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RWANDA COMMON COUNTRY ANALYSIS

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Kigali
Republic of Rwanda

Stakeholders Views on Rwanda's Development Trajectory, Agenda 2030 and Emerging Issues

*Note: Stakeholder views remain anonymous as per consultation protocol and do not represent the views of any particular UN Agency, Entity or the Government of Rwanda.

"Rwanda is that country that takes global imperatives very seriously. Look at MDGs, SDGs, look at addressing poverty and education. But sure, a lot remains to be done."

"There are several questions that collaborating with UN could answer. What do we learn from data on poverty and hunger? Why are babies underweight? Why are mothers still suffering from anemia?"

"Looking ahead there is certainly uncertainty around financing of SDGs and NSTI especially after the breaking of the COVID-19 pandemic"

"There is still need for awareness creation among Civil Society Organizations on SDGs and their implementation in Rwanda"

"If you want to talk about poverty do it at community level."

'Women in Cross Border Trade are no longer confined to the household. I can travel to Goma or Cyangugu. In the past we could not move from one province to another. Ours was to get married, get pregnant, cook and clean the house. Now we also work overnight and pay for the fees of my children.

My husband is my advisor and has seen the advantage to the family'.

"Gender equality and women empowerment in Rwanda has to go beyond numbers of how many people in central government and parliament and what are the global rankings. There are so many gender issues to address at other levels."

"The most marginalized of the marginalized refugees are those living with disabilities. For instance, some refugee camps are built in hilly areas and access to latrines of such groups among the refugees is a big challenge"

"On a scale of 1 to 5, one for very poor and 5 very excellent I would rate media access to UN information only 1."

"The UN can assist us in working with government to create a conducive environment for private sector work in Cross Border Trade. Most of what we do are conflict resolutions involving countries. Policies in the region differ from one country to another. UN can work with government to make CBT more efficient."

"Leaving No One Behind should not be a slogan but used replete with evidence from the ground."

"How does a person living with disability in a wheelchair access hand washing facilities during COVID-19? How does a blind person read guidelines on how to avoid COVID-19? How does someone in a wheelchair go to an office on [the] second floor? Many buildings do not have facilities for people living with disability."

"A primary challenge we see is how to change the mindset of people towards disability and understanding of disability itself."

"Civil Society needs to be trusted and involved more in regional and transboundary issues, AfCFTA, Great Lakes matters and Cross Border Trade"

"Strategies to promote Human Rights education in schools should be a priority"

"People's rights with regard to the environment have not come out clearly. Who is being affected by new industries and who is most affected by environmental degradation?"

"For the youth there is a lot to learn from the region, Zimbabwe, South Africa etc. We need to look at good practices from elsewhere in the region."

"Each day about 55,000 people cross this border going to Goma. 45,000 of these are small traders and 90 per cent of the total are women. It's like a women's border."

"CCA needs to venture into new areas like Cross Border Trade and the digital economy."

"Teenage pregnancy, family planning for men, child rights are issues that to me need a closer look."

"There is a lack of a demographic transition. We need to invest in youth for human capital and productivity."

"AfCFTA seems to still look like theoretical only. If actualized, it may even supersede Agenda 2030 in Africa. Countries even today tend to focus on themselves--it could be an issue the UN could look at in relation to SDGs."

"An SDG Advocacy Group was created following the Voluntary National Review process to monitor SDGs. But the work of the group is weak."

"What is crucial is responsible migration. Migration is a truly regional and transboundary matter."



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Abbreviations

AfCTA	African Continental Free Trade Area	INFF	Integrated National Financing Framework
AfDB	African Development Bank	INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism	IOM	International Organization of Migration
AU	African Union	ITC	International Trading Centre
BDF	Business Development Finance	LGBT	Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
BNR	Banque Nationale du Rwanda	LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity	LNOB	Leave No One Behind
CBT	Cross Border Trade	MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
CDC	Centre for Disease Control	MICE	Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Events
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women	MIGPROF	Ministry of Gender and Family
CEPGL	Economic Community for the Great Lakes	MINAFFET	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
CF	Cooperation Framework	MINALOC	Ministry of Local Government
CFSVA	Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis	MINECOFIN	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease	MINEDUC	Ministry of Education
CRC	Convention on Rights of children	MININFRA	Ministry of Infrastructure
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations	MINEMA	Ministry of Emergency Management
Dfid	Department for International Development	MoE	Ministry of Environment
DHS	Demographic and Household Survey	MoH	Ministry of Health
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo	MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
EAC	East African Community	MYCULTURE	Ministry of Youth and culture
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States	NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
EICV	Enquête Intégrale des Conditions des Vie	NLUDMP	National Land Use and Development Master Plan
EDPRS	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy	NEP	National Employment Programme
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement	NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development (now AUDA-NEPAD: African Union Development Agency)
EPRN	Economic Policy Research Network	NISR	National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization	NST1	National Strategy for Transformation 1
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment	NYC	National Youth Council
FRW	Rwandan Franc	ODA	Official Development Assistance
FONERWA	Rwanda Green Fund	OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
FSW	Female Sex Workers	PDNA	Post Disaster Needs Assessment
GBV	Gender Based Violence	PMT	Programme Management Team
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
GGCRS	Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy	PSF	Private Sector Federation
GoR	Government of Rwanda	RBC	Rwanda Biomedical Centre
GRB	Gender Responsive Budget	RC	Resident Coordinator
HDR	Human Development Report	RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach	RGS	Rwanda Governance Scorecard
ICT	Information Communication Technology	RIB	Rwanda Investigation Bureau
IGC	International Growth Centre		
IMF	International Monetary Fund		



RDB	Rwanda Development Board	UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
REMA	Rwanda Environmental Management	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
RGB	Rwanda Governance Board	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
RMB	Rwanda Media Board	UNHABITAT	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
RRA	Rwanda Revenue Authority	UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals	UNWOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
SMEs	Small and medium Enterprises	UPR	Universal Periodic Review
SSA	Sub Saharan Africa	UR	University of Rwanda
UN	United Nations	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on AIDS	VNR	Voluntary National Review
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund	VUP	Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme
UNCT	United Nations Country Team	WB	World Bank
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade	WEF	World Economic Forum
UNDAP	United Nations Development Assistance plan	WFP	World Food Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	WHO	World Health Organization
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa		

***Currency Equivalents, BNR March 2021**

US\$1 = FRW987.1



FOREWORD



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On behalf of the UN Country Team of Rwanda, I am privileged to share this first new generation of Common Country Analysis (CCA), as guided by the UN reforms on repositioning the UN Development System (UNDS) to support countries deliver on the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development with the sense of scale and urgency in the *Decade of Action*. The CCA is the *UN's independent, collective, integrated, forward-looking, and evidence-based country analysis*.

The descent of the COVID-19, health and socio-economic crisis has jeopardized and reversed development gains including people's wellbeing. Countries, societies and individuals are struggling to find the right balance between preventive health measures and socio-economic consequences, in particular, for vulnerable people and informal sector workers. It is worth mentioning that Rwanda has been cited worldwide as a good example in the fight against this pandemic.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Rwanda was heading towards the vision 2050 goals of becoming an Upper-Middle Income country by 2035, and a High-Income Country by 2050. For two decades Rwanda has undergone many reforms, institutions and systems building, changes in policies and strategies, which have contributed to the country's economic, social and governance transformation. Rwanda has made impressive economic and social progress, with growth averaging 7.5 percent while per capita GDP has more than doubled from US\$404 to US\$818 in just the last 10 years. Whilst sustained economic growth has lifted more than one million people out of poverty. Of course, the country needs to improve on inclusive growth that could create more wealth for the majority, better tackle poverty and inequalities.

This CCA assesses factors affecting the lives and livelihoods of women, men, girls and boys, and addresses historical, current and emerging social, economic, disaster and environmental risks—and the impact of COVID-19 across sectors. The report analyses how some groups may be more vulnerable than others or are at risk of being left behind. In the context of COVID-19, the report gives some elements to be considered for building back in a better, greener, more inclusive, more resilient and responsive to shocks, gender-responsive and sustainable manner. The CCA also examines aspects of development, peace and security, human rights and, where relevant, humanitarian pillars of the UN system.

The CCA is informed by listening to a variety of voices and institutions, reviewing various documents on Rwanda, including the Voluntary National Review (VNR), the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the Vision 2050, the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1 2017-2024), and carrying out an in-depth analysis. The UN hope that this CCA contributes to a better understanding of the country's situation, to better shape its development and transformation aligned with the vision 2050 grounded on the sustainable development goals of the agenda 2030 and the African Union agenda 2063, for the benefit of the people of Rwanda and leaving no one behind.

It is clear that continued effective and efficient reforms of policies and strategies, strengthening institutions and systems, improving human capital, enhancing digitization and innovations, managing urbanization, building a stronger agriculture, protecting the environment and harnessing the green growth and better positioning the country in regional integration and AfCFTA, will be critical. This will contribute to creating more decent jobs for youth and women, in particular. This requires a more inclusive approach to decision making process with the private sector, CSOs, the media; innovative, blended and inclusive finance with well-functioning financial sectors accessible to MSMEs and the informal sector and promoting savings.

The findings of this report provide us also with an opportunity to be better informed on the strategic scope and nature of the UN Rwanda to ensure that we continue delivering on national priorities including in the fight against COVID-19 and the recovery, through the implementation of our Cooperation Framework.

Let me express my sincere gratitude to all partners who provided their invaluable time, inputs and knowledge products to the CCA. I also commend the UN Rwanda team who has worked jointly to produce this report. This report should trigger more discussions and UN welcomes your comments.

Turi kumwe! We are together!
Fodé Ndiaye, UN Resident Coordinator



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Under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator and the guidance of the UNCT, the Rwanda Common Country Analysis (CCA) 2021 was prepared by a UN interagency team led by Josephine Marealle-Ulimwengu and Angela Zeleza of the RCO, with assistance from Maja Permerup (RCO) and Professor Herman Musahara (Consultant). Background and analytical papers were contributed by Evans Atis (UNICEF), Boubacar Bamba (UNHCR), Osten Chulu (UNDP), Schadrack Dusabe (UNWOMEN), Komi G nondoli (OHCHR), Glenn Hodes (UNDP), Theopista Kabuteni (WHO), Kathy Kantengwa (UNFPA), Andrew Mold (UNECA), Benjamin Mudahera (UNHABITAT), Madeleine Nyiratuza (UNDP), Nadine Rugwe (UNDP), Jean Paul Safari (UNHCR) and Jean Jacob Sahou, Charles Sebukeera, Harrison Simotwo, David Smith (UNEP Africa Office).

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The economic projections of this report are informed by the UNECA (Regional Hub) macroeconomic model for Rwanda through Bartholomew Armah, Mama Keita and Hopestone Chavula (UNECA). The report further draws inputs and information provided by representatives of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MINAFFET), Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA), Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA), Banque Nationale du Rwanda (BNR), National Institute of Statistics Rwanda (NISR), Rwanda Development Board (RDB), Rwanda Governance Board (RGB), and the Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA) in Rubavu

The report is also informed by a consultative process with relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries: Development Partners, and International Financial Institutions – The African Development Bank (AfDB) and the World Bank (WB), the Private Sector (in Kigali and Rubavu), Civil Society Organizations (in Kigali and Rubavu), Academia and voices from the field – women, youth, and persons with disabilities engaged in cross border trade in Rubavu, stakeholder from Kigeme and Mugombwa refugee camps (camp managers, women, youth, PWD, elderly, Community Based Protection Officers who work in the respective camps). These voices have been captured in broad terms as stakeholder views, and as per the consultation protocol the views of the respondent(s) and or individual participants remain anonymous.

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This Report is an independent assessment and is based on information current as of February 2021. The UN Rwanda team welcomes feedback on the content of the Rwanda Common Country Analysis. Please send comments to Angela Zeleza (angela.zeleza@un.org) and/or Josephine Marealle-Ulimwengu (ulimwenguj@un.org).



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Governance & Rule of Law: For the last decade, Rwanda has shown impressive progress in the area of governance in general and in justice and rule of law in particular. The rule of law indicator of the Rwanda Governance Scorecard scored 83.68 percent in 2017 and was 87.86 percent in 2020. Rwanda has recorded substantive achievements in key areas such as safety and security and performance of the judiciary.

The fight against corruption has also taken centre stage in the Rwandan administration and the Rwandan Society in general, which explains the trust by citizens in the control of corruption. The Rwanda Governance Scorecard evaluates the incidence of corruption at 87.20 percent in 2020 against 80.50 percent in 2017. Such progress is also recognized by international common perception measurements of corruption such as the annual corruption index where Rwanda has improved its score in terms of fighting corruption from 55 in 2017 ranked 48/100 to 54 in 2020 ranked 49/100¹.

- *Governance and Institutions require further capacity building to monitor and learn on human rights and good governance. In addition to enhancing citizen participation in decision making, accountability processes, including the youth and the civil society.*

Macroeconomic Performance: Rwanda has experienced the second fastest growth of GDP in Eastern Africa after Ethiopia in the last 5 years. However, with the onset of the pandemic Rwanda saw a significant drop in economic activities of all major sectors, with education and Rwandan strategic sectors (travel and hospitality) declining the most. As at January 2021 the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) pegged growth at - 0.2 percent. Ceteris paribus, Governments strong and commendable response to COVID-19 was supposed to bring a V shaped rebound of the economy following serious Government measures to contain, test, track and treat those infected. However, COVID-19 is still around, and the reeling effects of the pandemic and now the second wave are being felt. The reimposition of containment measures is likely to undermine any recent gains and decelerate further both external and domestic economic activity. At the household level, challenges are likely to remain with continued social distancing measures and depressed employment rates in the formal and informal sectors.

- *Going forward, the effective implementation of the Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) and Economic Recovery Fund (ERF) will be critical complemented by fiscal consolidation and private sector led growth. In addition, UN in collaboration with Government and Development Partners continue with deliberate efforts that support vulnerable groups to ensure we leave no one behind and sustainability of the development agenda.*

Agenda 2030: According to the Africa SDG Index and Dashboards Report 2020 produced by the Sustainable Development Goals Centre for Africa, Rwanda has performed well in eight SDGs:

- SDG 3: Good Health and Well Being
- SDG 5: Gender Equality
- SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
- SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
- SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
- SDG 13: Climate Action
- SDG 16: Peace Justice and Strong Institutions

There was concession that Government has made good progress in implementing the SDGs including their domestication and alignment to the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1), but more still needs to be done particularly in this Decade of Action and with adverse effects from COVID-19.

- *There is a need to scale-up financing to achieve the SDGs as well as Vision 2050. Supporting the implementation of the INFF is a case in point. There is a strong role for the UN to support Rwanda in showcasing regional leadership around promoting green and high SDG impact financing, digital transformation, market-building, regulatory reforms and the national capacity to monitor the SDGs that can help meet the SDG targets in Rwanda. Strengthening an integrated look at SDGs and formulating joint initiatives to boost those goals that are stagnating, or regressing is also key.*

Leaving No One Behind (LNOB): In the development agenda -- groups still remain that are left behind whilst some are most at risk due to a number of factors:

Who is left behind?	Furthest Behind/Most at Risk?	Why? (Drivers)
Women	Rural poor women, women with disabilities, FHH,	Culture, poor targeting, violence
Youth	Youth living with disability, young women and vulnerable youth from rural areas.	Labour market imperfections, lack of proper skills

¹ Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/rwa>



Young girls	Pregnant minors, abusers, orphans	drug	Lack of guidance, weak family bonds, technology/internet, abusive men and boys
Persons With Disabilities	Rural areas,		Stigma, discrimination, poor enforcement of laws and conventions, poor knowledge of disability
Infants and Children	Infants and children with disabilities, chronic or acute illnesses and/or with undernutrition including Low Birth Weight babies,		Extreme poverty, food insecurity limited access to health services and vaccination, low education of mothers and low awareness on health and nutrition matters
Refugees	Widows, Women, young refugees, children, disabled refugees		Stigma, poverty, exclusion
Migrants	Illegal immigrants		Poverty, political forces, trafficking, child labour, organ trade
Aging population	Rural areas, those with terminal illnesses		Poverty, exclusion, minority
Internally Displaced People	In hilly areas, in informal settlements in Kigali		Climate change effects, floods
People Living with HIV	Female Sex workers		Poverty, drug abuse,
LGBTQ	In refugee camps		Cultural demonstration effect

- *Strengthening inclusion and focus on the poorest and most vulnerable groups to ensure they are at the center of UN programming, taking into consideration the underlying causes and manifestation of multiple types of inequality and discrimination, and how they reinforce exclusion. To ensure an inclusive development going forward, there is a need for more disaggregated data, understanding of the culture and situation of those left furthest behind for effective targeting, decision making, policy and strategy implementation.*

Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women:

The United Nations in Rwanda continues to partner with Government and Non-Government institutions to address all forms of gender discriminatory provisions in Rwandan Laws. Rwanda is ranked in the 9th position globally and top in Africa but went down 3 places on the Global Gender Gap Report 2020 published by the World Economic Forum (WEF) compared to the 2019 report. The country is still among the top 4 countries in the world for political empowerment, thanks to a high share of women (above 50%) among both parliamentarians and ministers. However, the country still needs more concerted efforts to address social norms and culture rooted stereotypes that perpetuate gender inequalities.

The pandemic has not only had a direct impact on health and taken a toll on human life; it has also elevated the vulnerabilities of women. Prior to the

COVID-19 crisis, labor statistics were on largely positive trends according to the Labour Force Survey (LFS, 2019). For example, unemployment had declined among women from 22.7 percent in 2016 to 17 percent in 2019, while the employment-to-population ratio and labour force participation rate were also increasing. However, according to the LFS (2020), the unemployment rate among women aged 16 years and above had increased to 25 percent up from 14 percent in February 2020, while for men it was estimated at 19 percent from 13 percent as a result of the rise of unemployed population due to COVID-19. This underscores the severity of socioeconomic impact of the pandemic on women, majority operating in the informal sector, which occupies 91.2 percent of employed women.

- *Going forward the removal of all forms of barriers to empowerment and meaningful participation of women and girls, particularly vulnerable groups at local level, as well as engaging men and boys is key. Measures aimed at increasing gender equality in participation in economic activities and hence equally reaping the same benefits, as men remain paramount.*
- *Women should be equipped with all necessary prerequisites to actively engage in traditionally male dominated domains such as STEM² subject areas and the public and private sectors are to provide enabling environment to fully bridge the gender gap. Mechanisms and facilities promoting inclusive access to justice for victims of Gender Based Violence should still be viewed as irreplaceable in disrupting criminal intentions through exemplary and severe punishment to the convicted perpetrators.*
- *Support must be channelled towards coordinated and concerted efforts to address social norms and culture rooted stereotypes that perpetuate gender inequalities. Combating Gender Based Violence in collaboration with partners should remain key for the UN, not least with increase in GBV due to COVID-19.*

Human Rights, Inequality and Discrimination:

Rwanda appeared for the first time before the working group on United Periodic Review (UPR) of the Human Rights Council in 2011. It appeared again before this working group in 2015 to report on the implementation of 73 recommendations, which it accepted. On 25 January 2021, the human rights records of Rwanda were reviewed for the third time by the working group on UPR of the Human Rights Council. Following this exercise, 284 recommendations were formulated to the Government. This latter accepted 160 recommendations, deferred the response to 49 recommendations and noted 75 recommendations.

² STEM: science, technology, engineering and mathematics



The recommendations accepted by the Government offers the UNCT and its partners an opportunity for reinforcement of their cooperation with the country in human rights domain.

The cooperation in this domain is even more important now as the COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on economic, social and cultural rights and civil and political rights. COVID-19 has negative repercussions on the rights to work, to health, to education, and to food. Regarding civil and political rights, restrictive measures such as the state of emergency, border closures due to COVID-19 or traffic restrictions in certain areas of the country have limited the monitoring and human rights protection capacities.

- *Ensuring Human Rights-Based Approach and LNOB principle is integrated across all UN interventions, including in data-generation and in the COVID-19 response and recovery plans is key. Promote innovation, inclusivity in Human Rights programs and find new ways for human rights education, using online and other means of remote communication, taking into consideration the digital breach. UN to support the Government to entrench commitments to conventions on human rights and to ensure the implementation of UPR recommendations.*

Population Dynamics: Rwanda Human Development Index is 0.543 (2019). It is regarded as low human development country ranking 160 out of 189. However, it is among the countries that have seen the highest rise in human development since 1994 the year of the Genocide against Tutsi. Projections based on the 2012 Census show a rapidly growing population, dominantly youthful with a median age of just 19 years and 41 percent below 15 years, a result of rapid demographic shifts that are influenced by relatively high but declining fertility rates and sharp reductions in child mortality, and a rapidly growing urban population.³ The population growth rate estimate continues to be 2.3 percent per annum.

Health Status: By many indicators Rwanda has made visible achievements in the health sector save for the onslaught of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The network of health facilities include 8 referral, 4 provincial and 37 district hospitals in 30 districts of Rwanda augmented by 500 health centres and 1202 health posts dispensaries as well several private health facilities and clinics (MoH 2020).⁴ Life expectancy rose to 63 plus years, fertility rate declined from 6.1 in 2005 to 4.1 in 2019/2020 (DHS 2019/2020); married women using a modern method of family planning (mCPR) increased from 47.5 percent in 2015 to 58 percent in 2019/2020 while the unmet need for family planning decreased from 19 percent in 2015 to 14 percent in 2019/2020. 015 to 5.2 percent in 2020.

A major challenge the health sector will face is the response to COVID-19. There has been increased expenditure in the health sector and away from other health services to procure equipment, test and handle COVID-19 cases. Nonetheless, the heavy burden to the health sector and the economy caused by COVID-19 has also raised a platform for harnessing technology and innovations.

- *Going forward strengthening health systems, to ensure that they are resilient to and prepared for dealing with the current pandemic and future shocks is key. As well as Universal Health Coverage and supporting efforts to build human capital as a driver of achieving Agenda 2030. The UN should support the Government to develop and implement sustainable financing mechanism for the health sector.*

Education Status: Rwanda is among the top performing countries in sub-Saharan Africa in terms of access to education. The country has nearly reached universal primary education with a net enrolment rate of 98.5 percent (98.4% boys; 98.6% girls). Access to pre-primary increased over the past 5 years from 13 percent to 29.8 percent (MINEDUC, 2019), because of a reduction of supply-related bottlenecks. However, quality of education remains an issue, with the 2018 Learning Achievement in Rwandan Schools (LARS) study noting significant issues in students' literacy and numeracy. For example, 54.9 percent of P3 students and 56.4 percent of P6 students have met the grade level expectations in Kinyarwanda and English, indicating low levels of literacy skills.

The low level of HDI published by the World Bank recently is mainly driven by the poor performance of the education sector where the learning adjusted years of schooling stood at 3.9 before COVID-19. Education has a long gestation period to deliver benefits to the economy and sustainable development since learning loss generated by the pandemic may reduce students' productivity in the long run by 10 to 30 percent. Therefore, efforts should focus on improving the quality and relevance of education at all level to ensure education fully contributes to the transformation and development of Rwanda.

- *The Drivers of Future Growth analysis (GoR/WB, 2020) has Human Capital development as a key priority and indicates the need to address enduring challenges to unlock the development of Rwanda. Inclusive to this discourse is the promotion of quality and quality of education, and innovation. Which is all encompassing of vulnerable groups.*

Climate and Environment: Rwanda is already experiencing the effects of climate change which are expected to be more severe in future; and especially if the loss of forests continues. Rainfall has become increasingly intense and frequent and

³ Demographic dividend: Unlocking Rwanda's Potential to Reap the Demographic Dividend, 2017 (NISR and UNFPA)

⁴ Rwanda Health Sector Performance Report 2020



changes in rainfall patterns are predicted to increase by 5 percent to 10 percent. Changes in temperature and precipitation and their distributions are the key drivers of climate and weather-induced disasters that have negatively affected Rwandans and the national economy, including through droughts, floods, and landslides which results in damage to infrastructure, loss of lives and property (including crops) and contribute to soil erosion and water pollution.

Government operationalized the Rwanda Green Fund (FONERWA) in 2012, which aims to mobilize and manage domestic and international climate finance, and secure sustainable financing to support projects toward the implementation of the Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy. To date, FONERWA has mobilized more than US\$ 161.7 million from its development partners including DFID, the German Development Bank (KfW), the Government of Rwanda (GoR), the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) of the AfDB and Green Climate Fund.

- *Going forward, it will be key to enhance efforts of mitigation and adaptation of climate change in all sectors. Promote climate resilient technologies. Promote sound land management and adoption of appropriate technologies and irrigation. Diversify the agriculture sector to decrease reliance on rain-fed agriculture both for livelihoods and export, and decrease social vulnerability caused by strong dependency on natural resources affected by climate change.*

Transboundary & Regional Context: *Health & Transboundary Collaboration.* Cross-border spread of COVID-19 has been a major threat to COVID-19 control efforts. At the beginning of the outbreak, most of the cases were imported. As the outbreak evolved, the imported cases gradually declined as the local cases increased. Fortunately, capacities, learnings, and procedures in place built during Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) preparedness, including prevention and control at the border entry points, that were set up for EVD response facilitated for the Government to respond rapidly to the COVID-19 crisis.

Regional Trade: Rwanda's economic engagement in the regional and global economy has increased dramatically over the past two decades. Exports in particular have grown rapidly and diversified over the past decade, with a declining dependence on the three traditional exports (tea, coffee, and minerals) and an increase in industrial goods such as apparel and leather products, mechanical appliances, agro-processing and beverages. Service trade growth has been particularly marked. In some years Rwanda has been receiving more revenue from services than goods. Once concluded, the AfCFTA will have major implications for Rwanda's trade prospects related to service sector liberalisation, competition policy, intellectual property rights, and free movement. Rwanda can

play a positive role in pushing wider AfCFTA agenda forward within the region.

- *Regional dialogue is paramount on addressing socio-economic and political challenges as well as pushing forward the country's development agenda. UN can support processes to remove obstacles to trade at national, cross-border and regional level, with the view to use trade as an engine of development and means to implement the SDGs. Support small scale cross-border trade to combat poverty and enhance social cohesion, particularly among women, youth, and persons with disabilities. Support the realization of the AfCFTA. And, support the implementation of the United Nations Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes region.*

Humanitarian, Development and Peace: There is a gradual shift from a humanitarian approach to a more developmental focus with emphasis on sustainable livelihoods and social cohesion. This reorientation of focus has resulted in more attention and efforts around refugee camps to increase financial and technical support to refugee's livelihood planning and self-reliance objectives in tandem with local economic development targets for host communities. This also includes a renewed focus on enhanced educational opportunities at the secondary and tertiary level and an effort to design vocational training courses at TVET schools in line with market needs. Clean energy in camps and refugee hosting areas is also a priority for the GoR. The key to successfully integrating this new approach to humanitarian, development and peace – *triple nexus* – is to better engage all the UN agencies in Rwanda based on their mandates, comparative advantages and joint principles.

UNICEF and UNHCR have also been supporting refugee inclusion into national child protection systems by ensuring that the national child protection workforce understand and are equipped to handle and refer child protection cases pertaining to refugees. MINEMA and UNHCR Rwanda envision that by 2030 all refugees and neighbouring communities living in Rwanda are able to fulfil their productive potential.

- *Going forward, there is need to promote a HDP nexus approach in existing and new programmes. Integrating components of resilience and capacity to respond to emergency, as well as mitigation of disaster, in development interventions is key. As well as promoting trade and financial inclusion as a driver for peacebuilding and development in Rwanda and in the region, including among refugees. Provide needs-based humanitarian support and provide incentives for refugees and other beneficiaries to become self-reliant. And, support interventions promoting peaceful reintegration and reconciliation.*



Multi-Dimensional Risks: They are some risk considerations that could derail Rwanda's development agenda if not well managed. High risk is rated for human capital development, public health, environment and climate change effects and financing. The education sector has been the hardest hit by COVID-19. The quality of education was already a concern to Government even before the COVID-19 and the Human Capital low at 0.383. The public health derives its high risk from COVID-19. Save for a new vaccination effort there are new cases of people affected in all the regions of Rwanda and new waves of the pandemic in neighbouring countries. The frequent disasters related to climate change such as floods, droughts, mudslides and human displacement also place a threat to climate change and the environment.

Medium to high risk is rated on macroeconomic stability and regional and global influence. There has been good response through a recovery programme and accommodative macroeconomic policy but as COVID-19 effects are still bearing on the economy the uncertainty of macroeconomic outcomes are still in place in the medium term. The interruption of the supply chain and local demand has been linked to the global and regional domain especially trade and tourism and will continue as long as COVID -19 is still a global threat.

Low risk is rated for political stability, democratic space, and private sector development based on the existing strong political will and supporting policies; all of which are enablers for development.

Lastly, an important conclusion of the CCA is that the UN should strive towards multi-sectoral approaches and coordinated efforts in all areas of work. The UN comparative advantage in this space is by virtue of having strong complementary capacities amongst its agencies, and strong on-the-ground operational capabilities in all regions of the country. Indeed, an increasing number of UN programmes are being collectively designed and implemented taking advantage of complementary areas of expertise across two or more agencies. The UN is able to combine technical assistance with institutional capacity building in ways that not all development partners can provide.

- *Given its convening power, its normative role, technical expertise, its catalytic and innovative role, its broad networks locally, regionally and globally, and its strong partnership with all the involved actors -- the UN in Rwanda is best positioned to support and contribute to the building back better process while continuing to focus on delivering on national development agenda to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in this Decade of Action and renewed commitment to multilateralism.*



1. INTRODUCTION

1. Rwanda's United Nations Development Assistance Plan (UNDAP II 2018-2023) was launched and signed by the UN and the Government of Rwanda (GoR) in July 2018. This document represents the collective response of the UN Country Team (UNCT) to priorities encapsulated in the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) 2017-2024 and the Rwanda Vision 2050. It also aligns with the East African Community Vision 2050, the African Union Agenda 2063, and the United Nations 2030 Agenda.

2. The Common Country Analysis (CCA) is the UN system's independent, forward looking, and evidence-based collective analysis of a country's situation. It is part of the United Nations Common Country Programming Process leading to the development of the Cooperation Framework. The primary purpose of the CCA is to analyze the country context with a view to identifying short, medium, and long-term objectives for sustainable development. It examines progress, gaps, opportunities, and bottlenecks vis-à-vis a country's commitment to achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UN norms and standards, and the principles of the UN Charter as reflected in the Cooperation Framework Guiding Principles⁵.

3. This CCA builds on the CCA of 2017 as well as existing and new assessments which include: a) the Rwanda Voluntary National Review (VNR, 2019); b) the first in-depth analysis of SDGs; c) the UN Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19 (June 2020); d) the National COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan; e) the National Economic Recovery Plan (ERP); f) the UN Compilation report for the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR, 2020); (g) GoR Budget Statements and BNR Financial Reports; (h) joint WB-Government Drivers of Growth; (i) IMF Country Report (2021) and World Bank Rwanda Economic Update (2021); (j) the Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis 2018, and (k) the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) Assessment of the COVID-19 (2020). These inputs were complemented by the UNDAP II annual reports and reflect and support the ambitious and transformational change called for in the 2030 Agenda and guide how the UN can further support that Agenda in the prevailing conditions of Rwanda.

4. The Analysis also applies the principles of leaving no one behind (LNOB), human rights-based approach (HRBA) and gender equality and empowerment of women and girls (GEEW/G). This CCA also takes into consideration the impact of COVID-19 on Rwanda's development trajectory as well as provide recommendations for UN programming going forward and inform the next Cooperation Framework. (Refer to the appendices for the Methodology).

5. The report consists of the following chapters: Chapter 1. Introduction, Chapter 2. Rwanda Country Context, Chapter 3. Macroeconomic Performance, Chapter 4. An Assessment of Rwanda Performance and agenda 2030, and Chapter 5. An Assessment of Leaving No One Behind. The following chapters provide an analysis of thematic areas: Chapter 6. Social Development context, Chapter 7. State Institutions and Political Situation, Chapter 8. Climate and Environment, Chapter 9. Transboundary and Regional Context Analysis, Chapter 10. Humanitarian- Development- Peace Nexus, Chapter 11. Financing Landscape for Sustainable Development, Chapter 12. Multidimensional Risks and Conclusion. The CCA also takes an

⁵ United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, Internal Guidance, 3 June 2019, p. 14



opportunity to streamline voices of beneficiaries through quotes from stakeholders captured during the CCA consultation process.

2. RWANDA COUNTRY CONTEXT

6. Rwanda is a landlocked country located in central Africa bordered by Uganda to the north, Tanzania to the east, Burundi to the south, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west. Rwanda has a surface area of 26,338 square kilometres and is largely mountainous and often referred to as 'the land of a thousand hills'. The country's population density is one of the highest in Africa and increased from 321 persons/ Sq. Km to 416 persons/Sq. Km between 2002 and 2012 (Rwanda Vital Statistics Report, 2019). Administratively it has 4 provinces comprising of East, West, North, South and City of Kigali.

7. The Rwandan State is an independent, sovereign, democratic, social and secular Republic. The principle governing the Republic is "government of the people, by the people and for the people". Rwanda recognizes a multi-party system of Government with power sharing between political organizations while state powers are held by the three branches of Government (executive, legislative, judiciary). The three branches are separate and independent from one another but are all complementary. The highest level of citizen participation in decision-making in Rwanda is through election of the President of the Republic and members of parliament both chambers of Deputies and the Senate.

8. The aftermath of the civil war and the genocide was characterized by widespread and deep poverty and severe deterioration of health indicators. The share of the population living in poverty was estimated at 70 percent, up from 47 percent during the 1991 household survey, infant mortality had risen from 87 (per 1,000 live births) before the genocide to 131 in 1997 and maternal mortality had quadrupled. Agricultural output had recovered to only 78 percent of pre-war levels, leaving many households highly food-insecure and dependent on irregular food aid. Real per capita GDP had not caught up with its pre-war level and, even worse, was lower than its level in 1960 (WB, 2015⁶).

9. By 2000 the emergency period, which was characterized by settling people, putting in place institutions and bringing back production of food and cash crops ended. In 2002 the Government launched a 3-year Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (GoR 2002) and adopted the long-term plan Vision 2020. It was characterized by significant progress in social sectors like health and education while productive sectors like agriculture, infrastructure, and Industry where a huge challenge. The PRSP was followed by Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GoR 2008), which aimed to aimed to accelerate economic growth, creating employment, increasing income. By the time Rwanda drew the second EDPRS in

Figure 1: Rwanda's Provinces and Neighboring Countries



Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. *Note: the boundaries and names shown and the designations used in this publication do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

⁶ World Bank Rwanda Poverty Assessment, 2015

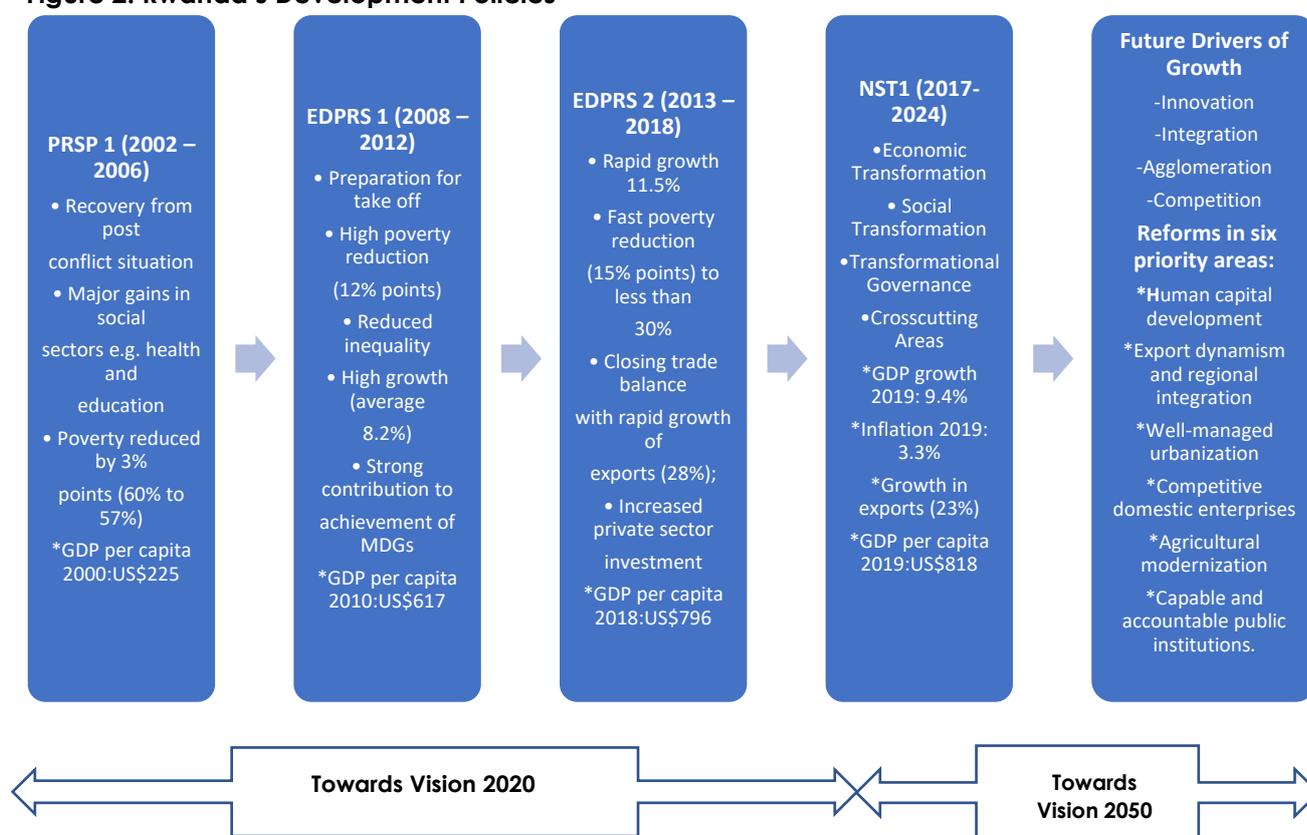


2013, Rwanda had caught up and progressed beyond the pre-Genocide economic conditions.

