

TEACH Rwanda Annual Report 2024 –2025



Learning, Teaching, and Systems Change in Action

Advocating for innovative, inclusive, engaging, respectful, joyful education

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With Gratitude

The Year in Numbers

Bright School

- 345 learners across Nursery to Primary
- 19 teachers engaged in ongoing coaching and mentoring
- 1 model school demonstrating play- and project-based learning in practice
- 5 nursery classes
- 11 primary classes
- 1 part time school-based mentor
- 2 Peace Corps Volunteers
- 28 graduating P6 students
- 4 new members of teaching staff and administrative recruited
- 2 weddings and 3 births

Teacher Development

- 59 in-service teachers supported through mentoring and training
- 1107 children impacted
- 4 school leaders engaged in instructional leadership development
- 5 partner schools mentored using TEACH Rwanda Standards
- 1 Module 1, 2 and 3 Cycle completed

Inclusion & Equity

- 10 learners supported through Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- 100% of teachers trained in inclusive, play and project-based pedagogy
- 2 IEP review cycles per term, conducted in partnership with parents
- 1 workshop on neurodiversity
- 3 days of CPD on SEN and inclusion

Partnerships

- 4 new MoUs signed with partners
- 1 MoU renewal with existing partner
- 1 successful district level Expo
- 1 new consultancy contract

What we Focused on this Year

- Strengthening Bright School as a living model of high-quality, inclusive teaching and learning demonstrating what is possible with Rwandan teachers, Rwandan students and the Rwandan curriculum.
- Deepening teacher understanding of child development, brain development, learning through play and projects, the 'why' behind play and practical, hands-on tools and strategies that can be embedded into daily practice
- Embedding inclusive practices and SEN systems within everyday classroom teaching. Developing knowledge and understanding around neurodiversity
- Supporting teachers to design meaningful, hands-on, real-life learning experiences centred around themes and enriched by community-based visits and outdoor learning
- Using data and observation to inform teaching, identify challenges early, and support individual progress
- Improving parent-school dialogue and relationships by introducing a termly parent survey, distributing a termly school newsletter, promoting Bright School's innovative approach to teaching and learning through a strong social media presence and starting a BS instagram page, encouraging all grades to have an active WhatsApp group for sharing learning experiences with parents and by termly, engaging General Assemblies co-facilitated by an active PTA

Message from Leadership

The 2024 - 2025 year was one of both challenge and meaningful growth for TEACH Rwanda. It was a year that required us to adapt, reflect, and make deliberate choices in service of our long-term vision.

At Bright School, we expanded not only our physical campus but also our organisational capacity. We welcomed a newly trained Finance Officer, a skilled HR Specialist, and an experienced School Accountant and Operations Supervisor. Alongside the growing strength of our education team, these additions brought renewed energy, increased transparency, and a higher level of professionalism across the organisation, strengthening the foundations required for sustainable growth and true collegiality.

At school level, we implemented a revised approach in the Upper Primary, focused on both subject delivery and timetabling. We recruited specialist teachers with strong subject knowledge and a shared commitment to child-centred practices and invested significant time in induction and mentoring to support their transition into the Bright School community. We also purchased land and began construction of a new eight-classroom building, a major milestone that will enable us to apply for permanent school accreditation.

We were encouraged by high levels of staff retention, reflecting a strong and committed team culture. However, student enrolment declined slightly, largely due to the expansion of neighbouring schools. While we recognise this as an ongoing challenge, we do not see ourselves in competition. Unlike other schools in Muhanga, Bright School remains inclusive in the truest sense - welcoming children regardless of gender, background, or academic ability. We resist ranking and comparison, holding firm to the belief that every child is deserving, capable, and able to thrive when given the right conditions. Our aspiration is to be parents' first choice not because of exam outcomes alone, but because of trust, values, and the quality of the learning experience we offer.

This year also brought moments of pride and celebration. We graduated our first full Primary 6 cohort of 28 students, a significant milestone for the school. Our learners competed in the FIRST LEGO League Regional

Competition in Huye, demonstrating collaboration, problem-solving, and confidence. We also held a joyful Moving Up ceremony for our nursery children transitioning into primary - a moment that reflected both children's growth and our commitment to listening to and responding to parent voice.

There were challenges too. We said a sad goodbye to long-standing partners, including REAP, as funding constraints brought our Memorandum of Understanding to a close. We also concluded our partnership with the Pharo Foundation after successfully delivering all agreed objectives and supporting the development of a sustainable, system-level mentoring model through the training of their teacher mentors. While endings are never easy, we are proud of the impact achieved and the relationships built and believe the change we witnessed over the duration of our partnerships have long term impact and sustainability.

We also made a deliberate investment in strengthening our organisation from within, engaging JSA Consulting Rwanda to support TEACH Rwanda and Bright School through a period of growth and transformation. This partnership has helped us move from a largely volunteer-led mindset towards a more mature, professional, and sustainable organisational structure, supported by the transition of our Kigali team into shared office space fostering greater collaboration, productivity, and a stronger sense of community.

