



Republic of Rwanda  
Ministry of Education

# THE HUMAN CAPITAL INDEX

IMPROVING RWANDA'S PERFORMANCE  
IN THE HCI EDUCATION INDICATORS

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Policy Brief, April 2021



## Key messages

- The Human Capital Index (HCI) published in 2018 and 2020 was the first time Rwanda was put on a global map with regards to performance in Education, Health and Survival
- Performance was above the region in Survival and Health components. But lagged behind on Education and Stunting Indicators
- Rwanda can improve its HCI Score through targeted and focussed reforms in the education indicators. Particularly through increasing access to pre-primary, reducing repetition in primary and addressing dropout rates in secondary education as well as improving learning outcomes and associated assessment tools.
- The districts and local communities have a key role to play to monitor attendance in schools (incl. dropout and repetition) as well as learning outcomes.



## The Human Capital Index 2020 and Rwanda's Performance

The **Human Capital Index** was first published by the World Bank Human Capital Project in 2018 and a second edition was published in 2020. The Index includes 174 countries and compares their performance on three components: (1) Health, (2) Survival and (3) Education<sup>1</sup>. It uses available data through international databases to project the potential that a child born in a country today will achieve in the course of his or her lifetime. The HCI Index ranges between 0 and 1 and is calculated through multiplying the scores of each of the three components. The score for Rwanda is 0.38. It means that a child born in Rwanda today can expect to achieve 38% of the potential it could achieve with a perfect health and education system.

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<sup>1</sup>Each component includes a set of indicators. Health includes (1) the rate of children under 5 not stunted and (2) Survival rate from age 15-60; Survival includes (1) Probability of survival after age 5 and Education includes (1) Expected Years of school, (2) Harmonized Testscores and (3) Learning Adjusted Years of school.

## Table 1: Rwanda's Performance in HCI

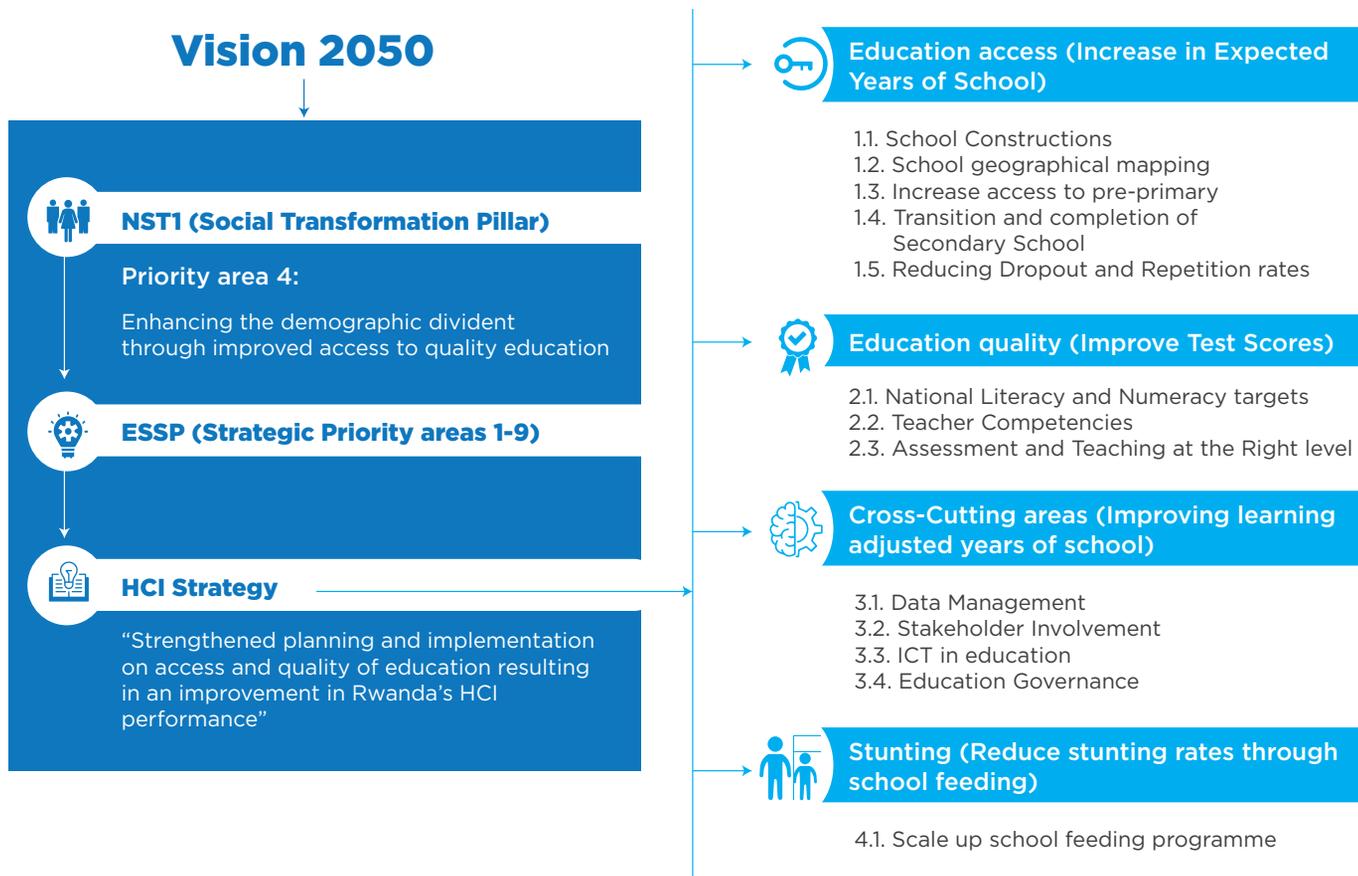
Indicator	Value 2018	Value 2020	Sub-Saharan Africa Average 2020
<b>Overall HCI</b>	<b>0.37</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>0.4</b>
Child Survival (under 5 mortality)	0.96	0.96	0.93
Expected years of school	6.6	6.9	8.3
Test scores	358	358	374
Learning-adjusted years of school	3.8	3.9	4.9
Adult Survival	0.81	0.81	0.74
Stunting	0.63	0.62	0.69