National Vision for Sustainable Development

10. The first EDPRS 2008-2012 was aligned to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)⁷ and by 2015 Rwanda had achieved all MDGs targets except a few aspects of poverty. Poverty had fallen from 56.7 percent in 2005/06 to 38.2 percent in 2016/17 and extreme poverty also declined from 35.8 percent in 2005/06 to 16.0 percent in 2016/17 (GoR 2016). Rwanda was among the first countries in Africa to domesticate the SDGs and became the host for the SDG Centre in Africa. By 2017 Rwanda was drawing a National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) to replace the second EDPRS that translated Rwanda's commitment to the SDGs (Table 1), together with Vision 2050 to take place of Vision 2020.

Figure 2: Rwanda's Development Policies



Source: MINECOFIN, BNR, NISR, WB, 2020

Table 1: Congruence between NST1 and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

National Strategy for Transformation (NST 1)	Economic Transformation Accelerate inclusive economic growth and development founded on the Private Sector, knowledge, and Rwanda's Natural Resource.	Social Transformation Develop Rwandans into a capable and skilled people with quality standards of living and a stable and secure society.	Transformational Governance Consolidate Good Governance and Justice as, building blocks for equitable and sustainable National Development.
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⁷ The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are 8 goals that UN Member States have agreed to try to achieve by the year 2015.



	Cross-Cutting Areas		
	Capacity Development, HIV/AIDS and Non-Communicable Diseases, Disability and Social Inclusion, Gender and Family Promotion, Regional Integration and International Positioning, Disaster Management, Environment and Climate Change		
SDG Dimensions	Economic Dimension Transform economies for growth and inclusive growth.	Social Dimension Integrate social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainability in all areas of human endeavour. Forge a new partnership for development.	Environmental Dimension Leave No One Behind Integrate social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainability in all areas. Build peaceful and effective, open and accountable institutions for all Put sustainability at the core of all development programmes.

Source: NST1, 2017-2024⁸

11. Post the 1994 Genocide, Rwanda's recovery is underpinned by key determinants including visionary leadership, strong institutions, strategic planning, and results oriented service delivery. Rwanda has initiated performance and accountability mechanisms with special focus on key population categories (youth and women), restoration of people's dignity, and zero tolerance for corruption. As a result, the economy has experienced a high level of ODA inflows per capita, investment in modern infrastructure and active prioritization of innovations and modern technology. The political will and effort to reform and change is reflected by some of the most recent global and regional rankings, see Box 1. Rwanda was rated among the fastest growing in Africa and Rwanda was among the best places to do business in Africa. From the 4th poorest country in the world in 1990s and Rwanda is now ahead of 20 countries in Sub Saharan Africa (SSA), (WB & GoR, 2020)⁹.

Recent Rankings of Rwanda

- 7th Global Most Efficient Government· 7th WEF 2015¹⁰
- 3rd Country in Cyber Security in Africa Global Cyber Security 2018¹¹
- 2nd Easiest Place to Do Business in SSA Sub Saharan Africa World Bank Report 2020¹²
- 2nd Most Competitive in Sub Saharan Africa Global Competitiveness Report 2018/2019¹³
- 1st safest place in Africa Gallup Global Report 2020¹⁴
- 9th Best Place to be a Woman Globally WEF Global Gender Gap Report 2020¹⁵
- 2nd Contributors of Peace keeping personnel in peace support operations¹⁶

⁸ [NST1_7YGP_Final.pdf \(minecofin.gov.rw\)](#)

⁹ Future Drivers of Growth in Rwanda, WB Group and GoR, 2020

¹⁰ [Global Competitiveness Report 2015 | World Economic Forum \(weforum.org\)](#)

¹¹ [Global Cybersecurity Index 2018 \(itu.int\)](#)

¹² [SSA.pdf \(doingbusiness.org\)](#)

¹³ [WEF_TheGlobalCompetitivenessReport2019.pdf \(weforum.org\)](#)

¹⁴ [2020 Global Law and Order Report | Gallup.com](#)

¹⁵ [WEF_GGGR_2020.pdf \(weforum.org\)](#)

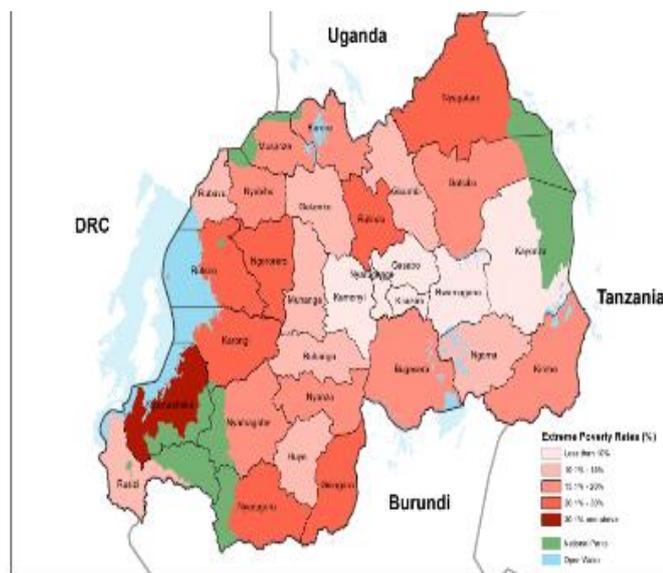
¹⁶ [Troop and police contributors | United Nations Peacekeeping](#) (January 2021)



Rwanda: Poverty Analysis

12. Although Rwanda is experiencing economic growth and has been on track in terms of achieving the SDG targets, poverty remains a major concern. According to the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) and measurement of non-monetary poverty method (EICV5, 2016/17), 29 percent of the total population (11.55 million) in Rwanda were poor in 2016, of which 29.2 percent were severely poor ((intensity between 90% and 100%) and about 10.2 percent were moderately poor (intensity between 40% and 49.99%). The majority of the poor population live in rural areas with Western and Eastern provinces found to be the poorest. However, in the Eastern part of the country, agricultural productivity is higher than in other areas, while infrastructure and services (electricity, clinics, schools, etc.) are less developed, and malaria (was a big contributor to child mortality) has a disproportionate effect. Moreover, in some years, drought had a negative impact on crop production in the Eastern part of Rwanda. While soil erosion, floods and landslide negatively affected agriculture production and destruction of infrastructure in North and South province of Rwanda.

Figure 3: Extreme Poverty Map of Rwanda



Source: www.environment.gov.rw

13. According to Government statistics¹⁷, the headcount poverty rate – which measures the percentage of people who are poor – was 38.2 percent in 2017 and the extreme poverty rate was 16 percent during the same period. There is significant variation by geographic locations, particularly with high concentration in rural areas including Western (47.1% poor; 21.6% extreme poor), Northern Province (42.3% poor; 17.4% extreme poor) and Southern Province (41.4% poor; 16.9% extreme poor) are with high poverty). It is also evident that poverty is one of the main determinants of food insecurity and malnutrition in Rwanda along with other reasons including high reliance on subsistence agriculture and undiversified livelihoods.¹⁸ The Rwanda Cost of Hunger Study 2014¹⁹ also emphasizes on this correlation and identified poverty and inequality as one of the major causes of under nutrition in Rwanda alongside environmental degradation(natural or man-made).

¹⁷ The Fifth Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey: EICV5, Poverty Profile Report 2016/17, National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) <http://www.statistics.gov.rw/publication/eicv-5-rwanda-poverty-profile-report-201617>

¹⁸ East and Central Africa Regional CAADP Nutrition Program Development Workshop; Nutrition Country Paper – Rwanda, Feb 2013; http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/nutrition/docs/policies_programmes/CAADP/east_central_africa/output_s/country_papers/Rwanda_NCP_210213.pdf

¹⁹ The Cost of Hunger in Rwanda 2014: Social and Economic Impacts of Child Undernutrition in Rwanda Implications on National Development and Vision 2020, African Union Commission (AUC) and NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the World Food Programme (WFP): <https://www.wfp.org/publications/cost-hunger-africa-rwanda>;



14. The same study concludes that eliminating stunting in Rwanda is a necessary step for inclusive development in the country as well as achieving SDGs. Poverty and extreme poverty lead to inadequate food intake, *undernutrition*, poor physical growth and development, impaired functioning and undernutrition have further impact on cognitive development and educational, health outcomes and productivity. Risk factors for stunting in children under five have been documented and include low mothers education level, mothers receiving inappropriate diet during pregnancy, children living in households with two or more children under two years of age, born with low birth weight or born preterm, not consuming animal proteins and not drinking treated water, children living in households with low dietary diversity²⁰. The rate of stunting has however declined from 38 percent to 33 percent between 2015 and 2019²¹. Nevertheless, this is still a high rate above the WHO public health threshold of severity (30%) and above the national target (19% of children under five with stunting by 2024, as per HSSP4). The rate is the same as the average of Sub Saharan Africa and much higher than the global average of 24 percent for children under 5²².

15. In addition, the Gini coefficient for Rwanda has been reducing. After it rose at the beginning of the 2000s, Rwanda saw inequality decline thereafter: measured by the Gini coefficient, from a base of 0.51 inequality increased two points in the first five years of the 2000s but in 2014 it dropped to 0.447 and in 2017 to 0.429 (NISR, EICV5).

“It is likely [for most countries] to have high levels of inequality at take-off. But we need to go beyond Gini coefficients. Meaning there is need for a broader view of inequality beyond economic and income inequalities. The new view on economic transformation going beyond structures needs to be mainstreamed in cooperation frameworks.” Stakeholder view.

16. According to the study undertaken in 2018 by CIMA Research Foundation²³ and United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), floods in Rwanda affect 12,000 people every year, mostly in the Western and Southern Provinces, while droughts affect 2.5 per cent of the population and 2.8 percent of livestock every year²⁴. The Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA) 2018 showed that 52.7 percent of Rwandan households were affected by natural hazards, induced disasters including drought, dry spell, irregular rains, floods and landslides²⁵. Based on data from the Disaster Communication System of MINEMA, damages caused by floods, landslides and rainstorm were estimated to 39,927 houses destroyed, and 34,142 hectares of crops destroyed between 2014 and 2019. Many houses were still reported to be at risk owing to floods water and debris. The displaced populations were living in temporary shelters including community centres, schools and temporary arrangements with friends and family. MINEMA's report estimated US\$51.5 million as the cost to repair houses, crops, bridges and water supply damaged by the September 2019 – May 2020 floods and landslides. Due to the topography of refugee camps and congested rainwater catchment roofs, they are susceptible to flooding and landslides and pose danger to human life. An estimation of over 3,000 refugee shelters are at risk and some of them have been crushed by the landslides and floods²⁶.

²⁰Nutrition, Market and Gender survey, Rwanda Agriculture Board and Ministry of Health, Rwanda, 2015 <http://www.sciedupress.com/journal/index.php/jms/article/view/15188>

²¹ DHS 2019/2020

²² <https://blogs.worldbank.org/health/all-hands-deck-halting-vicious-circle-stunting-sub-saharan-africa>

²³ [CIMA Research Foundation | Fondazione Acrotec \(cimafoundation.org\)](http://www.cimafoundation.org/)

²⁴ CIMA, UNISDR, 2018. Rwanda Disaster Risk Profile.

²⁵ MINAGRI, NISR and WFP, 2018. Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis.

²⁶ Rwanda Country Refugee Response Plan 2019 <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/69632.pdf>
UNHCR Environment team MUGIRE@unhcr.org



17. The fifth household living condition survey (EICV 5) 2016/2017 estimated that 48 percent of households that cultivated plots were affected by climate hazards²⁷. This has a major negative impact on livelihoods of the majority of Rwandan households among whom 71.3 percent are independent or small-scale farmers according to EICV5. Although pandemic diseases hazards are not frequent in Rwanda, the country is facing the COVID-19 crisis like all other countries. From the appearance of the first case on 14th March 2020 to 28th February 2021, the country registered 18,850 cases and 261 deaths.

18. Although the country has a very strong basis to manage the COVID-19 crisis driven by a clear vision, good leadership and well-functioning institutions, the anticipated growth decline from 9.4 percent in 2019 to -0.2 percent in 2020 has impacted household welfare negatively. The study conducted by the United Nations Rwanda²⁸ stipulates that loss of incomes as a result of a decline in economic activities, and lockdown/mobility restrictions may exacerbate the poverty for the poor and marginalized groups of the population, and chronic poverty may be further entrenched with an increase in poverty by 5.4 percent. New households that were previously above the poverty line, in the "non-poor insecure" category, may move into poverty, and some who were previously non-poor may move into income insecurity, which may, in turn, lead to social vulnerability and weaken coping capacity. Kigali districts, with the most households employed in sectors outside of agriculture, are likely to be hit the hardest by the COVID-19 crisis through increased vulnerabilities and job losses (UN, 2020).

3. ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

Economic Developments

19. Rwanda has experienced the second fastest growth of GDP in Eastern Africa after Ethiopia in the last 5 years (**Error! Reference source not found.**). Compared to 2017 where agriculture accounted for over a quarter of GDP--by 2019, GDP has been driven by industry, services and agriculture where agriculture contributed 24 percent, industry 18 percent and services accounted for over half of all economic activity, and 9 percent was attributed to net tax on products. The rise in the industrial sector is also attributed to the Made in Rwanda campaign. Rwanda's receipts from tourism are estimated at around 4 percent of GDP, while Rwanda's exports of air-transportation services have also increased rapidly reaching around 1.5 percent of GDP (UN 2020²⁹).

Figure 4: GDP growth rates 2015-2020*in Eastern Africa

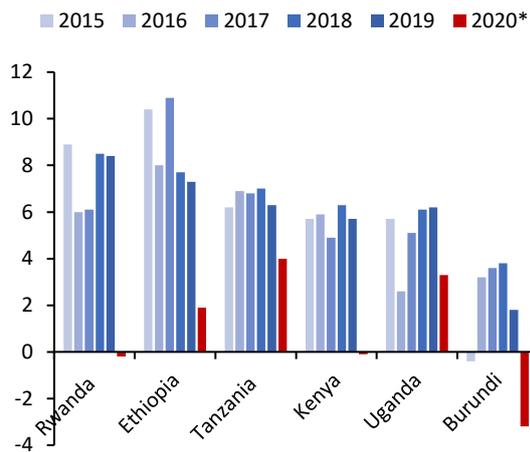
Figure 5: Percent change in growth in services at 2017 prices between Q3 2019 and Q3 2020

²⁷National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), 2018, fifth household living condition survey (EICV 5) 2017

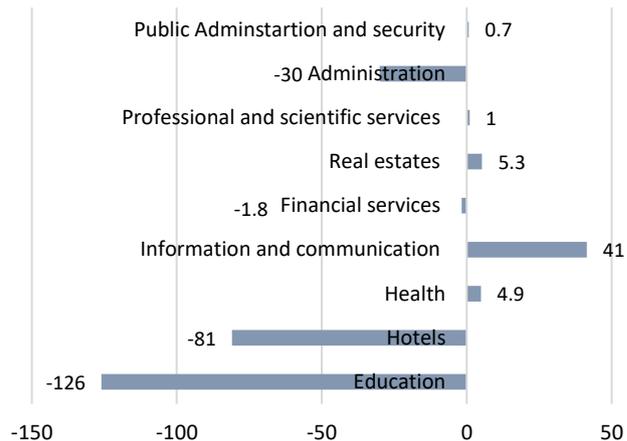
²⁸ The Socio-Impact of COVID19 in Rwanda, UN in Rwanda, Final Report June 2020

²⁹ UN Socio Economic Impact of COVID-19, 2020





Source: UNECA, 2020. *Note 2020 are IMF estimates



Source: NISR, 2021

20. However, the growth in the services sector has substantially waned with the onset of COVID-19; growth in services is estimated at 1 percent in 2020 from 8 percent in 2019. Figure 2 shows that education growth declined the most by 126 percent between Q3 2019 and Q3 2020 attributed to closures of schools for many months even beyond lockdown periods. This is followed by a decline in hotel services by 81 percent due to the disruptions that emanated from restrictions in travel, tourism, and hospitality³⁰ globally and nationally (NISR, 2021). Within three weeks, total average declared turnovers dropped by 55 percent year on year, driven by both industry and services sector with an average decline of 45 percent and 60 percent year on year basis respectively. Total industrial output fell by 6.4 percent year on year in the first three quarters of 2020 as a growth slowdown in the first quarter was followed by a sharp contraction of nearly 19 percent in the second and of nearly 2 percent in the third quarter -- compared to an 18.3 percent expansion in the same period of 2019 (WB, 2021³¹).

21. On the other hand, information and communication services realized a positive growth by 41 percent between Q3 2019 and Q3 2020 as a result of an increased demand for related services given the change in mode of business towards e-services and the drive towards a cashless economy (GoR 2021). Government also supported this by removing charges, or fees on electronic service provision.

22. The agriculture sector grew by 5.0 percent in 2019, and agricultural output remained constant in the first three quarters of 2020. However, heavy rains and floods during the first agricultural Season A destroyed part of the production of some important food crops. Food production shrank by 0.5 percent in the first three quarters of 2020. Output of Rwanda's crop exports contracted by 12.7 percent in the first three quarters of 2020, mainly driven by lower coffee production. By contrast, the livestock subsector benefitted from higher fodder production and government efforts to improve animal health and production (WB 2021³²). See Annex 1.

³⁰ The travel restrictions with the outbreak of COVID-19 reduced visitor arrivals to almost zero in April 2020, and the hotel and restaurant subsector dropped by 39.3 percent in the first three quarters of the year, ³⁰ Rwanda Economic Update, WB 2021

³¹ Rwanda Economic Update, WB 2021

³² Idem



Box 1: Risk of COVID-19 on Rwanda's Economy

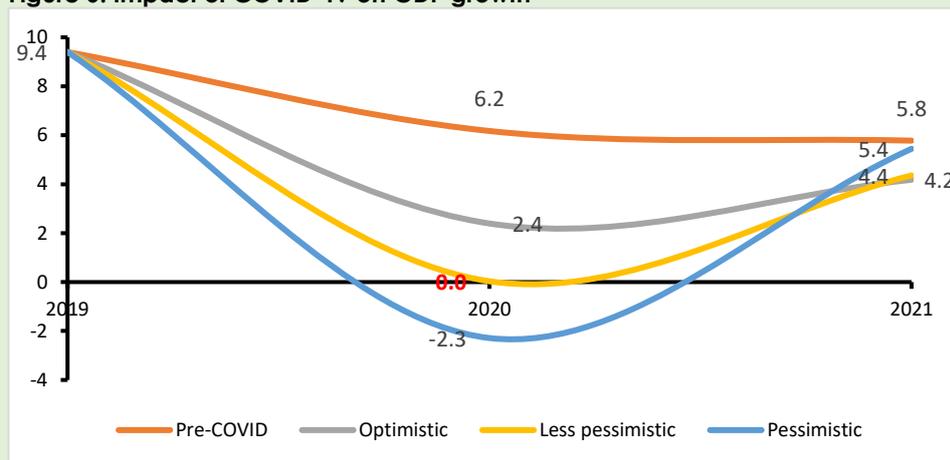
While the pandemic affected all major sectors, education and Rwandan strategic sectors (travel and hospitality) declined the most. The services sector contracted by 6.3 percent in the first three quarters of 2020, as a growth slowdown in the first quarter was followed by a sharp contraction in both second and third quarters. Half of the government's FRW100 billion Economic Recovery Fund for the private sector was allocated to the Hotel Refinancing Window. The employment to population ratio fell by 5 percent during the lockdown from March to May 2020. Unemployment soared over this same period from 13 to 22 percent of the labor force, while nearly 60 percent of workers who kept their jobs through the lockdown reported receiving lower salaries (WB 2021³³).

"The outcome of COVID - 19 has not been V-shaped as had been expected. That it is still around, and economy affected is becoming L-shaped. Implication is a need for a medium to long term strategy for recovery." Stakeholder view.

GDP fell by 12.4 percent and 3.6 percent y-o-y in the second and third quarters of 2020, respectively. This makes a 4.3 percent GDP contraction in the first three quarters of 2020. Even after the lockdown period, social distancing provisions of varying stringency remain in place, while businesses continue to incur fixed and variable costs to adhere to new safety, hygiene, and social distancing norms. Although some early indicators point to recovery in October 2020 (the BNR's annual composite economic index rose by 2.8 percent), the pace of economic activity is still too low to compensate for the loss recorded in the first three quarters of 2020. This weak recovery and the resurgence of the pandemic in major economies led the government to estimate a decline in GDP by 0.2 percent for 2020, the first recession in more than two decades, (WB 2021³⁴).

In October 2020, UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) projected that the pandemic could lead to slower growth or even contraction of the Rwandan economy in 2020. In the optimistic scenario, UNECA projected GDP to grow by 2.4 percent in 2020, 3.8 percentage points lower than the pre-COVID-19 estimates, due to the pandemic induced decline in global demand, fall in commodity prices (such as Tea, and Coffee), and lower local demand due to the social distancing measures and curfews. Importantly, the pandemic significantly affected the tourism sector with losses in employment and earnings. Between March and May 2020 after the lockdown tourism sector lost about US\$ 7.6 in about 8 weeks and laid off up to 3,888 workers³⁵. The pandemic is still on and the long term effects on an economy aiming to depend more on services for growth will have to be established. In the less pessimistic scenario, UNECA projections showed a stand still on real GDP (GDP growth of zero percent); while in the pessimistic scenario, the results show a GDP contraction of 2.3 percent in 2020. The UNECA less pessimistic projection of zero percent growth provides a range closer to the latest update of the World bank (2021) and IMF (2021) at -0.2 percent.

Figure 6: Impact of COVID-19 on GDP growth



Source: ECA estimates, 2020

³³ Idem

³⁴ Idem

³⁵ <https://gggi.org/reducing-operation-costs-and-creating-green-jobs-for-covid-19-pandemic-affected-tourism-industry-in-rwanda/>

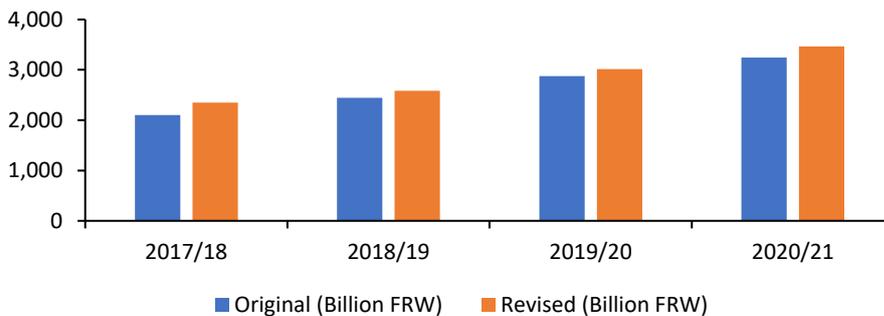


The response to COVID-19 was supposed to bring a V shaped rebound of the economy following serious Government measures to contain, test, track and treat those infected. However, COVID-19 is still around and a second lockdown was ordered in Kigali in early 2021 after a series of localized ones in some districts by end of 2020. The UNECA simulations that were done in October 2020 are valid particularly for the less pessimistic scenario. IMF 2021 medium term growth projections are at 5.7% in 2021, 6.8% for 2022, 8.0% for 2023 and 7.5 % in 2024. BNR is also optimistic that the Composite Index of Economic Activities that was 8.3% in 2019 and increased to 11.7% in Q4 from 7.1 in Q3 signals continued recovery in 2021.

Performance of Public Finances

23. A comparison of the originally approved and revised budgets indicates that, over the past four years, the national budget was consistently revised upward. In 2018/19 the national budget increased from FRW 2,585 billion up from FRW 2,444 billion. Whilst in 2019/20, the budget was incremented by 1.4 percent from FRW 2876.9 billion to FRW 3017.1 billion and the total budgeted resources for the 2020/21 fiscal year have been revised upwards from FRW 3,245.7 billion to FRW 3,464.8³⁶ (Figure 7). The upward budget revision is an indication of expanding fiscal space to finance the emerging priorities throughout implementation of government plans and for FY2020/21 is particularly to boost economic recovery from the COVID-19 impact (UNICEF, 2021³⁷).

Figure 7: Original versus Revised Budget Trends FY2017 to 2021



Source: GoR Budget Documents

24. Domestic resources account for 44 percent of the national budget, external-borrowing accounts for 24 percent, while external grants will contribute 15 percent in 2020/21. Tax and non-tax revenues, domestic borrowing, drawdown from government reserves account for 61 percent of the national budget, while the external financing (external borrowing and external grants) contribute 39 percent (UNICEF, 2021³⁸).

25. Tax revenues have been on an increasing trend from FY2017/18, growing by 36 percent between FY2017/18 to FY2019/20. The main sources of revenue being goods and services accounting for about 54 percent of total tax revenues. However, the pandemic has led to significant losses of revenues and increased spending pressures: domestic taxes and non-tax revenues are expected to decline when compared to 2019/20 from FRW 1825.2 billion to FRW 1632.2 billion, reflecting a decrease of 10.5. Furthermore, Government borrowing will continue to rise from FRW 788.8 billion in 2019/20 to FRW 1,120.9 billion reflecting an increase of 42.1 percent (Figure 9), (UNICEF, 2021³⁹).

³⁶ The revised budget consists of domestic revenue 1,784.7 billion, domestic financing FRW 314.4 billion, grants FRW 592.2 billion, loans FRW 766.5 billion and net lending FRW7.0 billion. While the revised budget is justified by information of higher development revenue to be collected it is also directed to containing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic (GoR FY2020/21 Budget document)

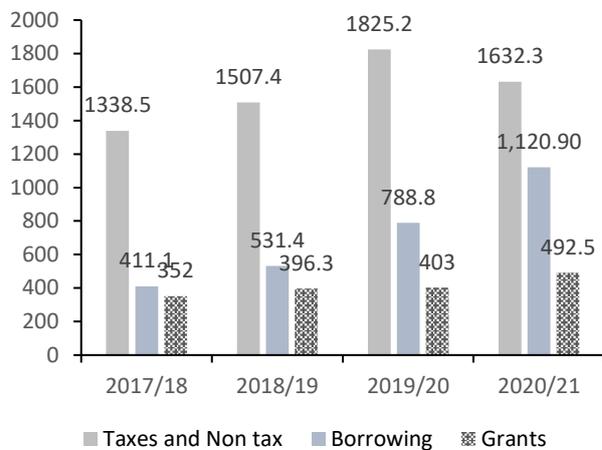
³⁷ Budget Brief

³⁸ Idem

³⁹ Idem

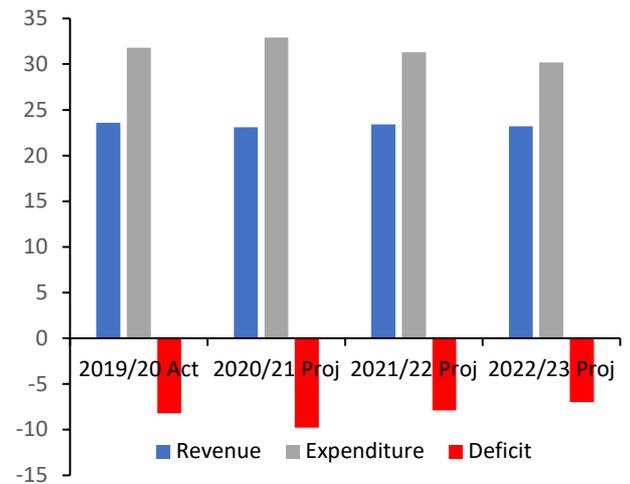


Figure 8: Trends in Sources of Finance for the National Budget, FY2017/18 to FY2020/21



Source: GoR Budget Documents

Figure 9: Revenues, Expenditures and Deficit FY2019/20 to FY2022/23*



Source: GoR Budget Documents, IMF, 2021

26. Government adopted in May 2020 the ERP for the period June 2020 - December 2021 aimed to recalibrate the level of GDP closer to its pre-COVID19 path by 2022. The Plan includes public spending and investment in key areas targeted for recovery while assuring debt remains at sustainable levels. According to the FY2019/20 budget execution report, COVID-19 related expenditures amounted to about Rwf109.1 billion (about 1.2 percent of GDP). Whilst revenue in 2020 is about 11 percent lower than the levels projected by the end of 2019. With the falling revenues and increased spending needs to fight the pandemic the budget deficit is expected to widen to almost 10 percent of GDP FY2020/21 (IMF, 2021⁴⁰), (Figure 6). The overall fiscal deficit, on cash basis, is estimated to have reached 9.4 percent of GDP in FY2019/20 (from July 2019 to June 2020), up from 5.6 percent of GDP in FY2018/19 (WB, 2021⁴¹). Fiscal risks have further intensified because of growing risks in the state-owned enterprise (SOE) sector, such as the national carrier and the companies operating in the strategic hospitality sector. Termination of international travel has already led to the realization of some of the Government guarantees adding further pressures to the fiscal accounts (World Bank, December 2020).

“The tax base of Rwanda needs to be broadened. Why not tax minerals? Innovation in sourcing financing is encouraged.” Stakeholder view.

Box 2: Risk of COVID-19 and Social Protection

Rwanda's Social Protection Sector is built on four main pillars which include: (i) Social Security, (ii) Short-term Social Assistance, (iii) Social Care Services and (iv) Livelihood and Employment Support. Social protection has recently gained public attention and its role in Rwanda's socio-economic development is significant. The social protection budget depicts an increasing trend over the past five years, from FRW 79.4 billion in 2016/17 to FRW 198 billion in 2020/21. As a share of the total national budget, the social protection budget increased from 4.1 percent to 6.1 percent during the same period (Figure 10). The administrative data from the GoR also indicates that the eligible population covered by core social protection schemes (VUP, RDRC, FARG) continues to expand horizontally, from 58.7 percent in 2018/19 to 78.4 percent in 2019/20 (Figure 8). The sharper increase in coverage in 2019/20 can be attributed to the accelerated scale-up of key Social Protection programs in response to COVID-19 starting from April 2020.

⁴⁰ IMF Country Report, No.20/1 Third Review Under the Policy Coordination Instrument

⁴¹Rwanda Economic Update, 2021



Figure 10: Social Protection Budget Trends 2016-2021*

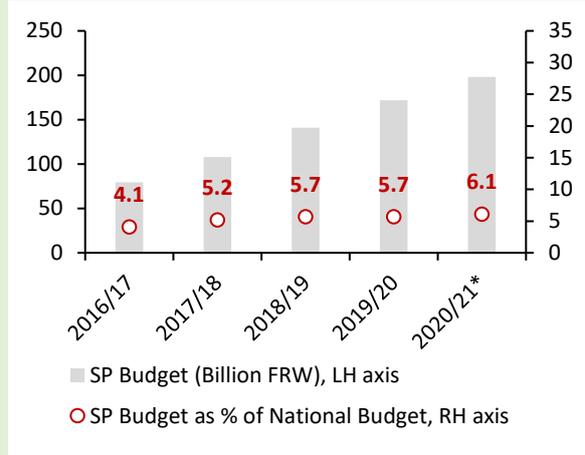


Figure 11: Social Protection Budget Trends 2016-2021*



Source: UNICEF, 2021⁴²

The Government of Rwanda has developed a Social Protection response plan to assist vulnerable households affected by COVID-19 estimated at FRW 133.6 billion (US\$ 141.7 million), representing around 1.5 percent of Rwanda's GDP. However, there is a need to link the costed social protection response plan and sectoral budget allocations with the implementation arrangement to be able to identify the potential funding gaps for the short and long-term needs (UNICEF, 2021⁴³).

In the 2020/21 Fiscal Year, the Government of Rwanda has allocated FRW 198 billion to the Social Protection Sector up from FRW 171.7 billion, reflecting a nominal increase of 15.2 percent. The increasing trend of the social protection budget illustrates the government's commitment to strengthen social protection programs to ensure inclusive and pro-poor development. However, further efforts to expand the coverage and adequacy are needed to ensure the resilience of households and potential graduation from social protection assistance (UNICEF, 2021⁴⁴).



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On 30th April 2020, the Cabinet approved a national Economic Recovery Plan, which included a comprehensive social protection response plan to address the socio-economic effects of COVID-19 crisis. The SP response plan was initially costed at FRW 133.6 billion and designed to support vulnerable households with cash support, asset distribution and financial services as detailed below. Most interventions are built on the national social protection framework leading to the scale up of key programmes and, in some instances, the inclusion of new *Ubudehe* categories in beneficiary groups.

- **Immediate relief response for the most vulnerable and affected households:** Existing cash support programs (Direct Support-DS, Nutrition Sensitive Direct Support-NSDS, Classic Public Works-cPW, Expanded Public works-ePW) were expanded geographically and scaled up to households from *Ubudehe* category 2 (DS, NSDS). In addition, emergency cash transfers were rolled out to support casual workers in the City of Kigali and to households engaging in cross-border trade as well as to households working in agriculture to help them access seeds and fertilizers. Food distribution support during the initial lockdown period was also implemented in urban areas.
- **Economic relief response to increase household resilience:** Productive assets were distributed to vulnerable households working in the informal sector while existing financial services were expanded

⁴² Social Protection Budget Brief: Investing in inclusiveness 2020/21

⁴³ Idem

⁴⁴ Idem



and toolkits to start small businesses were provided. Temporary work was provided to households from Ubudehe categories 1 to 3 through labour intensive projects.

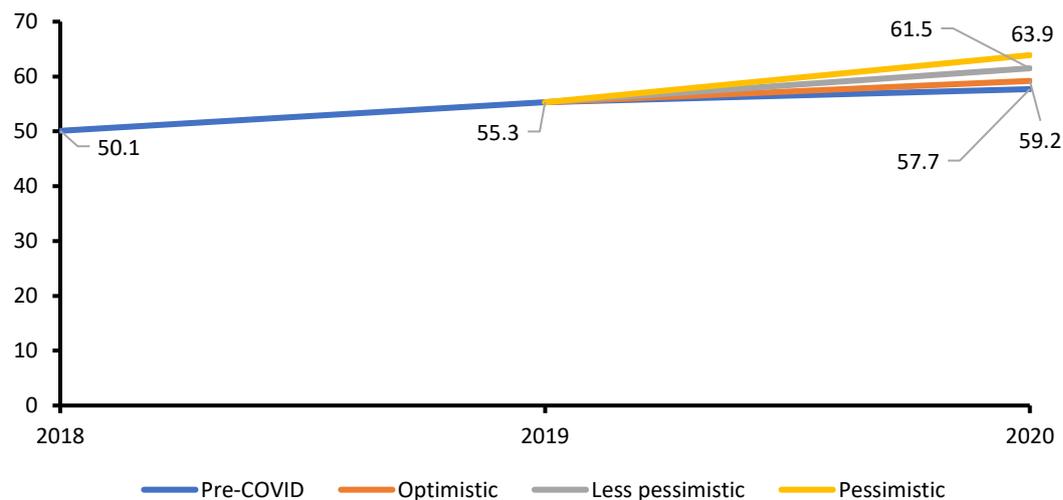
- **Accompanying measures aiming to ensure access to basic services:** Additional support was put in place to ensure access to shelter, health insurance and education materials/uniforms for the most affected households.

While VUP programs continue to expand, it is not possible to track specific budget lines dealing with the COVID-19 response measures in the finance law partially because these are integrated in the existing SP framework and programs. In order to harmonize the interventions across government institutions and development partners involved in COVID-19 response, it would be advisable to establish a mechanism to track the resources used to deal with the secondary effects of the COVID-19 pandemic (UNICEF, 2021⁴⁵).

Both domestic and external resources for Social Protection Sector financing have increased recently, with domestic resources increasing twofold and external resources increasing around five-fold. However, further horizontal and vertical expansion of social protection schemes is required to meet the NST targets. To ensure sustainability of scale-up plans, there is a need to develop a sustainable medium-term financing strategy for the Social Protection Sector to support resource mobilization and budget efficiency (UNICEF, 2021⁴⁶).

27. Against the backdrop of revenue losses and spending pressures, the country's public debt level is expected to increase to 60 percent of GDP in the optimistic scenario, 62.3 percent of GDP in the less pessimistic case and 64.7 percent of GDP in the pessimistic scenario (Figure 12). The public debt projections by UNECA encompass the IMF (2020) public debt forecast of 61.6 percent of GDP but lower than the World Bank (2020) public debt projection of 68.1 percent of GDP. The IMF/WB Debt Sustainability Assessment (June 2020) elevated Rwanda's risk of debt distress from low to moderate. It is projected that public and publicly guaranteed debt will reach 68 percent of GDP by the end of 2020 and more than 70 percent in 2021. Nonetheless, Rwanda's debt will continue to be sustainable given the country's strong debt-carrying capacity and reliance on concessional borrowing. The better than anticipated fiscal balance attributed to significant mobilization of concessional financing from development partners has helped close the fiscal financing gap in FY 19/20. External concessional resources should also contribute to filling the fiscal financing gap in FY 20/21.