Though heavy with change, it has left us stronger, more focused, and better prepared for what lies ahead. We remain committed to our vision of contributing to a nation of analytical thinkers, collaborative innovators, and compassionate leaders - rooted in a culture that values equity, inclusion, and lifelong learning.

Rachel Walmsley, TEACH Rwanda Country Representative

Who We Are & What We Do

Vision

Rwanda will be a nation of analytical thinkers, confident communicators, collaborative innovators, compassionate leaders, with a culture that embeds life-long learning based on play and projects.

Mission

Collaborate with education leaders through teacher capacity-building to implement global best practices in play and project-based learning that will result in a world-class education system in Rwanda.

What makes us distinctive?

TEACH Rwanda is an international education development organisation, founded in the USA and deeply rooted in Rwanda since 2010. We work at the heart of education systems - strengthening teaching practice, developing school leadership, and transforming learning environments - because we believe quality education begins with empowered educators.

Through our teacher and school leader mentoring programme, we support education providers to implement inclusive, culturally relevant, and trauma-aware pedagogy grounded in play and project-based learning. Our



approach combines global, research-based best practices with deep local insight, enabling teachers in our model school, Bright School, and partner schools to adapt learning for diverse needs and build on children's natural skills and interests.

Through ongoing mentorship, classroom observation, professional learning, and strong partnerships, TEACH Rwanda supports teachers to create environments where every child is valued. By engaging parents and caregivers and working collaboratively with other education providers, our impact extends beyond individual classrooms - strengthening schools and improving learning outcomes for children across Rwanda.

Bright School

Bright School in Muhanga is operated by TEACH Rwanda, a Rwandan INGO and non-profit organisation based in the United States. Bright School is more than just a school, however. It is a **demonstration site** where evidence-based practice, joyful learning, and inclusive education come together. It allows teachers, school leaders, and partners to see what is possible when children are placed at the centre of the learning ecosystem and teachers are supported as reflective, skilled professionals.

Since 2010, TEACH Rwanda volunteers and staff have built Rwandan teaching capacity, and demonstrated evidence-based, inclusive education, rooted in global best practices and play and project-based learning, with children and families in our exemplary and partner Schools.

Context: Why This Work Matters in Rwanda

Learning outcomes challenges

Nearly 92% of Rwanda children have access to primary education, however too many children are failing to achieve foundational skills. Large class sizes, curriculum overload, and limited opportunities for active learning mean that children often progress through grades without mastering literacy, numeracy, or problem-solving skills. These learning gaps emerge early and widen over time particularly for children from low-income households and those with additional learning needs.

Teacher support gaps

Teachers lack sustained, practical support to translate policy and training into daily classroom practice. Professional development is often short-term, theoretical, and disconnected from classroom realities. Ongoing coaching, feedback, and opportunities to practice and reflect are limited leaving teachers under-resourced to meet the diverse needs of learners.

Teachers as agents of change

Teachers are the single most powerful in-school factor influencing learning outcomes. When teachers are equipped with effective, learner-centred strategies such as play and project-based learning, and differentiation, classrooms become more inclusive, engaging, and impactful. Strengthening teacher practice creates immediate benefits for children and lasting change within schools.

Why demonstration schools matter for system learning

System reform requires visible, practical examples of what quality teaching and learning look like in context. Demonstration schools serve as living laboratories where effective pedagogy, leadership, and inclusion can be seen in action. They provide a credible, local reference point for teachers, school leaders, and policymakers, bridging the gap between policy and practice and helping educators see what is possible with the Rwandan curriculum, Rwanda children and Rwandan teachers.

Bright School: The Heart of Our Work

Bright School at a Glance

At Bright School, children joyfully engage in meaningful, relevant learning with the Rwandan Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC).

- Students build on their knowledge and skills through play and project-based learning built around a weekly theme
- Class sizes range from 20 in pre-primary to 28 in upper primary, to ensure children's full participation.
- Our teachers are mentored to respectfully engage children's analytical thinking, nurture their executive function skills, AND prepare them for Rwandan exams and success at Secondary level and beyond
- Classes are truly inclusive - we don't rank, we don't turn children away because of low performance and we help those who are struggling with Individual Education Plans and tailored support and the nurture they need to develop self-esteem and academic competence.
- Our Fund a Future scholarships (FaF) make it possible for the most vulnerable children in our community to access an education that enables them to lift their families out of poverty.
- Classrooms and our library are filled with interesting books, in three languages, that children choose and love to read. Natural and recycled items, blocks, clay, and puzzles are abundant.

Teaching & Learning in Action

The TEACH Rwanda Learning Cycle

TEACH Rwanda has developed a practical tool to support teachers in designing learning environments that reflect what we know about how children - and adults - learn best. The tool is intentionally presented as a **cycle**, recognising that learning is not linear and that deep understanding develops over time through experience, reflection, and practice. This cyclical approach also reflects TEACH Rwanda's belief in lifelong learning: teachers and learners alike are continuously growing, adapting, and refining their understanding.

