



Republic of Rwanda
Ministry of Education

Implementation Guidelines for District Imihigo

September 2025



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Background

These Implementation Guidelines set out district-led Umuhigo to tackle four education priorities: (i) reducing school dropout and grade repetition, (ii) improving SDMS and CAMIS data quality, (iii) increasing enrolment in pre-primary, and (iv) reducing adult illiteracy.

Districts lead delivery in close coordination with MINEDUC, REB, RTB, and NESA, with clear roles, timelines, and verification mechanisms to ensure accountability and timely course-correction. The approach is evidence-based: schools and districts use SDMS/CAMIS for routine monitoring; districts convene quarterly reviews; and NISR conducts end-year evaluations against agreed targets.

The Guidelines align with Vision 2050 and the NST2 by supporting human capital development, improving service delivery, and promoting inclusion. The Umuhigo framework keeps learners in school and progressing on time, ensures reliable data for decision-making, expands early learning, and opens second-chance pathways for adults; ensuring every district delivers measurable gains in learning and opportunity.



1. Reducing School Dropout and Grade Repetition Rates

Introduction

Dropout and repetition remain major symptoms of inefficiency in Rwanda's education system. The national promotion rate (across all levels of education) increased slightly from 75.7% in 2021/2022 to 76.2% in 2022/2023. Female students outperformed male students with a national average of 77.5% while male students averaged 74.9% promotion rate. Meanwhile, the repetition rate has plateaued at 19.1% the past two years, with female students repeating grades less than their male counterparts (18.3% vs 19.8%).

In primary education, the situation is most dire. While there were slight improvements across the three indicators of education efficiency - promotion, repetition, dropout – the grade level inefficiencies are still significantly high, with the negative impact reaching as far as low enrolment in secondary education (over 1 million secondary-age students remain in primary schools.)

Repetition rate in primary is now at 29.7% - far higher than the national average, and similarly the 5.2% primary dropout rates are higher than the 4.7% national average. Across all primary grades, female students demonstrate better educational outcomes in promotion, repetition, and dropout rates.

This staggering evidence of poor education quality requires calls to action across central and local government of Rwanda to ensure children are learning in classrooms.

Overview of School Dropout and Grade Repetition in Rwanda

A learner is classified as a dropout when they leave school before completing an education level – primary or secondary - and do not return the following academic year. Direct costs (fees, uniforms, materials) and rising non-tuition expenses intensify this risk, while accumulated learning gaps and the growing opportunity cost of household contributions further discourage regular school attendance. In primary, older pupils in upper levels (P4-P6) face the greatest risk of dropout, even for those who manage to re-enter the system. In lower secondary, early pregnancy disproportionately affects girls, undermining or abruptly ending their education pathways.

Repetition occurs when a pupil must remain in the same grade the following academic year after failing to meet next-grade promotion standards. In lower primary (P1-P3), repetition is driven primarily by household-level factors; late school entry, low parental education, inadequate school readiness, and under-resourced classrooms with high pupil-teacher ratios. Pre-primary attendance (including informal nursery) reduces the likelihood of P1 repetition. In P5, however, repetition often reflects school-level policies of applying stricter promotion benchmarks to boost national examination performance.

Rationale

Reducing repetition and dropout as a district Umuhigo is a national priority that represents a strategic opportunity to develop human capital that drives local socio-economic development. High repetition and dropout weaken human capital and waste public investment.



By achieving district-specific targets based on 2022-2023 baselines, districts will keep today's learners on track to become tomorrow's skilled workforce in agriculture, trade, services, public administration, and other economic sectors. The Ministry expects districts to engage parents and local partners, strengthen early-grade support including pre-primary enrolment and school readiness, monitor promotion and attendance each term, and address non-tuition barriers without delay.

This approach turns education into a catalyst for community growth, upholds equity for vulnerable learners - especially girls and children from poor families - and reaffirms that every child matters and no one is left behind.

Objectives

To reduce school dropout and repetition by keeping learners in school, supporting on-time grade progression, and addressing barriers through early childhood readiness, improved teaching, remedial learning, and strong parent and community engagement.

Scope

This Umuhigo targets all primary schools (public, government-aided and private) in every district, with the aim of reducing dropout and repetition rates. By increasing learner retention and ensuring on-time progression, districts will keep more children on track through the full primary cycle.

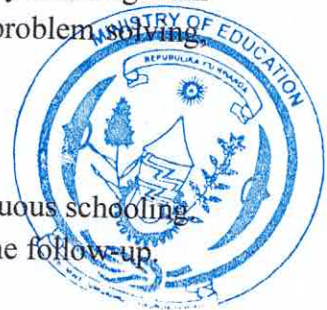
Lowering dropout and repetition directly advances Vision 2050 and NST 2, which find that universal, timely education builds the skilled workforce essential for sustainable growth. When more learners stay in school and progress on time, districts drive poverty reduction, inclusive development, and community prosperity. Reducing these rates is therefore critical to achieving Rwanda's socio-economic goals.

Implementation Approach and Activities

Each District will lead the delivery of this Umuhigo, working with MINEDUC, REB, RTB, and NESAC. Districts will roll out activities under their performance contracts, track and report attendance and risks of dropout and repetition, convene quarterly review meetings, and share data and practices through coordination platforms, with technical guidance and capacity-building from central agencies. This collaborative approach ensures accountability, real-time problem solving, and a unified drive to keep every child in school and progressing on time.

Implementation will include:

- Mobilising communities with awareness campaigns on the value of continuous schooling
- Identifying at-risk learners and providing counselling, mentoring, and home follow-up
- Supporting school feeding to reduce hunger-related dropouts.
- Organising remedial and catch-up classes to close learning gaps and prevent repetition.
- Training teachers in inclusive, learner-centred methods.
- Partnering with parents and local leaders to strengthen community support for education.
- Expanding early childhood education to boost primary school readiness.
- Monitoring dropout and repetition data at school and district levels.
- Supporting girls with targeted initiatives to address gender-specific barriers.



Expected results

Fully implementing this Umuhigo will deliver these outcomes:

1. More learners completing each grade on time and transitioning smoothly to the next level
2. Fewer pupils repeating a grade thanks to timely remedial support
3. Higher school attendance rates and stronger learning outcomes across all schools
4. Increased enrolment in pre-primary programs, boosting readiness for P1
5. Greater community and parental engagement in supporting continuous schooling
6. Enhanced teacher capacity to identify and assist struggling learners
7. Narrowed gender gaps in completion, with fewer girls dropping out
8. Reliable, up-to-date data on dropout and repetition to inform district planning

Stakeholders and their roles

1. **District Education Office**
 - Coordinate and monitor dropout and repetition reduction activities.
 - Support schools with resources and guidance
2. **School Leaders (Headteachers and Teachers)**
 - Identify, report, and support students at risk of dropping out or repeating.
 - Provide quality teaching and remedial courses to struggling learners.
3. **Parents and Guardians**
 - Encourage children to attend school regularly and support their learning at home.
 - Participate in school meetings and activities.
4. **Local Leaders (Sector and Cell Authorities)**
 - Mobilize the community to support education.
 - Follow up on children who miss school or drop out.
5. **Ministry of Education (MINEDUC)**
 - Develop and drive strategy to reduce dropout and repetition.
 - Provide overall support.
6. **Community Based Organizations and NGOs**
 - Run programs that support vulnerable children (e.g., scholarships).
 - Raise awareness about the importance of education.
7. **Students**
 - Attend school regularly and participate actively in learning.
 - Seek help when facing difficulties.
8. **Faith Based Organizations (FBO)**
 - Promote positive attitudes towards education in the community.
 - Help reduce social barriers like early marriage.



Monitoring and Evaluation

The following stakeholders share responsibility for tracking and assessing the activities to reduce dropout and repetition rates:

1. District Education Office

Regularly tracks school-level progress, collects and reports data on at-risk dropout and repetition each term, and follows up with schools to ensure activities are implemented.

2. National Examination and School Inspection Authority (NESA)

Provides technical oversight and quality assurance through inspections, reviews district performance, and advises on M&E tools and indicators

3. Sector Education Inspectors

Verify school attendance records, observe learning support initiatives, and confirm reported cases of dropout or repetition.

4. Ministry of Education (MINEDUC)

Defines the M&E framework and indicators, monitors district-wide progress and uses findings to guide strategic and policy decisions.

5. School General Assembly Committees and School Management Committees

Support school-level monitoring by reviewing attendance, completion, and performance data, and provide feedback to school leaders and the community.

Methodology for Evaluating the Umuhigo on Dropout and Repetition

The evaluation draws on official data from the Ministry of Education's Education Statistical Yearbook 2024/2025, compiled from districts and the School Data Management System (SDMS). The National Institute of Statistics Rwanda (NISR) will lead the assessment in November 2025.