Figure 12: Fiscal pressures will worsen debt position, 2018-2020



Source: UNECA estimates, 2020

⁴⁵ Social Protection Budget Brief: Investing in inclusiveness 2020/21

⁴⁶ Idem



28. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, GoR launched the ERP outlining key interventions across sectors that would support households, boost employment, and sustain economic growth. The identified priorities for economic recovery are the following:

- a) Contain the pandemic
- b) Mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 economic crisis on households' income by scaling up Social Protection
- c) Ensure Food Self-Sufficiency by increasing Agriculture production
- d) Support Businesses and Protect jobs
- e) Ensure a Coordinated Multi-sectoral response of Government to quick start and boost economic activity

These efforts are complemented by the Social Protection Response and Recovery Plan (SPRRP) designed to cushion the loss of livelihoods of vulnerable households and complement existing social protection programmes. Further, the Government has established the Economic Recovery Fund (ERF) to financially support recovery efforts in key sectors⁴⁷.

Box 3: GoR COVID-19 Response-First Lockdown 21st March to 01st May 2020

- Closure of all non-essential businesses throughout the country
- Places of worship were closed
- Schools and higher education institutions (both public and private) were closed
- All employees (public and private) were required to work from home and embrace technology, except those providing essential services
- Farming activities continued in preparation for the agricultural season B while observing guidelines from health authorities
- Large gatherings such as weddings and sporting events were postponed, and the number of people attending burial ceremonies minimized (no more than 15)
- Businesses and restaurants were allowed to continue, but only providing take-away services
- Use of electronic payments and online banking services encouraged whenever possible

Source: Office of the Prime Minister, Cabinet Communique

29. The Government has implemented the National COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan under the leadership of the National Epidemic Preparedness and Coordination Committee (NEPRCC) chaired by the Prime Minister. This has also been in terms of actions that directly support the most vulnerable during the lockdown and especially in distributing food. The Government through its institutions the BNR and MINECOFIN undertook to mobilize resources and review regulations to mitigate immediate effects of the pandemic. BNR instructed commercial banks to ease loan repayment conditions and established a FRW50 billion Fund. The Government also signed financing agreements with development partners to support the response to COVID-19. These include among others; foreign financing from IMF of US\$109.4 million to cushion the impact of lost foreign exchange from trade and tourism and to bolster foreign exchange, IMF US\$218 million as a Rapid Credit Facility, World Bank US\$ 100 million COVID-19 response to energy budget support, World Bank US\$ 14.5 million⁴⁸, and EU Euro 61.36 for reprioritization of social protection (UNICEF 2021).

30. On the backdrop of a surge in COVID-19 cases in the City of Kigali which accounted for over 60 percent of confirmed cases, the second lockdown of Kigali was effected from 03rd to

⁴⁷ The BNR Annual Report 2019-2020 summarizes these measures. Regulatory relief to financial institutions by adjusting banks capital and liquidity requirement to help sustain their lending activities as well as restructuring of loans for MFIs and SACCOs customers. Supporting the government initiative of accelerating cashless e payment to contain the spread of COVID 19. An extended Lending Facility of 50 billion Frw was introduced to assist banks with liquidity problem.

⁴⁸ IDA credit COVID-19 Emergency Response



14th February 2021⁴⁹. As at end February 2021, the GoR had already embarked on a COVID-19 vaccination campaign. Rwanda is among the first four countries to receive the vaccination and aims to cover 60 percent of the population with COVID-19 vaccines in the shortest time possible. Rwanda is expecting 102,960 doses from Pfizer; whilst astrazeneca allocation is about 348,600 to 398,400. Priority groups have been defined as health and frontline workers, people living with chronic conditions and the elderly (over 65). The revised national budget FY2021/22 has increased by FRW 219 billion from FRW 3,245.7 billion to FRW 3, 464.8 billion stated explicitly as allocated to respond to COVID-19 and its effects. However, as the COVID-19 pandemic is still evolving there is still need for more investment and support in response.

31. On its part the UN efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic remain continuous in collaboration with the Government and development partners. The UN has provided both financial and technical support to respond to COVID-19 and build back better. Between March and December 2020, the UN has mobilized more than FRW20.8 billion. In addition to the financial support, UN agencies have provided extensive technical support for policy analysis and strategic advice. In addition, some agencies intervened to reinforce human



Kigali. First doses of COVID-19 vaccine arrive in Rwanda 03rd March 2021, © Eugene Uwimana, UN RCO Rwanda

resources at the Government command posts and ensure that the country's high technological advancement is fully optimized through health innovations. The WHO has deployed 25 staff to support command posts, surveillance, laboratories, case management, infection prevention and control, risk communication and community engagement and data management. As of March 2021, this Technical assistance is worth US\$ 1,068,052. The UNDP provided high tech-robots with capacity to screen between 50 and 150 people/minute, deliver medication and food to patients and detect patient abnormalities. The robots have increased service quality, timeliness and reduced health workers exposure to COVID-19. ILO provided support to conduct a diagnostic on the impact of COVID-19 on the employment and labour sector, with a focus on long term solutions worth US\$35 000. UN-Habitat supported to mainstream environment and climate change actions in the Rwanda recovery plan with a consultation worth US\$50,000.

Monetary Policy Stance

32. Rwanda experienced a period of sustained low inflation from 2017 to 2019 averaging 3.8 percent (GoR, 2020). However, headline inflation accelerated in the first half of 2020 driven by food price inflation on the backdrop of damages to food crops caused by heavy rains, and also the upward revision of public transport fares in May 2020 following the implementation of COVID-19 guidelines. Rwanda's headline inflation stood at 8.9 percent as of September 2020

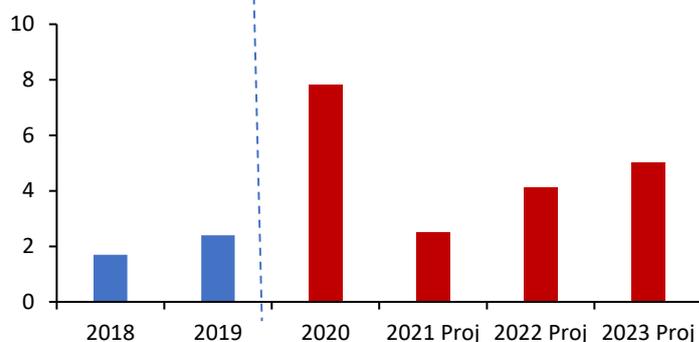
⁴⁹ Office of the Prime Minister, Cabinet Communique



(GoR, 2020). The National Bank of Rwanda (Banque Nationale du Rwanda, BNR) since reduced the policy rate by 100 basis point to 4.5 percent in April 2020 since April 2019 to counteract the economic slowdown associated with COVID-19 and support the country's economic recovery efforts.

33. BNR records that headline inflation dropped to 5 percent in the fourth quarter of 2020 from 9 percent in quarter 3. This is attributed to a decline in core inflation, following the downward revision of public transport fares in October 2020, and deceleration in prices of fresh food products. Alcoholic beverages, tobacco and narcotics increased by 5.5 percent lower than an increase of 6.9 percent in December 2020 and housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels increased by 4.1 percent slightly lower than 4.5 percent of December 2020. Excluding fresh food products and energy, consumer price index increased by 3.4 percent in January 2021 slightly lower than an increase of 3.6 percent in December 2020. Energy prices increased by 3.4 percent in January 2021, which is slightly lower than an increase of 3.8 percent in December 2020 (GoR 2021⁵⁰).

Figure 13: Inflation Trends and Forecasts (2018-2024)



Source: BNR and IMF, 2021

34. The average headline inflation in 2020 stood at 7.8 percent (BNR, 2021). Inflation should fall in the coming months on the backdrop of weak economic activity due to the pandemic and therefore subdued inflationary pressures. In 2021, headline inflation is projected to evolve around the lower bound of 2 percent (GoR, 2021).

35. It should be noted that the Rwandan franc also depreciated against the dollar by 4.4 percent year on year as at end October 2020. As of December 2020, FRW depreciated by 5.4 percent against the dollar the fastest since 2017 against 4.9 percent in December 2019. In nominal terms FRW depreciation against the dollar was 7.4 percent against 4.6 percent in December 2019 (GoR 2021). The pressures on foreign reserves have intensified recently with an emerging balance of payment financing gap attributed to the global pandemic.

36. The financial services sector continues to be resilient and stable at the end of December 2020. The decline in economic activities exerted downward pressure on the financial sector's performance mainly through reduced demand for loans and increased calls for loan restructuring, which accounted for 39 percent of banks loan portfolio in the second quarter of 2020 (BNR, 2020). Loan restructuring by banks and MFIs have provided a welcome relief for most affected business operators. Banks' non-performing loans (NPLs) ratio stood at 5.2 percent at end-September, only slightly above the regulatory benchmark, as they restructured

⁵⁰ Consumer Price Index, January, BNR 2020



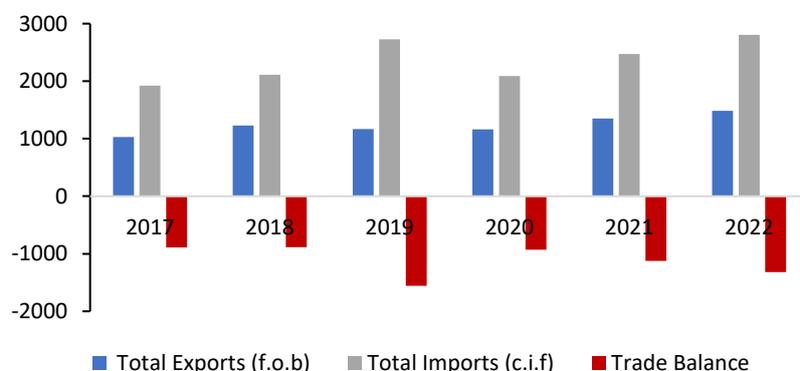
45 percent of their loan portfolio. Microfinance institutions (MFIs) restructured 21.9 percent of loans, but the pandemic pushed the NPLs ratio to 12.8 percent at end-June (from 8 percent at end-March), prompting an increase in provisions and a sharp drop in earnings. It declined to 9.2 percent at end-September as small businesses, the main customers of MFIs, resumed activity and loan repayments (IMF, 2021⁵¹). This has been buttressed by the decision to keep the Central Bank Rate at 4.5 percent to support commercial banks to continue financing businesses, and banks have retained adequate capitalization and a healthy liquidity position. BNR has granted the banks an exception to restructure outstanding loans of borrowers facing temporary cash flow challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

37. By December 2020 broad money grew by 18 percent and credit to private sector that was outstanding by 21.8 percent. The average lending rate reduced by 14 basis points to 16.35 per cent favourable to economic recovery (GoR 2021). Thus, Rwanda has maintained accommodative monetary policy over the period 2018-2020 which offers relatively enough monetary policy room to address the adverse economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

External Sector Performance

38. Rwanda has continued to experience a trade deficit in the period between 2017 and 2020 with clear stagnation of exports and decline in imports in 2020 and is projected to narrow gradually (Figure 14.) By December 2020 total domestic exports had fallen by 35 percent ⁵² (in particular, agricultural commodities), amid disruption in international trade and travel and low international prices of commodities that Rwanda exports (WB, 2020).

Figure 14: External sector performance with projections



Source: NISR, 2020

39. UNECA had projected a decrease in exports due to COVID-19 impacts ranging between 3.4 and 4.8 percentage points by the end of 2020 (Figure 15a) mainly due to the decline in external demand. In the optimistic scenario, exports are expected to fall by about 4.4 percentage points from their 2019 levels. While in the pessimistic scenario exports are expected to decline by about 4.8 percentage points. Looking at imports, UNECA projects an increase that ranges between 4.9-5.2 percentage points from their 2019 levels (Figure 15b). This is due to the fall in non-fuel import price of commodities and manufactured goods that encourages

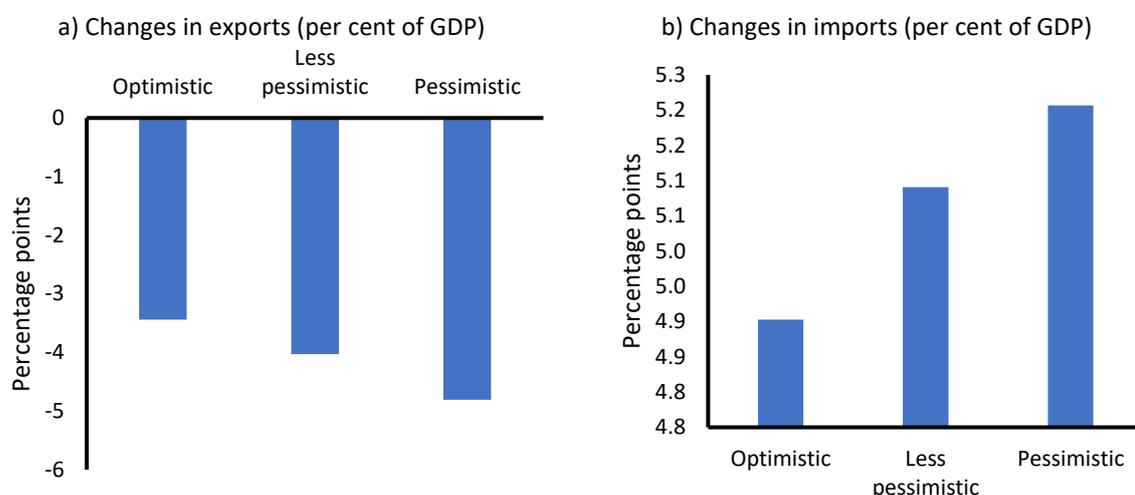
⁵¹ IMF Country Report, No.20/1 Third Review Under the Policy Coordination Instrument

⁵² UNECA database



imports, while the health crisis also raises the demand for imports of health products to tackle the pandemic.

Figure 15: Impact of COVID-19 on exports and imports in Rwanda, 2020



Source: UNECA estimates, 2020

40. The 16th Rwanda Economic Update (WB, 2021)⁵³ states that the current account deficit eased only in the second and third quarters, as the drop in imports exceeded that of exports. Although market prices for Rwanda's key export commodities declined contributing to a widening of the country's fiscal deficit and public debt -- this has been somewhat counterbalanced by an increase in non-traditional exports, principally from the mining sector. The current account deficit fell to 12.7 and 10.4 percent of GDP respectively in the second and third quarters of 2020, from 16.1 percent of GDP in the first quarter of 2020. The narrowing of the deficit is attributed to an improvement in the deficits on goods and services and primary income, combined with a substantial increase in secondary income, reflecting grants from development partners to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. In quarters two and three of 2020, the balance on secondary income reached 6.3 percent of GDP.

41. Merchandise exports declined in the first three quarters of 2020 with the pandemic-driven disruptions in transportation and the decline in global demand. Merchandise exports in dollar terms fell by 25.4 percent relative to the first three quarters of 2019. All major commodity exports, except for tea, fell significantly in the second quarter. Non-traditional exports, which had emerged as the main source of export earnings over the previous three years, fell to 54 percent of the first three quarters of 2019 level, due to land-border closures (World Bank, 2021⁵⁴).

42. The border closures, and suspension of international passenger flights on March 20, 2020⁵⁵ also led to a fall in exports of services, especially related to tourism, i.e. travel, and transport services. Accordingly, travel and transport exports fell by 73.2 percent and 41.7 percent in the first three quarters of 2020, respectively, compared to the same period of 2019. This had a two-fold impact on the services trade deficit (i) the deficit in transportation declined by US\$32.6 million relative to 2019 and (ii) the travel services balance also declined by US\$83 million,

⁵³ Rwanda Economic Update, World Bank, 2021

⁵⁴ Idem

⁵⁵ First case of COVID-19 was diagnosed on March 14, 2020 in Rwanda.



compared to 2019, for the first deficit in travel services since 2018. As travel and transport services represent about 65 percent of total services exports, the overall services deficit widened substantially (World Bank, 2021⁵⁶). The third quarter saw some slight recovery with the lift of the lockdown restrictions; although not enough to offset the plunge in trade and remained 10 percent below their level of the third quarter of 2019. The current account deficit is projected at 12.2 percent of GDP in 2020, with exports, tourism receipts and remittances recovering gradually (IMF, 2021⁵⁷)

Macroeconomic Outlook and Risks

43. The 16th Rwanda Economic Update by the World Bank 2021 indicates that education is the most severely hit sector in Rwanda and may affect the long-term human capital formation. The same report has indicated that GDP may fall by between 16 and 30 percent in 2030 compared to what it would have been if there was no COVID-19. This observation has ramifications to the realization of Agenda 2030 if no corresponding measures are taken in the next 5 to 10 years. The update has noted that among 43 countries in SSA whose growth trajectory has been reversed by COVID-19 Rwanda is 9th from the bottom with a difference of 8.3 percentage points down wards between pre COVID and recent forecasts. The next country affected in the region is Kenya with -7, Ethiopia 4.0 and Uganda -3.6 percentage points.

44. The near-term outlook remains highly uncertain as the economy remains vulnerable to external shocks compounded by the unpredictability of the speed and shape of domestic and global recovery. Real GDP growth is expected to be slightly negative at -0.2 percent in 2020, and is projected to rebound to 5.7 in 2021, albeit below potential (IMF, 2021⁵⁸). The reeling effects of the pandemic and now the second wave have slowed the country's growth trajectory. The highly exposed hard-hit sectors such as trade and real estate, reduced ability of cash-strapped borrowers to service loans, and deferred cash inflows from loan restructuring have raised credit and liquidity risks (IMF, 2021⁵⁹). The reimposition of containment measures is likely to undermine any recent gains and decelerate further both external and domestic economic activity. This prolonged contracted growth could also lead to revenue losses. Coupled with Government efforts to cushion the adverse socioeconomic impact of the pandemic – this may place additional pressures on public finances, debt, the balance of payments and financial sector vulnerabilities.

45. Going forward, the effective implementation of the Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) and Economic Recovery Fund (ERF) will be critical to the recovery the support to the economic recovery must be balanced to ensure fiscal consolidation once the crisis abates (IMF, 2021⁶⁰). It will be critical to promote private sector-led and inclusive growth, monitor and contain financial sector and fiscal risks and protecting vulnerable groups. All measures to support particularly micro-small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) should be intensified to propel a rebound in economic activity, buoyed by strong financial sector performance. At the household level, challenges are likely to remain with continued social distancing measures and depressed employment rates in the formal and informal sectors. Therefore, to leave no one behind, Government must continue with deliberate efforts that support vulnerable groups, in

⁵⁶ Rwanda Economic Update, World Bank, 2021

⁵⁷ IMF Country Report, No.20/1 Third Review Under the Policy Coordination Instrument

⁵⁸ Idem

⁵⁹ Idem

⁶⁰ Idem



addition to measures to green the recovery fund, and the protection and management of natural resources, environment and climate change.

4. ASSESSMENT OF RWANDA'S PERFORMANCE AND AGENDA 2030

Progress Towards the 2030 Agenda

46. The integration of the SDGs into the national development frameworks was guided by the Government of Rwanda's domestication roadmap approved in December 2015. The process was consultative and informed by lessons learnt from MDGs, an initial SDGs gap and data readiness analysis and the review of the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS 2) as well as 14 sector strategic plans. The gap analysis informed a detailed SDGs domestication plan and prioritization of new aspects brought by the adoption of the Agenda 2030. The National Vision 2020 and now vision 2050 as well as the NST 1 are Rwanda's blueprint in moving forward with the 2030 Agenda. Our assessment concludes that the NST 1 is in complete congruence with the SDGs, and the three pillars of the NST 1 are directly aligned to the SDGs imperatives (Table 1).

47. The Rwanda Voluntary National Review Report (VNR) of 2019 states that the level of commitment of Rwanda towards implementation of the SDGs is very strong. Further, the NISR has launched an online SDGs portal populated by the latest data on SDG indicators.

"An SDG Advocacy Group was created following the Voluntary National Review process to monitor SDGs, but the work of the group is weak." Stakeholder view

The Government of Rwanda is aware that the process of creating awareness for the SDGs at different levels among different stakeholders is a continuous process. A guide on SDGs was prepared in English and Kinyarwanda and widely disseminated to a broad spectrum of society to create greater ownership of the SDGs. Nevertheless, wider and more critical debate in Parliament and in the media on the progress of SDG implementation remains low. Thus, suggests a need for further support by the UNCT.

48. An analysis of modalities for the domestication of the SDGs through the 2019 VNR report has established a mapping of the priorities articulated in the NST 1 to the SDGs. The broad-based consultative process in the run-up to the development of the NST1 provided an opportunity to create SDGs ownership and awareness from central to local levels, guided by the Government's domestication roadmap approved in December 2015. An initial SDGs gap and data analysis was conducted together with a review of the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS 2) alongside 14 sector strategic plans. The gap analysis informed a detailed SDGs domestication plan and prioritization emerging from the 2030 Agenda which reveals that there is an almost perfect match between the two frameworks (Table 2 and Annex 2).

49. Few countries in sub-Saharan Africa have achieved the type of development results that Rwanda has experienced since the Genocide against the Tutsi of 1994. According to the Africa SDG Index and Dashboards Report 2020 produced by the Sustainable Development Goals Centre for Africa using standardized continental data from the United Nations Statistical Division and the OECD, Rwanda has performed well in eight SDGs while challenges in others persist which need addressing, especially with the advent of COVID-19, see Figure 16 and Table 2.



Figure 16: Assessment of SDG Trends in Rwanda - 2020

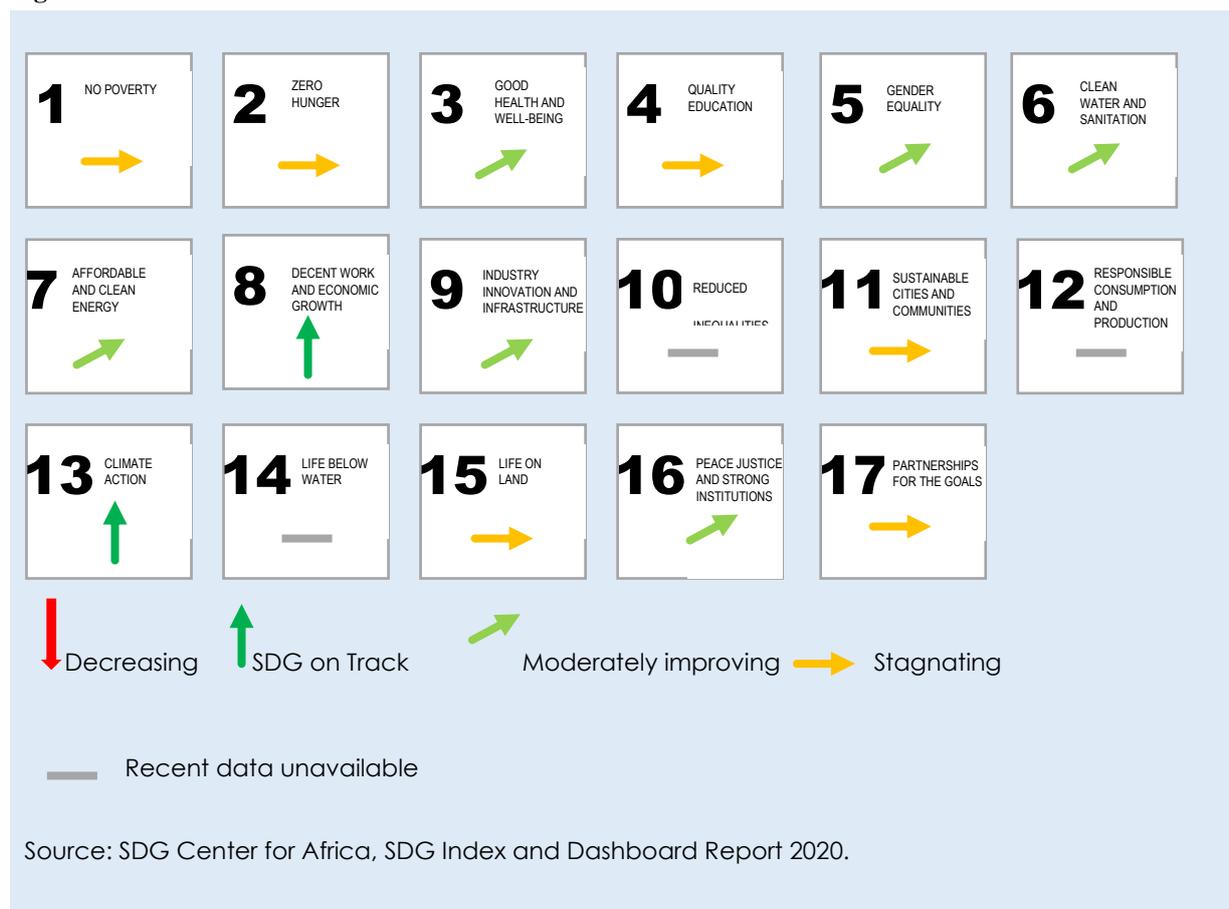


Table 2: SDGs at a Glance

On Track	Partially on track	Challenges remain	Significant challenges	Information unavailable/NA
SDG	Status			
	Poverty headcount ratio is 46% (SDGCA). VNR Report is at 55.2% for 2016. Situation is likely to worsen with COVID-19 (UN Socio-economic Impact Assessment, 2020). National Poverty Line is 38.2% (EICV 5, 2017).			
	18.7% of HHs are insecure. 17% are moderately food insecure while 1.7% are severely food insecure (VNR 2019). Good progress in prevalence of wasting in children <5 and prevalence of obesity. Undernourishment Stunting and anemia in children under five is a challenge. Prevalence of children with nutritional edema and micronutrient deficiencies to be documented.			
	Good progress on maternal mortality ratio that decreased from 210 to 203 deaths per 100,000 in the period from 2015 to 2020 live births. The under-5 mortality rate continues to decline from 50 deaths per 1,000 live births in the 2014-15 RDHS to 45 deaths per 1,000 live births in the 2019-2020 RDHS. The overall infant mortality rate has practically unchanged in the most recent 5-year period and is 32 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2020 while it was 32 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2015. Overall performance in health is good with 94% of births attended by qualified personnel, while about 91% of children between 12-23 months are fully immunized.			
	High net primary enrolment rate at 98% while mean schooling years have not improved. Literacy rate is relatively good at 87% in 2018. Gender Parity Index is almost perfect for primary and secondary education but lagging for higher education.			
	Rwanda has robust legal frameworks for the advancement of gender rights with low child marriages. There are 61.3% female MPs, 26.7 district mayors and 45.4% members of district consultative councils, 34% managers, who are female (Beijing+25 Report 2020/2018)			
	58% of the population has access to basic water services, 82% of the population in urban areas and only 53% in rural areas. 67% of the population has access to basic sanitation with 70% in urban and 52% in rural areas. Rwanda has 6% of sewer connection and less than 1% in rural area. Open defecation is low to 2%. With regards to hygiene 5% of the population has access to basic hygiene services meaning wash hands with water and soap and it is 3% in rural and 13% in urban areas that have access to basic hygiene services.			
	Access to electricity is low at 34% while there is good renewable energy consumption of 86.7%.			

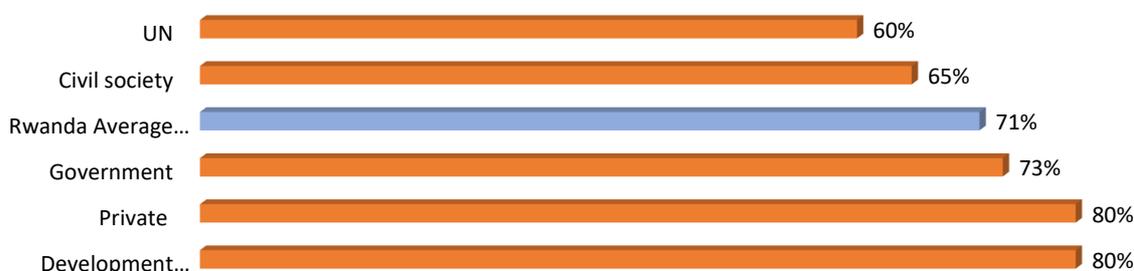


	Rwanda has excelled in this SDG. Average GDP growth rate is one of the highest in the world – averaging 8.5% in 2015 to 2018, and registering a growth rate of 9.4% in 2019. However, this trend is likely to be compromised by the adverse impact of COVID-19 with IMF estimating Rwanda's growth for 2020 to stand at 2%. Good economic participation rates of both women and men with unemployment at 15.4% (LFS 2019Q4). The quality of jobs created needs to improve to ensure that participation in the job market leads to the creation of decent jobs.
	Most indicators in this SDG are pointing upwards with high mobile broadband subscriptions at 39 per 100 population, while the population using the internet stood at 22% in 2018.
	Inequalities are relatively high with a Gini coefficient of 50.1 (2016). More work is required to establish the level of inequality in the population.
	Rwanda has reduced the proportion of the population living in slums significantly to 52% in 2017 from 63% in 2014.
	All indicators in this SDG are positive, with the exception of municipal solid waste. Rwanda's emissions of CO2 are all within acceptable limits of 13.3 kg/capita.
	In 2017, the number of deaths from disasters per 100,000 population was 273, while people affected by natural disasters totaled 80,164 (VNR, MINEMA). Rwanda has taken necessary actions to fulfil its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) through the implementation of the Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy to mainstream climate action in planning and budgeting.
	Most indicators under this SDG are not applicable to Rwanda.
	46.5% of terrestrial site important to biodiversity are protected on average with a 5-year average deforestation rate of around 0.6% of forest area. On the other hand, terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity threats in imports are at a minimum of 0.3%.
	Rwanda has been declared as one of the safest countries in Africa, with 80.3% of the population feeling safe in the place they live. Property rights are high, so is access to justice and public sector accountability.
	Rwanda's aid policy has been developed to guide innovative partnerships in accordance with national principles. This includes policies that guide its domestic resource mobilization (DRM). The proportion of domestic budget funded by DRM increased from 55% in 2005 to 84% in 2018/19.

Source: VNR 2019

50. The CCA 2021 Stakeholder Consultations involved assessing the perception of key stakeholders in the implementation of SDGs. The average score was 3 on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 rating very low progress and 5 rating as high progress. The average rate of implementation by category is analysed as 71 percent (Figure 17). There were responses that SDGs such as 1 and 2 have more visibility than others. There was concession that Government has made good progress in implementing the SDGs including their domestication and aligning them to NST1, but a lot has still to be done. There was also consensus that COVID-19 has affected the whole trajectory going forward.

Figure 17: Stakeholders view on Implementation on SDGs in Rwanda



Source: CCA 2021 Consultations



Unpacking SDG Performance

51. The Government recognizes that many of the areas facing challenges need urgent attention. The Government has committed to pursuing a policy of inclusion of socially and historically disadvantaged and vulnerable people in all its pro-poor development efforts as enshrined in the Constitution. Rwanda has actively pursued the Leave No One Behind principle by guaranteeing representation of vulnerable Rwandans in parliament including, but not limited to, youth, women, persons with disabilities and historically marginalized people. Rwanda has the highest proportion of female members of Parliament in the world (61.2) while female Cabinet Ministers and Judges account for 50 per cent each. In other domains of decision-making, Rwanda has 41 percent female Permanent Secretaries, and 45.2 percent District Councillors. In 2018, 26.7 percent of all mayors were female⁶¹ up from 16.7 in 2016. While 66.7 percent of all Vice mayors in charge of social affairs were female -- however only 16.7 percent were Vice mayors in charge of economic affairs.

52. Gender parity in education has been achieved with girls' primary school enrolment standing at 98.6 percent and at 98.4 percent for boys⁶². Promotion rate in primary school stands at: 84.0 percent for female and 80.4 percent for male. The overall level of repetition and dropout is concerning for both Rwandan boys and girls. However, boys are more likely to repeat (*Male:10.9%, Female: 9.2%*) and drop out (*Female: 6.8%, Male:8.7%*) as compared to girls. At secondary school, while more girls (26.7%) are enrolled than boys (22.1 per cent), girls (83.9%) are less likely to progress from lower to upper secondary than boys (88.6) (MINEDUC, 2019). Female students' participation in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) has decreased from 47.6 percent in 2017 to 44.7 percent in 2019 (MINEDUC 2019). Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) is another area Rwanda has made some progress towards gender parity. In fact, female enrolment has increased from 39.2 percent in 2017 to 41.1 percent in 2019. Further, gender inequities persist at tertiary education level where only 43.1 percent of enrolled students in higher learning institutions are women.

53. Additional measures to promote job creation for women and youth have been instituted including the establishment of a gender-sensitive Business Development Fund (BDF) and the empowerment of women in informal cross-border trade. Further, the Rwanda Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs (RCWE) was established as part of the Private Sector Federation (PSF) to improve the business climate and remove barriers for women entrepreneurs to enhance economic participation. In order to ensure that adequate resources are ring-fenced for the inclusion of women in the economy, a Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) approach has become law, and the Gender Budget Statement (GBS) is a mandatory annexure to the budget framework paper by all budget agencies. To eliminate all forms of Gender Based Violence (GBV), Rwanda also instituted the Isange One Stop Centres (IOSCs) to provide free of charge comprehensive services (medical care, psychosocial services, police and legal support and collection of evidence) to victims of GBV and child abuse (more on GBV in section on *Gender Based Violence: a Human Right Violation*).

54. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Youth and Culture and with the support of the One UN, successful initiatives have been further contributing to the participation of youth in the national development agenda such as the YouthConnekt initiative, a successful multi-faceted programme initiated by the Ministry of Youth in partnership with the One UN. The programme aims at empowering young people and connecting them with their peers, leaders from both

⁶¹ State of gender equality, 2019: gmo.gov.rw

⁶² MINEDUC, 2019



the public and private sector, and civil society organisations that can help youth realise their potential and gain meaningful employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. It combines elements of skills development, entrepreneurship, access to jobs and finance, sexual and reproductive health, awareness raising on issues related to youth development, and promotion of youth citizenship through community work and inclusion in local and national policy dialogue. The National YouthConnekt convention is one of YouthConnekt component, a yearly gathering of Rwanda youth from across the country and diaspora coordinated by the Ministry of Youth and Culture with the National Youth Council (NYC) which targets all Rwanda youth through social media, television and radio. The event aims at giving the opportunity for young people to demonstrate their potential, discuss the challenges they face for their development with their leaders as well as contribute to the National Dialogue Council, UMUSHYIKIRANO.

55. Rwanda has also put in place special measures to include youth in the development space to enable them to contribute to the medium to long-term development goals. This is done through the National Employment Programme (NEP), which focuses on strengthening youth entrepreneurship, access to finance, skills development and access to technology. In addition, the PSF has put in place the Chamber of Young Entrepreneurs to support youth business.

56. Rwanda has also embraced the principle of Universal Health coverage and put in place mechanisms to ensure access to quality health services through the Insurance schemes. The health insurance coverage stands at 90 percent, of which the community-based Health insurance (CBHI) is 85.1 percent in March 2021 (RSSB⁶³, 2021).

57. Through the integrated local development program to accelerate poverty eradication and enhance social protection, named Vision 2020 Umurenge Program (VUP⁶⁴), Rwanda has implemented Public Works programs for people capable of working in Ubudehe 1 and 2⁶⁵, and provided Direct Support for the elderly, child-headed households and persons with disabilities who are unable to work in Ubudehe 1 (the bottom income category). The Expanded Public Works support was introduced in 2017 to provide employment and promote sustained graduation from extreme poverty in labour constrained households namely by providing flexible working hours and identifying work sites close to the community for single worker households with caring responsibilities (VNR, 2019). This cash support scheme reached 50,717 households by September 2020 and is being gradually scaled up to cover all sectors in the country with the ambition of reaching 97,500 households by 2024. Under the VUP, financial services are also provided to people willing to start small income generating activities. Another VUP cash support measure, the Nutrition Sensitive Direct Support, was rolled out from 2019 to provide complementary cash support to Ubudehe 1 families with pregnant mothers or children under the age of 2. This support was later scaled up to Ubudehe 2 families in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

⁶³ @RSSB_Rwanda. (2021, March 5). Uwbitabire mu kwishyura Mituelli 2020/21. [Twitter post]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/RSSB_Rwanda/status/1367841028812767235

⁶⁴ VUP was started in May 2008 and consists of public works, cash transfers, financial services and sensitization

⁶⁵ Note: there is a new Ubudehe classification that is using letters introduced in 2020, which will start being used



58. As of December 2020, Rwanda hosted 144,662 refugees, with 53.3 percent originating from the Democratic Republic of Congo, 46.2 percent from Burundi while the remaining 0.3 percent are from other nationalities. About 92 percent of these refugees live in 6 camps while only 8 percent are hosted in urban areas (UNHCR, 2020)⁶⁶. Refugees in Rwanda are allowed to work and are integrated into national systems of health and education. Primary health care is provided in refugee camps, while local health facilities provide for secondary and tertiary referrals. Refugees in urban setting as well as students in boarding schools, away from the refugee camps, are integrated into Community Based Health Insurance (CBHI) and have access to services from public facilities. By 2020, more than 80 percent of refugee students had been integrated into the Rwandan national education system (UNHCR, 2020)⁶⁷.