The cycle begins with **Engage**, where learners take part in meaningful, hands-on activities or experiences that spark curiosity and motivation. Teachers intentionally design these experiences to be relevant, playful, and connected to real life. Learners then **Connect**, linking new experiences to prior knowledge, language, and lived experiences. These connections support deeper learning and ensure that new ideas are not taught in isolation.

Through this process, learners begin to **Understand**, as connections lead to new insights, concepts, and ways of thinking. Understanding is strengthened when learners are given opportunities to **Apply** their learning in different contexts - through problem-solving, projects, discussion, or practical tasks - allowing them to test ideas, make mistakes, and learn from experience. Finally, learners **Reflect and Practice**, thinking about what worked,

what was challenging, and how they can improve. Practice deepens skill development, while reflection informs future learning.

Reflection naturally feeds into the next learning experience, restarting the cycle at a deeper and wider level. This approach supports inclusive, joyful, and meaningful learning, while providing teachers with a clear, flexible framework for planning, observation, and continuous improvement in their classrooms.



Typical classrooms

Our well-prepared teachers choose weekly themes that spark children's curiosity. Popular themes include transport, construction, weddings, chickens and soil. Teachers begin each week by asking children what they already know and what they want to learn. Then at the end of the week children review what they learned and list more things they want to find out. Teachers use a curriculum web to plan the learning opportunities for students and integrate the theme across all subject areas in lower primary and across Social Studies and Science in Upper Primary.

P1 Theme Liquids

*Children suggested they could make their own juice. They use maths to work out the cost of ingredients. They count and measure how much fruit to use, what size to cut the pieces, and how long to cook the fruit. Science happens as they see and smell the fruit change through cutting and heating. Students discuss hygiene before cooking, eating and cleaning. Children experience good nutrition when they drink their juice. **They LIVE what they LEARN.***

Nursery 1 Theme Fruit and Nature

*N1 students visited a banana plantation. They had fun exploring the plantation and learning about how bananas grow. The children also had the chance to buy yellow bananas which helped them to practice using money. They used banana leaves to make craft, learning about recycling and how to care for the environment. The visit helped the children to connect with nature, be creative and to understand the importance of taking care of the world around them. **Real life learning in real life contexts***

Children's Outcomes

What is Bright School's vision for its students?

At Bright School, we believe every child has something special to offer.

When children leave Bright School at the end of Primary, we want them to be confident, curious, and ready for the next step in their learning journey.

Our learners grow into thoughtful young leaders who care about others, think creatively, solve problems, and never give up when things are difficult. They learn to believe in themselves, to dream big for their futures, and to take pride in who they are as Rwandans. We want them to feel that they have agency at a young age and therefore the power to implement change in their country even as children.

At Bright School, success means more than just good grades. It's also about kindness, respect, teamwork, and resilience. We help every child discover what makes them shine — whether it's coding, art, music, public speaking, fashion, mathematics, or writing — so they can use their talents to make a positive difference in their communities and in the world.

Top 10 Bright School Learner Attributes

1. Confident Communicator

A child who expresses ideas clearly in Kinyarwanda and in English, and through many forms of communication such as storytelling, art, play, coding, and performance — and who speaks with self-belief and confidence.

2. Curious, Life-Long Learner

A learner who asks questions, seeks out new knowledge, explores freely, and sees learning as an exciting, ongoing journey rather than a task.

3. Creative Thinker & Innovator

A child who experiments with new ideas, uses imagination, and embraces hands-on exploration to bring concepts to life.

4. Problem Solver

A learner who can analyse challenges, try different strategies, learn from mistakes, and persist until they find a solution.

5. Caring & Compassionate Citizen

A child who understands others' needs, shows empathy, and actively supports classmates, family, and community members.

6. Resilient & Growth-Mindset Driven

A young person who does not give up when things are hard, sees challenges as opportunities, and recognises that effort leads to improvement and growth.

7. Proud & Responsible Rwandan

A learner who values their culture, identity, and language, understands their civic responsibilities, and takes pride in contributing to Rwanda's development and recognition.

8. Collaborative Team Player

A child who listens to others, shares ideas, builds friendships, and contributes positively to group work and collective goals.

9. Ethical & Respectful Leader

A learner who demonstrates honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respectful behaviour - someone who can lead with humility and integrity, starting right from early childhood.

10. Agent of Change

A young person who believes they *can* make a difference, takes initiative, contributes to solutions, and uses their talents whether academic, creative, or practical in order to improve their school, community, and country.

Inclusion & Equity

Inclusion and equity are not add-ons at TEACH Rwanda; they are embedded in how teaching and learning are designed and experienced.

We define inclusion as the intentional creation of learning environments in which *all* children - regardless of ability, background, language, or learning profile - can participate meaningfully and thrive. By its very nature, learning through play and projects is inclusive: children engage with ideas through multiple media, multiple senses, movement, dialogue, creativity, and collaboration. This approach aligns closely with the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which emphasise providing multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression, and with global evidence showing that learning through play supports deeper understanding, motivation, and equity for diverse learners. Teachers at TEACH Rwanda are supported to differentiate learning thoughtfully, adapting content, processes, and outcomes to respond to the varied strengths and needs within their classrooms. This work is further strengthened through the integration of a new data analysis tool, which enables teachers to easily identify patterns of progress and challenge, at the level of individual learners or subject areas, and to select targeted, practical interventions that support every child's growth and learning journey.

