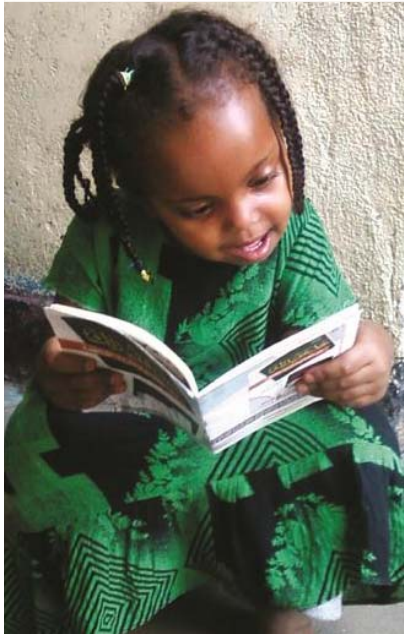


# Community of Practice Workshop: Getting the Right Books to the Kids

Rwanda Reads



**It's amazing that those twenty-six little marks of the alphabet can arrange themselves on the pages of a book and accomplish all that. Readers are lucky – they will never be bored or lonely.”**

# RWANDA – BUILDING A CULTURE OF READING





# RWANDA – AT A GLANCE



**Population:** 11 million  
*(highest population density in Africa)*

**Median age:** 19

**Vision 2020:** Shift economy from agriculture-based to knowledge-based economy

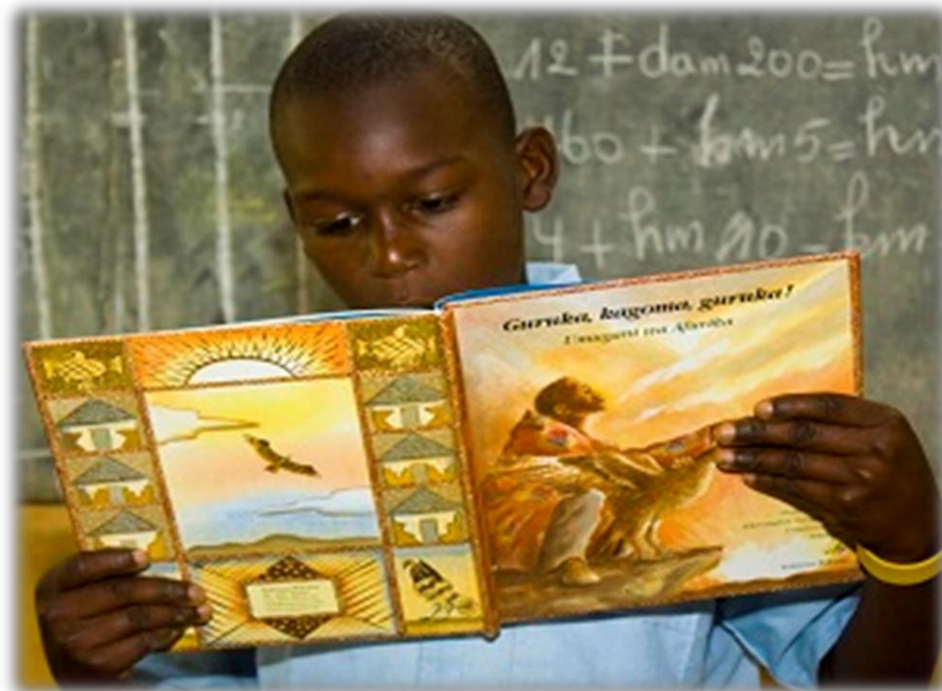
# READING: A KEY SKILL FOR ACHIEVING VISION 2020

Rwanda must develop *a reading culture* in order to...

- Achieve quality education
- Strengthen English/Kinyarwanda reading fluency
- Develop imagination and creativity
- Empower the public through lifelong access to knowledge
- Develop the habit of seeking new information in response to constantly evolving economic, technological and social environments

# MINISTRY'S COMMITMENT TO VISION 2020 -

# ALL CHILDREN READING BY 2015



# BUT WE KNOW THAT ALL CHILDREN CAN'T READ LIKE THIS CHILD CAN...

## Two baseline assessments (2011)

- Test of students' reading comprehension (*LARS*)
- Test of fundamental reading skills (*EGRA*)



## Results

A significant % of students cannot *read with understanding* a grade-level text (*LARS*)

Many students perform below grade level on *foundational reading skills* – by *end of P3*, *15% cannot read a word*

# **BUT...WHY CAN'T THEY READ**

- Reading for pleasure or life-long learning is not widely embraced
- Few parents read to their children
- Access to reading materials is limited
- Relatively few books in Kinyarwanda language, especially for young readers
- Few libraries and limited capacity to utilize and manage existing libraries (schools, community libraries etc)
- Supports for literacy instruction in primary schools are limited (age-appropriate books in classrooms, adequate training on how to teach reading)



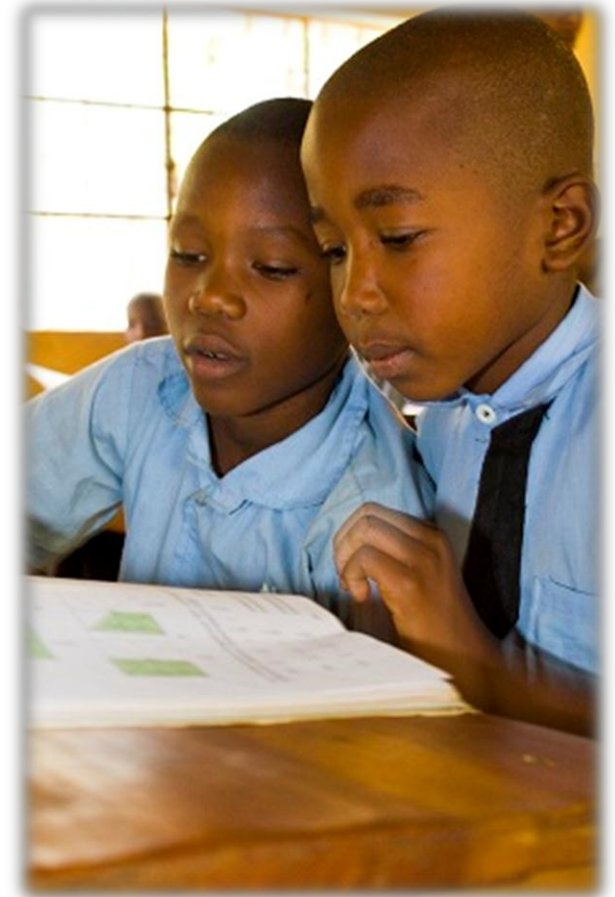
# RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGE: THE RWANDA READS INITIATIVE (MAR 2012)

National initiative, co-chaired by the Rwanda Education Board and USAID

## Goal

Involve all stakeholders (*private & public sector, civil society, donors, publishers, NGOs, media, etc.*) in the implementation a coordinated program to -

- improve students' reading skills
- promote a culture of reading across Rwanda



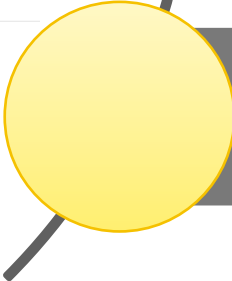
# RWANDA READS OBJECTIVES



1. Improve reading skills



2. Increase access to reading materials



3. Transform reading attitudes and habits



# NATIONAL LAUNCH July, 2012



# RWANDA READS OBJECTIVES



1. Improve reading skills

2. Increase access to reading materials

3. Transform reading attitudes and habits



# 1. IMPROVE READING SKILLS – TRAINING

## Preservice training

- ✓ New preservice curriculum that includes training to in how to teach reading, particularly in early primary (Dec 11)



## Inservice training

- ✓ New school-based mentoring program to improve teachers'
  - English language skills
  - Literacy instructional practices
- ✓ Daily interactive audio programs that model evidence-based reading practices





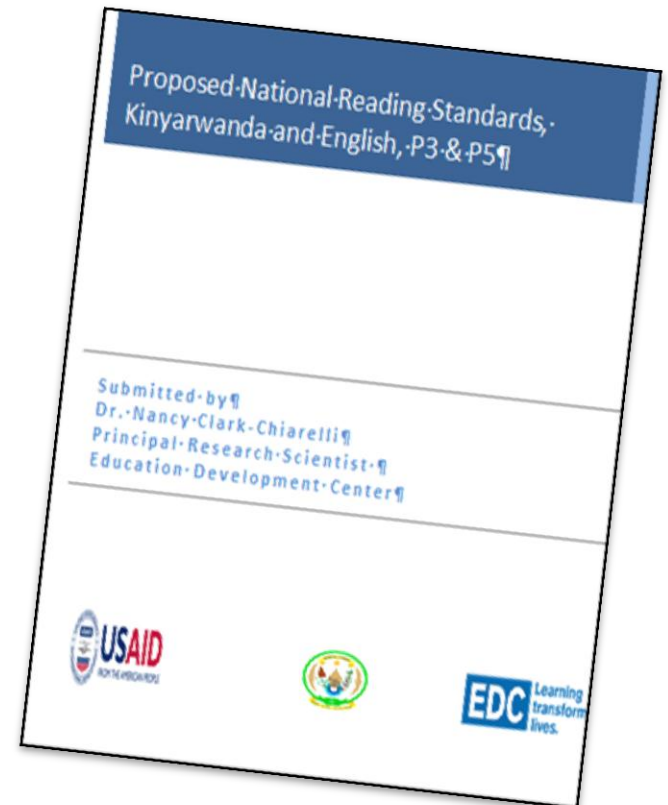
# 1. IMPROVE READING SKILLS – CURRICULUM

## New National Reading Standards (June 2012)

- P3 and P5 fluency and reading comprehension

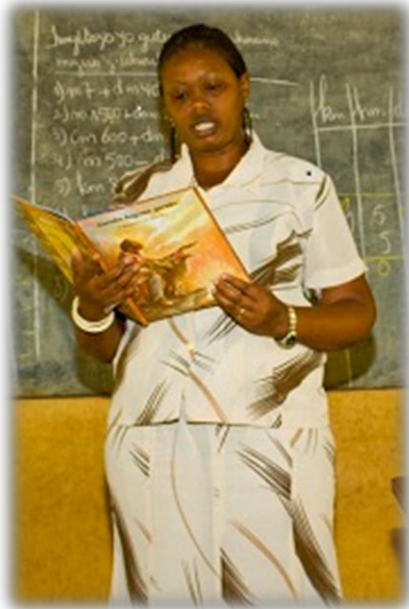
## New curriculum and and instructional materials

- Implementation, by 2016 of a curriculum with increased focus on reading/ writing and aligned with the new standards
- Production of textbooks and reading materials keyed to this curriculum

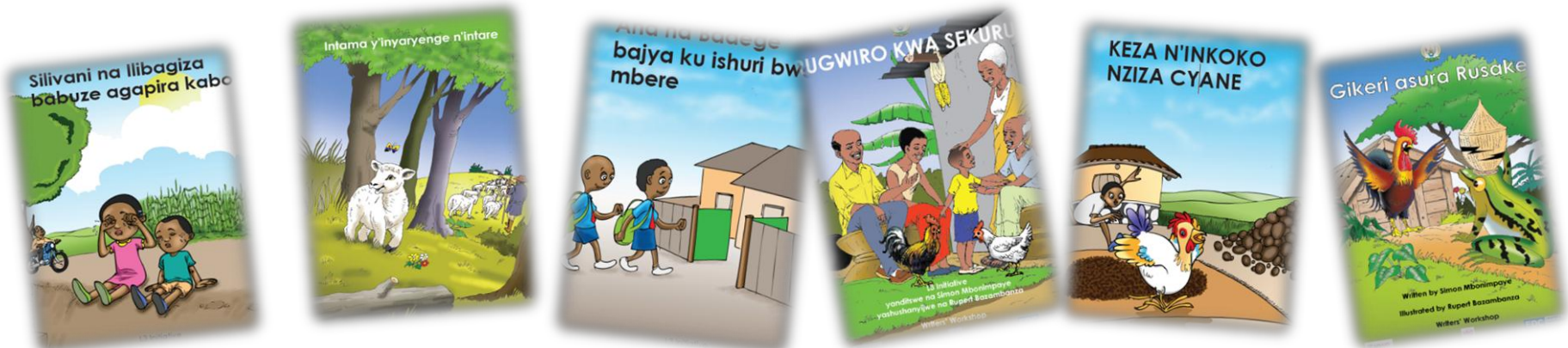


# 1. IMPROVE READING SKILLS – Instructional materials

- **New reading instructional materials (USAID/L3)**



- **Teacher's manuals** with lesson plans that model evidence-based reading practices
- **Weekly teacher read aloud stories**, and **student decodable texts** keyed to particular letter-sound combinations
- **Audio stories and interactive audio programs**