“In Rwanda a lot has been tried to incorporate refugees in the national systems of school and health services. However, the most marginalized of the marginalized refugees are those living with disabilities. For instance, some refugee camps are built in hilly areas and access to latrines of such groups among the refugees is a big challenge.”
Stakeholder view.

59. There are, however, certain areas, which need improvement, and groups of people that are yet to be fully included in the remarkable strides to leave no one behind (Chapter 5). In gender equality, despite the impressive statistics, poverty among female headed households is still widespread. Female-headed households (39.5%) are more likely to be poorer than male-headed households, while adult women are more likely to be living in poverty (34%) than adult males (31.6%) (UN 2019). Access to productive resources is still limited for women, especially for off-farm employment opportunities, while their control over productive resources is also constrained. There is need to exert more effort towards forestalling GBV to ensure that women are freed from negative social norms and the culture of silence about GBV.

60. In addition, Rwanda continued to register good progress in the reduction of maternal, neonatal and child mortality. Maternal mortality rates declined from 210/100,000 live births in 2015 to 203 per 100,000 live births in 2019/2020 Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey (RDHS), Neonatal mortality improved slightly from 20 per 1000 live births to 9/1000 live births and — under-5 mortality rate continued to decline from 50 deaths per 1,000 live births in the 2014-15 RDHS to 45 deaths per 1,000 live births in the 2019-2020 RDHS. However, the decline in childhood mortality rates have slowed down and eventually stagnated among the new-born and infant. After declining from 50 deaths per 1,000 live births to 32 deaths per 1,000 live births (between 2010 RDHS and 2014/15 RDHS), the overall infant mortality rate has practically remained unchanged in the most recent 5-year period (33 deaths per 1,000 live births, 2019/2020 RDHS). The neonatal mortality and post neonatal mortality have remained at almost the same level. The modest drops in these indicators call for urgent interventions to change the delayed and slow progress in improving them. The major contribution of maternal, newborn mortality is poor quality of services, despite high coverage of interventions such as births attended by a skilled provider which is 94 percent (GoR 2020). In addition, the health threats and shocks as a result of Health Emergencies such as COVID-19, has an impact on the health systems and the capacity to deliver routine health services and is threatening to reverse the gains in the progress towards attainment of the health-related SDGs. In this regard, continued support to quality health care remains key.

61. Furthermore, although progress on nutrition has been made especially regarding wasting for under five children; stunting remains a challenge despite falling from 51 percent in 2005 to

⁶⁶ <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/85123>

⁶⁷ <https://reporting.unhcr.org/node/25600>



38 percent in 2015 and to 33 percent in 2019/20. Anaemia in children under five is another challenge since the prevalence remains high and stable since 2010 (38% in 2010 and 37% in 2019-20). The 2017 Global Burden of Disease Study also indicates that the country is still facing a significant burden from major communicable diseases, while non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are increasing, and are expected to dominate the health burden in 2040. Risks factors such as high blood pressure, high blood glucose; air and water pollution; unhealthy diet, alcohol and drug use will be major factors resulting in NCDs⁶⁸.

62. Another area identified in the VNR 2019 is Children with Special Needs. There is an urgent need for establishing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) at all centres caring for children with disabilities. Capacity development for carers of children with disabilities should be strengthened to ensure that all aspects of social inclusion are addressed.

63. The vulnerability of majority of the population to climate change and disasters is due to continued high reliance on agriculture and natural resources for economic livelihoods. With regard to Rwanda's climate change vulnerability index, the analysis is presented by showing an assessment of data for 37 indicators in three groups – Exposure, Sensitivity and Adaptive. In summary, 17 indicators show reduced vulnerability, 11 indicators show increased vulnerability, 5 indicators show no change in vulnerability and 4 indicators do not provide data to make an assessment (REMA, 2019⁶⁹). The 2018 Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) shows that about 2,730,554 people were affected and 31,580 temporarily displaced in 15 districts. The PDNA also revealed that the total damage and loss in 2018 was estimated at US\$236 million, and the total cost of recovery and reconstruction - at US\$336 million (UN 2019).

64. The average scoring of all stakeholders in the CCA 2021 on implementation of SDGs was 3.3 out of 5 reflecting average performance. It is supported by the SDG Centre for Africa Report for 2020 that also scores 3; about 60 percent. The analysis from consultations put it at 71 percent. The score underlines that despite strong alignment of SDGs in national planning and strategies there is a lot to be done for all 17 SDGs and for specific SDGs as analysed. On average 67 percent of the stakeholders consulted expressed the need for more efforts towards LNOB. Whilst in terms of engaging with marginalized groups Gender scored the highest at 91 percent, followed by PwD at 79 percent; refugees 73 percent; youth 68 percent and LGBTQ at 9 percent (Figures 18 and 19).

⁶⁸ Global Burden of Diseases 2020: www.thelancet.com/gbd

⁶⁹Assessment of Climate Change Vulnerability in Rwanda, 2019, REMA



Figure 18: Rate of engaging different marginalized groups

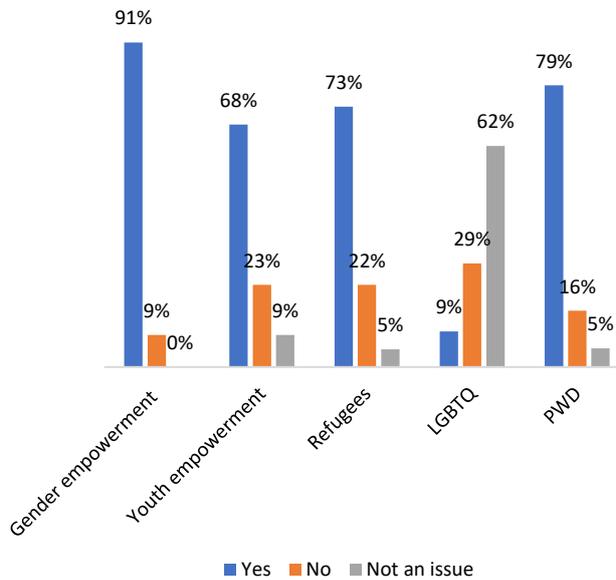
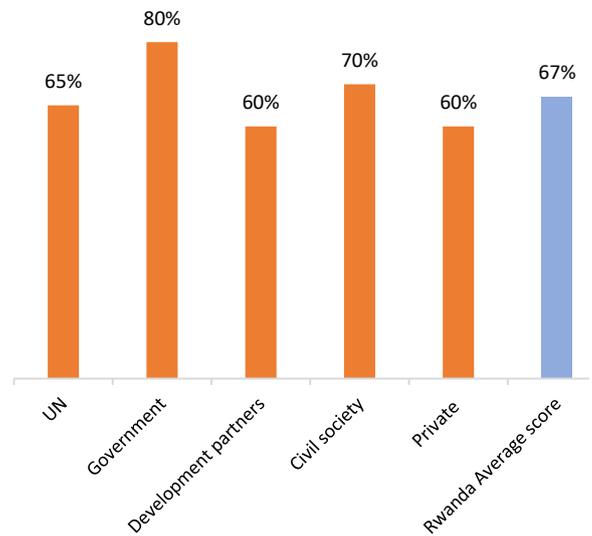


Figure 19: Stakeholders who express that more efforts to LNOB and inequality are required



Source: CCA 2021 Consultations

SDG Financing Landscape

Essentially, trends linked to the economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic render a greater need now for the INFF than ever before. Escalating trade and logistics barriers, rising levels of indebtedness, lower wages, and mounting job losses, are all taking a toll on the global economy and Rwanda is no exception. Reduced fiscal space and a slow-down in new lending to private actors means that efforts to ensure existing spending is both allocated and executed effectively is paramount -- UNDP, 2020.

65. The key challenge cutting across all the SDGs is the gap between the ambition of the targets and available resources to achieve them. Human and financial resources are limited, calling for more concerted efforts amongst all stakeholders to play their part in increasing resource mobilisation and capacity development for the SDGs. According to an expert report for the UN Conference of Trade and Development, the SDG financing gap is US\$2.5 trillion per year from now until 2030. In Rwanda as elsewhere there is a need to scale-up financing to achieve the SDGs as well as Vision 2050 by an order of magnitude. There is a strong role for UN to support Rwanda in showcasing regional leadership around promoting green and high SDG impact financing, digital transformation, and market-building and regulatory reforms to ensure an enabling environment for mobilizing additional investment flows that can help meet the SDG targets in Rwanda. While some efforts have been made in recent years, including supporting budget analysis and planning reforms to better align public finance to critical gaps—particularly in the areas of health, education, and climate change—and promoting financial inclusion for the informal sector, UNCT support for SDG financing was not a prominent focus in the UNDAF.

“Private financing for SDGs has not been much. Indeed, there is need to promote more PPPs.” Stakeholder view.



66. Since no comprehensive “SDG Budgeting” analysis has been undertaken to date, it is difficult to objectively ascertain the proportion of public spending being allocated to various SDGs. Social sector budget allocations have increased by 4.7 percent in FY 2019/20 as compared to 2018/19. Public spending on environment-related investment likewise has shown a steady increase between FY2014/15 and the present. The budget allocation toward environment and climate-related activities at central level institutions rose to approximately RWF118.9 billion in FY 2019/20. District level spending reached on average around 4.5 percent in FY2021/21 from around 2.5 percent on average in the four prior years. The total budget allocated to WASH activities has hovered around 1.5 percent of the national budget (Finance Law). As fiscal space becomes increasingly tight, there is a need for more integrated approaches to budget rationalization and SDG aligned spending, to ensure increased value for money from major public investment programmes.

67. Collectively, UNCTAD estimated in 2015 developing countries have a US\$2.5 trillion annual funding gap to achieve the SDGs. An IMF study conducted in 2018 also estimated Rwanda’s spending would need to rise by around 18 percent of average GDP levels to reach its SDG targets in key sectors. Therefore, there is increasing recognition that new partnerships and sources of development financing will be necessary to meet Rwanda’s rising needs and ambitious development targets building on an increase in its own financial contributions and rising domestic levels of investment and revenue generation. In Rwanda, the widest gap in reaching its financing plan for the NST1 comes from private domestic and international sources according to a recent presentation to donors by the Ministry of Finance.

68. Rwanda launched the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) for SDGs in September 2020⁷⁰. The INFF is expected to help Rwanda realize a paradigm shift in how it raises funds to implement the NST1 and its locally owned action plan for all 17 SDGs, encompassing targets aligned to NST1 for ending poverty, reducing economic inequalities, improving education and health, and tackling climate change whilst spurring economic growth. A recent IMF study (conducted prior to COVID pandemic) estimated additional spending of 18.7 percentage points of GDP by 2030 if Rwanda is to meet its SDG targets in selected sectors. The need is likely to be higher given the setbacks that have been observed across various human development and multi-dimensional poverty areas as a result of the health and economic crisis. The INFF will support refining and supplementing the costing of SDG target achievement of Rwanda particularly for cross-cutting areas like climate, early-childhood development, and nutrition.

Stakeholder views: Financing

- This is where there is most uncertainty
- Financial resources for SDGs are limited even before considering effect of COVID-19
- Volume and blended mix of financing from domestic and international and public and private financing is still weak
- INFF implementation needs to be given priority
- Non-financial means of implementation can be devised
- Cost of financing still high need to look for way of addressing this such as looking from concessionary sources
- Financing recovery from effects of COVID priority
- Financing social sectors and especially health needs attention Need for more PPPs

⁷⁰ A dedicated Joint Program co-led by UNDP and UNICEF is providing technical support to Rwanda’s INFF elaboration process. By June 2022 the country is expected to have a dedicated reforms strategy and road map for a strategy that domesticates the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, approved by Cabinet, as well as refined strategies in place to monitor and finance the SDGs.



- Broaden tax base
- NST1 wants Rwanda to be financial Hub
- Need for an Investment Fund
- Financing should address debt stress
- Funding huge infrastructure projects needs to study financing mechanisms
- Consider experiences of other countries in financing

69. The mobilization of sufficient financing to meet current fiscal and trade balances, whilst ensuring the National Economic Recovery Plan and strategic investments can be funded during a time of increased austerity will be a critical challenge. Reduced fiscal space and a slow-down in new lending to private actors means that efforts to ensure existing spending is both allocated and executed effectively is paramount. To illustrate: between FY2019/20 and FY2020/21, total fiscal revenue fell from 24.0 percent of GDP to 17.4 percent of GDP, the current account balance deteriorated from -9 percent to -16 percent of GDP, and credit to the private sector declined from 12.6 percent to 10.2 percent⁷¹. Net lending for calendar year 2020 is similarly projected to increase from RWF 351.9 billion to RWF 423 billion.⁷²

70. The INFF process is expected to strengthen the links and alignment between planning processes, financing policies and financial management systems based on diagnostics and risk-informed projections. In addition to greater sensitization and evidence-informed policy briefs, UNDP and UNICEF will support efforts to integrate SDG-impact considerations and trade-offs into routine guidelines issued on an annual basis for planning, budgeting, and the appraisal of public investment programmes. Already the Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) serves as a multi-stakeholder platform at national and district levels for facilitating decentralization and full participation of citizens in planning. With representatives from the public sector, private sector through umbrella Chambers, civil society and other local development partners, the JADF has served as a key arena to improve service delivery and accountability for SDG financing at the local level. It also plays a key role in aligning donor-funded development programmes, and investment projects implemented at district level, including those co-financed by large CSOs and private actors.

5. LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

“I am rating Rwanda’s observance of Human Rights 4 out of 5 basing on commitments to conventions, the constitution and institutions set up. But are we reaching everyone? Our last mile is important. For instance, on people living with HIV, sex workers and Sexual Reproductive Health.” Stakeholder advocating for rights of vulnerable groups

71. Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) is a UN value which is crucial to the realization of SDGs. This is a principle that aims to ensure that by 2023, the most vulnerable, particularly women, youth, adolescents and children (especially girls), and persons with disabilities, are empowered and benefit from increased social and economic opportunities. This CCA particularly highlights the impact on the LNOB principle in light of COVID-19.



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⁷¹ All data from MINECOFIN Public Dataset on Macroeconomic Framework accessible at www.minecofin.gov.rw

⁷² Ibid.



Persons living with disability (PwD)

72. PwD is a vulnerable group that has been cited more frequently by stakeholders of the CCA 2021 consultations. 446,453 persons with disabilities aged 5 and above are living in Rwanda according to the 2012 Census, out of which 221,150 were men and 225,303 women. The major cause of disabilities in the country is disease or illness, with almost half of all persons aged five and above with disabilities citing this as the reason. 20 percent of the disabilities are caused by an injury or accident, 13 percent have a congenital condition, and 8 percent have reported that their disability was caused by war/mines or the genocide against the Tutsi of 1994. The main causes of disability vary between men and women, as well as in rural – urban settings⁷³. Some literature suggests that depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, suicide attempts, and other mental health issues are common, and there is no evidence of a decreasing trend⁷⁴.

73. The disability programme efforts in Rwanda are founded on an equity-driven Government agenda and supported by progressive policy work and legal governmental framework. Some of the noticeable initiatives undertaken comprise the National Policy on Disability in 2003, Law N° 01/2007 relating to Protection of People with Disabilities in general, Law N° 02/2007 relating to the protection of disabled former war combatants, and Law N° 54/2011 which provides specific protections to children with disabilities. Creation of the National Council of Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) was another significant initiative. NCPD mission is to constitute a forum for advocacy and social mobilization for issues affecting persons with disabilities in order to build PwD's capacity and ensure their participation in national development. The foundation for the promotion and protection of human rights in Rwanda lies in the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda which indicates the basic human rights guaranteed for all persons, including persons with disabilities. For instance, article 16 of the Rwandan constitution (Republic of Rwanda, 2015) stipulates that "all persons are equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection by the law". Article 51 is specific to the welfare of persons with disabilities and other needy persons. This article specifies the following: The State (...) has the duty, within its means, to undertake special actions aimed at the welfare of persons with disabilities. A number of laws determining special actions geared to PWDs have also been adopted⁷⁵.

74. However, in spite of the existing legal instruments, Ministerial Orders, sector policy and strategic plans sanctioned by Rwanda, the implementation process is still a challenge. Concerns have been expressed about the slow pace of adoption of a national disability policy or about the fact that the ministerial orders of 2009 concerning persons with disabilities remain largely unimplemented (UN - Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UNCRPD, 2019). Discrimination against persons with disabilities still exists and greater investment in the disability sector is needed (Njelesani, Siegel, & Ullrich, 2018). Women, men, girls and boys with

⁷³ Thematic Report: Socio-Economic Characteristics of Persons with Disabilities, NISR, 2014

⁷⁴ USAID, 2019

⁷⁵ In 2007, Rwanda promulgated Law Number 01/2007 of 20 January 2007 related to the protection of Persons with disabilities in general. A second Law, Number 02/2007 also of 20 January 2007 related to the protection of Persons with Disabilities and former war combatants was passed at the same time. With regard to Law n° 02/2007 of 20/01/2007 relating to the Protection of disabled former war combatants, it provides that the Government has the duty to ensure that the disabled war combatant has an opportunity to access education of his or her ability compatible with his or her disability (Article 7). Article 9 stipulates that the Government has the duty to assist the disabled war combatant in acquisition of prosthesis and orthopaedics. In addition to the laws mentioned above, a number of ministerial orders were issued including key provisions related to the rights of persons with disabilities.



disabilities are still being left behind: due to norms, lack of knowledge and awareness, financial resources, physical obstacles inhibiting access services, one of the most commonly referenced examples, closely linked to awareness-raising, is a lack of accessibility due to stigmatization and discrimination. A study by UNICEF (2018) and the draft disability policy document indicate that gaps in policy implementation and unclear roles and responsibilities are significant barriers to inclusion of persons with disabilities. Many persons with disabilities face challenges accessing government policies, services and programmes aimed at alleviating poverty and empowering citizens. Further, planning and decision making is hindered by a general lack of reliable disability data (World Health Organisation, 2011). In the private sector, few organisations have programmes and/or facilities to accommodate the needs of people with disability.

75. To this end, measures have been put in place to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to meaningful learning opportunities and also ensure that all public buildings such as schools, markets and administrative offices guarantee easy access for persons with disabilities. The disability inclusion agenda has benefited from good collaboration between the Government, Civil Society Organizations, and development partners. Recent efforts by the Government to develop the new national disability policy which is still awaiting approval as well as the work concluded in 2020 by the Law Reform Commission to review the national legal framework with the aim of ensuring greater alignment with the UNCRPD will also provide a solid ground for disability inclusion in Rwanda.

“There is need to include voices of refugees, disabled, women, young girls, cross-border traders, migrants etc. Indeed, there may be limited knowledge on marginalization in terms of numbers and status. LNOB should not be a slogan but used replete with evidence from the ground.” Stakeholder view.

“If one has to fairly rate the implementation of SDGs but with a lens of persons with disabilities it would be 2 out of 5 or less. That means below average. Persons with disabilities are not familiar or adequately informed on the SDGs. A pathway of implementing SDGs would be formulation of a Policy on Disability and following through its implementation. Challenges to the groups of persons living with disability at organisational level is availability of financial resources. There is still over dependency on donors, discrimination and a mindset that has no consideration to the disabled and their rights, public transport, accessing buildings and accessing justice. On the face of it, much has been done for the disabled in Rwanda; the National Council, National Commission and ratification of conventions, 13 DPOs and supplying skin lotions to albinos. But the persons living with disabilities group is perhaps the furthest behind. COVID-19 has exposed the plight of persons with disabilities. A person in wheel-chair cannot access points of handwashing. The blind cannot get written information on COVID-19 in public places and the deaf did not get the guidelines on COVID-19 from mass media facilities. The UN can support the dialogues and monitor the implementation of laws and conventions. Data on disability in Rwanda is also outdated; from the Census 2012. Advocacy for the conditions of persons with disabilities is required for enforcing codes on buildings and transport. The UN can also assist in the monitoring and awareness creation efforts.” Stakeholders view.

76. Local communities including the poorest and persons with disability also have a role to play in the management of environment and natural resources and climate change adaptation and mitigation. The Government seeks to enhance the role of local communities not only as secondary players in environment and natural resources management but to work with them in establishing viable green enterprises. Currently engagement of local communities mostly revolves around implementation of projects as subcontractors, building their capacity, participation in resources management such as management of lakes and rivers’ buffers, joint patrol of reserved areas and participation during the development of management plans.

Youth

77. The Youth (16-30 years) population in Rwanda in 2016/17 was 3,165,000, or 26.6 percent of the total population. Almost half of the country’s youth, 45 percent, are independent farmers,



while other common jobs are wage non farmer (28.1%), wage farm (16.3%) and independent non farmer (9.3%). Consultations with a youth group in the Western Province (20 members, boys/men only) illustrated the need to support youth income generating activities also in rural areas. The activities, braiding and selling goats across the border, have generated income for the members to pay for their own school fees and some have finished secondary school education. The Youth Group also mentioned that there is low membership of female youth and a higher participation of females into the group would be planned.

Box 4: Risk of COVID-19 on the Youth

- Under the leadership of the Ministry of Youth and Culture (MYCULTURE), a nation-wide Rapid Impact Assessment of COVID-19 to Youth and Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) conducted in May 2020 among 2,600 youth which brought some light on the impact of the COVID-19 on young entrepreneurs, youth working in the creative industry and the employed ones. Its results showed that 95% of the 1,000 young entrepreneurs from all sectors have been affected by COVID-19 with reduced revenues linked to reduced demand and access to markets as well as transport challenges. The assessment finds that 49.9 percent of youth in business and entrepreneurship are in the informal sector, that youth owned businesses do not work with financial institutions (only 27 percent of the respondents had outstanding loans), and that almost all the businesses had been negatively affected by COVID-19.

- The unemployment rate among youth is tending to increase as a direct effect of COVID-19, the survey showed that more than 40% of employed youth have been experiencing temporary suspended jobs, decreased salary (20%) or possible termination of contract (12%). The figures for rates of unemployment have been estimated using scenario building. In the most modest impact of COVID-19 it has been estimated that about 600,000 jobs were lost between Q1 and Q2 in 2020. In the worst case scenario where the COVID-19 cases did not decrease until Q3 2020 the estimated loss has been put at 1.2 jobs. The vast majority expressed the need for capital in order to ensure business continuity, survival and investment to expand their activities and take advantage of the new rising opportunities such as e-commerce, etc

- Estimates from NISR labour surveys indicate that between March and May 2020 during the lock down unemployment went up from 15.4% to more than 22%. It is also estimated that 27% of the formal labour force is regarded as youth and another almost equal amount is employed in the informal sector. Which leaves a figure between 162,000 and 324,000 youths having been thrown out of their formal jobs in 2020 excluding those employed in the informal sector.

- In response, a youth resilience plan was developed by the MYCulture to support the impacted youth with a focus on addressing their identified challenges, particularly job sustainability and business continuity. The plan was implemented with the support of UNDP and KOICA and drew attention to supporting the youth owned enterprises with an objective of ensuring their business survival and taking advantage of the new rising opportunities. It is within that framework the One UN (UNDP and KOICA) provided technical and financial support to build 30 handwashing stations among all national youth centres for health prevention measures, to support young innovators who have been developing solutions to respond to COVID-19 as well as to existing young entrepreneurs whose businesses have been affected by COVID-19 through a US\$500,000 young entrepreneurs resilience fund as well to support innovative national awareness raising campaign through TV and social media aimed at mobilizing youth to stay productive while staying at home and ensure a respect of the COVID-19 prevention guidelines.

Gender

78. Gender is mentioned in summaries of almost all stakeholders (91 percent) and respondents are highlighting serious gender issues to address: such as cascading gains in gender downwards to local levels and among marginalised groups and to address current problems of GBV, early pregnancy, cultural barriers and traditional practices in the family that hinder gender equality, unpaid care work among women as well as gender parity in higher



education and STEM, participation by women in digital economy, sexual harassment, as well as family planning for men.

79. Despite great achievements in promoting gender equality, there are still gaps which need be covered to ensure gender mainstreaming in all SDGs and national development agenda (NSTI and Vision 2050). The Global SDG Gender Index makes Rwanda among the best performing countries in Sub Sahara Africa (ranked 5th) but Rwanda stands at 91 position ⁷⁶ out of the 129 countries with a score of 58.1. The report shows areas of improvement towards scores attributed. In addition, the on-going legal analysis of gender responsiveness under Rwandan laws reveal that the country has registered tremendous achievements in making its legal framework gender responsive but highlight the need to focus on enforcement of laws to address various gender gaps.

80. Furthermore, the country still needs more concerted efforts to address social norms and culture rooted stereotypes that perpetuate gender inequalities in Rwanda through awareness raising and dialogues reaching out to the maximum possible number of communities. Measures aimed at increasing gender equality in participation in economic activities and hence equally reaping the same benefits, as men remain paramount. Women should be equipped with all necessary prerequisites to actively engage in traditionally male dominated domains such as STEM⁷⁷ subject areas and the public and private sectors are to provide enabling environment to fully bridge the gender gap. Mechanisms and facilities promoting Inclusive access to justice for victims of GBV should still be viewed as irreplaceable in disrupting criminal intentions through exemplary and severe punishment to the convicted perpetrators.

81. Unpaid Care Work continues to limit women from efficiently tapping into the existing economic opportunities. The 2019 Labour Force Survey (LFS) shows that women spend on average 11.1 hours per week on cooking and shopping compared to only 5 hours for men, 7.5 hours on caring for children and elderly compared to only 3.5 hours for men, 4.6 hours per week on collecting firewood and 4 hours on collecting water compared to only 3.8 hours for men in both cases. The percentage of female employed in dependent jobs as Unpaid care workers is 5.4 percentage points higher than among male (6.6% against 1.2%).

“Gender equality with us is not the right concept but ‘ubwuzuzanye’ or mutual support and understanding. We as mostly Muslim women can now move out of the homes with consent of our husbands and plan jointly what to do with the money we get out of the business [there is empowerment in the households]. But the business still have the challenges that would need enhanced capacity to address.” Stakeholder view

82. It is important to recognize that there is also multiple discrimination, for instance towards women with disabilities. To ensure an inclusive development going forward, there is a need for awareness raising and change of norms, but also for more data for decision making; what is the situation for refugee women or girls living with disabilities, young LGBTBIQ women and men, etc? Programming should work to reduce stigma, empowering public civil servants, health care workers, teachers, the general public, etc, in being a part of changing the mind-set and ensuring an inclusive development for all people in Rwanda. The interventions need to be carefully designed and implemented in close cooperation with relevant partners who have credibility and a space to raise the issues. New interventions could draw from and build on

⁷⁶ <https://www.equalmeasures2030.org/products/global-report-2018/>

⁷⁷ STEM: science, technology, engineering and mathematics



lessons learned from previous work with civil society, faith-based leaders and other relevant stakeholders.

Box 5: Risk of COVID-19 Effects on Gender Dimensions

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only had a direct impact on health and taken a toll on human life; it has also elevated the vulnerabilities of women.

- Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, labor statistics were on largely positive trends according to the Labour Force Survey series. Unemployment had declined among women from 22.7 percent in 2016 to 17 percent in 2019, while the employment-to-population ratio and labour force participation rate were also increasing.
- According to the Labour Force Survey conducted by NISR in May 2020, the unemployment rate among women aged 16 years and above had increased to 25 percent up from 14 percent in February 2020, while for men it was estimated at 19 percent from 13 percent in the same period as a result of the rise of unemployed population due to COVID-19. The LFS found the female labour force participation rate at 47 percent, much lower than the male's (64.3%). These unemployment figures amid COVID-19 pandemic underscore the severity of socioeconomic impact of the pandemic on women, majority operating in the informal sector, which occupies 91.2 percent of employed women (LFS, 2019).
- With the disruption of the economy as a result of the adverse impact of COVID-19, the majority of the workforce at risk of losing their livelihoods are women as many work in sectors that have been hardest hit (tourism, hospitality food service).
- In most of the COVID-19 affected sectors⁷⁸, the share of women in employment averages 45 percent with the highest share of women manifesting in wholesale and retail trade at 54 percent of total employment (UN, 2020).
- Micro-small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) that are particularly important for many of the most vulnerable groups, including smallholder farmers, informal and farmworkers, self-employed people, daily wage earners, in most cases primarily women, are also very exposed to shocks brought about by the pandemic.
- With the pandemic and subsequent prevention and response measures including lockdown where families (women, men and children) are gathered together at home with limited movement combined with limited survival and restricted access to online reporting of Gender Based Violence (GBV) cases as well as limited access to information the vulnerability to GBV of most marginalized people i.e. women, children, elderly, persons with disabilities and persons with chronic health conditions may have increased because the timely reporting of GBV cases was even a key challenge well before the COVID-19 pandemic arose.
- There is a critical need to strengthen GBV reporting mechanisms especially by establishing or strengthening hotlines in collaboration with CSOs which had been working in GBV prevention and response including legal assistance to GBV Victims to ensure that the perpetrators are punished. It is also important to strengthen community structures and safe spaces to ensure that GBV Victims are effectively identified and supported through different referral mechanisms in place, but which need to be also strengthened to ensure that victims are reached in due time.

83. A recent study commissioned by the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (2019) also revealed the absence of gender sensitive indicators for environment and climate change in plans of key sectors including agriculture, energy, urbanization, and industry. In addition to supporting women initiatives, the study recommends increasing advocacy and awareness both at high level and at technical level. This includes the institutionalization and implementation of the female quota (30%) for all-natural resources management committees (catchment committees, Water Use Associations, land and forest management units at community level) and the incentivization of women's participation in senior management and technical positions at the central and district levels of administration to overcome the gender-structural power gap that constrains women's voices in environment and climate change governance. The tracking of gender statistics was also recommended to drive the success of gender mainstreaming in the environment and climate change sector.

⁷⁸ Real estate, administrative and support, accommodation and food services, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade



84. The case of women in Cross Border Trade is an illustration of how multiple issues need an integrated understanding. The border closure due to the COVID-19-crisis is having severe effects on traders, in particular women, effecting family incomes negatively. Rwanda has indicated in major plans and strategies and Vision 2050 the importance of Regional Integration. There is no way SDGs trajectory in Rwanda cannot be impacted by transboundary issues. Trade is an important aspect of regional cooperation. Cross border Trade is important across the borders and is often affected by misunderstandings across the border.

85. In 2020, a joint programme on promoting cross border trade has been launched with the aim to address Food and economic insecurity as conflict driver and factor as well as addressing impediments to cross-border trade between Rwanda and DRC. According to a [2015 survey](#) led by International Alert, 81 percent of traders reported having paid taxes in the DRC without receiving any receipt for such payment, while 27 percent of traders reported the same concerning taxes paid in Rwanda⁷⁹. According to the same assessment, the majority of small-scale cross-border traders (83%) are women, and the majority of them (82%), confirmed that small-scale cross-border trade was their main source of income. About 65 percent of the traders are the main breadwinners of their families⁸⁰.

“Peace and security are the primary issues that are related to regional and transboundary relations. Rwanda has often found itself amidst transboundary and regional misunderstandings. It has often affected cross border trade and the most affected are women who form the majority of traders.” Stakeholder view

86. Female Sex Workers (FSW) is a category of vulnerable women group which was mentioned once in consultations. But it appears in other stakeholders reports indirectly as a part of the problem of HIV⁸¹. Sex workers are regarded as a vulnerable group bearing the burden of the disease and agencies of transimission of HIV. The strategic plan suggests focusing on the group as one of the most vulnerable. Yet as one of those vulnerable groups that seem to be less visible and/ or discriminated limited information and advocacy is non existent. One study estimated 12,278 (2012)sex workers in Rwanda for long sex work has been regarded as illegal and comes forward as part of the PLHIV as indeed it has been estimated that half of all sex workers are HIV positive⁸².

87. Farmers in Cross-Border Trade (CBT). The CCA 2021 Consultative process conducted a focus group discussion with a farmer cooperative and found that this is also a group facing significant challenges namely access to inputs, finances, means of diversification of produce heightened by COVID-19. The cooperative was established in 2010 and has 208 members (100 men, 75 young men and 33 girls). Though a cooperative it is now like a small medium enterprise strong and growing. The area of focus is vegetables and also encourages modern farming on collective area of 350 hectares. It exploits CBT and have very formal relations with counterparts in DRC. It acquired a machine for value adding onions and processes through drying about 40 tonnes a week (which to the cooperative falls short) as they seek to grow produce with further value addition for commercial purposes. Growing the cooperative has been challenging as prospective members find the share of FRW 48,000 prohibitive. Other major challenges include cross border bureaucratic procedures, getting back their markets of

⁷⁹ International Alert: Deriving maximum benefit from small-scale cross border trade between DRC and Rwanda, 2015

⁸⁰ Idem

⁸¹ National Strategic Plan for HIV extension 2018-2020

⁸² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prostitution_in_Rwanda



Uganda and Burundi that fell as a result of country misunderstanding and modern cold chain transport to minimise perishability. Success stories justify rationale for support. However, issues such as inclusion particularly for women and youth (young girls more so) who cannot afford entry fees and shares need to be carefully studied in UN and Government interventions.

88. The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Questioning (LGBTIQ). The LGBTIQ were scarcely mentioned in the consultations with stakeholders. One respondent indicated that while there is no overt discrimination by policy or law by LGBTIQ in Rwanda, they are not engaged in the open, the issue tends to be forgotten. The majority of stakeholders, 91 percent said either it was not an issue (62%) or 29 percent said they did not engage with the group.

89. The Rwandan laws are mute on LGBTIQ. As reported by USAID in their Gender and Social Inclusion Analysis⁸³, “one of the biggest challenges facing that community is discrimination in access to health services. They have little confidence in service providers and see health facilities as unreliable and untrustworthy. LGBTIQ advocates reported experiences such as frequent shaming or preaching in health facilities, having had their confidentiality violated by facility personnel, or having been preached to about the immorality of their behaviour. The needs and concerns of women also are given less attention within the LGBTI community, where sexual health and HIV/AIDS programs target men who have sex with men and transgender women. As a result, lesbian and bisexual women and transgender men have a less visible presence and receive less consideration in programming and policy. Transgender women and men face the greatest stigmatization and obstacles in accessing healthcare (USAID, 2019). There is no reliable data yet but some interventions related to FSW and MSM give a sense of magnitude. In the NSP on HIV targeted 22,184 FSW and 617 MSM⁸⁴.

Refugees

90. Reaching the furthest behind first also means the need to end protracted crisis and displacement, as well as empower migrants in vulnerable situations. This requires improved collaboration across the humanitarian development peace nexus. Rwanda has also benefited from the resettlement programmes for refugees that aim to resettle refugee families and individuals in third countries. A multi-year comprehensive regional solutions strategy, targeting 30 percent of Congolese refugees in Rwanda, has resulted in the resettlement of 14,468 refugees whilst approximately 10,000 remain on the waiting list. However, the growing number of refugees in need of longer-term solutions, coupled with a lack of sustainable growth in resettlement and complementary pathways (such as education and labor mobility schemes) has meant that opportunities for third country solutions remain inadequate. Although, approximately 90 percent of refugee children are integrated in the Rwandan education sector they face financial barriers to complete their education. The repetition rate is currently estimated at 10 percent (Male:10.9%; Female: 9.2%) and the dropout rate at 7.8 percent (Male: 8.7%; Female: 6.8%) in primary schools (MINEDUC 2019). Challenges facing refugees remain namely: insufficient access to finance for entrepreneurship, limited access to tertiary and vocational education, the need to acquire a refugee ID card to conduct many economic and social activities⁸⁵. COVID-19 preventive restrictions and its socio-economic impacts have further compounded difficulties faced by refugees.

⁸³ Gender and Social Inclusion Analysis USAID, 2019

⁸⁴ RBC Nation Strategic Plan on HIV 2018-2020 extension

⁸⁵ <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/69632.pdf>



Box 6: LNOB Assessment at Kigeme and Mugombwa Camps; UNHCR December 2020

●**Inside the Camps participants appreciate availability of services:** access to education; access to healthcare; social interactions with the host community; freedom of movement; timely food assistance through Cash Based Intervention (CBI). Outside the Kigeme camp: Persons of Concern have limited information about the life of outside the camp refugees. However, they have an impression that urban refugees are better off. Outside the Mugombwa camp: When a refugee is outside the camp with MINEMA's authorization, and one gets sick, access to healthcare is granted without difficulties.

●**Commonalities on vulnerabilities experienced at both Camps:**

- The Youth: are generally vulnerable due to limited employment opportunities upon graduation.
- Girls: are particularly vulnerable because they have needs that the household assistance cannot meet such as skin lotions, sanitary pads are supplied irregularly through CBI.
- Widows: are extremely vulnerable; face challenges in raising children alone and are harassed by their children who accuse them of mismanagement.
- Men: are not respected by women and children because they are not bread winners "Inka ikundirwa icebe": the cow loses value when it cannot be milked.
- Existence of VAW and children: They are frequent due to insufficient food aid (FRW7,600 per capita per month).

Challenges being experienced by refugees and asylum seekers:

Kigeme: (i)Limited access to healthcare for camp based refugees who fall sick when they are outside the camp especially when they do not have MINEMA's authorization. (ii) The demand for job opportunities is far high than the supply. (iii) During COVID-19, the host community received social protection interventions, but camp based refugees did not.

