Ruggles, USAID Senior Advisor for Education Christie Vilsack, and EDC President and CEO David Offensend. Conference participants will include Ministry and district education officials, teachers, civil society members, and development partners working to build a culture of reading throughout Rwanda.

Conference presentations and interactive sessions will focus on examples of success and lessons learned from the five-year USAID-funded Literacy, Language and Learning (L3) Initiative, which works in all Rwandan primary schools, and literacy interventions by development partners.

"We are tremendously proud of our L3 partnership with the Rwanda Education Board and the gains we have achieved together in early grade literacy throughout the country," said EDC's Kingsley Arkorful, L3 Chief of Party.

Managed by EDC, L3 works to improve teaching, increase the availability and accessibility of teaching and learning materials, and ensure children throughout Rwanda have access to a quality education. L3 initiatives have notably increased the proportion of learners reading at grade level nationwide.

"This event will reaffirm the important role of literacy instruction in Rwanda's new competence-based curriculum," said Janvier Gasana, Director General of the Rwanda Education Board. "By reviewing what we've learned over 5 years, we will be able to build on our successes and plan for the future to ensure that all children leave primary school able to read and write with comprehension and fluency."

To date, L3 has distributed more than 7 million student books in English and Kinyarwanda, 56,965 teachers' guides, 27,334 read-aloud story collections, and 15,744 cell phones and speakers for playing audio lessons. It has also trained more than 23,328 teachers in literacy instruction.

"We understand that learning goes beyond the classroom and also involves families and communities," said Lee Marshall, USAID Rwanda's Education Director. "That's why this program includes initiatives that support improved equity in education, teacher motivation, and community support."

By the end of the L3 Initiative, more than 90,000 books for teacher training colleges and 85 community mobile libraries will have been distributed to communities, and 1250 Parent Teacher Councils will have been trained to promote the culture of reading. To learn more, visit the [L3 website](#).

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