



## Focus on Education:

### What is the situation?

The Government of Burundi has declared primary education free in 2007, which resulted in a dramatic increase in enrollment; however, more work needs to be done to improve infrastructure, skill staff, and ensure that children have the means, and necessary school materials to attend school. There is a shortage of classrooms, qualified teachers, teaching materials and school furniture.

The low primary school completion rate (around 53%) is also worrying, and transition to high school remains poor, especially for girls living in rural areas.

### World Vision's response:

World Vision Burundi (WVB) has been partnering with the World Food Program to run a School Feeding Program in primary schools, enabling children not to miss out on school even though are facing a difficult situation at home, with parents struggling to provide them with food. Over the past few years, up to 100,000 school children were supported by the project in Karuzi and Cankuzo. There are also School Feeding Programs running in 20 primary schools in Muyinga, where WVB has been partnering with the government and the community to build new schools.

The Literacy Boost initiative is another example of World Vision's work to improve children's education in partnership with government systems, schools, families and communities.

The Literacy Boost initiative adopts a holistic approach, working with teachers, parents, and community members to create a supportive literacy environment for children - in and out of school. WVB also supports the increase of community's involvement in the improvement of education, with school management committees (SMCs) playing a key role. SMCs comprise of elected members, including teachers, administration representatives, parents, students, and an appointed church representative.

Efforts are underway to encourage greater participation in decision-making by setting up additional student bodies.

### Key achievements in Financial Year 2012:

- 12 new classrooms, 1 library and 1 administrative bloc built
- 25 classrooms rehabilitated
- 94 sets of latrines for schools built
- 11 hygiene clubs set up
- 14,059 children enrolled in the School Meals Program
- Training/Capacity building sessions held for 597 teachers
- Books distributed to 9,625 children who were most in need



Kids pose happily in new school built by World Vision on Gatete Hill, Cankuzo.

### **New school brings joy to over 200 students on Gatete Hill, Cankuzo**

Following the Government's initiative – provision of free primary education in 2007 - the response was positive, and overwhelming. Enrolment in first grade went up to 130%. But even though children want to go to school, in many areas there is a lack of schools, forcing children to walk several miles each day. Mames Nizigiyimana is a ten-year-old boy living on Gatete hill in the eastern province of Burundi. His morning routine is simple: gets up early, fetches water nearby, has breakfast, and then goes to school. His school is in the neighbourhood, on the top of Gatete hill. But not that long ago his routine was different. It would involve walking up to six hours per day – to and back from school - as the Gatete school nearby was too small to accommodate all students. But in September 2012, thanks to World Vision Burundi and its partners, the old, overcrowded, dark school – comprised of two small classrooms – in Mames's area was replaced by a new school, with six brand new classrooms. It stands tall on top of the hill, next to the old school building, its large, bright presence a clear mark of the progress. "For all the people who built this new school, we have nothing else to say but 'thank you.'" When we were still using the old school, we would be afraid that it would collapse on us when it rained, and we were cold too. But now we are studying in good conditions thanks to you," said Mames at the opening of the new school on 29 September 2012.