Mugombwa): (i) Classrooms are overcrowded, which predisposes them to communicable diseases, and affects their quality of education. (ii) The host community received social protection interventions, but camp based refugees did not (during COVID-19). (iii) Only urban asylum seekers cannot use the Community Based Health Insurance while urban refugees and boarding students do.

Coping mechanisms that have been adopted:

Across both camps, risky behaviours adopted by youth are prevalent such as alcohol and drug abuse; theft, and engaging in prostitution, which lead to unwanted pregnancies and STDs. In addition to children dropping out of education; whilst specifically at Kigeme Camp old men congregate on the "hill of sorrow" to play and buy time.

Source: Feasibility Study 1000 Health Posts in a Land of 1000 Hills

Human Rights, Inequality and Discrimination

UNDAP II is responsive to addressing Human Rights, Inequalities and Discrimination issues through particularly: UNDAP Strategic Priority 3: By 2023 people in Rwanda live safe dignified lives in a country governed by rule of law, gender responsive accountable governance and inclusive participation. Outcome 5: By 2023, people in Rwanda benefit from childhood gender equality, justice, human rights, peace and security.

91. The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003 revised in 2015 devotes its chapter IV to human rights and freedoms which are inherent to all human beings⁸⁶. The Government continues to fulfil its human rights obligations by strengthening the institutional, legislative and economic development architecture. It also continued striving to overcome the challenges of the 1994 Genocide perpetrated against Tutsi. The Rwanda Constitution has established different institutions including the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) as an independent institution with A status charged with the promotion and protection of human rights in Rwanda. It also established different commissions, specialized organs, national

⁸⁶ Namely civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights, right to life, and to education, right to equality before law, protection from discrimination, child's right to protection, right to freedom of expression, right to freedom of assembly, that to mention few.



councils and public institutions for the protection of different vulnerable groups and categories of rights, including the Office of Ombudsman, the National Commission for Children, the Gender Monitoring Office, the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities, Rwanda Governance Board, and the National Commission for the Fight against Genocide.

92. In February 2017, the Government completed the process of putting in place the National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP) after being approved by the Cabinet of Ministers. Upon approval of the NHRAP, stakeholders developed its implementation roadmap, which was subsequently widely disseminated for execution. Its implementation runs through December 2020. An assessment report on the implementation of the NHRAP is in the process and once finalized will inform phase two of the NHRAP.

93. The UN Rwanda supports the Government's efforts for the implementation of human rights policies and laws through UNDAP II and SDGs goals. In this context the UN Rwanda has elaborated the Human Rights Strategy supporting the UNDAP II and put in place the UN Human Rights Taskforce. On 7 July 2020, the UNCT submitted its report to the Human Rights Council in the form of the contribution to the third review of Rwanda Universal Periodic Review which took place on 25 January 2021. The UNCT report assesses the progress made and the support provided by the UN Agencies in line with international human rights principles and the sustainable development goals. The UN supported the UPR process including a mock exercise and various interactions with stakeholders, CSOs, and DPs and took part to the workshop validation of the Government UPR Report. Additionally, unlike UNDAP I, the UNCT has instituted a gender mainstreaming strategy for UNDAP II applicable to all Results Groups and UNCT thematic Working Groups effective from 2019.

“On a conducive environment for persons living with disability, I would score it 2 out of 5. Do we have women with disabilities in those high level positions we talk of? Do we have women with disabilities as Mayors? How many in the youth council? Persons living with disabilities still lack access to political positions and access to justice.” Stakeholder view.

National Capacities on Human Rights

94. The Government fulfils its Human Rights obligations with the support from national stakeholders including the national human rights institutions, human rights NGOs, Women's Human Rights NGOs, focal points of different ministries. The result achieved in the promotion and protections of human rights are encouraging. However, it is necessary to pursue the capacity building in human rights by conducting training in monitoring and reporting techniques. Even more so the significant setback for the human rights agenda attributed to COVID-19 (Box 7).



Box 7: Risk of COVID-19 on Human Rights

- The COVID -19 pandemic has had a negative impact on economic, social and cultural rights and civil and political rights. In particular, COVID-19 has negative repercussions on the rights to work, to health, to education, to food, to mention a few. Under these conditions, the achievement of the SDGs goals, the development plan or basic social services have been affected and have increasingly become difficult to achieve. The inclusion of the 10 thematic Indicators and complementary indicators for assessing and monitoring human rights implications of COVID-19 is critical to ensure Human rights-based approach is integrated into the COVID-19 preparedness and response plans.
- Regarding civil and political rights, restrictive measures such as the state of emergency, border closures due to COVID-19 or traffic restrictions in certain areas of the country have limited the monitoring and human rights protection capacities.
- The current human rights programs or those to be adopted in the near future should be innovative and find new ways to raise awareness on human rights education using online communication methods.

95. The Government enacted a number of laws which guarantees to a large extent the protection of human rights: Law N° 027/2019 of 19/09/2019 relating to the criminal procedure; Law No 22/2018 of 29/04/2018 relating to the civil, commercial, labour and administrative procedure; Law No. 04/2012 of 17/02/2012 governing organization and functioning of national NGOs; Law No. 02/2013 of 08/02/2013 regulating media. Law No 44 bis/2017 of 06/09/2017 relating to the protection of whistle blowers; Law N° 68/2018 of 30/08/2018 determining offences and penalties in general; Law No. 32/2016 of 28/08/2016 governing persons and family; Law No. 71/2018 of 31/08/2018 relating to the protection of the child; Law No. 51/2018 of 13 August 2018 on the prevention, suppression and punishment of trafficking in persons and the exploitation of others to mention a few. The implementation of these laws contributes to the strengthening of human rights, particularly civil and political rights.

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

96. Rwanda appeared for the first time before the working group on UPR of the Human Rights Council in 2011. It appeared again before this working group in 2015 to report on the implementation of 73 recommendations, which it accepted. On 25 January 2021, the human rights records of Rwanda were reviewed for the third time by the working group on UPR of the Human Rights Council. Following this exercise, 284 recommendations were formulated to the Government of Rwanda. This latter accepted 160 recommendations, deferred the response to 49 recommendations and noted 75 recommendations. The UPR process in Rwanda engages different partners including the United Nations, Development Partners, Government and specialized institutions and the Civil Society Organizations. The recommendations accepted by the Government of Rwanda offers to UNCT and its partners an opportunity for reinforcement of their cooperation with the country in human rights domain.

97. The recommendations of the third cycle of the UPR are far superior to those of the second cycle. According to the Government, the increase in the number of recommendations does not mean a deterioration of the human rights situation in the country. The reason that justifies this important number of recommendations is explained by greater participation of peers in the dialogue with Rwanda and a good interaction of national and international human rights NGOs with the Council of Human rights during the process of submission and consideration of the Rwanda report.

98. The CCA has attempted to consolidate all the categories of the vulnerable groups including the drivers of their vulnerability. We also question whether there are some sub-categories that are furthest behind or more at risk. We propose interventions to improve their inclusion in the UN and Government programmes to ensure progress of the LNOB principle (Table 3).



Table 3: Tracking Leaving No One Behind

Who is left behind?	Furthest Behind/Most at Risk?	Why? (Drivers)	What and how to respond? (Recommendations)	Supporting Institutions
Women	Rural poor women, women with disabilities, FHH	Culture, poor targeting, violence	Scaling up GEWE at all levels, policy addressing drivers of women vulnerabilities	UN agencies UNWOMEN, MIGEPROF, INGOs
Youth	Youth living with disability, young women and vulnerable youth from rural areas.	Labour market imperfections, lack of proper skills	Overseeing implementation of existing policies, involving all UN agencies in JPs	UN agencies, UNDP, FAO, KOICA, MYCULTURE, MIFOTRA, BDF,
Young girls	Pregnant minors, drug abusers, orphans	Lack of guidance, weak family bonds, technology/internet, abusive men and boys	Scaling up national and family support schemes and enforcing law enforcement frameworks	MIGEPROF, UNWOMEN
Persons With Disabilities	Rural areas, refugees in all categories	Stigma, discrimination, poor enforcement of laws and conventions, poor knowledge of disability	Strategies to enforce laws and regulations, education on rights and access to justice	UNDP, NUDOR
Infants and Children	Infants and children with disabilities, chronic or acute illnesses and/or with undernutrition including Low Birth Weight babies	Extreme poverty, food insecurity limited access to health services and vaccination, low education of mothers and sensitisation	Increased support to vulnerable infants because of disability and diseases	UNICEF, MIGEPROF, MoH, ECDC
Refugees	Widow, women, young refugees, refugee children, disabled refugees	Stigma, poverty, exclusion	Integration in national programme initiatives	UNHCR, MINEMA
Migrants	Illegal immigrants	Poverty, political forces, trafficking, child labour, organ trade	Laws on abuse of migration principles and enforcing conventions on migration	IOM, MINEMA
Aging population	Rural areas, those with terminal illnesses	Poverty, exclusion, minority	Policy framework	MINALOC, RSSB, UNFPA
Internally Displaced People	In hilly areas, in informal settlements in Kigali	Climate change effects, floods,	Early warning schemes, and planning for disaster management adaptation and mitigation of effects of climate change	MINEMA, IOM
People Living with HIV	Female Sex workers	Poverty, drug abuse,	More access to ARVs and continue HIV infection controls; targeted interventions empowering sex workers to mitigate health and safety risks afferent to sex work	RBC, MoH, UN Women
LGBTQ	In refugee camps	Cultural demonstration effect	Cultural education and counselling with support through programmes that have access to the group	None

Source: CCA 2021 Consultations



6. Social Developments

Human Development Index

99. Rwanda Human Development Index (HDI) for 2019 is 0.543 (HDR, 2020⁸⁷). It is regarded as low human development country ranking 160 out of 189. Between 1990 and 2019, Rwanda's HDI value increased from 0.248 to 0.543, an increase of 119.0 percent. Table 4 reviews Rwanda's progress in each of the HDI indicators. Between 1990 and 2019, Rwanda's life expectancy at birth increased by 35.6 years, mean years of schooling increased by 2.7 years and expected years of schooling increased by 5.5 years. Rwanda's GNI per capita increased by about 130.9 percent between 1990 and 2019. However, it is among the countries that have seen the highest rise in Human Development since 1994 the year of the Genocide against Tutsi.

Table 4: Rwanda's HDI Trends

	Life Expectancy at Birth	Expected Years of Schooling	Mean Years of Schooling	GNI Per Capita (2017 PPP\$)	HDI Value
1990	33.4	5.7	1.8	933	0.248
1995	31.0	6.2	2.0	749	0.231
2000	48.6	7.2	2.3	860	0.341
2005	55.3	9.4	2.8	1,137	0.413
2010	63.4	11.1	3.8	1,497	0.492
2015	67.5	11.5	4.0	1,846	0.526
2016	67.9	11.1	4.1	1,904	0.527
2017	68.3	11.5	4.3	1,909	0.535
2018	68.7	11.4	4.3	2,021	0.540
2019	69.0	11.2	4.4	2,155	0.543

Source: UNDP, 2020

100. There is variation in trends of the estimated levels of human development index between the City of Kigali and the rest of the countryside. All districts of Kigali show a rising trend in human development from 2002/2010/11 to 2016 /2017. The most recent HDI of the city districts are above 0.6 above the current national average. There are 9 rural districts that have HDI of less than 0.5 and the district of Gisagara with the lowest index of 0.439.

Population Dynamics

101. The Government of Rwanda recognizes the importance of developing a quality population and minimizing the dependency burden as critical to achieving the Vision 2050⁸⁸. Population characteristics have not significantly changed since the last CCA (2017); projections based on the 2012 Census show a rapidly growing population, dominantly youthful with a median age of just 19 years and 41 percent below 15 years, a result of rapid demographic shifts that are influenced by relatively high but declining fertility rates and sharp reductions in child mortality, and a rapidly growing urban population⁸⁹. The population growth rate estimate continues to be 2.3 per cent per annum.

102. Total population more than doubled from 4.8 million people in 1978 to 10.5 million in 2012 and is projected to reach 16.3 million by 2032. The fertility rate differs sub-nationally and across

⁸⁷ Human Development Report, UNDP 2020

⁸⁸ NST 2017-2024, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning

⁸⁹ Demographic dividend: Unlocking Rwanda's Potential to Reap the Demographic Dividend, 2017 (NISR and UNFPA)



wealth categories. Notably, women residing in rural areas, living in the Eastern and Western Provinces have an average of 4.6 children, those with no formal education and those from poor households who are disadvantaged in the use of contraceptives have an average of 5.1 children⁹⁰. High fertility rate is also associated with low levels of female education and limited participation of women in the formal labour market. Moreover, teenage fertility rate has increased from 40 to 44 births per 1000 girls aged 15-19 years while the proportion of women aged 15-19 years who started bearing children increased from 6 to 7.3 percent between 2010 and 2015. Specifically, the high teenage pregnancy rate is among teenage girls living in the City of Kigali, the Eastern province, girls with low levels of formal education and those living in the poorest households⁹¹.

103. The rapidly growing population and consequent high population density will continually pose huge economic and environmental constraints. The dependency ratio remained very high (>80%) and remained the same between 2014/15 and 2016/17 as reported in the Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey; EICV 4 and 5 reports⁹². This high child dependency burden hinders the capacities of families and the Government to provide for the needs of children, build human capital and save for the future generation and improve economic infrastructure as well as overall public services.

Table 5: Demographic Profile and Projections for Rwanda

Population by broad age- ('000)	1980	2015	2030	2050	2070
0-14	2,469	4,517	5,338	5,471	4,864
15-34	1,702	4,087	5,549	6,863	7,023
35-64	850	2,302	4,131	7,212	9,413
65+	107	356	695	1,642	3,416
Total	7,108	11,263	15,713	23,238	26,786
Proportion of Children and young people	1980	2015	2030	2050	2070
0-14	48.0	40.1	30.4	25.8	19.7
10-24 years	29.4	32.5	29.9	23.9	19.3
Dependency ratio	101.5	0.76	0.66	50.5	50.4
Fertility and Mortality Rates	1980	2015	2030	2050	2070
Total Fertility rate	8.43	4.2	3	2.21	1.81
Under-Five Mortality Rate	217	50	40	25	18

Source: National Institute of Statistics Rwanda, 2012 PHC Population Projections; United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2017⁹³

⁹⁰ Demographic dividend: Unlocking Rwanda's Potential to Reap the Demographic Dividend, 2017 (NISR and UNFPA)

⁹¹ NISR and UNFPA, Unlocking Rwanda's Potential to Reap the Demographic Dividend, 2017

⁹² National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, EICV 2014; EICV 2017

⁹³ NISR, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN), and UNFPA: Unlocking Rwanda's Potential to Reap the Demographic Dividend, 2012 P. 7



Status of Health

104. Health, captured in SDG3, has been a priority in the social sector in all plans and strategies of Rwanda and currently Vision 2020, Vision 2050, and NST1 and is SDG 3. It is important for human development and human capital accumulation. For instance, it will be possible for Rwanda to reap the demographic dividends of a youthful population in the near future if health of Rwandans is improved. But health is complex and with COVID-19 pandemic short and medium term priorities are likely to be shifted.



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105. The network of health facilities include 8 referral, 4 provincial and 37 district hospitals in 30 districts of Rwanda augmented by 500 health centres and 1202 health posts dispensaries as well several private health facilities and clinics (MoH 2020)⁹⁴. The ratio of out-patients cases to the population has been decreasing over the years with 1.58,1.56 to 1.51 in 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 respectively. There is 1 doctor to the population of 8,294 and 1 nurse per 1,420 population (MOH, 2020⁹⁵) and 2,340 women in reproductive age per one midwife. While there were 216 ambulances to serve the sick in 2016, they are 296 in 2020. The health sector (Ministry, Rwanda Biomedical Center, Referral hospitals and districts) budget was FRW 230.8 billion in 2019/20 taking a share of 8.1 percent of the total national budget. This allocation was revised upward to FRW245.4 billion in the mid-year budget revision in February 2021; about FRW19 US\$19 per capita[CT3]. This is short of projections of funding needed to achieve UHC by 2030. The SDG Health Price Tag under the “progress” scenario suggest that achieving UHC would require approx. US\$41 per capita per year for countries to attain the health targets in the SDGs by 2030. Although higher spending does not necessarily translate to improved health, making the right investments at the right time can¹¹.

106. By many indicators Rwanda has made visible achievements in the health sector save for the onslaught of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Life expectancy rose from 51.2 in 2002 to 67.8 years in 2020 (with 65.8 years for men and 69.7 years for women)⁹⁶, fertility rate declined from 6.1 in 2005 to 4.1 in 2019/2020(DHS 2019/2020); married women using a modern method of family planning (mCPR) increased from 47.5 percent in 2015 to 58 percent in 2019/2020 while the unmet need for family planning decreased from 19 percent in 2015 to 14 percent in 2019/2020. There has been slight reduction of teenage pregnancy from 7 percent in 2015 to 5 percent in 2019-2020 RDHS. This calls for intensifying multisectoral interventions to address adolescent sexual and reproductive health.

107. Under 5 mortality declined from 152 in 2005 to 45 in 2019/2020. While infant mortality declined from 86 in 2005 to 33 in 2019/2020. Birth in a health centre rose from 28 per cent in 2005 to 93 in 2019/2020. Maternal mortality declined from 750 in 2005 to 203 in 2019/2020. Government has demonstrated leadership in addressing communicable and non-communicable diseases. Focus was made on preventing diseases through community education and immunization where 96 percent of children received all basic vaccines according to the most recent Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey 2019-2020. TB

⁹⁴ Rwanda Health Sector Performance Report 2020

⁹⁵ Health Sector Performance Report, 2020

⁹⁶ <http://statistics.gov.rw/publication/rphc4-population-projections>



incidence went down from 64 (49-81) per 100,000 population in 2013 to 57 (44-72) per 100,000 population in 2017. In the same period, TB mortality decreased from 8.7 (6.5-11) to 7.5 (5.5-9.8). TB Treatment success stands at 86 percent. Malaria incidence has reduced from 401 cases per 1,000-person year in 2017-2018 to 200 cases per 1,000-person year FY 2019-2020.

108. During the same periods, the nutritional status of children in Rwanda improved steadily, with a decline in stunting from 44 per cent in 2010 to 38 per cent in 2015 and 33 percent in 2020 (with 37 percent boys stunted compared to 29 percent for girls). Yet, faster progress is needed to achieve the Government of Rwanda's target of reducing stunting to 19 per cent among children under five years age 5 by 2024. Wasting declined 2.2 percent in 2014/2015 to 1.1 percent in 2020 (with 0.9% of boys wasted compared to 1.4% for girls). Even with the decline, the level of stunting is still very high and of public health concern and detrimental effect on human capital development. Though the prevalence of and overweight and obesity among children under five years has slightly decreased from 8 per cent in 2014/2015 to 6 percent in 2019/20 (with 5.8% boys overweight/obese compared to 5.4% for girls) (DHS 2019/2020) it is classified by WHO as medium severity and should be further reduced).

109. A major challenge the health sector will face and affecting other aspects of life is COVID-19. It is also affecting other aspects. Rapid steps to contain the pandemic have resulted in relatively few cases, more recovery and deaths compared to other countries. By the end of February 2021, there were close to 19,000 reported cases, over 17,000 recoveries and 261 deaths, approximately 2 per 100,000 population. But this has meant increased expenditure in the health sector and away from other health services. Despite the heavy burden to the health sector and the economy caused by COVID-19 it is becoming clear that there are innovations that are gradually emerging out of the efforts to contain the pandemic as it is still in the country and the region.

Box 8: COVID-19 Risk to Health Sector but Inspired Innovation

The central risk to economic management in general and health sector in particular is COVID 19. The effect of the pandemic will continue to wreak uncertainty to source, predictability and amount of funding to contain it and sustain the economy. But there has been indication of COVID-19 being a source of innovation. According to a UN stakeholder some of the innovative practices had started in 2019 as preparedness for Ebola which had struck in DRC and specifically Goma at the border with Rwanda. The most obvious innovation from the COVID-19 containment efforts has been harnessing technology application. Rwanda has been one of the countries in Africa to make use of ICT in promoting rapid growth and building a knowledge economy. The priority has leveraged the fight against COVID-19 and paving way for long term use of technology to spur the hitherto rapid growing economy.

- Drones were used by police to create awareness and pass on instructions to populations during the lockdown between March and August 2020
- Robots were acquired with support by UNDP to assist in identifying COVID-19 cases and passing on vital information
- More robots have been acquired with support by UNDP to clean and sweep COVID 19 viruses in a room to make it safe for health workers dealing with COVID-19 cases
- Mobile applications have been used in transport, in commerce and in booking for places in church. This has laid ground for building a cash less business sector that is efficient and reduces the contraction of the virus
- Hand washing (commonly known as Step and Wash or Kandagira Ukarabe in vernacular) and use of sanitizers as a hygiene habit have been passed on to the population as some of the steps to address contraction of COVID-19 as well as other diseases related to personal hygiene
- There are several non-technology but behavioural practices that COVID-19 is making a habit. The Government has always used home grown solutions and grass root mobilization of people to seek solutions. Similarly, COVID-19 is demonstrating the power of collective response to address a problem. This is important in seeking solutions for poverty and need arising from the pandemic at community level.

"UN is also pivotal in its role of advocacy for access to COVID-19 vaccine." Stakeholder view.



Status of HIV & AIDS

110. The prevalence of HIV has remained stable at 3 percent (3.6% for women compared to 2.2% for men) for more than 10 years. Predominantly, it is high in urban settings at 4.3 percent in the City of Kigali and 4.8 percent in other urban settings. Reduction of HIV incidence among adults who had tested HIV negative in the last 12 months from 0.27 percent in 2015 (RAIHS 2014-2015⁹⁷) to 0.08 percent in 2019 (RPHIA 2018-2019⁹⁸) and remarkable achievements towards the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets⁹⁹ have been observed (at 83.8%, 97.5%, and 90.1% respectively), as well as huge gains in prevention of mother to child transmission with above 98.5 percent coverage. Mother-to child transmission of HIV has been reduced to 1.7 percent. In terms of 90-90-90 global target, 84 percent of PLHIV were tested and know their HIV status. Out of these who were tested 97 percent are on HIV medication and 91 percent of PLHIV on ART have undetectable viral load.

111. Nonetheless, there is need to attain the first 90 due to gaps in prevention; higher among young people (15-24) as compared to the general population (0.33% vs 0.08%) and prevalence among key populations: FSW (45.8%) and MSM (4%) whereas viral load suppression is also still lower in men than women: 55.9 percent - 75.7 percent compared to 62.3 percent - 84.8 percent among women.

112. Results from the 2020 second Stigma Index Survey indicate that there has been an 80 percent decrease of stigma and discrimination experienced in the last 12 months (currently at the stigma and discrimination index of 13) as compared to the 2009 survey. However, the Stigma Index Survey conducted among refugees in 2020 shows a higher level of stigma among refugees compared to the general population (index of 23).

Status of Education

113. The overall governance of the education system is supported by several institutions, with distinct mandates. The Ministry of Education's work is guided by the Education Sector Strategic Plan (2018/2019–2023/2024) and supported by various policies on key education thematic areas, with the aim to enhance equity and quality of education. The Government has given priority to education as a key to human capital formation and building of knowledge-based economy. Education was made free for the first 9 years in 2006



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and by 2016 this was raised to 12 years. Early Childhood Development and Education has been given importance as a long- term strategy of improving the quality of learners. ICT and STEM have been emphasized in education with the introduction of one laptop per child, building and equipment of smart classrooms and laboratories. Although the

⁹⁷ Rwanda AIDS Indicator and HIV Incidence Survey

⁹⁸ Rwanda Population-based HIV Impact Assessment

⁹⁹ 90-90-90: (i) By 2020, 90% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status; (ii) By 2020, 90% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection will receive sustained antiretroviral therapy; (iii) By 2020, 90% of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression. UNAIDS, 2014



budgetary allocation to education has grown from about FRW241 billion in 2017/2018 to 313.4 billion in 2019/2020, only 13 percent of the overall public expenditures has been allocated to the sector in 2020.

114. Rwanda has achieved significant success in education and nearly reached universal primary education with a net enrolment rate of 98.5 percent (98.4% boys; 98.6% girls). Access to pre-primary increased from 13 percent (MINEDUC, 2013) to 29.8 percent (29.1% boys, 30.6% girls) (MINEDUC, 2019), because of a reduction of supply-related bottlenecks. However, the subsector needs to be expanded¹⁰⁰ to ensure children are ready to enter primary schools with the right level of development. In terms of access to education, Rwanda is among the top performing countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Nonetheless, quality of education remains an issue, with the 2018 Learning Achievement in Rwandan Schools (LARS) study noting significant issues in students' literacy and numeracy. For example, 54.4 percent of P3 students (52.2% boys, 56.4% girls) and 56.4 percent of P6 students (59.8% boys, 53.2% girls) have met the grade level expectations in Kinyarwanda and English, indicating low levels of literacy skills. In addition, foundational numeracy skills level is low as P3 and P6 students have scored 40.7 percent (40.3% boys, 41.3% girls) and 59 percent (63.7% boys, 54.5% girls) respectively in grade level competency.

115. Transition and enrolment in secondary education could be further improved since the transition rate stands at 72.2 percent (72.1% boys, 72.4% girls) and the net enrolment rate at 24.5 percent (22.1% boys, 26.7% girls). Low level of learning outcomes in secondary schools remain a challenge. According to the 2018 LARS report 71.3 percent of Senior 3 students (77.6% boys, 65.3% girls) are reaching expected levels of learning in literacy and 78.8 percent (81.8% boys, 75.9% girls) scored at or above expected level for numeracy.

116. TVET and Higher Education has made moderate progress in terms of access and quality of education. There has been continuous increase in number of TVET students (from 93,158 in 2016 to 97,235 in 2019) with more males than females as described in the gender parity section. In higher learning institutions, there has been a decrease in the number of students from 90,803 in 2016 to 86,206 in 2019. The quality and effectiveness of TVET and higher learning institutions are reported through the national tracer survey and employer satisfaction. While the employment rate in TVET within 6 months stands at 66 percent, in higher learning institutions it is estimated at 76 percent (Workforce Development Authority, 2019). However, it has been noted that underemployment is a major issue due to lack of jobs and inadequacy between available skills and the labor market needs.

¹⁰⁰ For example, not all districts have Early Childhood Centres (ECD) although there are other models for providing ECD services such as Home Based and Community Based.



Box 9: COVID-19 Risk to Education Sector but Inspired Innovation

- Education (SDG 4) is an example of the integrated nature of the SDGs and how it is important to the entire Agenda 2030. One contributor to the consultation process stated that unless education challenges are answered it will be difficult to eradicate poverty arguing that with the right education poverty can be challenged.
- Before the COVID-19 pandemic school feeding was introduced in many schools to improve the nutrition and health of pupils. In addition, nutrition has been included in the primary and secondary schools' competence-based curriculum adopted in 2016.
- While school feeding was improving education participation of some ¹⁰¹primary school pupils especially from poor families, the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the programmes. Most pupils and teachers were compelled to stay home for many months. It should be noted from the stakeholders' consultations it has been observed that staying at home for a long period during periods during COVID-19 lockdown has been associated with a rise in teenage pregnancies and violence against children (CCA 2021 Consultations).
- With the impact of COVID-19, school closure is likely to lead to substantial learning losses. Between 0.2 to 0.6 learning adjusted years of schooling might be lost and more pronounced among girls and poor children (World Bank, 2020).

117. The Drivers of Future Growth analysis (GoR/WB, 2020) has Human Capital development as number one and yet indicates the need to address enduring challenges to unlock the development of Rwanda. According to the [Human Development Report, 2020](#), Rwanda is ranked 160 out of 189 countries and 19 percent of its population is still vulnerable to multiple deprivations. The low level of HDI published by the World Bank recently is mainly driven by the poor performance of the education sector where the learning adjusted years of schooling stood at 3.9 before COVID-19. Education has a long gestation period to deliver benefits to the economy and sustainable development since learning loss generated by the pandemic may reduce student's productivity in the long run by 10 to 30 per cent. Therefore, efforts should focus on improving the quality and relevance of education at all levels to ensure education fully contributes to the transformation and development of Rwanda.

Trends in Gender Equality and Economic Empowerment

118. Gender equality and women's empowerment is enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003 as revised in 2015 and in other gender responsive laws that have been enacted including the law n° 32/2016 of 28/08/2016 revised in 2020 through Law N° 001/2020 of 02/02/2020 governing persons and family. This law gives equal powers and responsibilities between both spouses to jointly provide management of the household property including moral and material support to the household as well as its maintenance. The Law N° 27/2016 of 08/07/2016 governing matrimonial regimes, donations and successions underscores Rwanda's efforts to eliminate all forms of inequalities between male and female children in matters relating to succession, the Organic Law N° 12/2013/OL of 12 September 2013 on State finance and properties which enforces accountability measures for gender-sensitive resource allocation across all sectors. At the regional level, Rwanda ratified the African Union Protocol to the African Charter of Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and the African Union Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa.

119. The United Nations in Rwanda continues to partner with Government and Non-Government institutions and organizations to address all forms of gender discriminatory provisions in Rwandan Laws as the country address the [CEDAW/C/RWA/CO/7-9](#) concluding observations recommended. The One UN through UN Women in collaboration with Legal Aid Forum and the Forum For Women Parliamentarians (FFRP) has concluded a comprehensive assessment of gender equality compliance of Rwandan Laws through the UN Women's

¹⁰¹ School Feeding programme by WFP is still limited to 4 districts of Nyaruguru, Nyamagabe, Karongi and Rutsiro. The government through MINAGRI and MINEDUC has been running One Cup of Milk per Child in 15 districts.



Equality in Law for Women and Girls by 2030 initiative. The assessment found that Rwanda has made great strides in repealing gender discriminatory provisions over the last decade but also made some few legal reforms and laws enforcement recommendations to ensure there is zero case of discriminatory provisions against women and girls in Rwandan Laws.

120. The 2005 National Gender Policy was revised in 2019 to respond to the new national and international development frameworks such as SDGs and NST1. The National Gender Strategic Plan (2018-2022) provides principal guidelines on how sectoral policies and programs should integrate gender issues in their respective political, social, cultural and economic planning and programming. Gender equality has been mainstreamed as cross cutting across the NST1 as well its accompanying sector strategic plans (SSPs) across its 16 Sectors.

121. Rwanda is ranked in the 9th position globally and top in Africa but went down 3 places on the Global Gender Gap Report 2020 published by the World Economic Forum (WEF) compared to the previous report. Rwanda has closed 79.1 percent of its gender gap but loses three positions from the previous year. Rwanda is still among the top 4 countries in the world for political empowerment, thanks to a high share of women (above 50%) among both parliamentarians and ministers. Rwanda has also closed its Health and Survival gap and is 4.3 percent shy of completing gender parity in education. See Annex 4 for Rwanda Country Gender Score Card.



Kigali, 2018. Celebration of the Advancing and Sustaining Gender Equality Gains in Rwanda Joint Project, attended by Government institutions, UN Agencies private sector, NGOs, civil society and faith-based organizations. © UN Women Rwanda

122. The WEF, 2020 report concluded that a large gender gap remains in terms of Economic Participation and Opportunity (67.2% so far). Women's incomes and wages remain significantly lower (23.7% and 38.9%, respectively). Skill differences between women and men currently in the labor force are the main factor (only 38.7% of women are employed in skilled professions and even a smaller proportion is in senior positions of those skilled professions at 14%). The gender imbalance is largely attributed to limited human capital formation -- women are relatively more penalized than men. For instance, only 69.4 percent of women and 77.5 percent of men are literate, and, while gross participation in tertiary education is below 8 percent for both men and women, there are almost twice as many men than women who obtain scientific and technical degrees. Limited women's access to education in the past is still affecting their opportunities to compete in the workplace today. See Annex 6: Women and Access to Economic Opportunities. Another key challenge to women economic



empowerment is the gender gap pay which estimated at 34 percent (monthly income) and 27 percent (hourly income), (NISR, 2016)¹⁰².

Political Participation and Representation of Women

123. Participation of women in leadership and decision-making organs is enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda revised in 2015. The Constitution provides for a minimum 30 percent for women in all decision-making organs¹⁰³. Women's representation in the Cabinet has reached 50 percent (2019) up from 36.8 percent in 2014. In the on- going term of 2018-2023, women parliamentarians stand at 61.2 percent in the lower chamber and 38 percent in the Senate. At decentralized levels, women's share in the leadership has improved during the period of 2016 - 2018 from 16.7 percent to 30 percent as District Mayors and 45.2 percent in District Councils.

124. In the private sector, the current participation rate of women in the decision-making organs varies between 30 percent for presidential positions and 70 percent as second vice president in various chambers of the private sector federation at national level. At provincial level, women represent 20 percent as the first vice-president positions and 60 percent as the second vice-president positions in the executive committee members¹⁰⁴. Nonetheless, an existing gap which should not be obscured especially at central government and parliamentary levels is the capacity and skills required to perform effectively in discharging duties.

Gender Equality as a Human Right

125. In the strive towards elimination of gender inequalities and all forms of discrimination against women Rwanda has demonstrated its commitment to gender equality through ratification of relevant international instruments and putting in place a robust domestic legal and institutional framework to implement these obligations. Rwanda has ratified a number of international human rights instruments and global treaties such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights and regional treaties including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. While these treaties protect the rights of all persons (men and women, boys and girls), this protection must be with no discrimination, including discrimination on the grounds of sex.

126. Rwanda has also ratified treaties which specifically protect the rights of women such as the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Optional Protocol to CEDAW, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women; the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No 100 on Equal Remuneration and the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of

“Women empowerment needs to go beyond numbers. Rwanda has been doing well on the gender equality and empowerment and political inclusion. There is need for gender empowerment at local levels and among vulnerable groups.” Stakeholder view

¹⁰² National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (June 2016) *Labour Force Survey -Pilot*, p. 27. <http://www.statistics.gov.rw/publication/pilot-labour-force-survey-report-february-2016>

¹⁰³ Women's empowerment and participation in decision making is mainly captured by the ratios of women in parliament, ministerial positions, and other positions in various structures of governance both in public, private, and civil society entities.

¹⁰⁴ Governors and Mayor of the City of Kigali, women are 40%, Bureau of Districts Councils and Bureau of City of Kigali are 55.9%, Vice Mayors/Social Affairs are 66.7%, and District Mayors are 26.7% in 2018: MINALOC Administrative data, 2018.



Marriages. Rwanda is also among countries, which ratified the Convention on the political rights of women.

127. Rwanda has been reporting to CEDAW Committee and implementing accepted concluding observations made by the committee. In the latest state party report and review by CEDAW Committee, the Committee considered the combined seventh to ninth periodic reports of Rwanda (CEDAW/C/RWA/7-9) at its 1486th and 1487th meetings (see CEDAW/C/SR.1486 and 1487), held on 23 February 2017. The Committee's list of issues and questions is contained in CEDAW/C/RWA/Q/7-9 and the responses of Rwanda are contained in CEDAW/C/RWA/Q/7-9/Add.1.

128. The constitutional principle of equal participation in the political life is also reflected in various laws such as the Organic Law N° 001/2019.OL of 29/07/2019 governing Elections which provides to all Rwandans (men and women) equality to electoral processes; the Organic Law n° 10/2013/OL of 11/07/2013 governing Political Organizations which imposes upon political organizations in Rwanda to constantly reflect gender equality and complementarity, whether in the recruitment of members, putting in place organs of leadership, and in their operations and activities. Political Organizations are bound to the same gender equality principle whenever they are preparing the Party Candidates Lists for elections (Parliamentary elections).

129. Rwanda has also put in place laws criminalizing discrimination against women and girls as well as Gender Based Violence. The Law n° 68/2018 of 30/08/2018 determining offences and penalties in general states that all forms of discrimination including discrimination based on sex, race, nationality, and such discrimination is punishable to imprisonment for a term of not less than five years but not more than seven years and a fine of not less than five hundred thousand Rwandan francs but not more than one million Rwandan francs (article 163). The interplay of all these legal and policy instruments have made Rwanda to consistently stand high globally among the top leaders of gender equality and women's political leadership.

Gender Based Violence: A Human Right Violation

130. GBV is a violation of human rights that affects mostly women and girls. Harmful social and cultural norms and economic dependence of women vis-à-vis men are among the key underlying causes and drivers of violence against women and girls in Rwanda and in many other countries across the globe. The Government of Rwanda is committed to the elimination of gender-based violence in all its forms as enshrined in different laws and policy frameworks including the Constitution of 2003 amended in 2015 under its Article 16 on protection from all forms of discriminations; the country's commitments under the HeForShe initiative, the NST 1, the National Gender Policy, the Integrated Child Rights Policy and its strategic plan 2019-2024, the Health Sector Policy, the National Policy against Gender-Based Violence, the Social Protection policy (2020) and Social protection strategic plan (2018-2024), the Justice, Reconciliation, Law and Order (JRLO) sector strategy and associated strategic plans among others. In relation to legal framework, the law no 69/2019 of 08/11/2019 amending the law no 68/2018 of 30/08/2018 determining offenses and penalties in general prescribes heavy punishment for child defilement, marital rape, sexual violence and harassment of a spouse. Also, law N° 51/2018 of 13/08/2018 relating to the prevention, suppression and punishment of trafficking in persons and exploitation of others, protects women and girls against human trafficking and article 24 specifically prohibits sexual exploitation. The new law no 66/2018 of 30/08/2018 regulating labor in Rwanda prohibits sexual harassment at the workplace under article 8. Again, in an effort to ensure access to justice by victims of S-GBV are exempt from court fees.



