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Project title: Rwanda Primary School Pupils' Cognitive Flexibility and Learning Outcomes

INFORMATION SHEET

You and your school have been invited to take part in a doctoral research study into primary education in Rwanda. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

Purpose of the Research

The study is being undertaken as part of a PhD at the University of Cambridge, United Kingdom. The research is intended to explore how primary schooling in Rwanda fosters children's creativity (*guhanga udushya*), innovation (*ubudasa*) and problem-solving skills (*kwishakira ibisubizo*), being important 'generic' competences promoted within Rwanda's competence-based curriculum.

You have been invited to participate in the research as the head teacher, principal or manager of a public primary school. The purpose of the study is to investigate perceptions, attitudes, teaching practices and behaviours relating to the delivery of Rwandan primary education, including the implementation of the competence-based curriculum, and how schooling fosters children's creativity, innovation and problem solving. The research is being conducted in four public primary schools in XX and XX, and a fifth school as a pilot.

Taking Part

Taking part in the research is entirely voluntary. Throughout the study, you, your staff and your pupils would remain free: (i) to withdraw from the research at any stage and without giving reasons; (ii) to refrain from answering any questions; and/or (iii) to request to be removed from the project and your/their data destroyed.

The research will be conducted in and around Kigali, Rwanda, between January and May 2018.

If you agree to participate in an interview, you would be asked to sign a consent form. Interviews would be conducted in English and last a maximum of one hour. Teachers and staff who agree to participate in an observation would also be shown an information sheet and asked to sign a consent form.

Pupil Participation

Part of the research involves undertaking basic assessments and questionnaires with some of your pupils. The assessments comprise several games adapted for children in Rwanda and involve the pupils completing patterns, solving problems with a basic toy and sorting cards with different shapes and colours. The pupil would also be tested on his/her basic reading skills and asked several questions about prior schooling and his/her life outside of school. Pupils would be rewarded with stickers on

the completion of each task and you would be welcomed to review or participate in all assessments before their use with any pupils.

The assessments would need to be conducted in a quiet room at the school where a trained Rwandan enumerator would test each pupil individually for up to one hour. In total, the research would need to test 50 pupils from each of Primary 1 and 4 per school (a total of 100 pupils). Pupils would be selected from the class list based on their age.

Confidentiality

All information collected about individual participants would be kept strictly confidential (unless otherwise requested and subject to legal limitations). Responses would be recorded and stored anonymously to protect the privacy and prevent the identification of all respondents.

If you agree to be interviewed, you would be asked if the interview could be audio-recorded. If you consent, such recording would be destroyed once the interview has been transcribed and anonymised. A full copy of the transcript or a narrative summary could be made available for subsequent review in case you wished to check its accuracy and/or anonymity. You would also be free to switch off the recorder at any stage of the interview, without giving reasons.

If you and/or your colleagues are invited and agree to be observed, you/your colleagues would be asked if the observation could be video-recorded. If you/they consent, such recording would be destroyed once the observation has been coded and analysed. The observation would focus on teacher behaviours and practices, and pupils in the classroom would be informed of the observation in advance and invited to sit outside the video-recording sight-line, if they would prefer. You/they would also be free to switch off the recorder at any stage of the observation, without giving reasons.

In due course, the anonymised findings of the study will be made available in Rwanda and published in one or more international education journals. Neither the school nor any individual staff or pupil would be identifiable in such publications. Such anonymised quantitative data may also be made available through open-access portals to enable secondary research using the data.

Costs and Benefits of Participation

The only cost to you in taking part in the research would be that of your, your teachers' and your pupils' time. Observations would be completed at your school while interviews may be conducted at another convenient and preferable location (to be agreed in advance) to minimise time commitment, travel expenses and disruption for you and your colleagues.

The main benefit of taking part would be that you and your school would have an opportunity to contribute to research into an important aspect of Rwandan education that may inform educational reforms in the future.

Background to the Research

The research is being undertaken by a PhD student at the University of Cambridge, United Kingdom, with supervision from the University of Rwanda and support from enumerators provided by XX.

The study is being conducted with in accordance with the universities' ethical procedures and the British Educational Research Association guidelines (2011). If you have any concerns about the way in which the exercise is being conducted please contact Dr XX at XX in the first instance.

In the meantime, thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

CONSENT FORM

Thank you for agreeing to your school taking part in the above research.

Please read the following statements carefully and sign below to indicate your consent.

1. I have had the purpose and objectives of the research explained to me and I have read and understood the Information Sheet. I understand that agreeing to take part means that I am willing and agree:
 - for staff and pupils at the school to take part in the research (subject to their own personal rights of withdrawal and/or refusal);
 - to act as gatekeeper for the research and to answer or refer questions from (prospective) participants or others as and when they arise;
 - to be interviewed and/or to have one or more of my classes observed (if appropriate);
 - for the researcher to make notes of the interview/observation(s) (as the case may be); and
 - to allow the interview/observation to be video- and/or audio-recorded (delete if necessary).
2. I understand that any information I provide is confidential, and that no information that I disclose will lead to the identification of any individual.
3. I understand that I may request to see an electronic copy of my interview transcript and any notes on the classroom observation(s) (if appropriate).
4. I understand that the interview and observation data will be anonymised.
5. I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the research, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without giving a reason or being penalised or disadvantaged in any way. I also understand that this applies to each proposed participant in the research (both staff and pupils).
6. I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes of this research and agree to the anonymous (unless requested otherwise) use and quotation of data produced during the interview, observation(s) and/or pupil assessments/questionnaires (as the case may be). I understand that such information will be treated as strictly confidential and handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 of the United Kingdom.

Name:

Signature:

Date: