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Ruramira community library to officially open

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The Community Mobile Library in Ruramira, Kayonza district will be the fourth of its kind to officially open to the public. The launch event will take place on Friday, May 10th at 1pm at Ruramira Secondary School. Sponsored by the Rwanda Education Board (REB) and the USAID-funded Literacy, Language, and Learning (L3) Initiative, the Community Mobile Library initiative promotes a culture of reading by providing communities with a variety of rich reading materials.

On Friday, Ruramira's library committee and local leaders will unveil the library and showcase the books available for borrowing and reading. Students from primary and secondary as well as members of the community will read selected stories, and the committee will give a tour of the library.

Like all Community Mobile Libraries, Ruramira's is managed by a committee of community volunteers and contains 1,200 novels, anthologies, storybooks, and traditional Rwandan stories in both English and Kinyarwanda. The books appeal to a variety of interests and are appropriate for a wide range of reading levels. To maximize impact, the library will be shared with a number of neighboring communities.

"The library will help the people have materials for reading and provide an opportunity to start to create a stronger culture of reading," said Nkezabahizi Claude, a library committee member. "This will be for our students but also for every person in our community."

According to the committee, there are many ways that adults can support children's reading. Adults can read stories to children, or illiterate adults can ask a child to read the story to them. They can also ask children questions about the stories and ensure that children have time for reading each day. Of course, parents can also bring them to the library.

"If the children go there at a young age, they can begin to develop the skills for reading. They will make a habit and continue for the rest of their lives," says Nkezabahizi.

Libraries are already open to the public in Gicumbi, Bugesera, and Nyamagabe districts, and others in Ngororero, Ngoma and Nyaraguru are soon to open. By 2016, at least 80 will be established across the country. Peace Corps volunteers and civil society organizations are supporting their implementation.

Funded by USAID, the L3 Initiative is implemented by Education Development Center (EDC) in partnership with REB and with assistance from Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO), Concern Worldwide, International Education Exchange, and the Peace Corps.

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