Inclusion in Practice at Bright School

At Bright School, inclusion is visible in everyday classroom practice rather than reserved for specialist support alone. Teachers design learning experiences that are flexible and open-ended, allowing children to access concepts and demonstrate understanding in different ways. For example, children may engage in storytelling and role play, use manipulatives, drawing, construction and movement, or collaborative problem-solving or projects to build strong literacy and numeracy skills. This ensures that learners with differing language levels, learning preferences, or confidence can participate meaningfully. Project-based learning further supports inclusion by offering sustained opportunities for children to work at varying levels of complexity, make choices, and build on their individual strengths while learning alongside peers in both indoor and outdoor environments.

Alongside this universal approach, Bright School has strengthened its Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision at a deeper and more systematic level. Teachers now have a clearer and more confident understanding of

individual learning needs and how these may present in the classroom. Through intensive professional development, teachers are trained to use structured observation tools to notice learning, behavioural, and developmental patterns over time. These observations support the early identification of key areas of need, enabling timely and appropriate responses rather than allowing children to fall through the gaps.

Once needs are identified, teachers work collaboratively to develop Individual Education Plans (IEPs) that set clear, achievable targets tailored to each child. These IEPs are practical working documents, closely linked to classroom practice and regularly reviewed to track progress. Importantly, IEPs are reviewed twice each term with parents, strengthening shared understanding and partnership between home and school. This cycle of observation, planning, implementation, and review ensures that support is responsive, evidence-informed, and grounded in each child's lived learning experience.

Together, these inclusive classroom practices and strengthened SEN systems ensure that Bright School is not only welcoming to all learners, but actively supports their growth, progress, and sense of belonging.

'You have created an environment where every child, including those with special needs, can learn, grow, and belong. Because of this inclusive spirit, Asher was saved from any form of discrimination and was able to improve in many ways: socially, intellectually, in language, physically, and in practical life skills. These are lifelong treasures he carries with him. Asher found friendship not only with teachers, but also with students, administration staff, and even kitchen staff. This sense of belonging gave him dignity, confidence, and joy. For this, we as a family are forever grateful.'

Please accept my humble appreciation for the love, vision, and commitment you have shown to Asher and to many other children in Rwanda.

With deepest gratitude

Jean Claude

Testimonial from parent of a child with Down Syndrome at Bright School



P6 Exam Results

Across Rwanda, a great deal of importance is placed on the Primary 6 National Leavers' Exams (PLE). At TEACH Rwanda, we believe that education is about much more than exam results. However, we recognise that parents, local leaders, and national authorities often use these results to judge a school's performance. While we are proud of every child who prepares for and sits these exams, we also understand that not all learners achieve the expected results. Children's performance can be affected by many factors, including trauma, family illness, socio-economic challenges, vulnerability, or special educational needs. In many schools, children who struggle academically or have additional needs are turned away. At Bright School, we believe in the potential of every child.

At a Glance

- 28 learners sat for the PLE in the 2024 - 2025 academic year.
- 1 learner scored 92.8%.
- 6 learners (21.4%) received placement letters to boarding secondary schools
- Maths was the lowest performing subject with the average pass rate being 55.2%
- English was the highest performing subject with 100% pass rate and 42% scoring above 80%
- The school achieved a pass rate of 96.4% (27 out of 28 learners)

Nationally, the official pass mark is set at 50%. However, for many parents, greater emphasis is placed on securing placement in secondary boarding schools, where the required cut-off score varies each year. As a result, success is often measured by the number of students receiving placement letters, rather than by the number of learners achieving the national pass mark of 50% or above.

Over the past two years, the number of learners placed in boarding secondary schools has reduced over the last two years due to the government policy to strengthen secondary day schools. Previously, learners who scored above 70% were placed in boarding schools, which many parents believe offer better education than day secondary schools. This year, the threshold was 83%. For context, 16 learners (57.1%) at Bright School scored above 70%.

The school achieved a pass rate of 96.4% (27 out of 28 learners), compared to the national pass rate of 75.64%. Only one learner (3.6%) scored below 50 % which is a failure, while 24.36% of candidates nationally failed. This shows that the failure rate at Bright School was very low. The learner who did not pass came from an extremely vulnerable family situation that affected her overall well-being and learning for many years. In other school environments, it is very likely this child would have dropped out of school and wouldn't have had the opportunities that Bright School was able to provide her with such as psychosocial and financial support. In fact, we consider her exam results the complete opposite of a failure achieving an average score across all subjects of 46.6%.

In maths, 5 learners (17.9%) scored below 50%, this was the lowest performing subject at Bright School which is also reflected nationally where Mathematics remains the lowest-performing subject. The average performance in each subject was above 70 % except in Mathematics where the average performance was 55%. The whole class average performance in all five examinable subjects was 75%. The highest performance was in English, where the pass rate was 100%, as all 28 learners scored above the pass mark of 50%. In English, 12 learners (42.9%) scored above 80%.