This timing ensures all learners have returned for the new academic year and that remedial cohorts have received final promotion decisions. By early November, definitive, yearbook-validated figures on progression, dropouts and repetition will be available. NISR's analysis will then offer a reliable, comprehensive review of each district's performance against its Umuhigo targets.

2. Improved Management of Education Data Systems (SDMS and CAMIS)

Introduction

In the education sector, the effective use of the School Data Management System (SDMS) and the Comprehensive Assessment Management System (CAMIS) is critical to improving planning, monitoring, and evaluation of learning outcomes. These guidelines provide a framework for implementing District Imihigo focused on strengthening education data systems to ensure reliable, accurate, complete, and timely information for decision-making and accountability.



Overview

The Ministry of Education is strengthening the quality of education data through systems such as SDMS and CAMIS to ensure data completeness, accuracy, and timeliness across schools, local government, and the central government.

SDMS serves as the primary source of education statistics and planning by capturing key information on student registration, school infrastructure, school feeding, requests for grants and consumables, as well as academic and examinations data. Its modules (covering dashboards, academics, infrastructure, budgeting, special programs, and reporting) enable schools and districts to manage operations more effectively. The Ministry of Education uses data from these modules in SDMS to plan for the education sector budget – disaggregating data across schools, sectors, and districts to ensure all education resources are adequately allocated.

CAMIS is a digital platform developed by the Ministry of Education through the National Examinations and School Inspections Authority (NESA) to manage learner assessment data in basic education and TVET. It centralizes information on student classroom assessments, and national examinations.

CAMIS aims to digitize and streamline assessment and examination data, improve the reliability and accessibility of learner performance records, and provide real-time feedback to schools, districts, and policymakers on learning gaps and gains. The system also offers dashboards, analytical tools, and reporting modules, with the objective of supporting evidence-based decision-making in curriculum review, teaching practices, and policy development.

Rationale

Although SDMS and CAMIS are established systems, challenges remain in data quality and use. Schools and districts still face gaps in completeness, delays in reporting, and limited application of data for planning and accountability.

Embedding SDMS and CAMIS into District Imihigo reinforces local government responsibility: school administrators and teachers must enter truthful, complete, and timely data, while Sector Education Inspectors (SEIs) and District Directors of Education (DDEs) are responsible for ensuring this is done consistently to support effective decision-making at district, and national levels.

Objective

To strengthen SDMS and CAMIS by ensuring that education data are accurate, complete, timely, and reliable, so they reflect the real situation in schools and are fit for evidence-based planning, decision-making, and accountability.

Scope

Umuhigo covers all activities related to entering and managing education data in SDMS and CAMIS at school, sector, and district levels. Districts, as system end-users, are responsible for ensuring data is accurate, complete, consistent, timely, and reliable. MINEDUC handles system



development, maintenance, enhancements, and provides training and technical support so the platforms are functional and user-friendly.

Link with Vision 2050, NST 2 and National Aspirations.

The District SDMS and CAMIS Umuhigo directly supports Rwanda's long-term development strategy under Vision 2050 - which aims to transform Rwanda into a high-income country by 2050, and the National Strategy for Transformation II (NST2, 2024–2029) - which emphasizes digitalization, efficient service delivery, and evidence-based policymaking.

Strengthening SDMS and CAMIS through Imihigo will ensure education data is timely, accurate, and reliable for efficient planning, transparency, and accountability across schools, districts, and the national level.

This initiative aligns with the NST2's digital governance targets and supports Vision 2050's broader goals of high-quality education, robust human capital development, and data-informed decision-making.

Implementation Approach and Activities

Districts are the primary custodians of education data in the local government, ensuring SDMS and CAMIS are fully reliable and suitable for planning, monitoring, and decision-making. The Umuhigo will be implemented through clear timelines, structured oversight, regular monitoring, and verification mechanisms to strengthen data quality and accountability.