131. However, GBV remains a key concern for the country. Statistical data indicate that there has been a significant increase in reporting of GBV and child abuse cases from 13,624 in 2015/2016, to 15,143 in 2016/2017 and 21,083 in 2017/2018¹⁰⁵. In addition, the latest Demographic and Health Survey (DHS 2014 - 2015 indicate that 22 percent of women suffered sexual violence in their lives compared to only 5 percent of men. In turn, the Violence against Children and Youth Survey (2015-2016) shows that 24 percent of girls have experienced sexual violence prior to age 18, compared to 10 percent for boys.

132. The Government is also committed to expanding GBV services for increased proximity to the community in general and victims of GBV in particular. With support from the UN and the World Bank, Rwanda has already established 44 Isange One stop centres (IOSCs) with at least one IOSC per district, providing holistic services to GBV and child abuse victims including medical, legal, psychological, and socio-economic reintegration support. Due to the large geographical coverage of each IOSC and long walking distance for survivors of GBV to reach IOSC especially for rape and child abuse victims, the GoR has scaled up the services to health centres. While not all services can be provided on site due to the limited capacity of a health centre, preliminary medical care services and Post Exposure Preventive (PEP) Treatments are provided in the existing 495 health centres countrywide. In cases of child abuse, the Government has deployed a cadre of 29,674 child protection community workers (Inshuti Z'Umuryango) across the country and in all villages, and district level Child Protection Welfare Officers to enable better prevention and response to child abuse, neglect and abandonment.

133. The plan is to bring those services much closer to the communities at health centre level. This requires a significant investment to avail IOSCs services to all the 499 Health Centres in Rwanda. The Government is piloting the proximity of GBV prevention and response services through safe homes also referred to as Isange Shelters whereby 4 shelters have been set up in 4 Districts to generate lessons to build upon as the scale up is envisioned. Another challenge as regard to the elimination of all forms of GVB is the continuously increasing cases of teenage pregnancies from year to year and the disproportionate rate of prosecution and conviction of perpetrators of sexual harassment and GBV.

134. Even though IOSCs are effective and provide holistic services to GBV and child abuse victims, legal support to GBV victims remain among the key challenges the victims face as illustrated by cases prosecuted compared to the ones reported. For example, in 2016-2017, a total of 1,772 cases of GBV and child abuse cases involving 1,780 suspects were prosecuted. The prosecution won 1,488 cases of these cases which translates into a conviction rate of 84 percent. In 2017-2018, the cases of GBV and child abuse cases prosecuted were 2,293 with 2,487 suspects. The prosecution won 1,903 cases, hence a conviction rate of 83 percent. In 2018-2019, Rwandan courts gave verdicts in 2,537 cases of GBV and child abuse involving 2,768 suspects. The prosecution won 1,985 which means the conviction rate reached 78.2 percent. This shows a continuous decrease of cases won by the prosecution which is mostly attributed to delayed reporting of GBV cases leading to spoiling of forensic evidence but also high economic dependence of the victims on perpetrators and family pressures leading to the withdrawal of legal complaints. Furthermore, close to 45 percent of girls who experience sexual violence do not report it. Therefore, many perpetrators never face justice¹⁰⁶. This requires

¹⁰⁵ HMIS (Health Management Information System) Statistics as quoted in the Technical Note on Isange One Stop Center Program Sustainability Paper, 2019.

¹⁰⁶ Violence Against Children and Youth Survey (2015-16), published in 2018



therefore continuous awareness-raising for social norms changes, men engaged to build strong positive masculinities, timely reporting of GBV and child abuse cases but also increased legal assistance to GBV victims. It is also important to strengthen the capacity of service providers for effective and timely services to GBV Victims and accountability at both local and national levels, for example by putting in place a case management process for child abuse cases that will ensure children receive timely services and are followed up when they return home.

135. In a bid to enhance harmonization of GBV data collection, evidence-based planning, monitoring and evaluation, GBV Management Information System (GBV-MIS) was developed as web-based platform that will collect GBV data across all IOSCs. However, there is still need to build the capacity of service providers to use it effectively and disseminate the information to the end users. Teenage pregnancy and resulting stigma and discrimination from family remains a high concern to be addressed as a priority. For example, the responsible institutions reported more than 17,000 cases and more than 19,000 cases in 2018 and 2019 respectively.

Decent Work

136. SDG 8 focuses on the creation and maintaining decent work as a critical component of economic growth. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), decent work involves opportunities for work that are productive and deliver a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men. In essence, SDG 8 is about work that improves the livelihoods of people in all sectors both women and girls and especially the youth. Job creation is considered a priority within Rwanda's Vision 2020 and Vision 2050. The concept of decent work as opposed to mere numbers or figures of people with a wage-earning job has found a place within the cooperation agenda between UNDP, ILO and the rest of UN with Government of Rwanda in the period after 2018.

137. With an objective of improving the quality of the monitoring of the project's achievement, the One UN joint Youth Programme project Steering Committee agreed on the following definition of decent jobs which is aligned with the definition of the Government of Rwanda referred in the National Strategy for Transformation (NST 1) and the Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA). A Decent job is a job which combines the respect of the following 4 criteria/indicators:

- Employment: Adequate opportunity for work including remuneration (employment yielding sufficient returns to labour to permit a worker and his/her dependents a level of consumption above the poverty line) (Indicator: Salary above poverty line (Set at FRW159, 375 (US\$178) per adult per year in 2014)) for full-time and for contract of minimum one year. As shown in Table 6, this implies that over 90 percent of workers earn below the stipulated poverty line of FRW 159,375 from their primary source of income. Juxtaposing actual poverty figures suggests that a significant portion of total income of workers comes from a variety of secondary jobs.
- Social security: Provision of medical care and benefits in respect of sickness, employment injury, family, maternity, invalidity, etc. (Indicator: Provision by employer of social security benefits to employee).
- Basic Rights: No Child labour, no under abusive conditions, no discrimination at work and freedom of association (indicator: Respect by employer of basic rights of employee)
- Social Dialogue: Social dialogue between employers and employees in relation to terms and conditions of employment (Indicator: existence of social dialogue)



138. Based on the recommendation of the Joint Youth Programme Technical Committee and with an objective of improving the monitoring of the programme's achievements, the Joint Youth Programme agreed to add a new programme indicator, namely the number of decent jobs created through the programme. The Steering Committee decided to add this new indicator (number of decent jobs created) in the result framework.

139. In 2019 the Labour Force Survey (2019) estimated unemployment rates at 15.4 percent with 17 percent for female and 13.8 male. Among young females of 16-24 years this was 22.4 percent while it was 16.9 percent among young males. Average income from employment at main job in Rwanda was estimated as FRW67,942 per month for males and FRW44, 741 for females. Overall, average income from employment at main job both men and women was FRW57,878 per month (Table 6). The vast majority, 91.2 percent employed in the informal sector are female while male constitute 88.3 percent (Labour Survey 2019). 40.6 percent of paid employees earn less than FRW20,000 per month from employment at main job, which is equivalent to approximately US\$20, far less than the decent wage of FRW159, 375. 60.9 percent of the women are in daily wage jobs compared to 52.6 percent for men.

Table 6: Size distribution of harmonized monthly income from employment at main job

Monthly income from employment (FRW)	Number of paid employees	Percentage distribution
Total	2,199,443	100.0%
Less than 20,000 FRW	892,977	40.6%
20,000 – 29,999 FRW	477,869	21.7%
30,000 – 49,999 FRW	275,791	12.5%
50,000 – 99,999 FRW	252,419	11.5%
100,000 FRW and above	281,299	12.8%
Not stated	19,087	0.9%
Median	21,667 FRW	
Average	57,878 FRW	

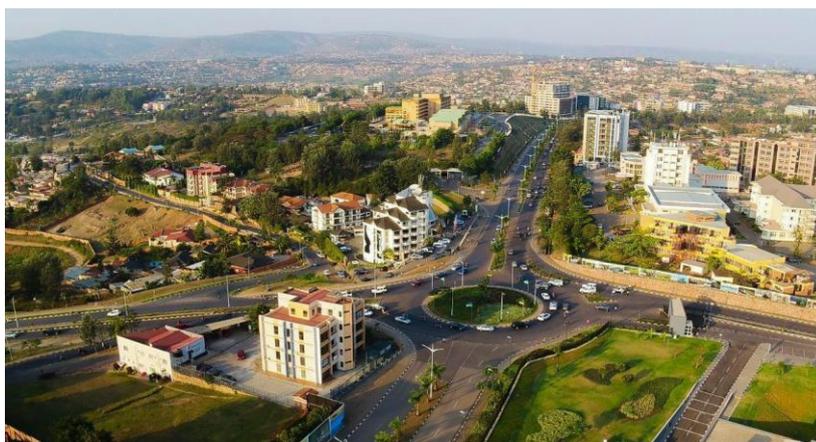
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey, 2019

140. While an ILO (2020) study on Rwanda showed increase in employment especially in the construction and transport 53 percent, ICT 56 percent, tourism 120 percent and services 113 percent, there are still challenges of creating more decent jobs in industry and in non-farm activities such that jobs are consistent with growing productivity and release labour out of agriculture. Of course, the structural change from the agricultural sector through enhanced productivity in the sector also attributes to this.



Human settlements, Infrastructure, and Urbanization

141. The Vision 2050 identifies urbanization as a key driver for economic transformation and development and aims to accelerate Rwanda's urbanization to 70 percent, and its annual rate to 6.8 percent in 30 years. The current urbanization rate is about 18.4 percent with an annual urbanization rate of 4.4 percent (GoR 2020).



Kimihurura/MINIJUST © [Official Rwanda Development Board \(RDB\)](#)

142. Under the EDPRS 2, approach on City of Kigali six secondary cities were proposed to serve economic poles of growth to promote investment in priority sectors, offer job creation, green economy, and avoid pressure on peri-urban land of the Capital city and urban sprawl. The Kigali City Master Plan was adopted in 2013, and at local level, all 30 Districts have elaborated Local Development Plans. However, current built-up areas and urban boundaries have expanded widely. Therefore, to accommodate the target urban population, which is 14.7 million, the City of Kigali and the 6 secondary cities, which were planned for a population of 6.2 million, will not suffice. To fill the gap, National Land Use and Development Master Plan (NLUDMP) presents new five variants of the hierarchy. Kigali is at the highest rank, the second rank includes the three satellite cities (Bugesera, Rwamagana, and Muhanga), then the eight secondary cities (Karongi, Kirehe, and Kayonza, Huye, Rubavu, Musanze, Nyagatare, and Rusizi), District towns, and finally, urban centres/emerging centres, including the small agglomerations of small emerging towns in the rural areas.

Integrated, gender-sensitive and disability-sensitive urban planning offers a unique opportunity for the cities to realign their growth trajectories onto a more sustainable and inclusive path. With various development strategies occurring in diverse sectors, there is need for an inclusive multi-sectoral approach to achieve sustainable urban development. Beyond the City of Kigali, Rwanda must invest in better mobility and access to services; more innovative power solutions; improved public health and safety; strengthened capacity and economic empowerment; creation of new jobs and ensuring the economic inclusion of women and youth; promoting sustainable and inclusive urban food systems, and promoting a more integrated and inclusive approach to urban development that is sensitive to social factors, particularly disability, gender and age—UN Habitat, 2021.

143. Compared to 10 percent in 2009, more than half of Rwandans now have access to electricity in their homes. For the duration of the same period, generation capacity has more than tripled, and the duration and frequency of outages have reduced. However, the cost of electricity supply is among the highest in the region and continues to be a barrier to Rwanda's economic and industrial development. At the present tariffs, household consumers face difficulty affording electricity, and it is anticipated to aggravate as the rural electrification drive reaches ever poorer parts of the population (WB, 2019¹⁰⁷).

144. Many households still rely on traditional biomass, mostly charcoal in urban households and firewood in rural households, which increase the unpaid care work and exposure to health

¹⁰⁷ Rwanda Economic Update: Lighting Rwanda, 2019



risks, especially for women and girls. Also, with hydropower as the main source of Rwanda's installed capacity, the power sector is relatively clean, yet increase of renewable in the energy mix and reducing the use of biomass will be pursued to align with Rwanda's low-emission development pathway (Energy Sector Strategic Plan 2018/19-2023/24). According to the Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy (2011), Rwanda's contribution in the form of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is relatively small, although the future population growth and rapid urbanization along with economic development are expected to increase the emission.

145. Unfortunately, there are many unplanned and underserviced settlements also located in environmentally sensitive areas such as steep slopes or disaster-prone areas, posing great risks to the population. About 38.3 percent of Rwanda's population live in informal settlement of which 61.3 percent are in urban areas and 32.8 per cent in rural areas. 77.3 per cent of Kigali's urban inhabitants, and 78.2 percent of Kigali's rural and urban inhabitants live in informal settlements (EICV5). According to UN-Habitat's City-Wide Informal Settlement's Upgrading Strategy for Kigali, 13 percent of informal settlements are in high-risk areas (of which 9 percent are on highly steep slopes and 4 percent in flood-prone areas). Also, informal areas usually face serious infrastructure deficits, ranging from insufficient access roads to lack of water and sanitation facilities. These shortfalls further deepen the urban divide. When located in remote areas, access to health and education services is often an additional major challenge, rendering such settlements even more disconnected and underserviced. In addition, overcrowded housing and poor access to sanitation renders the residents of these settlements especially vulnerable to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

146. Most Rwandan cities are not equipped to tackle the negative consequences and absorb the shocks of rapid urbanization, such as poverty, lack of basic services and infrastructure (i.e., insufficient health and education facilities, limited access to water and energy), congestion and pollution, informal settlements, and other environmental and economic challenges, such as climate change, resource depletion, food insecurity, unemployment, economic inequality and instability. In addition to, unsafe mobility for all and violence against women and girls in cities and an unplanned urban expansion. The One UN Rwanda is implementing the Joint Programme on Sustainable Cities to increase the capacity of Rwandan cities to better manage existing challenges and prevent future ones.

147. 82 percent of the Rwandan population is rural and resides in 13,661 villages. The excessive number of Imidugudu and scattered homestead in rural areas disregard the economies of scale. Accordingly, the NLUDMP suggests the transformation of rural settlement structure is imperative. To consolidate and freeze the rural settlement sites sprawl, it is recommended to cluster the rural population into about 3,000 settlement sites, and considerably increase the housing density by 2050. In all Districts, Integrated Development Program (IDP) model villages are under implementation intending to provide socioeconomic opportunities in rural areas. It is planned to reconstruct and improve IDP model villages to integrate all socio-economic levels of the population. The One UN Rwanda also had partnered with GoR to provide Green Village initiatives as a sustainable rural solution, to tackle Rwanda's growing natural resource challenges, while at the same time providing homes, schools, water, gas, and electricity for some of the country's poorest and most vulnerable communities.

148. Rwanda today is well placed to address existing challenges and leverage the opportunities offered by urbanization as a driver of economic development, job creation, and poverty reduction, and by channelling COVID-19 recovery towards the realization of better integrated, smarter, greener and more resilient Rwandan cities. The National Urbanization Policy, developed in 2015 with the support of UN-Habitat, urges that support towards



addressing the challenges in insufficient awareness and understanding of urban planning tools, and capacity to adequately follow up on the rightful implementation of urban planning documents must continue. The country is highly vulnerable to climate change and disasters therefore, adaptation to climate change is also a key priority. The National Land Use and Development Plan (NLUDMP) suggests ensuring an elaborate mainstreaming of climate change into medium-term planning, sectoral and district development plans, adapting green urban transport systems, and integrating disaster risk reduction within development sectors, among others. Rwandan cities are in urgent need of effective planning and financing strategies to tackle existing and future challenges.

Sustainable livelihoods, including consumption and production

149. Sustainable livelihood is about maintaining or enhancing our capabilities and assets required in production and consumption now and in the near future without undermining the natural resource base. Most production and consumption exert stress on resources. Thus, in meeting basic needs, production and consumption need has to minimize their effect on natural resources and environment, Greenhouse gas emissions, waste generation and air and water pollution in the entire lifecycle of production or services.

150. As one of the most densely populated countries in Africa and being heavily reliant on subsistence agriculture for livelihood-- natural resources depletion has been high. More than 80 per cent depend for food on agriculture on smallholder farmers, with the majority cultivating less than 0.3 hectare of land (EICV5). Women do the bulk of production. Poverty is dominant in rural areas especially among Female Headed Households. Women are involved more in subsistence production and their likelihood to be poor is higher than for men at 34.8 per cent and 31.6 per cent respectively (EICV 5). Agriculture leads to more deforestation, forest degradation and destruction of the ecosystem which increase the vulnerability of people and ecosystem resulting in higher effects of climate change and lower productivity. Over dependency on biomass for fuel has also continued to exert stress on the natural resources.

151. The challenge has been to promote sustainable production practices in agriculture that raise yield, ensure food security and nutrition without damaging natural resources for future generations. There have been efforts by the Government through MINAGRI, FAO, UNDP and WFP to promote climate smart agriculture through practices that enhance productivity, ensure food security and nutrition without depleting the natural resources. Practices that empower women and youth and vulnerable groups in enhancing their livelihoods without damaging the environment. One approach has been promoting smart agriculture that makes use of technology to promote modern farming such as Small-Scale Irrigation technologies that raise production without affecting the environment. So far, the Joint Programme on Economic Empowerment of Rural Women (RWEE) in Rwanda that involves UN agencies and other partners is in place in only 3 districts.

“There is an opportunity for UN and University to collaborate in research for transformation, which provides results that influence policy.” Stakeholder’s view



7. STATE INSTITUTIONS AND POLITICAL SITUATION

Rule of Law

152. For the last decade, Rwanda has shown impressive progress in the area of governance in general and in justice and rule of law in particular. As highlighted by the CCA 2017, the rule of law indicator of the Rwanda Governance Scorecard scored 79.7 per cent in 2016¹⁰⁸ and was 87.86 per cent in 2020¹⁰⁹. Rwanda has recorded substantive achievements in key areas such as safety and security and performance of the judiciary. The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019 of the World Economic Forum ranked Rwanda 1st in Sub-Saharan Africa and 31st globally¹¹⁰ for safety and security. The Rwanda Governance Scorecards have also scored safety and security as the best performers of all indicators measured by the Rwanda Governance Scorecards. In 2020 for example, the population's confidence in safety and security was estimated at 95.44 per cent (RGS 2020) while the level of citizen's satisfaction with personal security was at 93.73 per cent and the level of citizen's satisfaction with property security at 88.93 percent (RGS 2020). The implementation of community policing concepts has played a key role in improving citizens law enforcement personnel partnership, leading to increased reporting of criminal offenses and reduction in crime rates.



Rwanda National Parliament © parliament.gov.rw

153. In the area of access to quality justice, the country has made important reforms that have improved service delivery in the justice sector. The improvement of the rule of law scores from 81.7 per cent in 2014 to 87.86 per cent in 2020¹¹¹ can be attributed to mainly sub-indicators including performance of the judiciary (about 75 per cent in 2016 and 88 per cent in 2019) and access to justice (76.5 per cent in 2016 and 85.99 in 2020) with the most dissatisfaction attributed to case filing backlogs in primary courts. The Government of Rwanda works with other stakeholders, mainly CSOs and the Rwanda Bar Association, to provide legal aid to indigents through Memorandum of Agreement. In 2018, the Government issued Ministerial Order No. 133/MOJ/AG/18 reducing court fees in civil, commercial, social and administrative matters, one more step towards ensuring access to justice for all.

154. The World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2020, a global report that presents a portrait of the rule of law in 128 countries and jurisdictions by providing scores and rankings based on eight factors: Constraints on Government Powers, Absence of Corruption, Open Government, Fundamental Rights, Order and Security, Regulatory Enforcement, Civil Justice, and Criminal Justice has ranked Rwanda 37 out of 120 countries globally, 2nd in Africa after Namibia, and 1st globally for Low Income Countries¹¹². The advances in the rule of law have been boosted by the establishment of the Integrated Electronic Case Management Systems (IECMS), which since 2016, has become the only entry point for filing all litigation cases and is used countrywide by the Ministry of Justice, the Judiciary, the Prosecution, the Rwanda Bureau of Investigation,

¹⁰⁸ UN Common Country Assessment Report, 2017

¹⁰⁹ Rwanda Governance Scorecard 2020

¹¹⁰ World Economic Forum, Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report, 2019, Page 51

¹¹¹ Rwanda Governance Scorecard 2014 and 2020

¹¹² World Justice Project: Rule of Law Index, 2020



the Correction Services, the Rwanda National Police, the professional bailiffs and the Rwanda Bar Association. This automated information management system is designed within the initiative of modernizing Rwanda's Justice, Reconciliation, Law and Order Sector (JRLOS) and is intended to ensure improved access to and transparency of justice information both for the government institutions and general public. For this innovation, Rwanda has received the prestigious 2017 Top Ten Court Technology Solution Award at the 8th International Conference organized by the National Association for Court Management and the International Association for Court Administration. Justice reforms also include the elaboration of key policy documents including the recently elaborated criminal justice policy, the ADR policy, and the strategy for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in justice delivery.

155. In terms of case management, case backlogs in the judiciary are evaluated at 47.9 percent for 2019/2020 financial year. The performance of the judiciary was evaluated at 84.7 percent by the RGS 2019 against 84.6 percent in 2016 and 80.3 percent in 2014. The prosecution has also improved over time, from 87.5 percent in 2014 to 91.8 percent in 2019 and 93.05 percent in 2020¹¹³. There were 560 minors in detention by the end of 2020 according to the RCS (Rwanda Correctional Services), which is a rise from previous years. This signifies that more attention and effort must be made to prevent children from coming into contact with the law, but also on ensuring that all justice processes take into consideration the best interest of the child. Justice sector reforms also include the establishment of the Rwanda Investigation Bureau (RIB), to ensure rule of law, justice and safety of the people of Rwanda on 18 April, 2018. In the same month, the Rwanda National Police officially handed over functions of the defunct Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to the newly created RIB. In 2020 the UN partnered with the ILPD (Institute of Legal Practice and Development) to develop a new Diploma programme on justice for children aimed at all legal professionals in the justice sector (prosecutors, judges and lawyers).

156. In the area of reconciliation and social cohesion, the level of reconciliation and social cohesion improved such that the 2020 governance scorecard evaluated reconciliation, social cohesion and unity at 93.75 per cent from about 81 per cent in 2014¹¹⁴. Efforts were invested to social healing in prisons where about 27,000 prisoners are expected to be released in the near future. These initiatives include community dialogue on unity and reconciliation as well as programmes to support the socio-economic reintegration of former genocide crimes convicts released from prison. In addition, in 2019 His Excellency Paul Kagame exercised his constitutional prerogative and pardoned 367 persons mainly women and girls convicted for the offences of abortion, complicity in abortion and infanticide and thus contributing to the realization of key international human rights and normative frameworks on women's rights and sexual and reproductive rights.

157. The fight against corruption has taken centre stage in the Rwandan administration and the Rwandan Society in general, which explains the trust by citizens in the control of corruption. The Rwanda Governance Scorecard evaluates the incidence of corruption at 87.20 per cent in 2020 against 80.50 percent in 2017. Such progress is also recognized by international common perception measurements of corruption such as the annual corruption index where Rwanda has improved its score in terms of fighting corruption from 55 in 2017 to 54 in 2020¹¹⁵.

¹¹³ Rwanda Governance Scorecard 2014 and 2019

¹¹⁴ Idem

¹¹⁵ Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index –<https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/rwa>



Public Accountability and Service Delivery

158. Incorporated in all national strategic documents; Vision 2020, Vision 2050 and NST1, Rwanda recognizes accountability of public institutions and service delivery as key to promote citizens wellbeing and country development. Among other initiatives to strengthen the accountability of public institutions is the IMIHIGO “performance contract” in which citizens participate in the planning from household to national levels. Two variables of participation and inclusiveness, namely level of citizen satisfaction with their participation in decision making and level of citizen’s satisfaction with their participation in IMIHIGO planning recorded an increase of 18 percent and 15 percent respectively in RGS 2019. Gender equality was also introduced as an assessment criterion for the Districts’ performance contracts ‘‘IMIHIGO’’ as a way to enhance their accountability on gender equality in local development planning.

159. To improve service delivery in the health sector, a Performance Based Financing (PBF) system was adopted some 10 years ago as an innovative, results-oriented approach that incentivizes health providers based on their achievement of agreed-upon, measurable performance targets. This can be attributed to the current initiatives to engage citizens to play a significant role in different development

“Digital ways of broadcasting and the media reforms from 2013 have promoted media’s role in society. Information has opened up – media can do its business in an enabling environment. People also use social media to communicate with the Government – it has helped democratize the society.” Stakeholder view

programs. To be accountable, the citizens’ voice should be heard, and media play an important role to carry the voice and be the eye of the citizen. In general, accountability stands at 84.3 percent (RGS: 2019) which constitutes an increase of 0.6 percent from 2018. Despite the role of the media in the historical 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, tremendous improvement with major reforms (2011 and 2013) are to be proud of. The reforms have several positive impacts including absence of political interference where performance stands at 81.9 percent, self-regulation and public trust in the media at 96 percent according to Media Sector impact assessment of 2019. Overall, the state of media in Rwanda is improving and stands at 72.4 percent (RMB: 2018), however there is room for improvement.

160. Ensuring the quality of service delivery is a fundamental obligation of the Government, private sector and all other service providers. The Government of Rwanda has prioritized service delivery as one of the key drivers of socio-economic development. The NST1 targets the level of citizen satisfaction with services received from public institutions to be 90 percent by 2024. Rwanda has made deliberate efforts to meet a number of targets in this regard such as adjusting service delivery indicators to reflect service delivery in the governance and justice cluster, service delivery in the social cluster, service delivery in the economic cluster as well as service delivery in the private sector. Nevertheless, recent studies have shown that the service delivery declined in performance with a score of 78.31 per cent (RGB 2020) from 74.3 percent (RGB 2018). In particular, the economic cluster and the local administration (RGB 2019). Most services in local governance are supported by IREMBO portal¹¹⁶.

161. The GoR continues to ameliorate efforts towards service delivery by putting in place various mechanisms to ensure public services and citizens’ satisfaction in service delivery. The COVID-19 pandemic also affected most of the sectors’ service delivery and pushed the country to emphasize the increased need in ICT solutions to support service delivery in all sectors where possible. Over this pandemic period, constraints to financial transactions were

¹¹⁶ You can request different Government services online through *Irembo*, a one-stop service *portal*.



eased by the use of free transfer of cash with the use of ICT tools / mobile phone to reduce the transmission of the disease. To achieve satisfactory level of service delivery will require more means and necessary infrastructure.

Inclusive Participation and Democratic Governance

162. An overview of Rwanda's governance indicators indicates an overall positive trend. The World Bank 2020 Ease of Doing Business Report ranked Rwanda 2nd after Mauritius in Sub-Saharan Africa and 38th out of 190 countries globally¹¹⁷. The 2018 Mo Ibrahim Index of Good Governance ranked Rwanda 8th in Africa (down from 5th in 2016); of the four categories making up the overall governance score of 64.3, Rwanda scores lowest in the category of participation and human rights (51.6)¹¹⁸. In the World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators, Rwanda does best in the indicator on control of corruption (scoring in the 70th percentile in 2019) but scores lowest in the indicator on voice and accountability (18th percentile in 2019)¹¹⁹. The national data reaffirm this progress on control of corruption, transparency and accountability, which increased from 79.4 percent in 2014 to 84.3 percent in 2019¹²⁰.

163. In the area of political rights and civil liberties, Rwanda made considerable progress moving from a national rating of 81.8 per cent in 2016 to 85.76 per cent in 2020¹²¹. Mechanisms have been put in place to ensure promotion and protection of civil and political rights including the legislative reforms with review of the penal code, passing of the access to information law in 2013, laws regulating international NGOs (2012), national CSOs (2012) and faith-based organizations (2018). The national data on participation and inclusiveness decreased from 76.8 per cent in 2017 to 73 per cent in 2019; this decrease is mainly due to a decrease in the subsector of decentralization from 75.6 per cent in 2017 to 64.6 per cent in 2019¹²². However, this indicator increased to 81.96 per cent in 2020 (RGS 2020).

164. In terms of participation of non-state actors, the national data of CSO participation and media participation stand at 67.1 percent and 74.5 percent respectively. Vibrancy of non-state actors in policy formulation increased from 67.3 percent in 2017 to 74.3 percent in 2019¹²³. However, according to the CSO Development Barometer, citizen perception regarding the ability of CSOs to hold state and private corporations accountable is only at 57.8 percent. The same barometer indicates moderate ability of CSOs to influence public policy and engage with Government (72%) and low effectiveness of CSOs in meeting societal needs (64.9%)¹²⁴. These low figures indicate that CSOs in Rwanda are not adequately delivering on their functional areas as outlined in Rwanda's EDPRS. This is mainly due to various challenges including: i) Rwandan CSOs demonstrate disparities in internal capacities, but generally, they face similar challenges regarding the external environment in which they operate as well as their own internal organizational capacities. ii) CSOs primarily focus on service-delivery type of interventions and are largely effective in this area. iii) Only a few CSOs are effectively involved

¹¹⁷ World Bank, Ease of Doing Business rankings - <https://www.doingbusiness.org/en/rankings?region=sub-saharan-africa>

¹¹⁸ Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) - <http://iiag.online/>

¹¹⁹ World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicator - <https://info.worldbank.org/governance/wqi/Home/Reports>

¹²⁰ Rwanda Governance Scorecard 2016 and 2019

¹²¹ Rwanda Governance Scorecard 2016 and 2020

¹²² Rwanda Governance Scorecard 2016, 2017 and 2019.

¹²³ Rwanda Governance Scorecard 2019

¹²⁴ Civil Society Development Barometer 2018



in advocacy, voicing the concerns of the voiceless and shaping public policies¹²⁵. The investment in the strengthening of civil society organizations through the CSO strengthening facility has contributed to an increase from 74.3 percent in 2019 to about 75 percent in 2020 in terms of vibrancy of CSOs and non-state actors in Rwanda (RGS 2020). In 2020, in total, 41 CSOs were closely supported technically and financially to implement micro-grant development projects at community level to promote citizen empowerment in various areas.

165. In the media sector, reforms initiated since 2013 have helped to strengthen media autonomy. This has been achieved by changing from state regulation to media self-regulation and dedicating attention to media capacity development by revising the mandate of the Media High Council (MHC) to become a public organization dedicated to media capacity development. With UN support, the MHC implemented capacity building strategic plan 2014-2018 by conducting various training of media practitioners including editing of media content, editorial management, communicable diseases including COVID-19 reporting, family planning, climate change, disaster management and environment protection. Twelve media practitioners (42% of females) also gained skills in media business sustainability and professionalism through mentorship programme. This resulted in the increased citizen satisfaction with access to information scored at 92 percent by the 2020 Citizen Report card (CRC). As part of Media capacity building and to promote inclusive access to information for persons with disabilities, 14 journalists from 12 TV stations were trained on Rwandan sign language and acquired skills to communicate with deaf and hard of hearing persons, to translate at their TV stations. Capacity building for media practitioners also resulted in reaching citizens in rural areas to raise awareness on human security issues which led to the production of 108 stories published by 27 journalists through their respective media outlets.

166. However, challenges towards improved media professionalism remain. Transparency International Rwanda's survey on corruption in media in Rwanda indicates that the prevalence of corruption, both by journalists and media stakeholders, is high. Corruption seems to be prevalent especially on the demand (media) side. Seventy six percent of media practitioners acknowledge engaging in some form of corrupt practices¹²⁶. The national data in the Rwanda Media Barometer confirms this trend and indicates that cash bribes are perceived to be the main form of corruption observed in media rated at 93.7 percent¹²⁷. See Annex 7.

Engagement at Sub-Regional, Regional and Global Levels

167. Rwandan foreign policy is inspired by principles of mutual respect, equality and complementarity between States and the global commitment to sustainable development. Bilateral, regional and global partnership is being established for the attainment of global peace as well as the creation of wealth through development cooperation. Rwanda is a member of four key regional integration blocs: the East African Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL) and Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). Each one of these regional blocks have their own strategic strengths and weaknesses, and each have made different degrees of progress towards economic and political integration (see [ARIA 2021](#) for an assessment) but it is clear from Rwanda's policy positions that the EAC is generally regarded as the priority regional economic community.

¹²⁵ Never Again Rwanda and Interpeace, The Role of Civil Society in Enhancing Citizen Participation in the Governance and Development Processes of Post-Genocide Rwanda, 2019

¹²⁶ Transparency International Rwanda, Survey on corruption in media in Rwanda, 2015

¹²⁷ Rwanda Media Barometer 2018



168. Rwanda is also engaged in a Tripartite Agreement between EAC- COMESA-SADC and the African Union (AU) and has international trade agreements such as the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) and the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), with the EU and USA, respectively and more recently the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). According to the NSTI, Rwanda will leverage its regional integration and international positioning to accelerate achieving its development goals.

169. While efforts for regional and global partnerships are in place, in recent years there have been persisting tensions with neighbouring countries, particularly DRC, Uganda and Burundi. With the new leadership in DRC, however, collaboration and partnership has substantially improved. The candidacy for membership of the EAC by DRC ([EAC, 2021](#)) has a lot of long-term positive implications, both economically and politically, for Rwanda and the region. While there are still barriers that need to be overcome with regard to relations with Burundi and Uganda, there have been positive signs of improvement over the course of 2019 and 2021, for instance, peaceful transfers of power in Burundi and DRC demonstrate a positive momentum; and the signing of a memorandum of understanding between Rwanda and Uganda in August 2019 to improve their political and economic relations.

170. The COVID-19 situation and closure of borders in the region have caused delays in the implementation of the MoU between Rwanda and Uganda that was signed in Luanda, Angola in August 2019 and the follow up ministerial meetings held in Rwanda and Uganda for its implementation thereafter, which sought to resolve the disputes between the two countries including the release of prisoners for Uganda. On 21st February 2020, the fourth quadripartite summit was held at the Rwandan/Ugandan Gatuna/Katuna border, with President Joao Manuel Gonsalves Lourenco from Angola and President Felix Antoine Tshisekedi from DRC meeting with Rwandan President Paul Kagame and Ugandan President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. On Wednesday 26 August 2020, Rwanda and Burundi held a high-level meeting of intelligence officials that took place in the Eastern Province, addressed issues that have affected security, trade, and movement along their border.

171. Not only do political tensions affect the economic targets of a land locked country like Rwanda, but they also affect the Great Lakes region which remains a highly complex and volatile region, with ever-shifting alliances, recurring tensions and multiple sub regional organizations. This has heavily impacted on the socio-economic situation of the country amidst the COVID-19 outbreak with limited exchange of goods and services but also strict restrictions for cross border trade for several months which will likely result in deepening the rate of poverty particularly for bordering districts. Freedom of movement has been seriously affected by the political tensions between some of the countries in the region and further exacerbated by COVID-19 prevention measures. Therefore, going forward it is important through regional blocks such as the EAC, that countries harmonize the prevention measures to facilitate trade and freedom of movement across the region.

172. Beyond the EAC and the Great Lakes region, Rwanda has been a key player within the framework of the African Union before and even within the COVID-19 pandemic. The country has taken significant steps in promoting the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, AU African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), NEPAD- African Union Development Agency (AUDA) and AU Agenda 2063. Beyond adhering to the principles, Rwanda took steps in domesticating key AU legal and strategic instruments as well as providing financial contributions to regional



initiatives including Africa Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as part of the COVID-19 response efforts as well as other economic initiatives championed at continental level. Progress in Agenda 2063 has been identified as reduced unemployment, access to electricity and internet and maternal mortality ratio and new HIV infection reduced. Rwanda performance in the First Continental Report on Agenda 2063 is summarized in Annex 8.

173. The Voluntary National Review 2019 shows progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda (see Chapter 4), and points that increased efforts are required including the pivotal role of CSOs, private sector players and DPs in delivering SDGs. This last point is crucial in promoting inclusive governance principles but also inclusive and sustainable growth. In terms of engagement with the Human Rights Council, Rwanda cleared its treaty body-reporting backlog and is sustaining efforts for timely reporting.

174. On 25 January 2021, the human rights records of Rwanda were reviewed for the third time by the working group on UPR of the Human Rights Council. Following this exercise, 284 recommendations were formulated to the Government of Rwanda. This latter accepted 160 recommendations, deferred the response to 49 recommendations and noted 75 recommendations. The UPR process in Rwanda engages different partners including the United Nations, Development Partners, Government and specialized institutions and the Civil Society Organizations. The recommendations accepted by the Government of Rwanda offers to UNCT and its partners an opportunity for reinforcement of their cooperation with the country in human rights domain.