Achievements and new initiatives

Nursery Moving Up Ceremony

This year we closed the academic year with a new event - our first ever Nursery Moving Up Ceremony. This event was inspired by parental requests for Bright School to have a graduation ceremony for the nursery 3 students as they leave the pre-primary setting and prepare to join P1. Many graduation ceremonies here in Rwanda involve long hours of sitting, speeches from local dignitaries and an adult-centric environment. For some years we had resisted a graduation programme for our youngest children as research says events like this can be stressful, overwhelming and meaningless for children. However, since piloting a termly parent survey, we felt it was time to show parents that we can both listen to their requests whilst remaining aligned with our values and what we know is good for children. The event was vibrant, interactive and full of celebration and significance. Children travelled through a tunnel of hands whilst the community sang them through the metaphorical journey from their nursery building to the primary building. Children performed songs they'd chosen themselves, some children made speeches and shared poems they composed in their heads, they presented their teachers with homemade cards as a thank you for their love and care and shared food and drinks with their parents.

Primary 6 End of Primary Graduation Ceremony

We held our annual P6 Graduation Ceremony class of 25 P6 students complete with hat throw, cake, shared drinks and song and certificates. Our students were both proud and emotional and we celebrate all of them as they move forward in their education as proud Bright School Alumni.



Free Enrichment Provision

As part of our commitment to extending learning beyond the classroom, Bright School hosted its fifth annual Enrichment Summer Camp, offering a week of engaging activities for Bright School students and children from the wider Muhanga community. For the first time, the programme was provided free of charge, widening access while raising the school's visibility and strengthening community engagement. Led by experienced facilitators, the camp created a supportive environment where children could build confidence, develop new skills, and form friendships through activities such as construction, robotics, modern dance, traditional dance, and rugby. The programme enriched students' learning experiences and reinforced Bright School's reputation as a place where curiosity, creativity, and practical skills can flourish beyond the four walls of the classroom. It was also increased

our enrolment in P6 as a number of the students who came to the programme from competitive schools chose to stay for the next academic year.

Preparation Programme for Students Entering P6

In response to strong parent demand, Bright School introduced an after-school preparation programme for students in P6 plus a summer programme for those students just completing P5. The programmes addressed learning gaps, provided more personalised support, and built students' confidence and motivation while reducing stress and anxiety associated with national examinations. During the hour after school each day, teachers worked with students to revisit and clarify newly taught content from the week, addressing misconceptions and strengthening understanding. The approach emphasised peer-to-peer learning through discussions, paired research, group work, content analysis, and targeted focus groups for students requiring additional support in specific subjects. As well as helping to prevent future academic difficulties and promote long-term success, the programme also has potential to develop into a small income-generating activity (IGA) in the future.

Recruitment of Part-Time School-Based Mentor

To strengthen internal capacity for teacher development, Bright School recruited a part-time School-Based Mentor from within the existing teaching team. The mentor, previously a P4 teacher, had consistently demonstrated strong expertise, creativity, personal drive, and clear potential to support the professional growth of colleagues. A part-time teaching role was created to enable her to dedicate time to peer support and mentoring, helping to build a stronger culture of collaboration, reflective practice, and continuous improvement across the teaching team.

Teacher Development & Professional Growth

Our three-tiered teacher mentoring process is designed to fundamentally change the way the Rwandan education system works, by preparing teachers with the knowledge and skills needed to support children's integrated learning through play and projects.

Observation (Module 1) at a TR Exemplary School (typically Bright School) where teachers and school administrators see small class sizes (20-28), children's original writing and drawing displayed in classrooms, learning materials for children to choose, children's literature for reading pleasure, opportunities for free-play and teaching practices that encourage understanding and real life application. Participants join Bright School teachers for lunch providing opportunities for informal conversations about what they have observed. The day is closed with a guided reflection time with the TEACH Rwanda staff.

Workshops (Module 2), four day-long sessions are held at least a week apart, so teachers and school leaders can apply their new learning between sessions. Teachers begin to understand child and brain development research, implement evidence-based practices, use planning and teaching tools as live documents, and create an engaging learning environment.

Classroom mentoring (Module 3) supports teachers as they implement their new skills. This is a key component of our 2-year MoUs with partner schools. Mentoring and face to face reflections sessions are essential to building robust systems that are sustainable. Each mentoring visit is followed by a comprehensive report detailing individual teachers' achievements and recommendations and whole school goals.

During this time, Bright School and other partners demonstrating exemplary practices, act as training sites, mentoring spaces and living laboratories

We are adapting and refining our programme in order for it to remain relevant to the current policy environment and applicable across all of pre-primary and primary.