*Some of the new weekly teacher read aloud stories*

# RWANDA READS OBJECTIVES



1. Improve reading skills

2. Increase access to reading materials

3. Transform reading attitudes and habits



## 2: INCREASE ACCESS TO READING MATERIALS



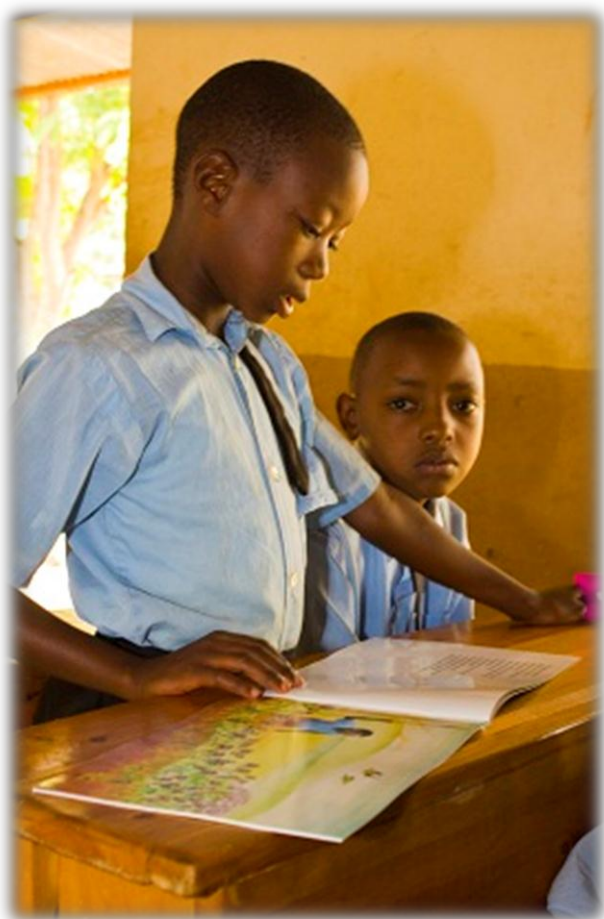
- ✓ Reinforce existing partnerships with local, regional and international publishers
- ✓ Distribute more reading materials to schools

✓ Increase local production of reading materials (*Writer's workshops, National Story Writing competitions*)

✓ Increase number of libraries (school, community, etc)



# REINFORCE PARTNERSHIP WITH PUBLISHERS



## Number of titles submitted 2009 tender

Kinyarwanda	19 titles <i>(none for P1 to P3)</i>
English	227 titles





# REINFORCE PARTNERSHIP WITH PUBLISHERS

April 2012 – Tender for new reading materials

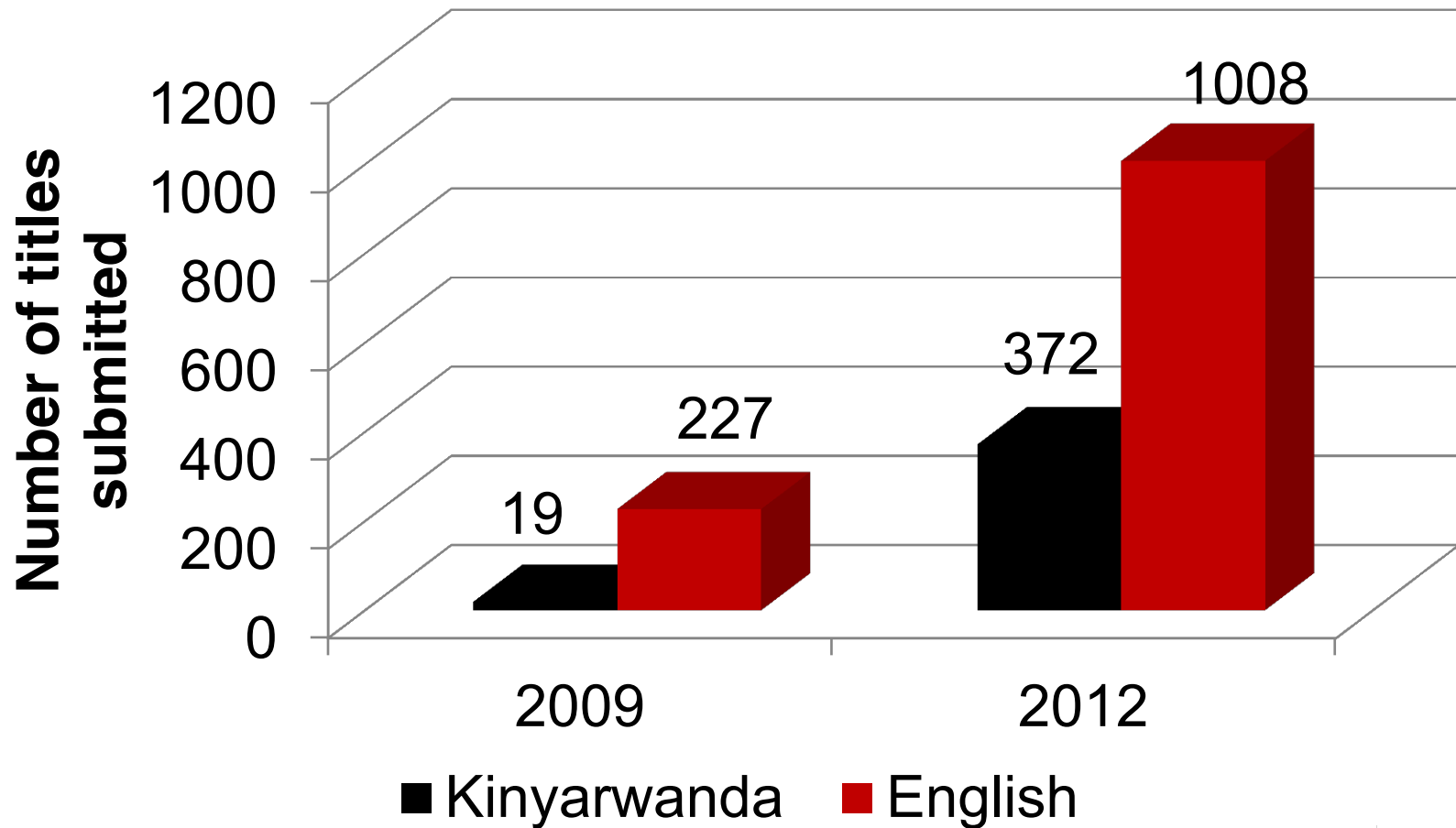
**Detailed technical specifications for 21 reading levels\* – from beginning to autonomous reader**