Sustaining Good Governance, Effective Public Service and Accountability

175. Despite the commendable achievements that have been highlighted in this analysis, key challenges remain that need urgent policy action by the Government and stakeholders. First, the reduction of case backlogs in the judiciary and in particular the Supreme Court. The new reforms in the judiciary will be crucial in resolving the case backlog issue, however this must be systematic in levels of the judiciary. Second, the optimum use of Integrated Electronic Case Management System (IECMS) is still limited by the internet connectivity especially in remote areas of the country where connection is weak. High speed internet would resolve the issue of internet connectivity. Third, access to legal aid is not affordable by a portion of the population, in particular the vulnerable such as GBV victims, women, children and persons with disabilities. Without the operationalization of the legal aid fund, many Rwandan cannot have access to justice.

“The Constitution of Rwanda of 2003 revised in 2015 has good coverage of human rights and protection of minorities. So what is not the real issue. The real issue is in enforcing and implementations of status and conventions at specific levels: GEEW, PwD etc” Stakeholder view

176. Fourth, the justice sector is also challenged by the prison population, which is far behind the international standards. The recently elaborated criminal justice policy points to increased use of alternatives to imprisonment to promote restorative justice but it could also contribute meaningfully in addressing the challenge of prison overcrowding. Finally, the rule of law sector, is also challenged by emergence of new and sophisticated crimes which include cybercrimes, online and other web-based frauds and terrorism hence the need for reinforced investigation capacities and strategies. Similarly, the worrying increasing cases of child defilements and teenage pregnancies in Rwanda over the last 3 years calls for stronger prosecution and evidence preservation mechanisms to ensure justice. However, only a handful of GBV victims are able to afford the costs of the frequently needed scientific evidence such as DNA tests.



177. The COVID-19 pandemic has also magnified the need to expand ICT infrastructure across the country to enable citizens to access public services, most of which are now provided online. Awareness raising requires investment for people to know how and when services can be accessed given that the COVID-19 containment measures have necessitated limitations of movements. While requirements for services could be standardized, different categories of people might need more attention in one area or another particularly children, youth, women, persons with disabilities, who were particularly affected by the effects of COVID-19 outbreak in the country. Reducing the costs and removing all barriers towards essential services including sexual and reproductive support, education and health would greatly contribute to building the human capital which as a pre-requisite for the achievement of the Vision 2050. The expansion of ICT infrastructure comes alongside greater awareness around child online protection. The Government launched its Child Online Protection Policy in 2019 which is currently being implemented with support from the UN.

8. CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

“Poverty is the cause to environmental issues, for example, deforestation: People who don’t have jobs go and destroy the forest to get an income. We need to find ways to tackle the root causes, use existing mechanisms.”
Stakeholders view

178. Rwanda's territory is covered with diverse landscapes that include natural ecosystems, forested areas and agro- ecosystems. The country's natural resources and its image as a green economy are important assets. However, deforestation, land degradation, and expansion of cultivation into protected areas and high slope lands pose a risk to the country's natural capital. In 2014, the total cultivated land was measured as 1,747,559 hectares (66%) of the national territory (26,338 km²). This implies that some mountainous and protected areas have been lost over time to cultivation, exposing Rwanda's natural systems to even greater climate change risk. This is primarily due to rapid population growth (See Chapter 5).

Forest Management

179. The country had lost up to 65 percent of its forest cover by 1960 due to competing demands on land for agriculture which is the main livelihood activity. Forests play a major role in the social economic development of Rwanda by providing goods and ecosystem services in addition to employment. According to the Forest Policy of 2018, the forestry sector is one of the pillars for sustainable development and climate resilience to improve livelihoods of present and future generations. Forests in Rwanda are also important economically for household energy. Biomass supports almost 83 percent of Rwanda's total energy use, and accounts for over 90 per cent of energy use in rural areas. Charcoal production provides the largest benefits (61.8%) followed by wood production at (19.2%) (GoR 2018). Additional benefits accrue from distribution and selling of both charcoal and wood which provides 6 percent and 12.8 percent of generated employment, respectively.

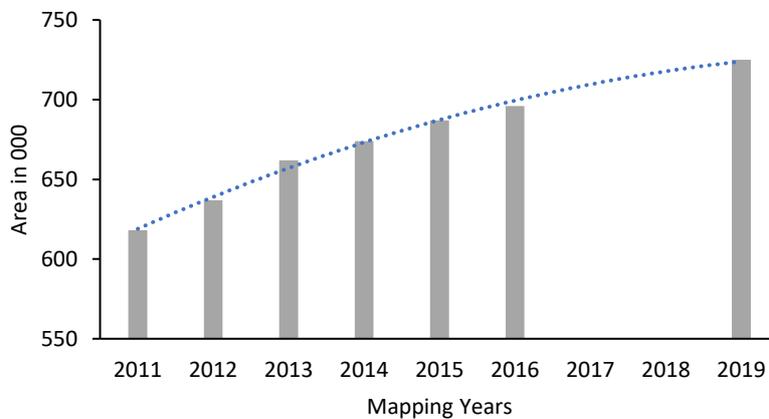
180. Recognizing that forest resources had dwindled significantly from the 1930's, and the adverse impacts of this loss on the environment and the ecosystem services they provided, the Government committed to increasing the forest cover to 30 percent of the country's total land area by 2020 and maintaining it at that level into the future. This commitment was captured in Vision 2020, the EPRS 2, and NST1. These policy documents also set a target of reducing the



percentage of households using wood energy from 86.3 per cent (baseline) to 50 percent by the year 2020.

181. Rwanda has taken several steps to reverse this trend and forest degradation was remarkably reduced between 2009 and 2019. By the end of 2019, a net of 5 percent afforestation rate was achieved based on the fact that about 105,713 ha of forests had suffered deforestation while 139,674 were afforested accounting for 15.7 percent and 20.7 percent respectively over this period. Rwanda fully achieved the forest cover target (30.4% equivalent to 724, 695 ha) in 2019 moving from a forest cover of 24.5 percent in 2012, (Figure 20) (6th national report to CBD, September 2020). This was done through different forest landscape restoration programmes contributing to the Bonn Challenge that the country joined in 2011. Under this challenge, Rwanda made a pledge to restore 2 million hectares of its degraded and deforested landscapes by the year 2030, the highest as a proportion of the total land area of participating countries.

Figure 20: Trend in Forest Cover Increase, 2011-2019



Sources: MINIRENA/RNRA, 2015; and Rwanda Forest Cover Mapping, 2019

Wetlands and Water Resources Management

182. Rwanda's wetlands comprise marshlands, lakes, rivers and streams and represents around 15 percent of the national territory (of which 6.3% are marshlands and 8.6% are lakes and streams). Total wetlands cover an area of 276,477 hectares of which 74 per cent is classified as conditionally exploited, 6 percent unconditionally exploited, and 20 per cent fully protected. Marshlands are 935 in total and cover about 10.6 per cent of the Rwandan surface area by 2017 (MoE, 2019). Wetlands in Rwanda are facing a lot of challenges mostly anthropogenic that include invasive alien species, land use conversion and encroachment, over and uncontrolled use of resources such as sand extraction, and contamination from domestic, agricultural practices, industrial effluent discharge as well as solid waste dumping. Some of these challenges have economic consequences – for example, wetland degradation previously reduced water inflow into hydroelectricity generation reservoirs and reduced electricity generation (Musahara, H. 2006). Climate change especially due to variations in the precipitation patterns has also been noted to have a significant impact on wetlands (Nile Basin Initiative, 2019).

183. To address these challenges, over the last 5 years, the Government put in place different measures including policies that enforce the

“More than 60 per cent of Kigali residents live in informal settlements.” Stakeholder view



protection and wise use of wetlands in Rwanda such as the 2018 Environment law; the 2017 Prime Minister's order drawing up a list of swamp lands, their characteristics and determining modalities of their use, development and management; the 2019 National Land Use Master Plan which will guide how land will be sustainably managed up to 2050 and categorizes wetlands as protected zones where no infrastructure developments and other wetlands degrading activities are allowed with buffer zones for protecting the wetlands set at 50m for lakes, 20m for marshlands and 10m for rivers and; the 2019 Kigali Urban Wetland Master Plan which was directly implemented. As part of the implementation of this plan, demolishing structures that were constructed on wetlands in Kigali as a follow up to the 2013 land law that placed wetlands under public land which gives the state responsibility to ensure their protection, sustainable use and management. In addition, GoR is prioritizing irrigation development with the national irrigation master plan (2010-2020), which identifies potential irrigable land of 589,000 ha. With the support of UN and other DPs, GoR is rapidly increasing the irrigated areas as a means of sustainable land management which leads to wetland conservation.

184. Remaining issues in wetlands management include shortage of hillside arable land and thus continued wetlands encroachments and high cost of wetlands rehabilitation and relocation of degrading properties from wetlands. Long-term monitoring of wetlands and their catchments is needed to inform on the seasonal effects on wetlands integrity. Also, there is a need to mainstream wetlands wise use in the national priorities namely National Strategy for Transformation (NST), the Green Economy agenda and Vision 2050 and construction of waste management systems for point source pollution.

Biodiversity Conservation

185. There are four fully protected areas in Rwanda covering 9.13 percent of the country's total surface area. Deforestation and land use change in protected areas is a major concern, as Rwanda's protected areas have lost an estimated 50 per cent of their original surface area over the last 40 years (Revised NDC, 2020). Since the 1960s, massive tracts of landscape have been continually converted or encroached into for various socioeconomic purposes such as settling people and agricultural production. This has led to loss of critical habitats for biodiversity, which is threatening the survival of certain species as well as ecosystem services (NBSAP, 2016). These natural habitats/ecosystems also provide essential goods and services that support Rwanda's economic growth and peoples' livelihoods.

186. Thus, over decades, the Government intensified efforts to safeguard all its protected areas, which constitute the bulk of natural ecosystems. The 2020 biodiversity and wildlife law provides for strengthening the conservation of biodiversity through provisions related to conservancies, community and privately wildlife land management for business. Over the last 5 years, Rwanda observed the continued increase in the population of the Mountain Gorilla and populations of other species such as Eastern Chimpanzee, Golden Monkeys, and the Grey Crowned Cranes; successfully re-introduced 23 Black Rhinos in 2017 and 2019 and 11 lions into Akagera National Park after 10-year absence. Before COVID-19, tourism was contributing up to 14.9 percent of the country's GDP and was growing at a rate of 9.66 per cent annually (Knoema, 2020).

187. Although, Rwanda has made progress in biodiversity conservation, some challenges remain. For instance, while the linkages between biodiversity and ecosystem services are well understood, the value of biodiversity is not fully reflected in broader Government policies and



incentive structures. There also has not been a comprehensive economic valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services provided to the national economy. In addition, costs of biodiversity loss as well as the ecosystem services they provide and the benefits that accrue have not been fully computed for all ecosystems (NBSAP, 2016). Establishment of the value of biodiversity and integrating it into the national planning and development processes is therefore critical for the realization of their sustainable management and utilization for the benefit of all. UNDP supported REMA to conducted Biodiversity expenditure review and to strengthen the national mechanism to collect and manage fines and fee from Biodiversity degradation.

Pollution

188. Pollution is still a major environmental issue in Rwanda and arises from various sources such as agricultural inputs (fertilizers and pesticides from farmlands), industrial operations, and poor solid and liquid waste management.

189. (a) Water Quality Management. Pollution of water bodies (rivers, lakes, wetlands) has been identified as a big problem with adverse impacts on resources such as fisheries and aquatic life. Also, it compromises the goal of providing clean and safe water to the country's growing population (NBSAP, 2016). The Government has adopted an Integrated Water Resources Management Framework, which will make a significant impact in terms of improving water quality/minimizing pollution from agricultural chemicals and sediments washed away from farmlands. Measures such as catchment restoration, improved management of watersheds, and implementation of sustainable cities help mitigate water pollution from various sources. There is also a national water quality monitoring system in place which helps to evaluate the success of measures being implemented.

190. (b) Air Quality Management Air pollution is mainly generated by motor vehicles in urban areas while in the rural areas, it is from use of wood for fuel especially at household level. The Government also passed a new air quality management law 18/2016 governing the preservation of ambient air quality and prevention of related pollution. Standards have also been developed to enhance the regulation of air emissions that include: Non road mobile machinery, thermal power plants; and for testing environmental compliance for motor vehicles, cycles and tricycles exhaust emissions. In addition, Rwanda in an effort to enhance the governance and management of ambient air quality standards and emissions limits in the country has adopted East African Standards on Emissions by Cement factories, Air quality specification Tolerance limits of emissions discharged to the air by factories.

191. To curtail air pollution through clean mobility interventions, Rwanda continues to work with the UNDP, private sector and other stakeholders. The country has the potential to leapfrog past many of the imperfect mobility technologies that have affected air quality in many parts of the world. Electric vehicles (EVs) are part of Rwanda's solutions, with the country being among the first few in Africa to embrace the public-private sector partnerships, through its launch of pilot projects aimed at emboldening its clean mobility ambition. In 2019, for instance, Rwanda partnered with Volkswagen EV to launch a pilot clean mobility project in its capital city of Kigali. The country's national development plan calls for climate resilience and the adoption of a low-carbon economy, which includes building smart (integrated) cities, smart transport facilities and services, as well as the use of ICT and digital solutions.



192. (c) Solid Waste Management. Rwanda continues to set a good example for Africa on waste management. The country has put in place measures that are aimed at prohibiting the manufacturing and importation, as well as the use and sale of single use polyethylene plastic bags (UNEP, 2019; Rwandan Government 2008). This is in addition to outlining actions aimed at curtailing a rising tide of electronic waste estimated at a 6 percent country-wide increase per year (Rwandan Government E-waste Regulation 2018). These developments are associated with the rising demand for electrical and electronic equipment across the country. Accordingly, the Rwandan authorities have rolled out plans to establish e-waste collection points in all its districts by end of 2020. This intervention will contribute to the country's efforts of collecting up to 4,000 tonnes of e-waste per year, as part of its target of reaching 10,000 tonnes of e-waste every year. The mark is buoyed by other existing collections through business-to-business approach. The aggregation points will feed the country's pioneer e-waste recycling facility located in Bugesera district to the eastern parts of Rwanda. Efforts of dismantling and recycling the e-waste are set to expand the job opportunities in the country's waste management and wider circular sectors, while contributing to SDG-12 on sustainable consumption and production. In readiness for this, the country has put in place various capacity development measures that include training of hundreds of technicians to aid in sustainable e-waste management at national and sub-national levels. UNDP is working with REMA to decouple hazardous waste from economic growth in Rwanda and safely manage chemical and hazardous waste which is emerging as a health and environmental issue.

193. Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) is actively involved in managing potentially harmful pollutants associated with the COVID-19 containment measures with UNDP support. These include those that emanate from the countrywide surge in the use of personal protective gear at household levels, as well as at public places and healthcare centres. Part of the REMA's strategic interventions in this area includes policy guidelines to aid in safe aggregation and disposal of the health care and other medical waste.

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

194. Climate change has been identified as being a factor that can adversely affect biodiversity, livelihoods, and provision of ecosystem goods and services such as water, and the overall development of a country. Rwanda is already experiencing the effects of climate change which are expected to be more severe in future; and especially if the loss of forests continues. Rainfall has become increasingly intense and frequent and changes in rainfall patterns are predicted to increase by 5 percent to 10 percent (GoR, 2018a). Changes in temperature and precipitation and their distributions are the key drivers of climate and weather-induced disasters that have negatively affected Rwandans and the national economy, including through droughts, floods, and landslides which results in damage to infrastructure, loss of lives and property (including crops) and contribute to soil erosion and water pollution. Rwanda is highly reliant on rain-fed agriculture both for rural livelihoods and exports of tea and coffee, in addition to depending on hydropower for half of its electricity generation. The Government is committed to taking urgent action to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. As a Party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the country seeks to contribute to the ambitious goal of limiting temperature rise to 2 °C with efforts to reach 1.5 °C agreed under the Paris Agreement.



195. Rwanda has ratified various Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) that are geared towards promoting proactive sustainable environment and natural resources management, towards ecosystems and biodiversity conservation. These agreements include the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Framework Convention

“More reforms in mitigating and adaptation to Climate change are required. New moves and policies and use of used cars, vehicles that do not use fossil fuel, women use of improved stoves, promotion of LPG instead of biomass, smart agriculture are initiatives linked to sustainability that need to be promoted.” Stakeholder view

on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Kyoto Protocol and lastly, the Paris Agreement on climate change in 2016 and ratified it. In 2020, Rwanda was the first country to submit its revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) to the UNFCCC which outlined adaptation as a key priority. Climate change mitigation and adaptation has been integrated into different policies and strategies including the Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy (GGCRS, 2011-2050), the National Strategy for Climate Change and Low Carbon Development, the Nationally Determined Contributions, the National Policy for Water Resources Management, the Energy policy; and the Forest and Agriculture policies. Based on the fact that natural vegetation is the most important carbon sinks through sequestration, the increased forest cover has also increased the carbon storage and sequestration potential in the country, controlled soil erosion and flooding and regulated micro-climate. Rwanda should explore the opportunities to use its robust carbon sink to mobilize carbon credits.

Climate Change Adaptation

196. The 6th national report to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), 2020 and the updated NDC (2020) indicates measures that the country should focus on to increase resilience of the citizens and ecosystems to the impact of climate change in the coming 5 years. These include development of sustainable land management practices (soil erosion control; landscape management); development of agroforestry and sustainable agriculture (control soil erosion and improved soil fertility); promotion of afforestation / reforestation of designated areas; improvement of forest management for degraded forest resources; development of a harmonized and integrated spatial data management system for sustainable land use management; adoption of inclusive land administration that regulate and provide guidance for land tenure security; climate-compatible mining, floods control especially in cities; developing national water security through water conservation practices, wetlands restoration, water storage and efficient water use; developing water resource models, water quality testing, and improved hydro-related information systems; developing and implementing a catchment management plan for all Level 1 catchments; promotion of non- agricultural income generating activities; promotion of intensive agro-pastoral activities; introduction of species resisting to environmental conditions; and development of firewood alternative sources of energy.

197. Efficient, affordable cooling is an important element in efforts to curb and adapt to climate change. Without action to address energy efficiency, global energy demand for space cooling is projected to more than triple by 2050. Recognizing the multiplier effects of sustainable cooling, Rwanda has put in place transformative interventions (UNEP, 2020). Areas targeted include those that are aimed at boosting food security and curbing food loss, protection of vital vaccines, and lessening of emissions of climate-damaging refrigerant gases. Part of these actions, launched in July 2020, is set to revolutionize the country's agro-value chains. For instance, Rwandan farmers that often lack effective ways to manage the distribution of produce after harvest and get it to market have been considered under these new interventions. Ineffective delivery systems constrain farmers' ability to sell goods beyond



a local area. Tomatoes in the country, for example, are widely produced and consumed locally with reports showing 25 percent of the production being lost just after harvest (Feed the Future Initiative, 2018). The losses are attributed to lack of temperature management given their high perishability and short shelf life.

Climate Mitigation (Carbon Dioxide offset)

198. According to NDC (2020), in 2015 total emissions in Rwanda excluding forestry were estimated at 5.33milliontCO₂e. The agriculture sector accounted for the largest share of the total (2.94million tCO₂e, 55% of total), followed by energy (1.68milliontCO₂e, 31% of total) and waste (0.64million tCO₂e, 12% of total). Emissions from industrial processes and product use (IPPU) represented just 0.08milliontCO₂e, equivalent to around 2 percent of total emissions and mainly associated with calcination CO₂ emissions from clinker production. Under a BAU projection, Rwanda's total emissions are forecast to more than double over the 2015-2030 period, rising to 12.1 million tCO₂e in 2030. The forecast indicates the growing contribution from fossil fuels to national emissions, arising from increasing demand for power generation, road transport and other modern energy uses. At the same time, despite potential for increased productivity, agricultural output is expected to be limited due to land availability, thereby limiting emissions growth from this sector. A detailed assessment of identified GHG mitigation options for Rwanda estimates a total emissions reduction potential of around 4.6 million tCO₂e in 2030 excluding the reduction of emission by Forests in 2030 (Updated NDC, 2020).

199. A total cumulative removal of 27,860,228 tCO₂e had been achieved from 2011 to 2018 through forest landscape restoration. To ensure that the carbon sink grows to meet the 2030 projected GHG reduction, the country needs to promote energy use efficiency in public buildings and at household level in the energy, water and sanitation institutions; promote energy saving cook stoves, biogas and other alternative energy sources that reduce consumption of biomass energy by different stakeholders; build national capacity on cleaner production and sustainable consumption and production for industries for various sectors; promote green cities with low energy buildings and services; promote green and climate resilient villages and green schools (rainwater harvesting systems, biogas, reforestation and agroforestry, sustainable management of soil and water, use of organic manure (5th National Report to the CBD); encourage mass transportation; engage the private sector in cleaner production and go beyond coffee and tea in green certification programmes; improve the management of solid and liquid waste; improve organized settlements with local services centred; rehabilitate water drainage to reduce floods; increase green spaces in cities; promote e-mobility; and continue the provision of Tax incentives for Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG).

200. Even though, Rwanda is a non- annex1 of the UNFCCC, there are strong measures to reduce its emissions and to enhance its carbon sinks. Climate mitigation options also lie in its clean energy sector which has multiple opportunities to not only optimize on its associated avoided deforestation and forest degradation but also expand socio-economic opportunities. 30.4% of national territory is made of forest and the country can use its forest resources to claim carbon credit. Current Government reports show the country has set itself a target to achieve 512 MW installed power generation capacity and attain universal access by 2024, up from its current under 220 MW power generation. Key among the sustainable energy sources that can accelerate the country's attainment of these targets while also mitigating its carbon emissions include the hydropower, geothermal, solar, and Lake Kivu's methane gas, among others. Cumulatively, these locally available sustainable energy options are estimated to produce



more than 1600 MW (Bimenyimana and others, 2018). It thus means Rwanda currently utilizes less than 15 percent of its local electricity generation potential, a situation which strains the country's socio-economic productivity. For instance, electricity tariffs in Rwanda have been estimated to be more costly than any of those of its East African Community counterparts by at least 22 percent (Government of Rwanda, VNR 2019). Nonetheless, Rwanda's Government's commitments provide a ray of hope for the country to harness its immense renewable energy potentials, as epitomized by its ramping up of connections from 364,000 households in June 2012 to more than 700,000 households in 2017, being about 31 percent of all households in the country.

Climate Finance

201. Rwanda's third communication to the UNFCCC highlighted three main challenges in climate finance in Rwanda as: i) insufficient funds; ii) limited budget for the implementation of climate actions and limited involvement of private sector investment in environment and climate change activities. Also, the communication indicated a need for more bilateral and multilateral financial support (GoR, 2018a). Rwanda has undertaken various initiatives to identify climate finance. These have included a series of environment and climate change expenditure reviews and costing for GGCRS in addition to costing of Sector Strategic Plans supported by UNDP.

202. The implementation of the revised NDC cost is estimated at USD 11 billion (US\$ 5.3 billion for adaptation and US\$ 5.7 billion for mitigation) in next 10 years (2020-2030). The full implementation of the strategic mitigation actions under the revised NDC is conditional on the support of international stakeholders. The implementation of the prioritised policies and actions assume the continued use of existing and planned national and international financial sources. Rwanda is participating in the NDC partnership, a process that has so far attracted financing for readiness support on developing a pipeline of projects targeting public and private climate finance. The support packages have come through the "DeepDive" and Climate Action Enhancement Package "CAEP" which are currently being implemented. Through these initiatives, the various sectors have developed concept notes on both mitigation and adaptation that will be used to develop national priority projects pipeline to accelerate Rwanda's climate action.

203. The Government operationalized the Rwanda Green Fund (FONERWA) in 2012, which aims to mobilize and manage domestic and international climate finance, and secure sustainable financing to support projects toward the implementation of the Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy. This was done with the support of UNDP, DFID and other development partners. As a cross-sectoral national financing mechanism, FONERWA is the vehicle through which environment and climate financing is channelled, programmed, disbursed, and monitored and is today the engine of green growth in Rwanda and serves as an example for what is possible - in Africa and around the world (FONERWA). To date, FONERWA has mobilized more than US\$ 161.7 million from its development partners including DFID, the German Development Bank (KfW), the GoR, the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) of the AfDB and Green Climate Fund. The key priority of the Fund's operations is to ensure a sustained and effective delivery that continues to incrementally commission projects, build capacity of potential applicants to access funding, commit finance and quality assure implementation of funded projects. Additionally, operations aim to enhance FONERWA's role in addressing wider national strategic needs related to the environment and climate change investment. This necessitates technical support to the GoR to adequately resource the Fund, build capacity to execute its mandate.



204. Despite Rwanda's generally low access to electricity, development partners continue to support the country's climate actions under SDG 13¹²⁸ as well as its clean energy expansion options in line with SDG 7¹²⁹. These opportunities, mainly tailored towards climate impact amelioration and adaptation, are set to buoy the country's climate commitments and the quest for accelerating its socio-economic trajectory. Among those in the forefront of supporting Rwanda in these fronts include the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank, both of whom have been pivotal in strengthening Rwanda's clean and renewable energy capacity. UNEP continues to collaborate with the country in geothermal energy development, among other fronts, through the African Rift Geothermal Development Facility. The UNDP has been supporting the restoration of the ecosystem, the implementation of the National Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy (GGCRS), mobilization of climate finance and supporting the Integration of Environment and climate change into national, sectoral and Districts Development policies, strategies, plans and Budget. The World Bank, on the other hand continues to provide finances to enhance Rwanda's energy access capacity. In 2020, for example, the World Bank approved USD150 million in financing to improve Rwanda's access to modern energy for households, enterprises, and public institutions, as well as towards the enhancement of the efficiency of the country's electricity services (World Bank Press Release, September 2020). Out of the US\$150 million, US\$75 million will be provided as grant funding and the balance will be provided as a loan, through the *Rwanda Energy Access and Quality Improvement Project (EAQIP)*. UNDP is providing support towards clean cooking energy and integrating environmental sustainability through solarization of health posts in Joint Programme (UNFPA lead; UNDP, WHO, UNHCR) being developed on innovative financing with Joint SDG Fund.

Transboundary, South-South and Triangular Collaboration

205. Global changes in temperature and precipitation and the regional distribution of those changes are the primary drivers of climate-related hazards in Rwanda. These include floods, landslides and droughts as well as windstorms and severe rainstorms that have struck Rwanda in recent years with devastating effects on the population. Rwanda recognizes the importance of global and regional solidarity to address climate change issues. In this regard, the country ratified several international conventions and agreements such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement on climate change and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

206. Under Agenda 2063 and the East African Community Vision 2050¹³⁰, Rwanda joined several efforts to reduce climate change and its effects such as land degradation, biodiversity loss and water scarcity. These include: i) the Nile Basin Initiative for equitable use of the Nile river water resources; ii) the Lake Victoria Basin Commission that coordinates sustainable development and management of the Lake Victoria Basin in the 5 East Africa Community Partner States; iii) the lake Kivu and Rusizi/Ruzizi River Basin Authority that is a joint effort between Rwanda, Burundi and Democratic Republic of Congo for integrated water resources management and; iv) the Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration (GVTC) between Rwanda, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo to conserve a network of

¹²⁸ SDG-13:

¹²⁹ SDG 7:

¹³⁰ Some of Rwanda's successes in environment and climate change under different home-grown solutions are shared with other countries in the framework of South-South and triangular cooperation by the Rwanda Cooperation Initiative.



transboundary protected Areas in Greater Virunga Landscape with a focus on mountain gorillas. Zoonotics such as COVID-19, Ebola and HIV/AIDS have reminded us that the world needs to collaborate more than ever before to reduce human-wildlife communicable diseases. This should include global, regional and transboundary efforts to reduce wildlife poaching and trafficking.

Post COVID-19: Building Back Better and Greener

207. Responding to the UN Secretary General's call to "build back better", Rwanda has at the level of Head of State affirmed the intent to ensure sustainable economic recovery, and the need for the stimulus actions to not cause adverse effects on the environment. A number of efforts in this regard are ongoing including partnering with UNDP, NDC Partnership and the World Bank to work on recovery plans and strategies for the post-COVID that ensure green growth.

208. A targeted consideration of Rwandan ecological systems as part of the country's quest to build back better and greener from the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic, is essential. As a key component of a transformational change for nature and people. Rwanda's diverse sets of ecosystems constitute a key base for averting future zoonotic diseases associated with human-wildlife interfaces. Vital in this area is evidence-based policy choices that can be tailored to support the Rwandan communities around wildlife conservation areas, including through integrated ecosystem-based approaches for food security, energy, and water. This is in addition to exploring the areas of collaborative advantages between Rwanda UNCT and the GoR on options that can be harnessed to bring on board 'like-minded' actors to support green and inclusive post-COVID-19 recovery interventions. Examples include multi-partner collaborations, aimed at generating impactful interventions in the lines of investing in nature and people, and connecting it to a *One Health* approach (UNEP, 2020) at national and sub-national levels.

209. The theme was a point of discussion in the consultations and the views in organizations and individuals are summarized below representing the views of stakeholders:

Stakeholders views

- Environment and climate have receded as a priority compared to previous Rwanda development strategies
- People's rights with regard to environment not known by people
- Convening powers of authorities in charge of environment in NST1 needs to be stronger
- The argument of green growth is important and should be part of the new recovery plan
- Rwanda needs to consider issues of environment and climate seriously given its topography, population density, degradation of natural resources such as erosion and deforestation
- Restoration of environment practices need to be intensified such as tree planting
- Good examples of banning plastic products need to be promoted
- Many agencies do not have environment experts
- Pollution, urban spaces, resilience, women and environment are themes that need higher prominence
- Climate finance does not reach the grass root levels
- Innovative financing mechanisms like Carbon Credits and Payment for Ecosystem Services have not found root adequately



- Valuation of ecosystem services and biodiversity are not adequately done
- Natural resources accounting has not taken its role in informing policy
- Very good laws and strategies on environment and climate; enforcement and implementation is the challenge
- Analysis of transboundary issues on environment and climate change need to continue
- UN should play a role in assisting many transitions in the pipelines like green growth, sustainable cities, change in sources of energy and sustainability

9. TRANSBOUNDARY AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

Health and Transboundary Collaboration

210. Rwanda has been actively participating in the East African and Great Lakes Health Initiatives. The region has historically recorded a high prevalence of Communicable Diseases including HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) which was declared in August 2018 and the prevailing challenges of insecurities in the region, have made it difficult to control and contain the EVD. This posed a high risk of importing the EVD to neighbouring countries which included Rwanda. The World Health Organization (WHO) advised countries neighbouring DRC to strengthen surveillance and preparedness for importation of the virus. In particular, Rwanda, Uganda, and Southern Sudan were categorized as priority 1 group of countries with the highest risk of likely regional spread of the EVD outbreak from the DRC. The UN led by WHO Regional Office, facilitated policy dialogue of the five priority countries (Rwanda, DRC, Burundi, Uganda and South Sudan) and partners which was held in DRC to enhance cross border preparedness and tighten response measures against EVD from 14 to 15 August 2019. The recommendations included:

- I. All countries should establish bilateral collaboration with DRC. Multilateral collaboration should be considered in the near future.
- II. Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs), protocols and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) should be developed to guide the areas for bilateral and cross-border collaboration, including how coordination will be conducted at national, intermediate and local levels, to ensure preparedness, information sharing and response.
- III. Countries should regularly conduct exchange visits to share best practices and experiences.
- IV. Countries should share capacity in terms of personnel deployment and medical counter measures.

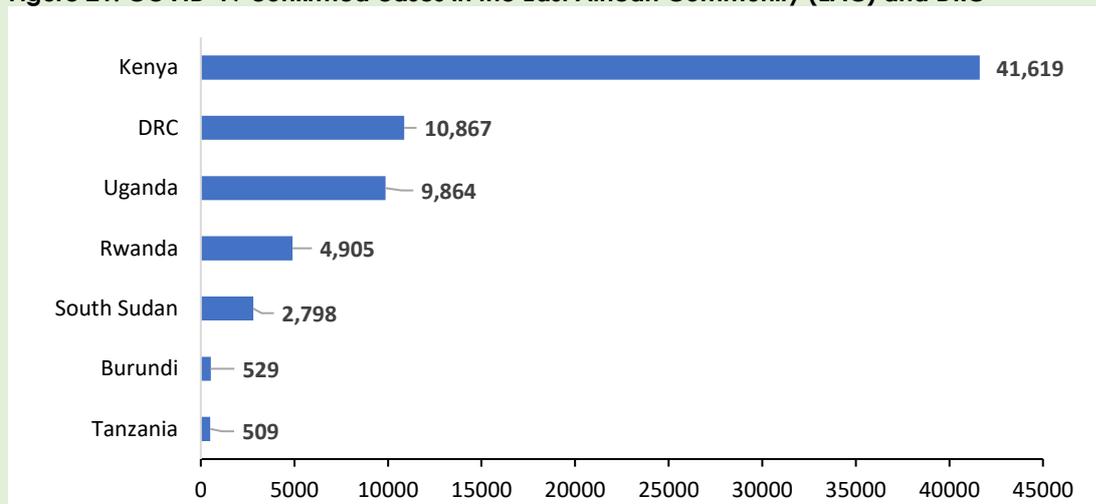
211. Dialogue ensued between the Governments of the DRC and Rwanda with regard to cross-border issues for Ebola preparedness and response. This resulted in the signing of a joint communique on collaboration by DRC and Rwanda which also included technical missions to learn from each other. Health professionals from Rwanda participated in the EVD response in DRC, building capacity and practical experiences that increased both the EVD preparedness and the COVID-19 response capacity. While cases of EVD were identified in the border town of Goma, Rwanda managed to maintain the country free from EVD. The EVD outbreak in DRC was declared over on 18th November 2020, 27 months after the start of the outbreak. However, a new EVD outbreak was declared in North Kivu province of DRC on 7th February 2021.



212. Following confirmation of the first COVID-19 case in Rwanda¹³¹, public health and social measures were implemented to slow down the spread of COVID-19. These measures included closing of international borders and closing land borders except for cargo. Capacities, learnings, and procedures in place built during EVD preparedness, including prevention and control at the border entry points, that were set up for EVD response facilitated for the Government to respond rapidly to the COVID-19 crisis.

213. There has also been close collaboration as part of the Great Lakes Initiative between the East African countries and DRC in the prevention and control of communicable diseases especially malaria and prevention of malnutrition. This collaboration resulted in the development of the Malaria Strategy to be implemented by all the countries in the initiative.

Figure 21: COVID-19 confirmed cases in the East African Community (EAC) and DRC



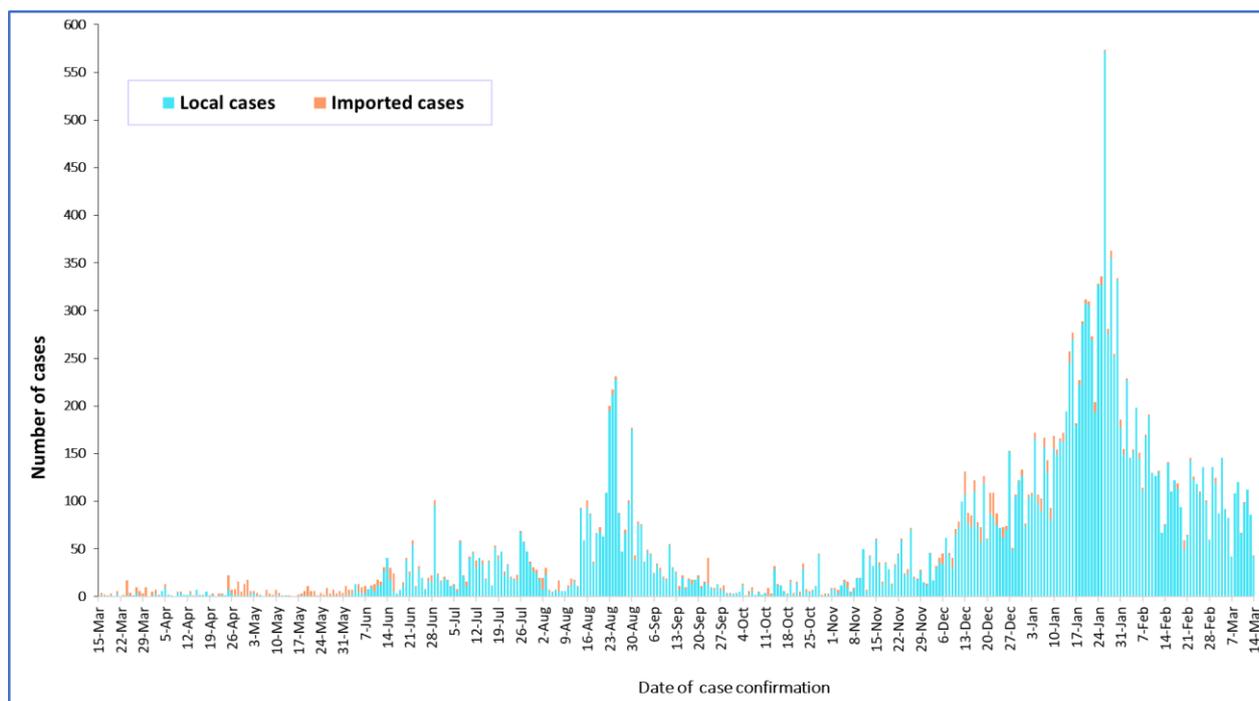
Source: WHO Dashboard of 04022021

214. Cross-border spread of COVID-19 has been a major threat to COVID-19 control efforts. At the beginning of the outbreak, most of the cases were imported. As the outbreak evolved, the imported cases gradually declined as the local cases increased. The first three peaks in number of cases early on in the Pandemic were linked to cross-border spread: first in March 2020, when mandatory quarantine and testing of international travellers was initiated, second was related to cross-border truck drivers and the third peak was identified after testing of high-risk groups in one of the districts bordering the DRC (Figure 22).