Learning focus areas cover:

- ❖ **Child Development:** early childhood education principles; brain development; neuro-science; how brains are nurtured by caretakers through play and projects; age appropriate milestones.
- ❖ **Play-based professional practices:** what to say to promote student's analytical thinking; coaching conflict resolution; developing executive function skills; how to talk to children using open-ended questions that prompt problem solving, processing, creativity and planning; defining genuine learning and analytical thinking; tools for effective assessment and review; writing objective observations.
- ❖ **Play and projects to integrate the CBC in Pre-primary and Primary:** Applying Dale's Cone of Experience and Bloom's Taxonomy to plan learning opportunities that are engaging, joyful, iterative, social interactive, meaningful, that engage all the senses, that develop multiple areas of human development and that are age appropriate and inclusive; using effective planning tools; using themes to build the curriculum; building a scheme of work that integrates curriculum areas through themes; integrating higher order thinking skills and projects into learning plans in order to create an integrated balanced curriculum.
- ❖ **Foundational Literacy skills:** Reading strategies and how and when to ask comprehension questions; how to use books and storytelling in the classroom; story re-enactment; supporting the development of early literacy through scribbling, drawing and writing original stories.

'Module 2 shifted my entire perspective on education. I discovered that Learning through Play is a better and research-based approach to education and through it we can make education both fun and deeply impactful in the long-term. The practical delivery style perfectly proved that creativity and learning go hand-in-hand.'

Jerome Kayiranga, BS Accountant and Operations Supervisor



Other TEACH Rwanda Partnerships

Ongoing partnerships

Whilst Bright School is our flagship school and lies at the heart of what we do, it is not an island and the impact of TEACH Rwanda stretches much wider. This year we have maintained valuable existing partnerships with both **Komeza and Harmony Nursery Schools** who demonstrate consistently high levels of teaching practice and are aligned with TR Standards providing children with the foundational skills and enthusiasm for learning needed to be ready to enter the primary education system.

TEACH Rwanda was also proud to partner with **Umubano Academy** in Kigali who are operated by **A Partner in Education (APIE)**. We provided professional development and mentorship support across Umubano nursery and primary school over terms 2 and 3 in the academic year 2024 - 2025. Overall, teachers were highly receptive to CPD sessions and demonstrated willingness to engage with new practices. While the degree of classroom application varied, several teachers made significant strides in adopting playful, learner-centred approaches. Building on the strong outcomes achieved during the initial engagement, APIE renewed its partnership with TEACH Rwanda, recognising the value of the work at Umubano Academy and enabling the programme to continue for a further year providing another income stream for TR.

Over the past two years, TEACH Rwanda has developed a strong and highly valued partnership with **EDD - Empower Develop Dignify**, a pre-primary and primary school in Kigali. Throughout this period, EDD has demonstrated an exceptional level of commitment to continuous improvement, engaging fully with feedback, implementing agreed recommendations, and embedding changes in practice across the school.

EDD has been one of the few partner schools to consistently and comprehensively act on all recommendations provided, reflecting a strong culture of reflection, accountability, and learning. As a result of this sustained commitment and progress, TEACH Rwanda is proud to recognise EDD as an exemplary partner school.

In July 2025, TEACH Rwanda entered discussions with EDD with the intention of renewing the Memorandum of Understanding for a further year, building on the strong foundations established and a shared commitment to high-quality teaching and learning.



New partnerships

TEACH Rwanda established a new partnership with **Igiti Africa**, a creative enterprise committed to producing high-quality, culturally relevant educational products. Igiti Africa develops engaging resources such as puzzle

maps, playing cards, and digital games that celebrate African heritage and Black culture while enriching learning and sparking imagination for both children and adults. This partnership reflects a shared commitment to meaningful, contextually relevant learning experiences and to supporting creativity and cultural pride within education.

We also established a new partnership with **Bridgevision**, a publishing company in Kigali that is committed to connecting ideas and vision through innovative publishing. Our partnership has enabled us to print our first edition of 'Natural & Recycled Resources - Learning Materials for Pre-Primary and Primary Students: Find, Play, Understand!' This book has hundreds of ideas about ways for children to learn through play and projects with recycled tires, leaves, bottle caps, animal bones, water...and much more.

Through careful relationship building, TR founder Jan Brown, was able to establish a partnership with **Engineers without Borders (EWBS) Rwanda** at a time when TR was in great need of technical assistance as Bright School expanded its campus. We have been grateful for this MoU and the generous support of EWBS throughout all our recent construction projects where they provided architectural drawings, support with writing BOQs and budgets, technical input and site visits. Their support has been invaluable and will be renewing this MoU in the coming months.

TEACH Rwanda has built a strong and strategic partnership with **Peace Corps** to strengthen both our programme delivery and organisational capacity. Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) work alongside our team at Bright School in Muhanga, supporting pre-primary and primary education initiatives and contributing to teacher capacity development. Importantly, this partnership fills critical organisational gaps that TEACH Rwanda did not previously have the capacity to address. Our first Peace Corps Volunteer serves as a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Outreach Coordinator, leading on content creation and digital communications, data visualisation, and programme monitoring and analysis. Together, this partnership strengthens learning outcomes, accountability, and institutional growth.