### Key highlights of the HCI Strategy

The HCI Strategy was developed by the HCI Taskforce. The HCI Taskforce was established in December 2020 and constitutes of 5 institutions (NISR, MINALOC, MINEDUC, REB and NCDA). It is led by MINEDUC. The strategy includes specific intervention areas for the Education Indicators of the HCI. Some of the proposed interventions are already on-going. However, capturing them under the framework of the HCI will help to better track the implementation and ensure that synergies between the different programmes are harnessed.

Overall, the HCI strategy is directly aligned with the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP 2018/19-2023/24). The Objective of the strategy is to lead to “Strengthened planning and implementation on access and quality of education resulting in an improvement in Rwanda’s HCI performance”.

The target of the strategy is to increase Rwanda's HCI score to 0.41 in 2022 and 0.44 in 2024 HCI rankings. The below figure outlines the intervention areas and key proposed interventions





## Recommendations for Immediate Interventions

The HCI Strategy provides details on the baseline against the above intervention areas and proposes concrete activities. These activities, if implemented, will improve the performance of the Education indicators at the district level. The below provides a list of interventions and actions that should be fast-tracked and implemented ahead of the publication of the next HCI in 2022.

### 1. Expected years of school

The indicator of Expected years of school, is calculated by using the enrolment rates across all levels of basic education and adjusting them for repetition rates. Currently this indicator stands at 6.9 years (out of a possible of 14 years), meaning that the average child born today can expect to attend 6.9 years of school in the course of his or her life. This shows, that despite a high enrolment in primary school (98.5% in 2019), the enrolment in pre-primary and secondary school remains low (below 30%) bringing the overall figure down. In addition, repetition rates remain high particularly at primary school level (at 10%).

Proposed actions include:

- Increasing primary school readiness through a strengthened focus on increasing the access to pre-primary classrooms through GoR constructions and partnerships with FBOs
- Increase pre-primary teachers on GoR payroll and in tandem strengthen capacity of ECD caregivers
- Closely monitor dropout and repetition rates at local levels through DEOs and SEIs
- Strengthen SGACs and parents' involvement to ensure children stay at school through targeted awareness campaigns
- Improve transition to secondary schools through follow-up and preparations starting in primary school

### 2. Harmonized Test Scores

Improving the quality and learning outcomes of the education system is a much more complex task than the one of increasing access. In the HCI it is done through standardizing available learning assessments across the 174 countries (using TIMSS/PISA or other regionally conducted

assessment scores). For Rwanda the test score is at 358 (out of 625). The data used is from the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) conducted in 2016. The HCI strategy proposes a focus on three intervention areas to improve learning outcomes. Proposed actions include:

- Setting national benchmarks for numeracy and literacy which are aligned with the curriculum
- Setting a national reading target, operationalized through the districts' Imihigos
- Implementation check and support to introduce English as Medium of Instruction in Lower Primary to ensure it does not affect learning outcomes
- Promotion of a reading culture in school and beyond
- Support of teacher training and CPD by allowing time for CPD activities
- School leadership strengthening
- Inspections with a focus on learning outcomes
- The Learning Achievement in Rwandan Schools (LARS) conducted (LARS IV & V) and recognized by World Bank to feed into HCI

- Capacity to conduct and analyse comprehensive assessments strengthened

### 3. Cross Cutting interventions – Learning Adjusted Years of School

The measure bringing Expected Years of School and Harmonized Testscores together is referred to as Learning Adjusted Years of school. This figure is at 3.9 years for Rwanda. It means that even if children attend schools, learning is not necessarily happening. Children on average attend 6.9 years of school, but effectively learn only 3.9 years of content. This is due to various factors that are addressed under Education quality interventions. But there are some areas, which affect both the access to education and its quality. They require focussed attention as well.

#### Proposed actions include:

- Addressing data updates and inconsistencies of data used for HCI ranking
- Operationalise and integrate education data systems for evidence-based policy making
- Awareness campaigns to promote parents and community engagement in education

- Roll out of education community workers
- Planning for a scaling up of education community workers
- ICT connectivity and ICT skills among teachers
- Strengthened governance through ESSP tracking and Joint Imihigo including learning outcomes monitoring (MINALOC and MINEDUC)

#### 4. Stunting

Stunting is one of the two indicators under the HCI Health component. Rwanda currently records 33% of children under 5 years as being stunted (DHS 19/20). Stunting severely affects children’s abilities to learn and is thus closely linked to education. Though it is mostly under the mandate of the Ministry of Health (MINISANTE), we propose to include it under this strategy particularly concerning the role that the school feeding programme can play.

#### Proposed actions include:

Operationalise school feeding programme (particularly pre-primary) and will be scaled up to Primary levels.



## Conclusion

The Human Capital Index (HCI) is a useful tool that Rwanda can use to frame its intervention along education access and quality. It will help to bring the interventions to light that are of most impact to allow the children of Rwanda to reach their potential. This includes expanding the access across the whole cycle of education, strengthening the learning that happens in school and ensuring awareness and involvement among the community in and around the school to monitor both school attendance and actual learning. If the above-mentioned reforms are implemented and the data used for HCI is regularly updated through the respective agencies, Rwanda can achieve an improvement in the quality and access of its education system. This will ultimately also result in a better score in the HCI.



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