



Preparing Children to Become Innovative Adults

DEVELOPING NATIONS LIKE RWANDA ARE HOPING THAT ENTREPRENEURSHIP CAN ALLEVIATE POVERTY

“It is increasingly clear to us that entrepreneurship is the surest way for a nation ... to develop prosperity for the greatest number of people”.

“I consider entrepreneurship to be, simply, the backbone of a new Rwanda”.

H.E. Paul Kagame, 2009

BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR REQUIRES CERTAIN KEY TRAITS

- Imagination and creativity
- Willingness to take risk
- Self-confidence
- People skills
- Drive to succeed

RESEARCH HAS INDICATED THAT MANY OF THESE TRAITS ARE DEVELOPED THROUGH PLAY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

- Play builds imagination and creativity
- Play accelerates cognitive development
- Play promotes social skills
- Play advances physical development
- Play helps kids work through emotions

Developing Imagination Through Play



Developing Cognitive Abilities Through Play



RESEARCH INDICATES THAT TOY BLOCKS AND CONSTRUCTION TOYS HELP CHILDREN DEVELOP

- a capacity for creative, divergent thinking
- spatial skills
- motor skills and hand-eye coordination
- language and math skills
- social skills through cooperative play

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT HAS LONG BEEN RECOGNIZED

**The creation of something new is not accomplished by the intellect
but by the play instinct.**

Carl Jung
Swiss psychoanalyst 1875–1961

**Play is the only way the highest intelligence of humankind can
unfold.**

Joseph Chilton Pearce
Contemporary American scholar

**Children at play are not playing about. Their games should be seen
as their most serious minded activity.**

Michel de Montaigne
French essayist 1533–1592

MOST CHILDREN IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ARE DEPRIVED OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY BECAUSE:

- Toys and art materials are unavailable and/or unaffordable
- Parents don't encourage play
- Educators don't understand the importance of play
- The education system is based on rote principles where creativity is discouraged

IF CHILDREN ARE UNABLE TO PLAY, THEY LIKELY WILL GROW INTO ADULTS WHO

- Have little or no imagination
- Imitate instead of innovate
- Cannot think “outside the box”
- Lack the confidence to try anything new
- **Will never become entrepreneurs**
- Are doomed to a low standard of living

THE PLAY 2 THRIVE PROGRAM IS INTENDED TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF PLAY DEPRIVATION IN DEVELOPING NATIONS

The mission of the Play 2 Thrive Program is to provide:

- Information to the public and governments about the importance of play,
- Training to parents and teachers,
- Play and creative art materials to kids, and
- Play-related programs to schools

to help children to grow into innovative adults.

STATUS OF THE PLAY 2 THRIVE PROGRAM

- The program is in the development stage
- Initial steps will be taken in the following order:
 1. Identify local sources of toys and art materials
 2. Introduce the toys and art materials to a small number of preschools in a pilot program
 3. Train the teachers how the toys should be used
 4. Gather data from the pilot program and make appropriate modifications

STATUS OF THE PLAY 2 THRIVE PROGRAM

Another immediate task is to interview Rwandan entrepreneurs to determine what factors in their childhood and later life helped them develop their entrepreneurial skills.



FOLLOWING SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE PILOT PROGRAM, THE FOLLOWING STEPS WILL BE TAKEN

- Secure funding to expand the Program
- Scale up the production of play and art materials
- Develop training material for teachers and parents
- Complete a play-based program (curriculum)
- Expand the number of preschools in the program
- Work with NGOs, governments, and other bodies to promote play for kids

RESOURCES CURRENTLY NEEDED

- Contacts who know what resources are available for producing toys and art materials in Rwanda
- Assistance in developing training materials for teachers and parents
- Partners who can assist in promoting children's play and its importance in alleviating poverty

LONG-TERM GOALS

Bridge 2 Rwanda has very high hopes for the Play 2 Thrive program because we believe it can be an effective tool in alleviating poverty, not only in Rwanda, but in all poor nations.

Play 2 Thrive

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

Do you have any questions?

Building Imagination



Developing Creativity



Developing Cognitive Abilities