National and Development Partner Engagement

TEACH Rwanda actively collaborates with a range of development partners and coordination platforms across Rwanda to strengthen alignment, learning, and collective impact in the education sector. Ongoing engagement with partners such as VSO, Right to Play, and UNICEF includes field visits, knowledge exchange, and shared learning around teacher development, play-based learning, and inclusion. TEACH Rwanda is an active member of the Rwanda Education NGO Coordination Platform (RENCOP), participating in quarterly meetings and contributing to sector dialogue and coordination. We also engage in key technical working groups, including Teacher Development and Education Leadership (TDEL) and Early Childhood Development (ECD), ensuring our work is informed by national priorities and emerging best practice. At the local level, TEACH Rwanda participates annually in the Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) Expo in Muhanga District, increasing visibility, accountability, and collaboration with district authorities and local partners. Together, these partnerships strengthen system learning, coherence, and the reach of our work

Learning, Challenges & Adaptation

This year surfaced several important lessons about the realities of growth, funding, and capacity. While progress continued across programmes, some planned initiatives were delayed or adapted due to external shifts and

internal constraints. These experiences have sharpened our understanding of what TEACH Rwanda needs in order to grow sustainably.

The planned Kitchen and Bakery, supported through a Global Grant from Rotary, did not progress as expected. Changes in grant requirements meant that a stronger WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) focus was needed, requiring a redesign of the original proposal. In addition, rising market prices and inflation since the initial grant application in 2021 significantly increased construction costs. The inclusion of essential WASH infrastructure such as a toilet block, handwashing stations, and a rainwater harvesting system further increased the funding required. As a result, additional resources are now being sought before the grant can be realised.

Our planned full exit from EPR premises was also delayed. While the transition remains scheduled for the next academic year, insufficient capital to expand classrooms on our own site made this move unfeasible in the current year. Despite the ongoing monthly rental costs, we continue to value our relationship with the church. Access to car parking, road infrastructure, playing grounds and shared use of the chapel for large gatherings such as termly General Assemblies and end of year graduations remain important elements of our Memorandum of Understanding.

This year also highlighted gaps in our grant-seeking capacity. As grant applications become a more strategic focus for TEACH Rwanda, it became clear that we need a dedicated application team and a more streamlined internal process. As this was a relatively new area of work, we experienced early challenges in identifying suitable funding opportunities, aligning them with our strategic priorities, and developing effective language for Letters of Inquiry (LOIs). These “teething problems,” combined with broader organisational capacity constraints, slowed progress and reinforced a persistent reality: securing reliable and diversified income streams remains one of our greatest ongoing challenges.

Looking Ahead: 2025 – 2026

Priorities for Bright School

The coming year will focus on consolidating quality while strengthening long-term sustainability. Academically, the school aims to achieve strong P6 examination outcomes through consistent instructional quality, targeted learner support, and careful monitoring of progress. Alongside academic success, Bright School will deepen its pastoral care approach, recognising that wellbeing, confidence, and identity formation are essential to learning.

A key development will be the design and launch of a Girls Programme that supports learners to build practical skills, self-awareness, and confidence in navigating social and systemic barriers. This initiative reflects the school’s commitment to educating the whole child, not only preparing learners for exams but for life.

Infrastructure growth is also a priority. Transitioning from rented premises to a permanent campus will provide stability, enable improved learning environments, and allow for longer-term planning. To support financial resilience, we hope to develop income-generating activities (IGAs), including agriculture to contribute to the school kitchen, coaching programmes for P5 and P6, and our bakery initiative which will provide a sustained income stream for Bright School. These efforts are intended to supplement income while modelling entrepreneurship and sustainability. We also hope to be able to increase teacher salaries to provide a liveable wage more aligned with our values, keep retention high, and affirm the professional value of educators.

Teacher Development Goals

Teacher development will remain central to Bright School's identity as a demonstration of effective practice. The focus is on both strengthening existing skills and introducing new pedagogical strategies so that teaching remains consistent, reflective, and evidence-informed. The long-term aim is to enable Bright School teachers to act as peer mentors and exemplars for other educators and next year we will have a full time, non-teaching teacher mentor for Bright School with this goal in mind.

Partnership with our local Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) will be deepened to provide structured internship placements. These placements will aim to create a mutually beneficial pathway: trainee teachers gain hands-on experience in an innovative environment, while the school develops a pipeline of future educators already aligned with its approach.

Professional learning will continue to emphasise play-based and project-based methodologies grounded in global best practice while remaining locally relevant. Engagement with families and the wider community will also expand through a community development programme designed to build understanding of the school's pedagogy and strengthen trust in child-centred learning approaches. New school partnerships, formalised through MOUs, will amplify our mission, visibility, and shared learning.

Evidence and Learning Agenda

In 2025 - 2026, Bright School will place greater emphasis on systematically capturing and analysing both qualitative and quantitative data. This will include learner outcomes, classroom practice, teacher development indicators, and family engagement. The intention is to produce a research paper that documents impact, identifies areas for growth, and contributes to wider dialogue on effective, inclusive education in the Rwandan context. Evidence will be used not only for reporting, but to guide continuous improvement and reflective practice and to engage donors and key stakeholders

What Support Is Needed

To realise these priorities, the organisation must strengthen its internal capacity. This includes recruiting qualified, innovative staff across both programme and school functions who can sustain growth while maintaining quality. Leadership development is equally important: leaders need to be guided by clear principles that shape decision-making, professional practice, and school culture. Establishing this coherence will ensure that expansion does not dilute values, and that improvement efforts remain focused, sustainable, and aligned with the school's mission. Continued investment in people, systems, and infrastructure will enable Bright School to move from a strong model of practice toward a stable, scalable example of holistic, high-quality education.



