

UK Minister for Development and Africa, Andrew Mitchell, on Thursday officially launches new partnerships to support access to education in Rwanda.

The purpose of the initiative is to increase girls' access to education through the Girls in Rwanda Learn (GIRL) programme that focuses on keeping girls in school who are at risk of dropping out and supporting children with disabilities.

Under the new programme worth £60 million (USD 89,7 million), the minister signed a seven-year partnership with UNICEF and launched the British Council's globally renowned Digital Library for the first time in Rwanda.

This is part of the UK's efforts to make educational resources available to all. Access to the library will be free for 12 months and provides over 80,000 resources.

It is scheduled to run from 2023 to 2030, operating in 50 percent of the poorest performing schools in Rwanda, and expects to bring learning improvements that will impact up to 700,000 children.

"During my visit to Rwanda, I will explore the depth and breadth of our relationship. Our two countries continue to work together on a range of issues important to both nations, and the region, including climate change and women and girls' education," Andrew Mitchell said.

On his first day in Rwanda, Mitchell met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs Vincent Biruta and held discussions focusing on bilateral relations and regional issues.

He will also attend Rwanda's annual gorilla naming ceremony, Kwita Izina, on Friday which aims to highlight conservation efforts to protect the endangered species and will as well name a baby gorilla.