- age appropriate themes
- age and culturally appropriate social messages
- developmentally appropriate language, vocabulary, font, illustrations (from beginning to autonomous reader)

\* *adaptation of Fountas and Pinnell scale*



# Comparison between 2009 and 2012 tender

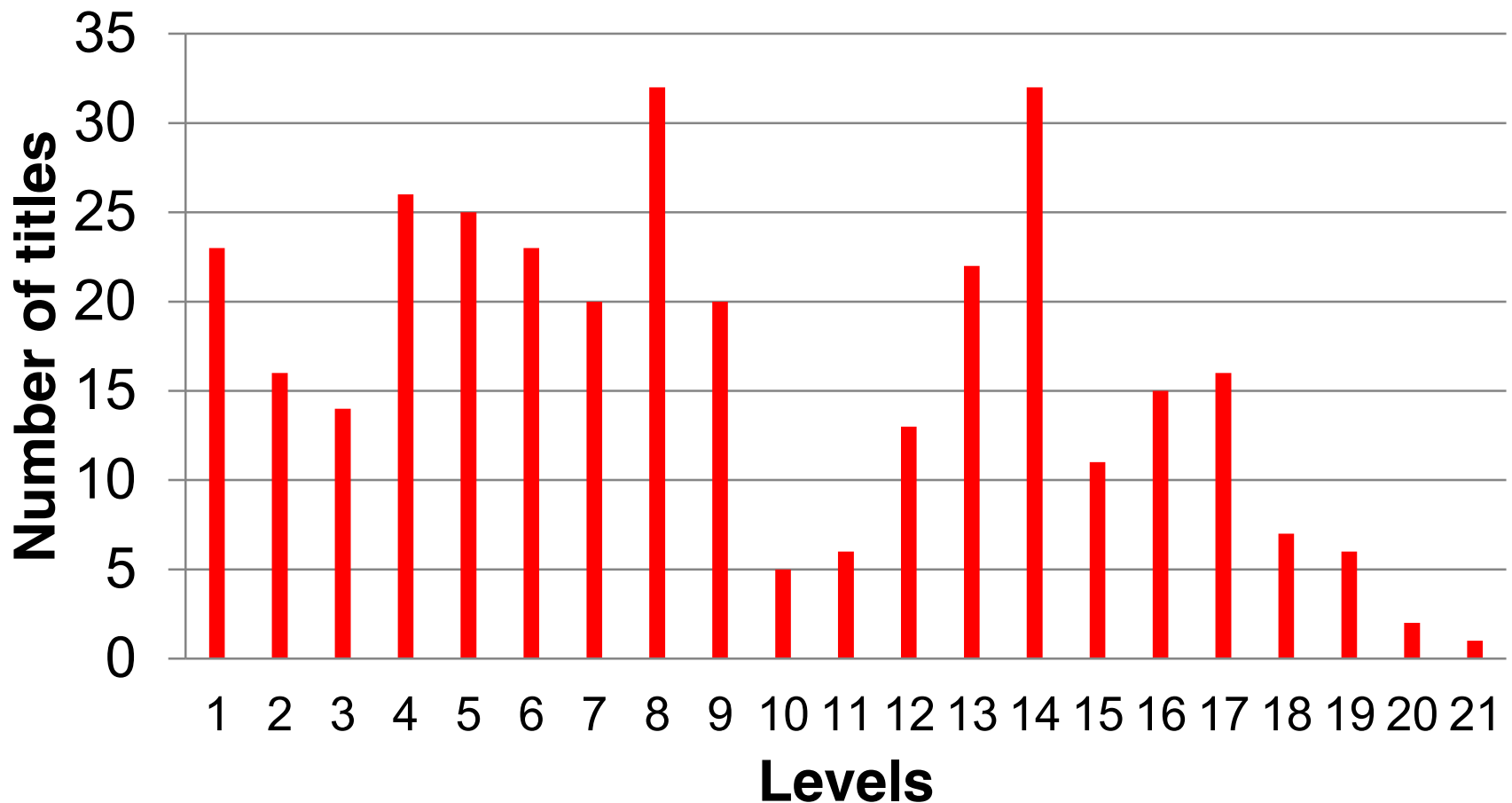


- **1900%** increase in Kinyarwanda titles
- **340%** increase in English titles



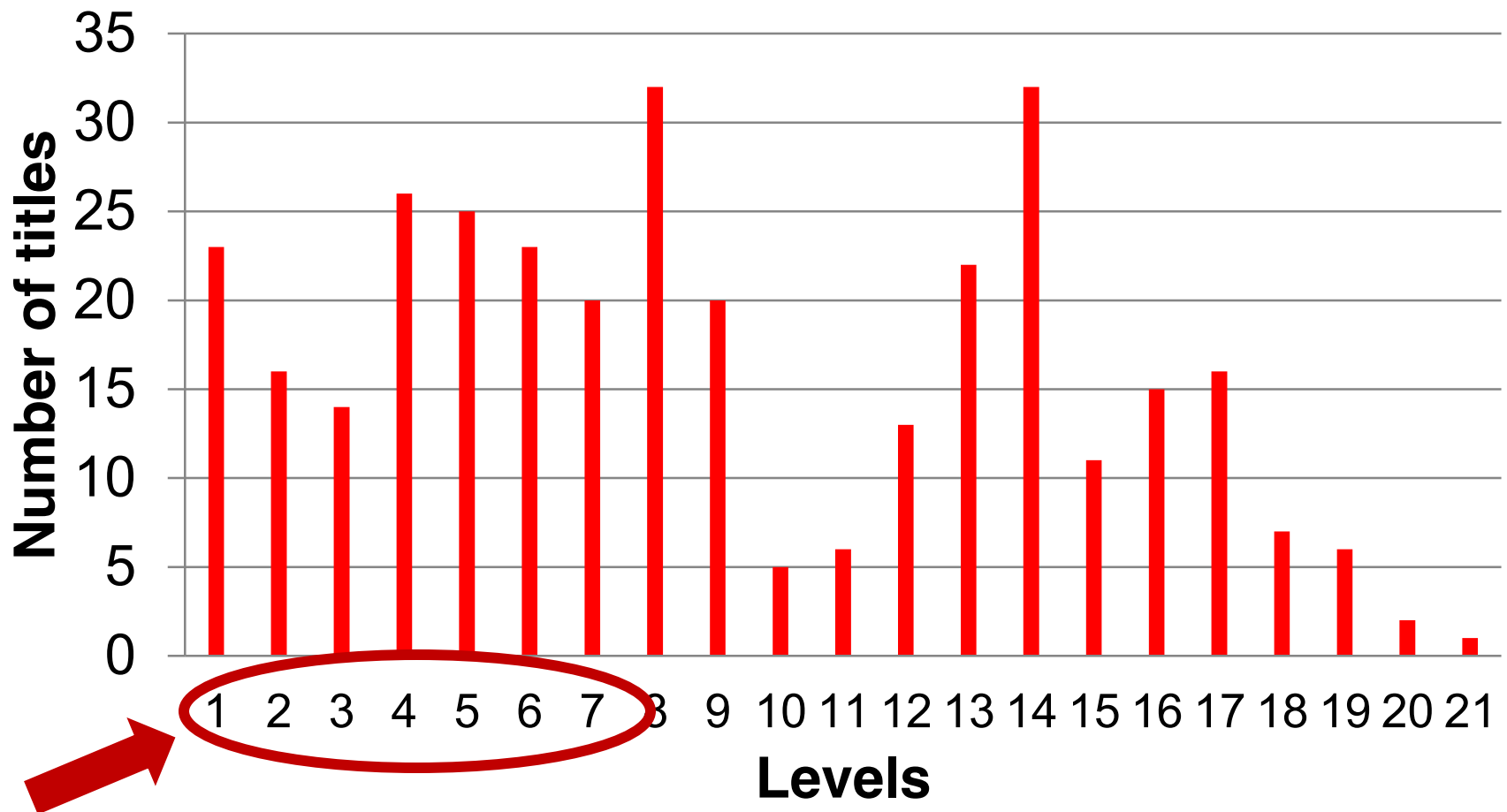
# INCREASE ACCESS TO READING MATERIALS

## KINYARWANDA TITLES



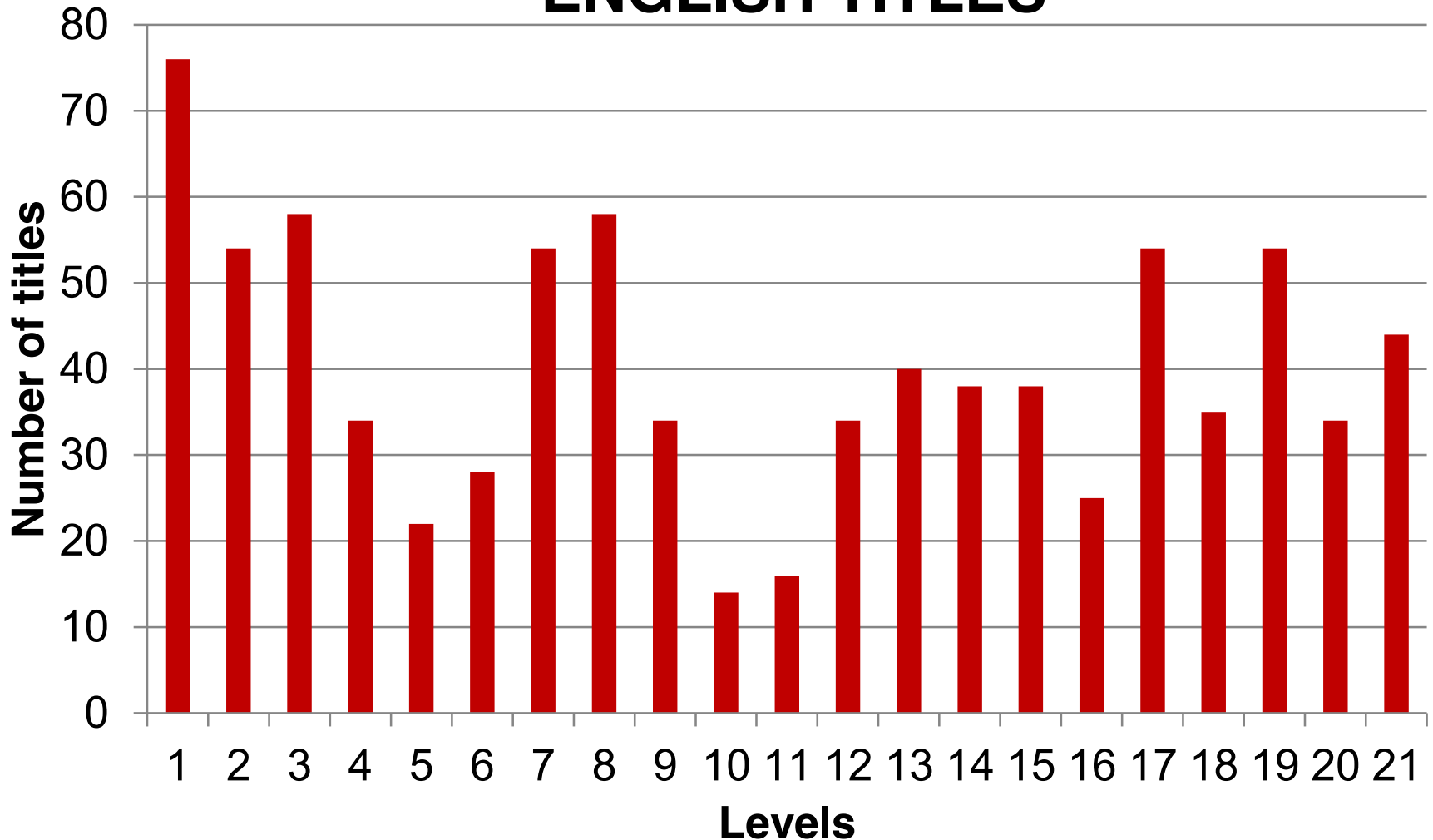
