

Institute for Rural Education
And Development

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 18, 2020

Four New Early Childhood Development Centres Open in Central, Eastern, and Western Regions

The Institute for Rural Education And Development (IREAD) is proud to announce that the districts of Kampala, Bugweri, Bukedea, and Kanungu are celebrating the official opening of an IREAD early childhood development (ECD) centre in their community. These four new IREAD ECD Centres offer activity-based learning for children aged 3 to 6 and have already enrolled over 500 children. These four new centres bring the number of IREAD ECD Centres in Uganda to 10, with four existing centres in West Nile and one in each of Kayunga and Sironko.

The ECD Centres have been built through a collaborative effort led by IREAD, an NGO based in Canada. The Rotary Club of Kampala Day-Break is a key partner, encouraging the communities' support and ensuring their involvement in the projects. The Ministry of Education and Sports and the Church of Uganda both endorse IREAD and the excellence of early childhood education offered at IREAD ECD Centres. IREAD builds its ECD Centres in communities where early education programming is not already being offered.

IREAD raised Ushs 7,300,000,000 from donors in Canada and the United States—many of whom have family ties to Uganda—and local Ugandan families to build, furnish and equip these new ECD Centres, and to train ECD teachers. The Rotary Club of Kampala Day-Break worked with each community to establish its contribution of local building materials and unskilled labour. IREAD ECD Centres are built on parcels of land donated by the Church of Uganda or private Ugandan foundations.

A Centre Management Committee (CMC) has been established in each village to manage and operate the ECD Centres. CMCs are made up of volunteers committed to ensuring ongoing quality ECD programming for the community's children. IREAD will remain involved in each ECD Centre by providing teachers' ongoing professional development and overseeing the ECD instruction.

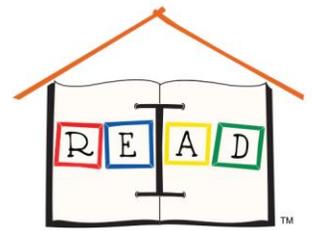
The extraordinary commitment of donors, community leaders, and business leaders is evidence of the importance Ugandans place on making certain every child, particularly those from underserved areas, has access to early childhood education and its proven long-term benefits.

Members of the media are welcome to attend the upcoming inauguration ceremonies for each new ECD Centre, which are listed on the accompanying IREAD Backgrounder document.

Dr. Noor Jaffer, IREAD President, and May Virji, IREAD Uganda Country Representative, are available for interviews.

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Backgrounder

Institute for Rural Education And Development's (IREAD's) mission is to partner with rural communities in the developing world to create sustainable early childhood development centres.

IREAD was established as an NGO in Canada in 2009 and received charitable status from the Government of Canada in 2013 (#85778 271 RR0001). IREAD USA was established as an NGO in the United States and received its status as a 501(c)(3) charity in 2019 (84-1917790). IREAD currently operates in Uganda and in Northern Pakistan.

The 2020 openings of IREAD ECD Centres in Kampala, Bugweri, Bukedea, and Kanunga districts brings the number of IREAD ECD Centres in Uganda to 10. Plans for 2020 include building another three ECD Centres in Uganda.

With these 10 Centres, IREAD expects a total of 2,000 enrolments in 2020. Since 2014 when IREAD opened its first ECD Centre in Uganda there have been 3,300 enrolments.

How IREAD Works: In partnership with the Rotary Club and community leaders, the IREAD field team identifies villages that need an ECD Centre for which they are willing to donate land. IREAD signs an agreement with the community specifying the unskilled labour and local materials they will provide for the construction. This ensures that costs are contained, and that the community is involved in the ECD Centre from the beginning.

What does IREAD Provide? IREAD provides the services of an architect, engineer, stonemason, carpenter, plumber and other skilled labour, as well as all construction materials. IREAD furnishes and equips the ECD Centres. IREAD is responsible for training teachers and for their ongoing professional development, and monitors and evaluates the Centres and its teaching standards. IREAD ECD Centres are certified by the Uganda Ministry of Education and Sports and follow the national ECD curriculum.

How do Communities with IREAD ECD Centres Benefit? In addition to providing access to high-quality early childhood education for their children, IREAD empowers local communities, training them to organize, run and maintain their ECD Centre through village-led Centre Management Committees (CMCs). As well, villagers are recruited and trained as ECD teachers and caregivers, creating employment and career opportunities.

Why Early Childhood Development? ECD programs have proven to be a highly effective means of strengthening society by ensuring each individual member lives up to their full potential. Children who participate in ECD programs are known to have higher school completion rates, high social and emotional competence, improved health status, and high earning potential and increased female labour force participation.

Please visit the IREAD website at www.iread.org for full information about our work.



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2020 Inaugurations

IREAD and the Rotary Club of Kampala Day-Break invite members of the media to attend the official inaugurations of the new IREAD ECD Centres:

Safir Hajee IREAD ECD Centre & Sherali and Khatija Kassam IREAD Resource Centre

Location: Luzira Prison Main Gate Buvuma Road
Date: Tuesday, February 25
Time: 10:00 a.m.

Samnani IREAD ECD Centre

Location: Koena Village Bukedea District
Date: Thursday, February 27
Time: 10:00 a.m.

Nathoo IREAD ECD Centre

Location: Bugweri District along Iganga-Tororo Highway
Date: Wednesday, February 26
Time: 10:30 a.m.

Jiwan Abji IREAD ECD Centre

Location: Kanyamisinga, Katete in Kanunga District
Date: Wednesday, March 4
Time: 10:00 a.m.

Locations of IREAD ECD and Resource Centres