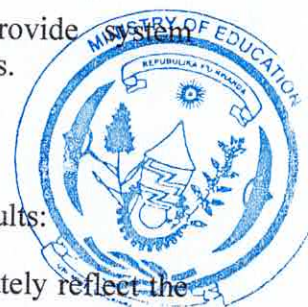
Implementation will include:

- **Capacity building:** MINEDUC will conduct nationwide training for all public and government-aided school headteachers and one administrative staff per school. Most private school headteachers will also be trained. Training will focus on effective use of data systems, accurate and timely data entry, and validation of records.
- **Regular data entry and updating:** Schools will continuously enter and update student, school, and assessment data in line with issued timelines.
- **Monitoring and verification:** Districts will coordinate audits, physical verification, and joint inspections to ensure accurate, complete, and timely data entry, while supporting schools to address discrepancies.
- **Technical support and oversight:** MINEDUC and NESA will provide maintenance, technical support, and feedback on data quality improvements.

Expected results

The District SDMS and CAMIS Umuhigo is expected to achieve the following results:

1. All students, school, and assessment records in SDMS and CAMIS accurately reflect the real situation in schools.
2. All required information across schools, sectors, and districts are captured in the systems.
3. All SDMS and CAMIS data are entered, updated, and reported within the provided timelines.
4. Information in the systems is trustworthy, verified through audits, physical verification, and school inspections.
5. Reliable and comprehensive data supports evidence-based planning, monitoring, and accountability in the education sector.



Stakeholders and their roles

• Ministry of Education (MINEDUC)

- o Develops and maintains the SDMS.
- o Issues timelines for SDMS data entry and reporting.
- o Provides technical support and capacity-building to districts, sectors, and schools.
- o Coordinates overall implementation of SDMS data entry schedules.

• National Examination and School Inspection Authority (NESA)

- o Develops and maintains CAMIS.
- o Issues timelines for CAMIS data entry and reporting.
- o Provides technical support and training for assessment data.
- o Conduct inspections in schools on data quality in SDMS and CAMIS.
- o Provide feedback on data quality improvements.

• District Education Office

- o Coordinate the implementation of the *Umuhigo* at the district level.
- o Conduct audits, physical verification, and joint inspections to ensure accurate, complete, and timely data entry.
- o Support schools in correcting discrepancies and improving data quality.

• Schools

- o Enter and update all required information in SDMS and CAMIS according to provided timelines.
- o Ensure data accuracy, completeness, and timeliness at the school level.
- o Address comments provided by inspectors on data quality

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of the SDMS and CAMIS Umuhigo will ensure that data in the systems are reliable for evidence-based planning and decision-making.

District Education Offices, including the District Director of Education Unit and Sector Education Inspectors, will conduct routine monitoring, audits, and physical verification of school data.

Schools are responsible for timely entry and updating of all required data in SDMS and CAMIS. NESA Inspectors will verify assessment data in CAMIS and provide feedback to districts and schools to improve data quality.

MINEDUC will coordinate overall monitoring efforts, track adherence to timelines, and ensure alignment between districts, schools, and central reporting systems.

Regular progress reports and review meetings at district level will identify gaps, inform corrective actions, and strengthen accountability in education data management.

Methodology for Evaluation

The evaluation of the SDMS and CAMIS Umuhigo will be carried out by the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) at the end of the 2025/2026 fiscal year. District performance will be scored based on findings from physical verification in sampled schools, assessing data accuracy,



completeness, timeliness, and reliability. Ongoing monitoring by District Education Offices, NESA Inspectors, and MINEUDC will support year-round data quality and recommendations for improvement.

3. Increased Enrolment in Pre-Primary Education

Introduction

The Umuhigo on increasing enrolment in pre-primary education aims to expand access to early childhood learning as a foundation for school-readiness, improved learning outcomes and lifelong skills. Pre-primary education is a critical stage for cognitive, social, and emotional development, and increasing enrolment contributes directly to national goals of quality and inclusive education.

Districts, in collaboration with schools, parents, and communities, are expected to mobilize resources, raise awareness, and ensure that more children of eligible age are enrolled in pre-primary, thereby reducing disparities and laying the groundwork for better performance in later schooling.

Overview

The Umuhigo on increasing pre-primary enrolment focuses on ensuring that more children between the ages of 3–5 years access early learning opportunities through community-based and formal pre-primary settings. This initiative seeks to strengthen the foundation of Rwanda's education system by expanding coverage, addressing enrolment gaps, and promoting equity across districts. By improving access to pre-primary, the Umuhigo supports school readiness, reduces future repetition and dropout, and contributes to the overall quality of basic education.