Financial Overview

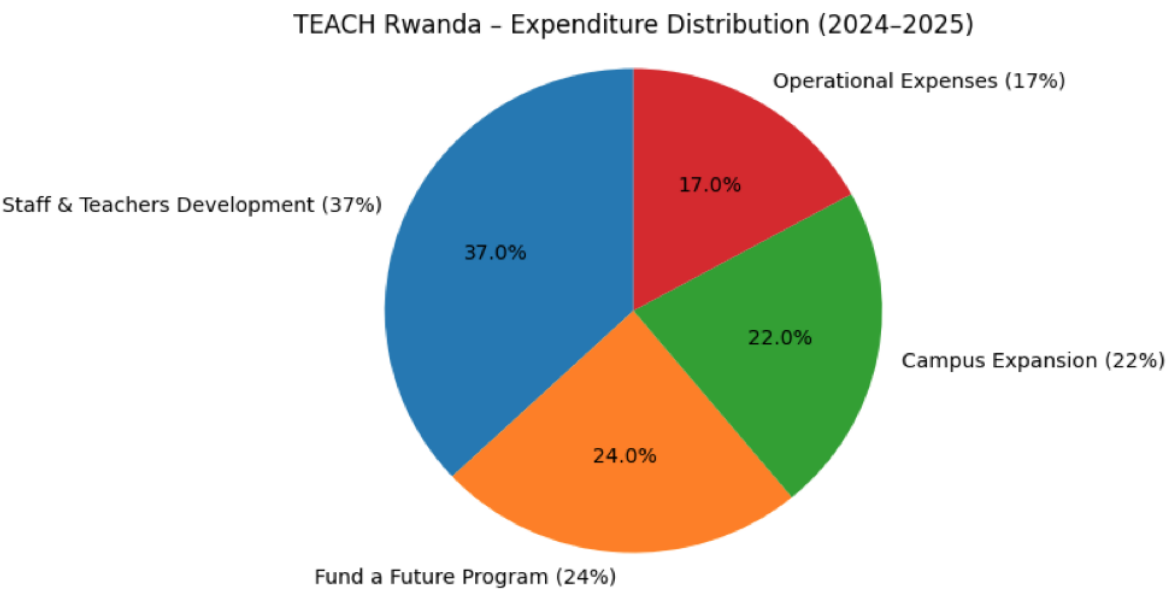
Revenue Overview

During the reporting period, TEACH Rwanda’s income was predominantly sourced from international partners, with national consultation services providing a smaller but strategically important contribution. International donations amounted to USD 165,000 (92.9%), while national donations from consultation services contributed USD 12,576 (7.1%), bringing total revenue to USD 177,576. International funding remained the backbone of the organization’s financial sustainability and enabled a critical transition from a largely volunteer-based model to a fully paid organizational structure.

The mobilized funds were strategically invested to strengthen institutional capacity and support long-term programmatic growth.

Expenditure Overview

In alignment with its mission and long-term vision, TEACH Rwanda allocated its resources across priority programmatic and operational areas, as indicated in the pie chart



These investments were carefully directed toward strengthening existing programs, enhancing staff and teacher capacity, and supporting key operational needs while laying the groundwork for future growth.

Building on this financial structure, TEACH Rwanda is well positioned to sustain and expand its impact. Continued investment in staff and teacher development, alongside long-term infrastructure projects such as land acquisition, construction of a dining hall, and development of a playground, will support the ongoing expansion of the Bright School campus and contribute to an improved, child-centered learning environment.

With Gratitude

None of the work captured in this report would be possible without the collective commitment of our partners. We are deeply grateful to the donors who believe in our vision and invest in the possibility of high-quality, inclusive education for every child. Your trust and generosity allow ideas to become action and help sustain the steady, long-term work that meaningful educational transformation requires.

To the schools that open their doors to collaboration, thank you for your courage and commitment to continuous improvement. Your willingness to innovate, reflect, and grow ensures that the work we do together remains grounded in the realities of classrooms and the needs of children.

To the teachers who bring learning to life each day, we are so grateful for you. You are the heartbeat of TEACH Rwanda and your dedication, creativity, and care for your students are central to our success. It is your daily effort that shapes confident, capable, kind life-long learners.

We are also deeply grateful to the wider community - parents, caregivers, and local partners -whose encouragement and engagement strengthen the environments in which children learn and grow.

Finally, we extend special thanks to Scott Garrigan and the Garrigan Foundation for their many years of generous support and steadfast belief in this mission. Your partnership has played a vital role in helping this work take root and continue to grow.

Together, this community of partners makes it possible to move forward with hope, purpose, and shared responsibility for the future of education.