# INCREASE ACCESS TO READING MATERIALS

## KINYARWANDA TITLES



# INCREASE ACCESS TO READING MATERIALS

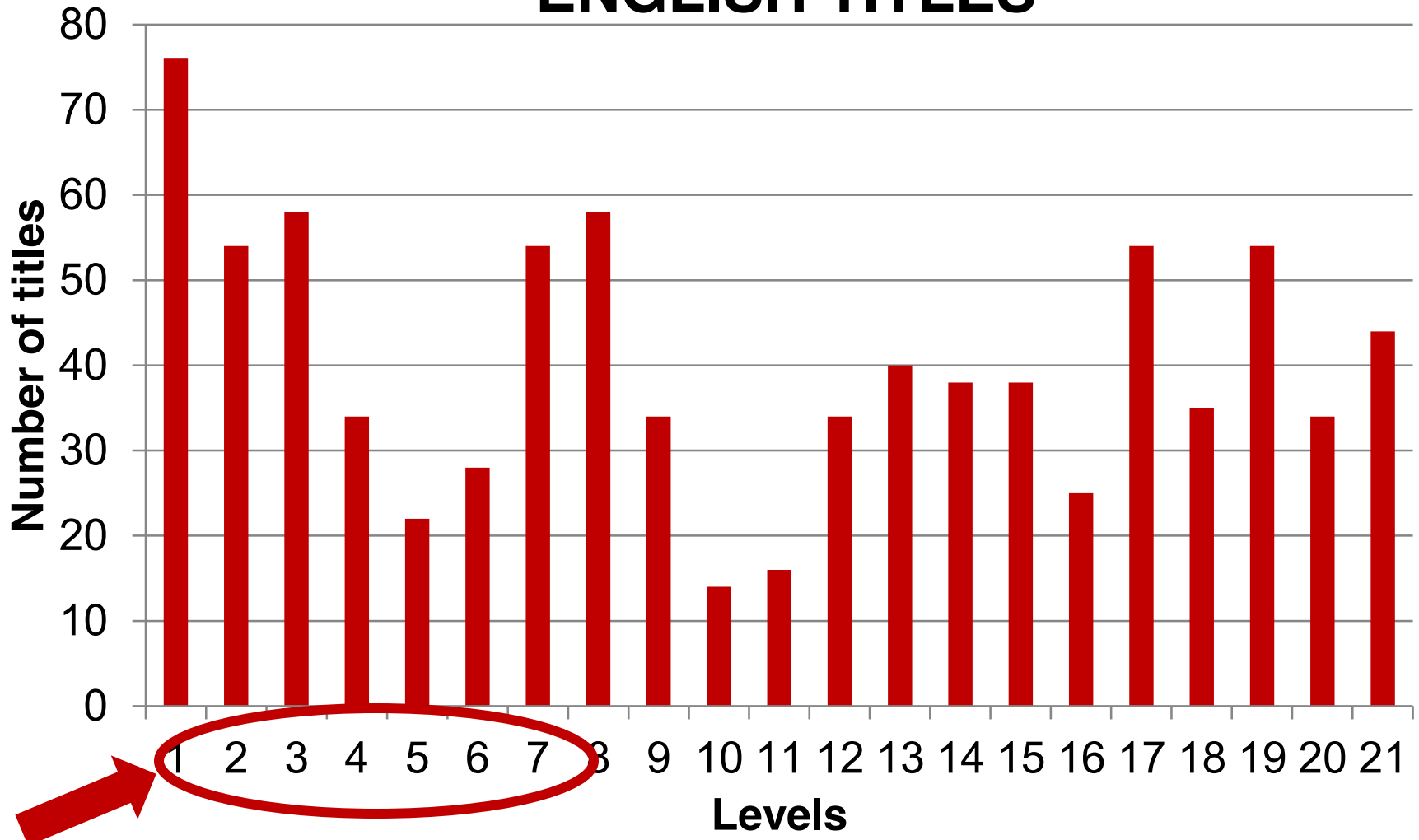
## ENGLISH TITLES





# INCREASE ACCESS TO READING MATERIALS

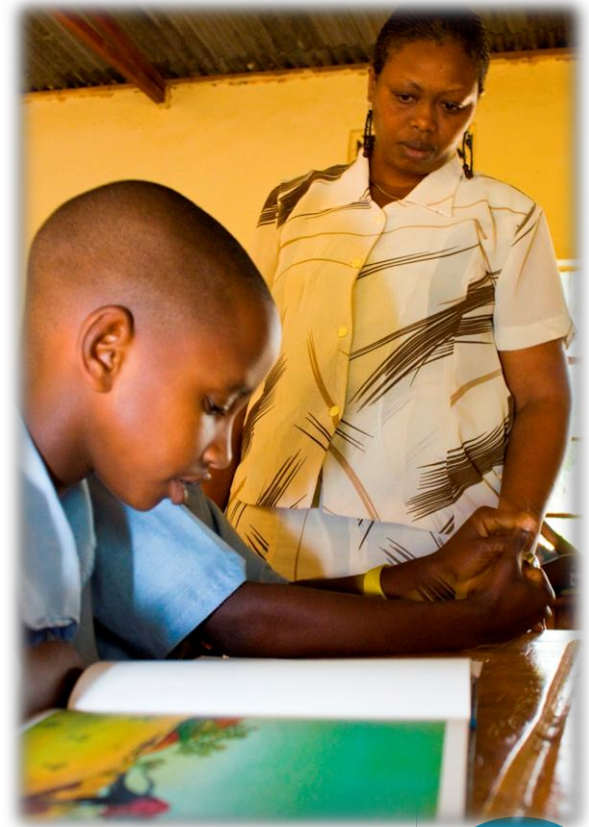
## ENGLISH TITLES



# PARTNERSHIP WITH PUBLISHERS - RESULTS

## Sufficient titles to

- build grade specific classroom library collections (library in a box)
- Introduce school-wide recreational reading materials (« Drop everything & read »)
- Implement home-school reading programs