Rationale

Increasing enrolment in pre-primary education is essential for giving every child a strong start in learning and development. Early childhood education improves school readiness, enhances cognitive and social skills, and reduces the risk of repetition and dropout in later years. Despite progress, enrolment rates remain below national targets, with disparities across districts. This Umuhigo therefore prioritizes expanding access to pre-primary as a strategic investment in human capital and a driver of equity and quality in Rwanda's education system.

Objective

To strengthen early childhood development and school readiness by increasing pre-primary enrolment through parent and community mobilisation and by expanding access via community centres, public schools, and partnerships with Faith-Based and private providers.



Scope

This Umuhigo covers all districts, sectors, and schools, targeting children between the ages of 3–5 years for enrolment in pre-primary. It applies to public, government aided and private pre-primary schools and formal ECD centres.

Link with Vision 2050, NST 2 and National Aspirations.

The Umuhigo on increasing pre-primary enrolment contributes to Vision 2050 and NST2 by promoting inclusive and equitable access to quality early childhood education. It supports Rwanda's national aspirations of building a skilled, competitive, and knowledge-based society through strong foundations in learning and human capital development.

Implementation Approach and Activities

Districts will coordinate enrolment campaigns, mobilize parents and communities, and ensure that all eligible children are registered in SDMS. Schools, clustered ECD centres, Faith-Based Organizations, and private providers will support access and timely reporting, while sectors and local leaders contribute through sensitization. MINEDUC and NESA will provide technical guidance and monitor overall progress.

Implementation will focus on:

- Mobilizing parents, communities, and local leaders to enroll eligible children aged 3–5.
- Expanding access through clustered ECD centres, public schools, and partnerships with Faith-Based and private providers.
- Prioritizing rural areas to reduce disparities.
- Conducting regular monitoring and reporting at school, sector, and district levels
- ECD-School clustering to leverage existing infrastructure for increased enrolment of children aged 3-5 years and to improve education service delivery in these centres.

Stakeholders and their roles

- **Ministry of Education (MINEDUC)**
 - Provides policy guidance and technical support.
 - Monitors national progress on pre-primary enrolment.
- **District**
 - Lead implementation of the *Umuhigo* at district level.
 - Coordinate enrolment campaigns and oversee data reporting in SDMS.
 - Mobilize schools, sectors, and communities to achieve enrolment targets.
 - Coordinate ECD-School clustering to leverage existing infrastructure for increased enrolment and education service delivery
- **Sectors and Local Leaders**
 - Support community mobilization and sensitization of parents.
 - Assist schools in identifying and enrolling eligible children.
 - Coordinate ECD-School clustering to leverage existing infrastructure for increased enrolment and education service delivery
- **Schools**
 - Admit eligible children and ensure timely entry of enrolment data in SDMS.
 - Promote awareness among parents and guardians about pre-primary education.
 - Cluster nearby ECD centres to provide administrative services such as student registration in SDMS to allow for provision of capitation grant and school feeding.
- **Faith-Based Organizations and Private Providers**



- o Expand access to pre-primary services and report enrolment data to the district.
- **Parents and Communities**
 - o Ensure eligible children attend pre-primary and support school readiness initiatives.

Expected results

Implementation of this *Umuhigo* is expected to achieve the following results:

1. Increased enrolment of children aged 3–5 years in pre-primary across all districts.
2. Greater community awareness and participation in supporting early childhood education.
3. Expanded access to pre-primary services through clustered ECD centers, public and government-aided schools, Faith-Based Organizations, and private providers.
4. Improved school readiness and early learning outcomes for enrolled children.
5. Reduced disparities in access to pre-primary education, especially for rural areas.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Umuhigo on increasing pre-primary enrolment will be monitored and evaluated to ensure that targets are met. Districts will conduct routine monitoring, verify enrolment records in schools, and ensure timely reporting in SDMS.

MINEDUC will provide technical guidance and oversight, while periodic district-level review meetings will assess progress, identify gaps, and guide corrective actions. Key indicators such as enrolment rate and coverage status of eligible children will be tracked to measure performance and inform decision-making.

Methodology for Evaluation

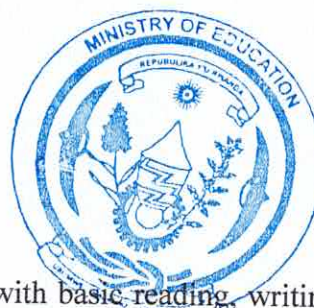
The Umuhigo will be evaluated by the National Institute for Statistics (NISR) at the end of the fiscal year using physical verification of sampled schools and SDMS data to assess enrolment rate.

