



Educational Backgrounder

Rwandan History

Rwanda is a tiny land-locked country in central Africa, home to 11.6 million people. It's a lush, mostly agricultural nation that's been called "the land of a thousand hills." But there's a stark contrast between the beauty of Rwanda's geography and its stark history.

In April 1994, extremist politicians launched a genocide that saw an estimated 800,000 to 1 million Rwandans — mostly ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus — slaughtered in just 100 days by militias. One sixth of the population was wiped out. The few UN Peacekeepers stationed in the country watched in horror as the international community turned a blind eye.

That was 19 years ago. Today, Rwanda is recovering. Reconciliation courts, have helped citizens heal and forgive. A moderate government has made education and technology a priority. Rwandan has one of the highest rates of women in politics. The environment benefits from a national plastic bag ban. But challenges remain.

Sixty-three per cent of Rwandans still live on less than \$1.25 a day, according to 2011 World Bank figures. Ninety per cent of the population are subsistence farmers. Aid was 40 per cent of the budget in 2013. And 11 per cent of Rwandan children are orphaned or vulnerable.

Rwandan Literacy

Rwandan education is free for Grades 1-9, but quality remains poor and resources are scarce, according to World Bank data. Just 54 per cent of students finished primary school in 2008. There are 70 students per primary classroom, and three primary students for every two textbooks. In secondary school there are five students per book. Only 25 per cent of schools have electricity; 34 per cent have no access to water. In 2010, the youth literacy rate was 77 per cent.

Grace Rwanda believes Rwanda's future lies with its youth. We work to improve the education of children in Rwanda by supplying school libraries. We proudly buy most of our books in-country to support the economy and ensure they are books classrooms actually need. Join us in creating a literacy legacy at www.Toonies4Change.org and www.GraceRwanda.org.

Grace Rwanda Resources

Photos of Rwanda and our projects: [Flickr.com/photos/GraceRwandaSociety/sets](https://www.flickr.com/photos/GraceRwandaSociety/sets).

Videos of our work in Rwanda: [Youtube.com/user/GraceRwandaSociety](https://www.youtube.com/user/GraceRwandaSociety).

Facebook: [Facebook.com/GraceRwandaSociety](https://www.facebook.com/GraceRwandaSociety). Twitter: [Twitter.com/GraceRwanda](https://twitter.com/GraceRwanda).

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