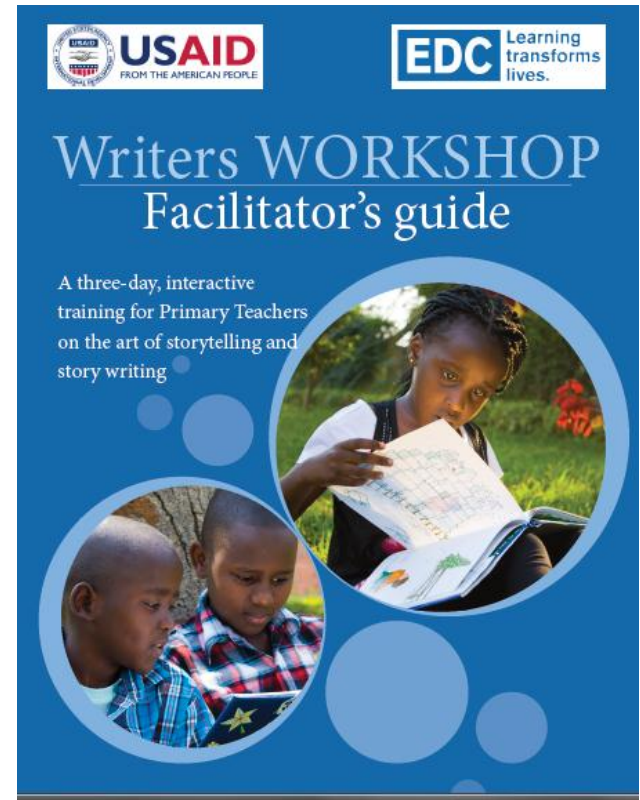


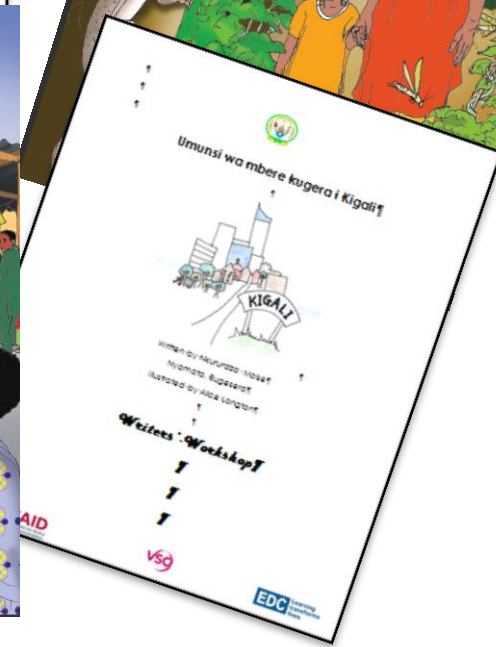
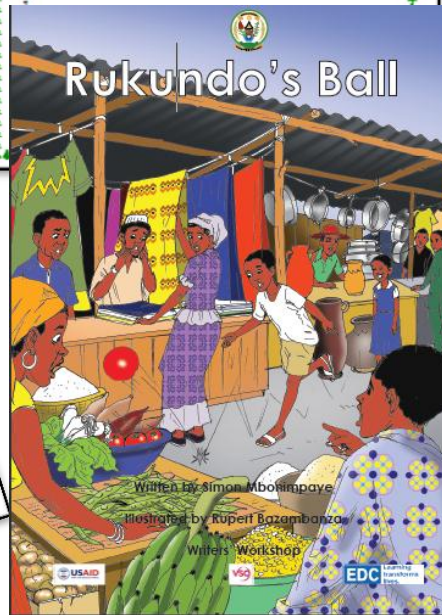
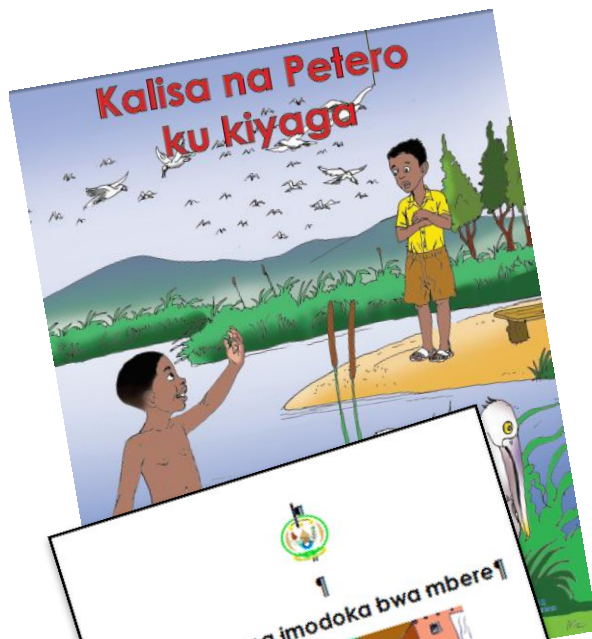
# INCREASE LOCAL PRODUCTION OF READING MATERIALS– WRITERS’ WORKSHOPS



*Turning teachers into authors*

**Purpose:** Creating a bank of age and context appropriate stories for primary classrooms





- 3 writer's workshops since April 2012
- Over 70 story books authored
- **Next step:** Establish public-private partnership to publish stories and get them into schools



# INCREASE LOCAL PRODUCTION OF READING MATERIALS– NATIONAL STORY WRITING COMPETITIONS



Partnership with the Equity Bank (Aug 2012) to

- Sponsor two competitions per year
- Publish annual anthologies of winning entries and distribute them to primary schools across the country





# INCREASING ACCESS TO READING MATERIALS – MOBILE LIBRARIES

- Launch 11 mobile libraries in October 2012 in rural, hard to reach areas  
*(Partnership with Peace Corps)*
- Each mobile library has 1200+ titles and serves 2 to 3 communities
- Plan to expand to 80 mobile libraries by 2016.



# RWANDA READS OBJECTIVES



1. Improve reading skills

2. Increase access to reading materials

3. Transform reading attitudes and habits



# 3: TRANSFORM READING ATTITUDES AND HABITS

- ✓ Communicate to parents and communities the critical role they play in supporting children's reading
- ✓ Build popular interest and excitement around reading via
  - School reading competitions nationwide (First Lady)
  - “Drop everything and read program”
  - Home-school reading programs
  - Writers' Workshops
  - Annual national story writing competitions



# TRANSFORM READING ATTITUDES AND HABITS - ACTIVITIES TO DATE

- ✓ Television broadcast of Rwanda Reads documentary, radio broadcast of audio stories
- ✓ Rwanda Reads radio advertisements & SMS
- ✓ Posters distributed
- ✓ Book for parents on importance of reading developed
- ✓ Book discussion groups held



# RWANDA READS OBJECTIVES

## Monitoring progress



1. Improve reading skills

2. Increase access to reading materials

3. Transform reading attitudes and habits



# MONITORING PROGRESS



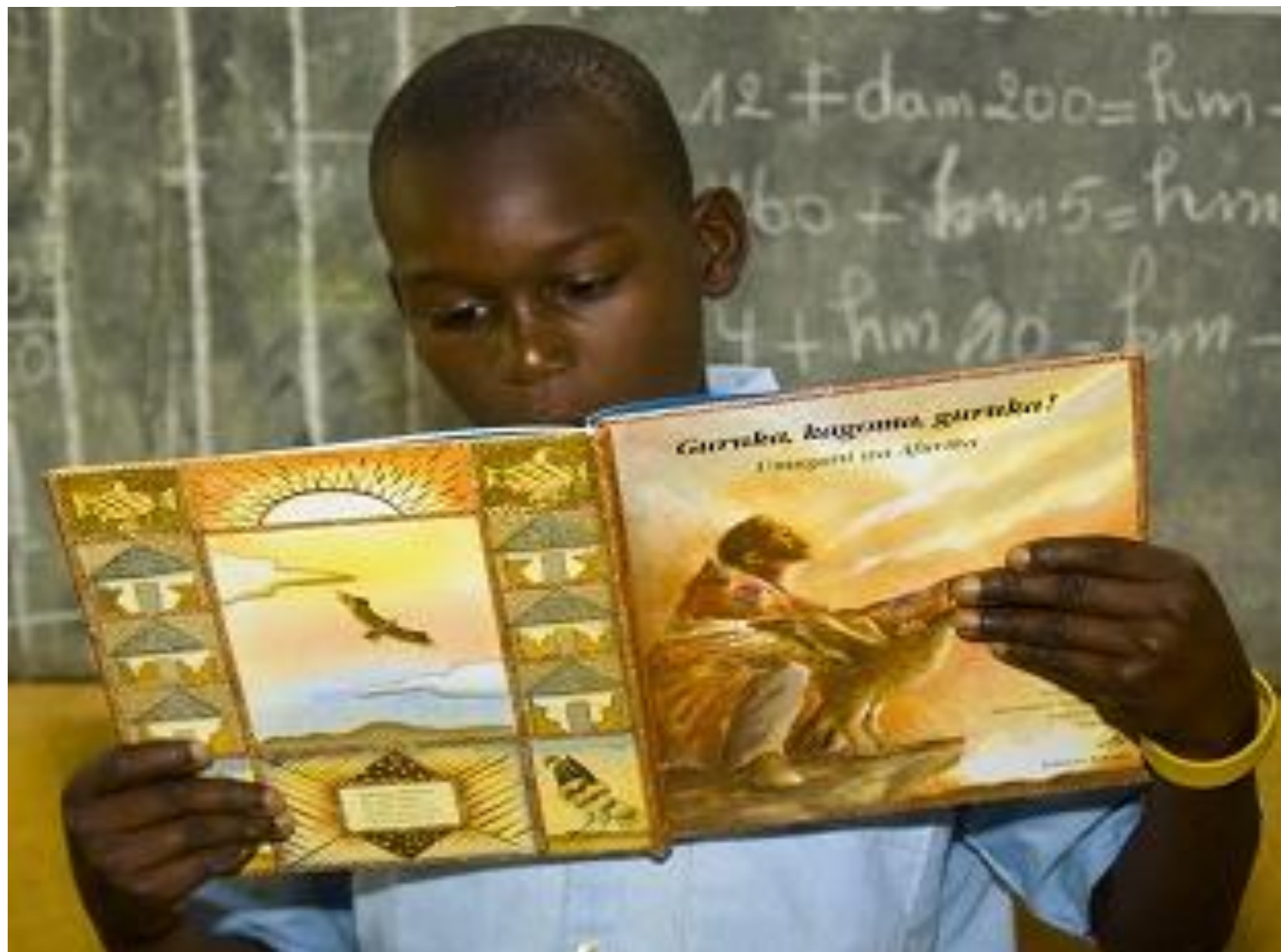
National assessments to evaluate comprehension and fluency - P3 and P5

- **2011** – baseline
- **2014** –schools receiving intensive support to improve early grade reading
- **2016** – nation-wide assessment





# THANK YOU





# **A CONCRETE MANIFESTATION OF RWANDA'S COMMITMENT TO BUILDING A CULTURE OF READING... THE NEW KIGALI PUBLIC LIBRARY**