District performance will be scored based on these findings, while ongoing monitoring by districts and sectors will support data quality for the final evaluation.

4. Adult Literacy

Introduction

The Umuhigo on reducing adult illiteracy seeks to equip adults with basic reading, writing, and numeracy skills, enabling fuller participation in social, economic, and civic life. The Integrated Household and Living Standards Survey VII (EICV7) shows that one in four adults (24.2%) aged 15 and above remain illiterate. Illiteracy is higher among women (26.4%) than men (21.6%), in rural areas (28.9%) compared to urban (13.1%), and among the poorest households (37.5%) versus the wealthiest (10%). Illiteracy is also most severe among older adults, with nearly 4 in 5 (79%) of those aged 65+ unable to read or write, and among persons with disabilities, where 56% are illiterate.



Overview

The Umuhigo on reducing adult illiteracy aims to provide basic reading, writing, and numeracy skills to adults who have not completed formal education. It will be implemented through community learning centers and local partnerships to ensure inclusive access across all districts.

Rationale

Reducing adult illiteracy directly supports Vision 2050 and NST2, both of which emphasise human capital, equity, and inclusive growth.

EICV7 confirms that over 2.3 million adults in Rwanda are illiterate, disproportionately affecting rural residents, women, the poor, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Addressing this challenge through community learning centres and local partnerships will break cycles of exclusion, expand access to economic opportunities, and ensure that Rwanda's development is inclusive and equitable.

Objective

To reduce adult illiteracy by identifying and enrolling illiterate adults in literacy centres, expanding access to learning opportunities, and monitoring progress at district level, thereby equipping adults with basic reading, writing, and numeracy skills to fully participate in social, economic, and civic life.

Scope

This Umuhigo targets all illiterate adults across districts, providing access to community-based literacy programs and ensuring inclusive participation, with progress monitored at district levels.

Link with Vision 2050, NST 2 and National Aspirations.

The Umuhigo on reducing adult illiteracy supports Vision 2050 and NST2 by building human capital and promoting lifelong learning and reducing inequality. It contributes to national aspirations of social inclusion, economic empowerment, and active civic participation through improved literacy among adults.

Implementation Approach and Activities

Districts will coordinate enrolment, oversee literacy centres, and ensure timely data reporting. Adult literacy centres will deliver learning programmes, while sectors and local leaders mobilise communities and support participation.

Implementation will include:

- Identifying and enrolling illiterate adults in all districts.
- Expanding access to literacy programmes through centres and community partnerships.
- Mobilising communities, local leaders, and organisations to champion adult literacy.
- Monitoring and reporting on the performance of literacy centres at sector and district

Expected results

Implementation of this Umuhigo is expected to achieve the following results:



- Increased number of adults enrolled in adult literacy centers across all districts.
- Improved literacy skills (reading, writing, and numeracy) among participating adults.
- Expanded access to adult literacy centers and learning opportunities.
- Strengthened community engagement and support for adult literacy initiatives.
- Regular monitoring and reporting of adult literacy progress at district level

Stakeholders and their roles

- **Ministry of Education (MINEDUC)**
 - Provides policy guidance, technical support, and monitors national progress.
- **District**
 - Lead implementation at district level, coordinate enrollment campaigns, and oversee literacy centers.
 - Ensure timely reporting and monitor progress.
- **Sectors and Local Leaders**
 - Mobilize communities and support awareness-raising for adult literacy participation.
- **Adult literacy Centers**
 - Deliver literacy programs and support adult learners.
 - Maintain records and report enrolment and progress to districts.
- **Local Organizations and Partners**
 - Provide additional literacy services, resources, and support outreach initiatives.

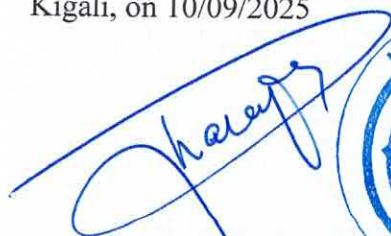
Monitoring and Evaluation

Districts will monitor enrolment, participation, and progress in literacy programs. MINEDUC provides technical guidance, and NISR will conduct an end-of-year evaluation.

Methodology for Evaluation

NISR will evaluate the Umuhigo at the end of fiscal year. District performance will be scored against the targets and participation.

Kigali, on 10/09/2025



Charles Karakye
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education

