EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Research has shown that the first few years of a child's life are the most critical to ensuring their optimal holistic development. The early childhood development (ECD) programme in Rwanda seeks to ensure that young children and families, especially the most vulnerable, are utilising quality ECD services. This includes increasing access to ECD services for children and their families, and improving child care and early stimulation by parents and caregivers so children are ready to transition to primary school.

SITUATION

- Only 13% of children have access to organised early childhood education programmes.  
  - 12% of boys
  - 14% of girls

TARGETS

- By 2023, increase access to 30% for all children.

CHALLENGES

- Limited availability of ECD opportunities such as ECD spaces
- Home environments do not support optimal child development
  - Inadequate play and learning materials
  - Parents do not provide adequate care and attention

PARENTS / CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

- Only 49% of children are engaged with an adult in their home to promote learning and school readiness.  

TARGETS

- By 2023, 70% of children are engaged with an adult in their home to promote learning and school readiness.

CHALLENGES

- Parents and caregivers have limited knowledge and skills to support learning at home
  
  - Lack of a standardised national parenting curriculum and guides.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

- Only 63% of children aged 36-59 months are developmentally on track.
  - Literacy and numeracy
  - Physically
  - Socially and emotionally

TARGETS

- By 2030, 90% of children are developmentally on track.

CHALLENGES

- Most ECD centres are not meeting minimum national standards.
  - 48% of caregivers are not trained.

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1 Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey 2014-15
2 “Engaged”= Four or more activities that promote learning and school readiness.
3 Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey 2014-15
4 National Mapping of ECD Services 2018