Trailbridges make it possible for students to safely reach critical education services year-round.

In communities with reliable, safe access to school, children receive more instructional learning time, teachers are better able to plan for a full classroom, and all students are better prepared to enter college or the workforce once they leave school.

A CASE STUDY: CYUMBA, RWANDA

The Cyumba Suspended Bridge, completed in early 2016, serves more than 4,000 people in neighboring communities, and another 3,000 in surrounding communities, including more than 2,500 school-aged children. The Cyumba and Akabuye communities previously used a crude timber bridge to reach resources, but that bridge was often overtopped by high water and unusable during periods of heavy rain.

The Nyamirama Primary School is closer as the bird flies to the community centers than the Gisunzu Primary School, but the river effectively cut off students in Cyumba from reaching Nyamirama during the rainy season, so prior to the new bridge’s construction, they were forced to walk hours to reach the Gisunzu Primary School on their own side of the river, or enroll at the Nyamirama School but did not attend on days when a high river made crossing unsafe. Now that the new, safe bridge has been constructed, all students are able to attend the Nyamirama Primary School year-round. The bridge’s construction has had a positive effect on attendance (up 7.7% in the first two years following bridge construction) and tardiness (down 14.9%), as well as academic performance (up 4% in the first year following construction), for students from the Cyumba community attending the Nyamirama Primary School.