



Education in Rwanda



Education Structure

3 – 6 – 3 – 3 system:

- Nursery school => 3 years
- Primary school => 6 years
- Lower secondary => 3 years
- Upper secondary => 3 years
- Higher education => 3 to 5 years

Language

4 official languages:

- P1-P3: All subjects are taught in Kinyarwanda except English
- P4-6: All subjects are taught in English except Kinyarwanda and French
- S1-University: all subjects are taught in English except Kinyarwanda, French and Kiswahili

Nursery education (3 years)

Encourages socialisation of young children and equip them with basic skills to get prepared for primary education.

Primary education (6 years)

Prepares the child for secondary studies and ends with the national primary leaving examination. Double shift school from P1-P4.

Lower secondary education (3 years)

A general program to prepare students for upper secondary streams. It ends with a national exam.

Upper secondary education (3 years)

Prepares students for higher education, technical postsecondary studies or employment. It ends with a national exam. It is divided into 3 streams:

- General secondary education
- Primary teacher training
- Technical secondary school

Higher education (3 to 5 years)

Aims at providing high-level general education and technical and vocational education in different departments. 2 streams:

- General higher education
- Technical and vocational education

A school day

- 20 contact hours per week in primary school
- 30 contact hours per week in secondary school
- Primary 1 – Primary 4: Half day (before noon or afternoon)
 - From 2020: Primary 4 will be full day of school
- Primary 5: full day of school

School calendar

- Trimester 1: January –April
- Trimester 2: April- July
- Trimester 3: August-November

N.B. after each trimester, there is a two-week holiday (by 2022 schools will start in September)

Curricula

Competence-Based Curriculum since 2016

Key competences emphasised:

- **Basic competences:** Literacy; Numeracy; ICT; Citizenship and National Identity; Entrepreneurship and Business Development; Science and Technology and communication in the official languages.
- **Generic competences:** critical thinking, creativity and innovation, research and problem solving, communication, co-operation, interpersonal relations and life skills and lifelong learning.
- **Cross-cutting issues:** genocide studies, environment and sustainability, gender, comprehensive sexuality education, peace and values education, financial education, standardisation culture and inclusive education.

Challenges

- Low gross enrollment rate (GER) and gross intake rate (GIR) at both nursery and secondary levels.
- Low promotion rate (78%), high repetition rate (16%) and high dropout rate (5.6%) at primary level
- High pupil-teacher ratio e.g. 43:1 in nursery schools and 80:1 in primary schools.
- Inadequate facilities e.g. pupil desk ratio 6:1 and pupil-textbook ratio is 5:1 for some subjects such elementary science and technology.
- Lack of qualified teaching staff e.g. only 84.7% of teachers in nursery schools are qualified and 79.5% of teachers at secondary level are qualified.

Types of schools

- Public schools: schools owned by the Government of Rwanda
- Government-subsidised schools: schools owned by an individual or an organisation but which receives support from the government
- Private schools: schools established by an individual or an organisation

Challenges in relation to gender

- Women under-representation in teaching staff at higher level of education e.g. 29.9% in secondary and 17.92% at university
- Increased early pregnancies e.g. 6386 female students were pregnant in eastern province
- Traditional socio-cultural beliefs e.g. some people still believe that girls are weak in science