¹³¹ 14 March 2020



Figure 22: Trends in Local and Imported Cases for Rwanda; March 2020 – February 2021



Source: WHO Dashboard of 28th February, 2021

215. There have been regional efforts to ensure cross-border collaboration in the control of COVID-19, including a meeting between Health Ministers and the Heads of States of the East African Community, High level meetings with the Democratic Republic of Congo and the development of a strategy for cross-border management of the COVID-19 outbreak in East and Southern Africa. On 8th September 2020, the EAC rolled out the Regional Electronic Cargo and Driver Tracking System in the Eastern Border of Rwanda. The objectives are to:

- Enabling mutual recognition of COVID-19 test results across borders.
- Manage issuance of digital certificates for cross border movement of authorized persons during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Provide a cross border joint coordination framework for Ministry of Health officials along the transit trade corridor to control the spread of the virus across borders.
- Enable digital verification of transit documents and travel authorization by law enforcement, customs and immigration at border crossings and other strategic locations along the transit corridors.
- Facilitate intuitive analytics of data and surveillance of mobility related to cross border movements for better management of the Pandemic in relation to cross border mobile population segments (e.g. Truck Drivers).
- Enable cross border sharing of information relating to truck driver movement, behaviour while on transit and health status.

This managed to significantly reduce the delays to cross-border trade, as documented in AERC/UNECA/TMEA (2021), to the extent that by the end of 2020, formal sector export volumes within the EAC had recovered to pre-pandemic levels.

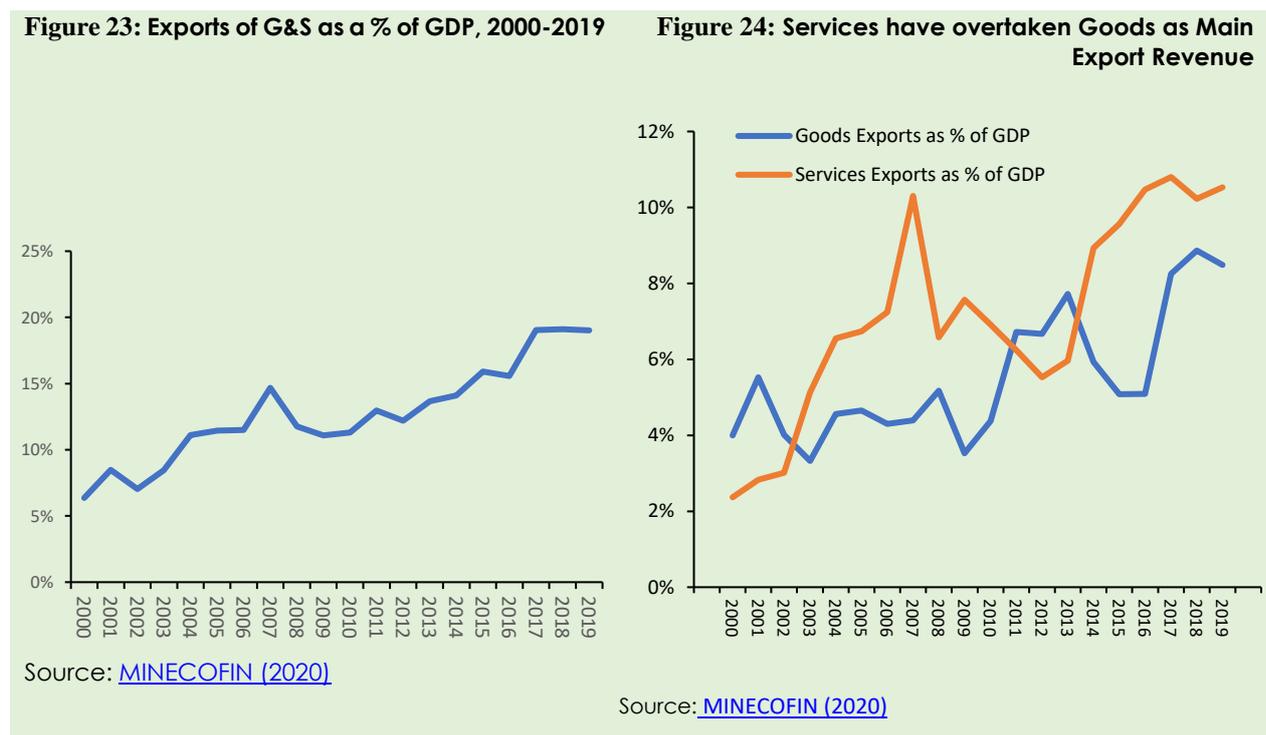
Regional Trade

216. Rwanda's economic engagement in the regional and global economy has increased dramatically over the two decades. Goods and Service exports, as a per cent of GDP, have



risen from around 6 percent in 2000 to nearly 20 per cent by 2019 (Figure 22). Exports in particular have grown rapidly and diversified over the past decade, with a declining dependence on the three traditional exports (tea, coffee, and minerals) and an increase in industrial goods such as apparel and leather products, mechanical appliances, agro-processing and beverages ([World Bank, 2019: 99-100](#)). Service trade growth has been particularly marked. In some years Rwanda has been receiving more revenue from services than goods (Figure 24). Rwanda has already made efforts to grow its tourism sector by making substantial investments in the Kigali Convention Centre, RwandAir, as well as tourism assets such as Akagera and Nyungwe National Park. Four- and five-star hotels managed by major companies such as Radisson Blu and Marriott. Rwanda's Vision 2050 and the 2018-2024 Seven Year Plan also foresee further investments in Information and Communication Technologies, other service sectors with large growth potential.

217. Despite this progress, there is a general recognition that the tradeable goods sector remains too small and narrow to achieve the country's developmental aspirations. This has contributed to a large trade deficit at 15.6 percent of GDP in 2019¹³² causes problems related to [balance-of-payments constraints](#). Going forward, the development of a more robust export sector serving both regional and global economies and a renewed effort to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in tradable sectors would boost scale economies and specialization and constitute an important source of competition, innovation and revenue ([GoR/World Bank, 2019](#)).



218. FDI inflows have taken some time to react positively to the policy measures introduced to make Rwanda an attractive investment destination but have recently reached higher levels of around US\$ 300-450 million a year. In line with Rwanda's aspirations to construct a diversified more service-oriented economy, the ICT, finance and manufacturing sectors have been the principal destinations for much of that investment (Figure 22). To date, over half of the

¹³² [MINECOFIN \(2020\)](#)



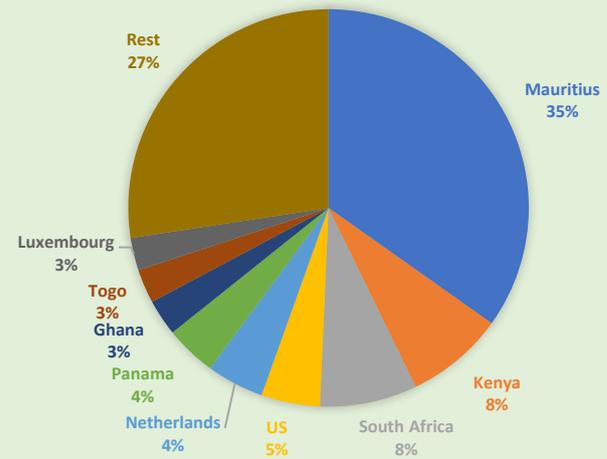
investment stock comes from other African countries (Figure 23). For Rwanda, further increases in intra-African FDI would be desirable. In principle, investors from within the EAC and the wider African region have a more intimate knowledge of regional markets and are more capable of navigating the cultural factors that often impede foreign investment from further afield. There is, in other words, a greater cultural affinity which facilitates cross-border business ([Blonigen and Piger, 2014](#)). There is also evidence that intra-African FDI creates more employment opportunities and is more conducive to technology transfer than extra-African FDI ([Gold et. al, 2017](#)).

Figure 25: FDI Stock in Rwanda per sector 2018 (RWF, billions)



Source: BNR, 2020

Figure 26: Stock of FDI to Rwanda by Geographic Origin, 2018 (% Share)



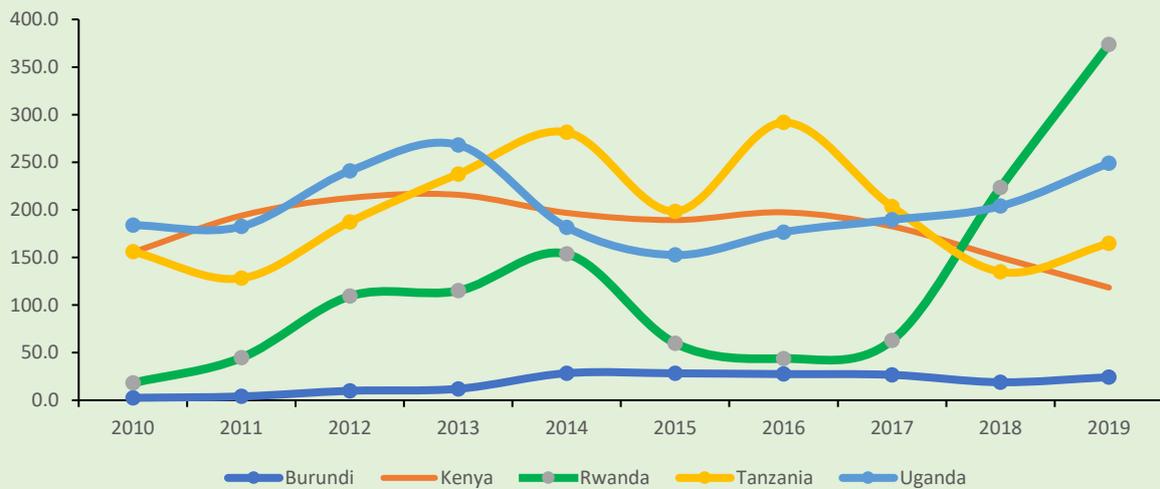
Source: BNR, 2020

The Growing Importance of Regional Markets for Rwanda

219. Given the [high growth](#) that prevailed in Eastern Africa prior to the COVID-19 crisis, the regional market has been especially vibrant. Ever since its integration into the East African Community in 2007, Rwanda has been becoming increasingly embedded in the regional economy. The share of Rwanda's trade destined for the EAC market has generally followed a secular rise, with DRC currently as Rwanda's largest regional export market (Figure 28). Rwanda is exporting an increasingly diverse range of products (e.g., processed foods, mattresses, roof tiling, etc) through an expanding number of small, medium and large manufacturing firms as well as through pure trading firms.



Figure 27: EAC Exports to DRC, 2010-19 (USD, Millions)



Source: IMF, Direction of Trade Statistics (2020)

220. A great deal of Rwanda's Cross-Border Trade (CBT) is small-scale informal trade conducted by women traders. It is estimated that between 70 per cent and 80 per cent of cross-border traders are women and 90 percent of these women traders rely on CBT as their main source of income (UNDP, 2020). Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, it was estimated that around 90,000 traders cross the Rwanda/DRC border on a daily basis daily, most of them doing informal trade. While informal is not officially recorded due to the small quantities traded or because formal regulatory and tax policies are not being applied correctly by border officials. While there is no official estimate of the economic losses at this point, informal cross-border exports are estimated to have yielded US\$125.3 million in 2018. Since women account for 74 percent of traders operating between the very lucrative Rusizi-Bukavu and Rubavu-Goma border crossings, the loss is likely to be significant for the country and the women involved in CBT (CCA 2021 consultations).

221. Conscious of the importance of CBT in Rwanda, the Government of Rwanda, in close partnership with the UN, INGOs and Private Sector, has strengthened and is continuing to strengthen the social cohesion and economic integration of cross-border communities, in particular between Rwanda and DRC, through effective implementation of integrated border management systems, facilitated by improved infrastructures (One Stop Border Post at the Rubavu-Goma border). While the legal framework has improved the last years, hence facilitating small-scale CBT, voices were raised in the consultations regarding the needs for training and awareness-raising about rules, regulations and protection issues, both among border officials and traders.

222. Among other interventions, the European Union, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Trademark East Africa (TMEA) are collaborating for the construction of the One Stop Border Post (OSBP) at the Rusizi-Bukavu border between Rwanda and DRC to enhance cross-border trade and movements and improve cross-border community dialogue. The Rusizi II border has been identified as a critical geographical location to set up the OSBP, due to its importance as a trade and transport corridor and because of the constant movement of cross-border communities in search of employment, business opportunities and essential health services.



223. The [Africa Regional Integration Index \(2019\)](#) provides quantitative assessments of African countries performance in five dimensions of Regional Integration. It is good to see that for the overall index as well as for 3 out of 5 dimensions, Rwanda ranks among the best performers. With respect to the five dimensions looked at, the country is strong in trade integration, macroeconomic integration, and free movement of people and goods. Areas of weakness are infrastructure integration and productive integration. The latter is important as it provides an idea of integration into regional value chains.

224. There is a large potential for investment and trade in the Great Lakes region, which remains largely untapped. Recognizing that economic cooperation, expanded trade opportunities as well as job creation could help bring long-term stability and peace in the region, the Office of the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) have been mandated to take lead on organizing a Trade and Investment Conference for the region, originally planned to take place in March 2020 in Kigali but postponed due to COVID-19.

Extra-Continental Trading Issues

225. Despite the growing economic importance of intra-regional trade and integration, Rwanda is still heavily dependent on extra-continental trading and investment relations, with around 56 and 82 percent of its exports and imports being destined to/from outside Africa (IMF DoTs, 2019) Table 7.

Table 7: Exports and Imports, Share with Extra-African Trading Partners, 2014-2019

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Exports to EU	15%	11%	7%	7%	6%	4%
Imports from the EU	12%	13%	13%	12%	12%	10%
Exports to China	4.4%	7.3%	3.9%	3.0%	3.1%	1.3%
Imports from China	16.4%	19.3%	21.1%	20.4%	19.3%	19.9%
Exports to US	5.0%	5.6%	4.4%	4.9%	3.8%	1.1%
Imports from US	1.5%	2.4%	2.6%	2.7%	1.4%	1.7%
Exports to the UK	1.5%	1.5%	1.2%	1.3%	1.2%	3.3%
Imports from the UK	0.9%	1.2%	0.9%	1.1%	0.8%	0.7%

Source: ECA calculations from IMF DoTs (2020)

226. A case in point are the bilateral trading relations with United States. Rwanda had been benefiting from preferential access to the US market since 2000 under the United States African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).¹³³ The US is starting to discuss with its partners what happens post-AGOA, which, in principle, expires in 2025. The previous US administration was negotiating a series of bilateral free trade deals with African countries. Yet for Rwanda, the United States currently represents barely 1 percent of its export market and 2 percent of its imports. The challenge for small developing countries like Rwanda is that US FTAs are often demanding in the terms of the content of the agreements – frequently requiring an opening up of domestic markets to US FDI, the removal of public procurement restrictions to non-

¹³³ However, trading under AGOA was suspended in 2018 because suspended from accessing the American market under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), following Rwanda's refusal to rescind a decision to lock out second-hand clothes and shoes. Rwanda was implementing an EAC-wide decision made in Arusha in 2016 which had agreed to impose a ban on imports of used clothing and leather products over a three-year period beginning 2019, in a bid to re-energise the regional textile industry. But in the end, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda abandoned the joint position. Subsequently, the value of Rwanda's textile products to the United States dropped from \$2.5 million in 2018 to just \$224,294 in 2020 ([MINICOM, 2021:21](#)).



nationals, financial service liberalisation, the respect of US intellectual property, and other non-trade related aspects. The question is whether this potential loss of [policy space](#) for African member states like Rwanda is worth the marginal gain in market access.

227. A similar dilemma confronts trading relations with the EU. The EU had announced it was phasing out of non-reciprocal market access under the Everything-but-Arms (EBA) agreement for LDCs. But in an attempt to promote a regional approach, negotiations under the new Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) were supposed to be negotiated with the East African Community as a block. Unfortunately, those negotiations did not succeed in reaching a consensus among EAC member states, and hence a question mark currently hangs over the outcome.¹³⁴ In the aftermath of Brexit, the United Kingdom is similarly currently pursuing bilateral trading deals with countries on the African continent, and preliminary negotiations are currently underway between Rwanda and the UK ([Bizimungu, 2020](#)).

228. In any case, the trading relations with additional trading partners in Europe and North America have gradually become eclipsed by the rapid rise of Rwandan trade with China. Rwandan imports from China have surged in recent years, and China alone is now responsible for around 20 per cent of Rwanda's total imports ([NISR, monthly trade data](#)). The challenge here is that, although China ostensibly has a preferential market access scheme for LDCs to the Chinese market, in practice it has not been very effective in raising the level of exports to the Chinese market. As a consequence, Rwandan exports only a very low volume to China and as a result sustains a large bilateral trade deficit with China.

229. Yet the COVID-19 crisis has unequivocally provided a warning about the risks of sourcing from a single market and over-dependence. China has become one of the major sources of intermediate, capital as well as some finished products for Rwanda. There have been warnings about the excessive dependence of the East Africa Community on China as a source of intermediate and consumer goods ([Mold, 2016](#)). The interruption of trade during the COVID-19 crisis disrupted supplies of necessary intermediate products and led to the rapid search for alternative sources by traders, from markets such as Turkey and Egypt. Over the long-run, Rwanda may need to think of diversifying its supply chain, in particular through deeper integration in the African markets.

Championing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

230. A major development for Rwanda has been the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Signed in Kigali at an African Union Summit in March 2018. Rwanda has emerged as one of the champions of moving the AfCFTA agenda forward rapidly. The agreement could have a special relevance with regard to Rwanda's trading relations with the DRC -- both countries are members of COMESA, although DRC has not yet acceded to the COMESA Free Trade Area, and hence trade is still heavily impacted by tariff and non-tariff barrier.

231. From 1st January 2021, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda are in the implementation phase of the AfCFTA, with an initial linear reduction in tariffs on 90 percent of intra-African imports (measured by tariff lines) over a period of 10 years for Rwanda, leading

¹³⁴ So far, the EPA has only been ratified by Kenya and signed by Rwanda. The deadline for signature was missed several times, and postponed since. The postponement of the ratification has few consequences for all EAC states but Kenya, since they are least developed countries (LDCs) and will continue to benefit from duty-free quota-free market access into the EU for 'Everything But Arms' ([European Parliament, 2021](#)).



to their complete elimination within a time frame of 13 years¹³⁵. Rwanda is well placed to take advantage of the new trading environment under the AfCFTA, both from the point of view of export opportunities in other African markets, and also from lower-priced intra-African imports. Once concluded, the AfCFTA will also have major implications for Rwanda in terms of phase two negotiations related to service sector liberalisation, competition policy, intellectual property rights, and free movement. Rwanda can play a positive role in pushing wider AfCFTA agenda forward within the region. UNECA is currently working with the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MINICOM) to finalise Rwanda's National AfCFTA Strategy which will strive to identify additional actions and means needed to continue making progress, for the country to make the most of the AfCFTA's potential.

232. The AfCFTA offers a window of opportunity for African countries to boost intra-African trade and to diversify, structurally transform and meet the human rights objectives and poverty-related goals to which the continent is committed under Agenda 2063. As one of its general objectives, the AfCFTA commits to “promote and attain sustainable and inclusive socio-economic development, gender equality and structural transformation of the State Parties¹³⁶. Thus, ensuring that gender equality is promoted in all AfCFTA processes is at the heart of the agreement.

Environmental Transboundary Issues

233. Even though Rwanda is least contributor the greenhouse gas emission, it is severely affected by the global changes in temperature and precipitation and the regional distribution of those changes have been the primary drivers of climate-related hazards in Rwanda. These include floods, landslides and droughts as well as windstorms and severe rainstorms that have struck Rwanda in recent years with devastating effects on the population and economy in general. Rwanda recognizes the importance of global and regional solidarity to address climate change issues. For this, the country ratified several international conventions and agreements such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement on climate change and the Convention on Biological Diversity among many others. Rwanda submitted the revised Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the Paris agreement in 2020 and works with development partners such as the World Bank and the UN to steer the implementation of the ratified agreement to build resilience of its citizens and environment.

234. Under the African Union Agenda 2063 and the East African Community Vision 2050 frameworks, to which Rwanda is a part of, the country joined several efforts to reduce global warming and the impact of climate change, environmental and land degradation, biodiversity loss and water scarcity. These include: i) the Nile Basin Initiative for equitable use of the Nile river water resources; ii) the Lake Victoria Basin Commission that coordinates sustainable development and management of the Lake Victoria Basin in the 5 East Africa Community Partner States; iii) the Lake Kivu and Rusizi/Ruzizi River Basin Authority that is a joint effort between Rwanda Burundi and Democratic Republic of Rwanda for integrated water resources management and; iv) the Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration (GVTC) between Rwanda, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo to conserve a network of transboundary protected Areas in Greater Virunga Landscape with focus on mountain gorillas.

¹³⁵ AfCFTA, 2018. Under the negotiations, countries will be allowed to identify 3 percent of tariff items as 'sensitive' and excluded from the agreement. The schedule for tariff elimination varies, according to the level of development of country. For a summary of the timetable for tariff elimination, see [ECA/TMEA \(2020:8\)](#).

¹³⁶ UN Women (2019) Opportunities for Women entrepreneurs in the context of African Continental Free Trade Area



235. Zoonotics such as COVID-19, Ebola and HIV/AIDS have reminded us that the world needs to collaborate more than ever before to reduce human-wildlife communicable diseases. This should include joint efforts to reduce wildlife poaching and trafficking, restore degraded biodiversity and ecosystem, enhance reforestation and afforestation as well as restore relationships between people and planet. Some of Rwanda's successes in environment and climate change under different home-grown solutions are shared with other countries in the framework of South-South and triangular cooperation by the Rwanda Cooperation Initiative (RCI).

Towards Regional Integration

236. Going forward, Rwanda presents some good level of integration with the rest of neighbouring countries, and beyond to the rest of the continent. In particular, through economic relationships including trade, both exports and imports of goods, services (notably tourism, transport, including through RwandAir), FDIs, finance, and ICTs. These relationships provide sources of revenue, jobs and wellbeing for Rwanda. There is also the potential to even grow further with the AfCFTA which must be nurtured.

237. Indeed, there is a strong nexus between peace, security and development and every country in the sub-region must work on maintaining peace and security as a way to ensure higher levels of well-being and reaching their respective overarching development objectives, including to reach Middle Income Country (MIC) status by 2035 and High-Income Country (HIC) status by 2050. Going forward, there is also a need to continue to strengthen points of entry to detect and manage disease outbreak and reduce the risk of transmission. Therefore, the Government of Rwanda will need continued support in their efforts and participation in the transboundary disease prevention and control especially the capacity for preparedness and response to emergencies including Ebola, COVID-19, and other diseases.

10. HUMANITARIAN- DEVELOPMENT-PEACE NEXUS

'We must also bring the humanitarian and development spheres closer together from the very beginning of a crisis to support affected communities, address structural and economic impacts and help prevent a new spiral of fragility and instability. Humanitarian response, sustainable development and sustaining peace are three sides of the same triangle.' Secretary-General António Guterres' remarks to the General Assembly on taking the oath of office, 12 December 2016.

238. The peace, humanitarian, development nexus, commonly known as, the triple nexus refers to the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace actors and their activities. As a part of the ongoing UN reforms and UN's "New Ways of Working", UN agencies in areas of humanitarian, development and peace are envisioned to work more cohesively together. Under this approach, different actors are expected to work towards collective outcomes over multiple years. The approach seeks to capitalize on the comparative advantages of each sector to reduce need, risk and vulnerability following the recommendations of the World Humanitarian Summit 2016 and in accordance with the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs.

Humanitarian Response Based on Human Rights Approach

"The UN should work to develop capacities of refugees or internally displaced – education, finance, etc – then the protection of them will be ensured. The UN should also look into how all humanitarian support can be channelled to development – humanitarian support should provide incentive and support the change of mindset to become self-reliant."
Stakeholders view



239. Despite decades long humanitarian interventions, refugees and other populations at risk have remained mainly dependent on humanitarian assistance, also in Rwanda. Since 2018 the UN, through the UNDP II, seeks to strengthen the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and improve programmatic integration and coherence, including through appropriate integration between operational and programmatic action for more efficient implementation of interventions and more effective and impactful UN system support to national development. The UNDP II includes development, humanitarian and peace interventions. Since its development, the UN has continued to successfully advocate for the inclusion of refugees across all strategic priorities. There is enhanced integration between refugees and host communities, also ensuring a “do no harm” approach in UN programmes as well as in other Government activities.

240. Development interventions address the underlying causes of vulnerability and shocks and have potential to enhance the capacity of the population at risk to withstand anticipated shocks. Through integrating peace actions into development and humanitarian programmes, there is scope to better tackle economic and gender injustices and address disparities and inequalities within diverse population groups, geography, race, ethnicity, religion, social categories, cultural differences, while following the principle of leaving no one behind.

241. The integration of development and humanitarian interventions have had positive effects on social cohesion and reduced the risk of emerging conflicts between refugees and host-populations. However, there are very few interventions with collective outcomes covering development, humanitarian and peace aspects. For instance, the on-going voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees from Rwanda to Burundi provides an opportunity to explore for a joint UN programme in the triple nexus.

“Donors tend to prefer the humanitarian piece in the triple nexus alone because it has political visibility. There is dire need to prioritize prevention work.” Stakeholder view

242. The UN system and agencies in Rwanda identified three major areas of potential humanitarian crisis in Rwanda based on past trends. These include: i) economic shock and extreme poverty situation amongst refugees, ii) natural disasters and, iii) conflict in the neighboring countries leading to refugee influx into Rwanda. In this context, areas covered in this section of the CCA include-: extreme poverty, disaster risk management and response, refugees, migration and finally peace and security. Under each of these broad areas the situation is described and circumstances surrounding inter alia inequality, discrimination and vulnerability are explained as part of the analysis of underlying issues guiding prioritization.

Disaster Risk Management

“Poverty is the cause to environmental issues, for example, to deforestation: People who don’t have jobs go and destroy the forest to get an income. We need to find ways to use existing mechanisms to tackle the root causes to our problems.” Stakeholder’s view

243. The GoR has made important progress in the area of disaster risk management (DRM) policy and institutional frameworks. Operationalization of a robust DRM institutional and legal framework have led to the realization of some key outputs including-:

- i) Elaboration of the National Disaster Management Policy (2012)
- ii) National disaster risk management plan 2013
- iii) Contingency Plans (CP) prepared in 2015 and revised between 2018 and 2019. (These are CP for floods and landslides (2018), storms (2018), droughts (2018),



- population influx (2018), earthquakes (2019), Volcanic eruption (2019) and managing the emergency consequences of terrorist incidents (2019))
- iv) District disaster management plans guidelines and checklists for mainstreaming DRR and DRM in key sector's strategies have been developed
 - v) National Risk Atlas of Rwanda was published in 2015.

244. These outputs have together improved the capacity for risk reduction and disaster management especially in the public sector and enhanced the coordination mechanism for DRR and DRM in Rwanda. Despite the progress in enhancing national DRM capacity and elevation of disaster risk reduction to a national priority levels, various challenges raised in the CCA 2017 still exist in the sector which continue to hinder progress and expose Rwanda's assets to natural disasters. The capacity assessment of MINEMA conducted jointly by MINEMA and UNDP in 2019 also showed gaps to address.

245. The Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA) launched a project entitled "Development of comprehensive disaster risk profiles for enhancing disaster management in Rwanda" to conduct a comprehensive and nationwide assessment of the existing risks with the view of developing a comprehensive disaster risk profiles for Rwanda. The National Risk atlas launched in 2015 is still the main document documenting Rwanda's disaster risk profile. The atlas indicates that Rwanda remains exposed and vulnerable to five major natural hazards including, droughts, floods, landslides, earthquakes and windstorms as presented in Table 8. The main assets at risk include; population, agriculture, health, education, buildings and transport infrastructure. The risk atlas concludes that Rwanda has a very high exposure to all five hazards, while the physical vulnerability of the different assets varies across hazards with high vulnerability to drought and landslide and moderate vulnerability to earthquake and windstorms.

Table 8: Rwanda's Disaster Risk Exposures

Hazards	Vulnerability	Most Prone Areas
Drought	High	Eastern: Kayanza, Gatsibo, Kirehe, Nyagatare, Rwamagana, Ngoma, Bugesera
Landslides	High	Western, Southern, Northern provinces, Congo-Nile Ridge: Nyamagabe, Ngororero, Rutsiro, Nyabihu, Kamonyi, Nyabihu, Burera, Ngororero and Kigali City: Nyarugenge, Gasabo and Kicukiro districts
Landslides	High	Western, Southern, Northern provinces, Congo-Nile Ridge: Nyamagabe, Ngororero, Rutsiro, Nyabihu, Kamonyi, Nyabihu, Burera, Ngororero and Kigali City: Nyarugenge, Gasabo and Kicukiro districts
Floods	High	Catchment areas: Nyabarongo, Sebeya, Nyabisindu, Mukungwa and Kagitumba
Earthquakes	Moderate	Western province: Rubavu, Rutsiro, Rusizi, Ngororero, Nyabihu, Nyamagabe and Nyamasheke, also Gatsibo and Nyagatare in Eastern
Windstorms	Moderate	Southwest through the extreme Northwest up the East belt
Lightening	Moderate	Western province: Rutsiro

Source: MIDIMAR, National Risk Atlas, 2015

246. The National Risk Atlas showed that disasters have increased over the last 25 years mainly as a result of climate change in terms of frequency, intensity and persistence of extreme changes in heavy rainfalls, heat waves and drought among others. According to the Ministry in Charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA), lightning, heavy rain/rainstorms, landslides, floods, mine disaster, building collapse, fire and windstorms have claimed 1,096 lives in Rwanda



over the last three years (2017-2019). For disaster preparedness and response, the two MINEMA strategic response stores were fully equipped and now have the capacity to store up to 15,000 household items for approximately 75,000 persons¹³⁷. Also, the Government of Rwanda established the Disaster Response Fund in law no 41/2015 of the 29th August 2015 relating to disaster management to improve readiness to handle disasters.

Refugees, Displacement and Inclusion

247. Overall, regarding the refugee situation in Rwanda, there is a gradual shift from a humanitarian approach to a more developmental focus with emphasis on sustainable livelihoods and social cohesion. This reorientation of focus has resulted in more attention and efforts around refugee camps to increase financial and technical support to refugee's livelihood planning and self-reliance objectives in tandem with local economic development targets for host communities. This also includes a renewed focus on enhanced educational opportunities at the secondary and tertiary level and an effort to design vocational training courses at TVET schools in line with market needs. Clean energy in camps and refugee hosting areas is also a priority for the GoR. The key to successfully integrating this new approach to humanitarian, development and peace – triple nexus – is to better engage all the UN agencies in Rwanda based on their mandates, comparative advantages and joint principles.

“We need to ensure peace in the region to resolve the refugees’ situation.” Stakeholder view

248. The GoR maintains a policy to protect and advance the rights of refugees and the country's commitments to the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Additional Protocol and the 1969 Organization of African Unity Refugee Convention and enforcement of Law No. 13 ter/2014 of 21/05/2014 relating to refugees. The country hosts 144,662 refugees as of December 2020. About 46.2 percent of the refugee population in Rwanda are from Burundi, 53.5 percent are from DRC while the remaining 0.3 percent are from other nationalities. About 51 percent are below the age of 17 years and 4 percent above 60 years. About 92 percent of the refugees are hosted in six refugee camps located in six districts while about 8 percent are located in urban areas (mainly Kigali and Huye). Since end 2019, an emergency transit mechanism (ETM) has allowed the evacuation of migrants from Libya to Rwanda. As of December 2020, the ETM facility hosts 315 individuals awaiting for durable solutions. UNHCR, together with the GoR, and primarily funded by the EU manage the ETM facility which provides a safe transit space for evacuees from Libya. This includes emergency protection and lifesaving assistance until asylum seekers and refugees can access durable solutions, including voluntary return to their country of origin, resettlement to other third- countries or possibly longer-term stay in Rwanda. Since late August 2020, there is also an ongoing voluntary repatriation being undertaken, with Burundian refugees returning from Rwanda (mainly from Mahama camp) to Burundi. As of December 2020, a total of 7,895 were facilitated to repatriate.

“I would rate 3 out of 5, and not 5 out 5, for refugee management in Rwanda because there is a lot that refugees face as a vulnerable group. – lack of access to employment, socio economic conditions, registration, stigma etc.” Stakeholder view

¹³⁷ MIDIMAR, Annual report 2013/14, 14/15, 15/16, 2016



Table 9: Location of refugees in Rwanda, December 2020

	District	Camps, RCs, Urban areas	Refugee population	Main origin
1	Karongi	Kiziba refugee camp	17,145	DRC
2	Nyamagabe	Kigeme refugee camp	19,786	DRC
3	Gisagara	Mugombwa refugee camp	10,907	DRC
4	Gicumbi	Gihembe refugee camp	12,302	DRC
5	Gatsibo	Nyabiheke refugee camp	14,416	DRC
6	Kirehe	Mahama refugee camp	57,617	Burundi
7	Kirehe	Gatore reception centre	-	Burundi
8	Nyamata	Gashora transit centre (Emergency Transit Mechanism)	315	Eritrea, Sudan, Ethiopia, etc. (from Libya)
9	Nyanza	Nyanza reception centre	54	Burundi
10	Huye	Huye town	871	Burundi
11	Kigali	Kigali city	11,249	All
	Total		144,662	

Source: UNHCR 2020, MINEMA 2020

249. The GoR has made considerable contributions to the wellbeing of refugees the country hosts, ensuring their dignity and human rights are protected. Through the focal ministries, MINEMA and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (MINAFFET), other Government MDAs have been engaged in supporting Rwanda's commitment to not only addressing the humanitarian concerns around refugees but also their integration into society. Rwanda became a pilot country for the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) in 2018. Implementation of the CRRF in-country centres on the four commitments made at the Leader's Summit in New York (2016) that cover livelihoods, documentation, health and education. Achievements include provision of health insurance to urban refugees and students from the camps who study in boarding schools in urban areas, by issuing Community-Based Health Insurance Cards (CBHI) similar to that of citizens, issuance of identity cards (ID) and Machine Readable Convention Travel Documents (MRCTDs), inclusion of refugee students in the national curriculum by increasing the absorption capacity of schools near refugee camps with a target to have 100 percent in primary and secondary integrated in the national education system by end of 2020. In addition to this, CRRF implementation in country is being guided by the nine pledges made at the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) that build upon the earlier commitments made in 2016, with a new pledging area: energy and environment. Rwanda also participated at the High-level Level Segment on Statelessness in October 2019 making eight pledges there to address the issue in-country. This complements the GRF pledge on providing documentation to all refugees, including birth and marriage certificates.

250. Also, the GoR and UNHCR with support from other partners, has developed a joint Strategy on Economic Inclusion of Refugees and Host Communities (2016-20) and is in the process of rolling out a new joint strategy (2021-24) on facilitating Refugees' economic inclusion and self-reliance through medium to long term integrated interventions and policy support for achieving sustainable livelihoods. UNICEF and UNHCR have also been supporting refugee inclusion into national child protection systems by ensuring that the national child protection workforce understand and are equipped to handle and refer child protection cases pertaining to refugees. MINEMA and UNHCR Rwanda envision that by 2030 all refugees and neighbouring communities living in Rwanda are able to fulfil their productive potential. This is in line with GoR Strategic Plan for Refugee Inclusion (2019-24), the Comprehensive Refugee Response



Framework (CRRF) and UNHCR Global and Country Livelihoods Strategy and Multi-Year Multi Partner Protection and Solutions Strategy (MYMPPSS).

251. The GoR Strategic Plan for Refugee Inclusion is also aimed at devising a strong advocacy initiative and policy campaign for enhancing refugees' legal and de-facto access to decent work (such as the right to work, own a business, access financial services, land/property ownership, freedom of mobility) in cooperation with development partners/donors. This initiative is to graduate camp-based refugees out of assistance programs and increase formal access to work opportunities. It aims at combining protection, prevention and promotion components to reduce the major constraints faced by poor and vulnerable refugees and their host community members. Examples of ongoing initiatives of peace-humanitarian-development nexus are the joint GoR-UNHCR-WFP-FAO Misizi Marshland agricultural project that targets the refugees and host communities in Gisagara, promoting joint economic activities through cooperatives.

Box 10: The Misizi Marshland Project

- In line with the objectives of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, aiming at the self-reliance and eventual integration of 140,000 refugees in Rwanda, the UN is working with the Government of Rwanda and partners to create an inclusive atmosphere that provides employment and economic empowerment for refugees and host communities alike, reducing friction and reinforcing the humanitarian–development-peace nexus, critical for reaching the SDGs. One of the key pilots is the Misizi Marshland project started in 2018, targeting 300 refugee farmers (from the DRC) and 1127 Rwandan farmers to jointly cultivate maize on 55 hectares of reclaimed marshland in Misizi, provided by the Mugombwa District authorities. 55 percent of the 1427 participating farmers are women.
- This project has shown that promoting joint agriculture activities between refugees and host community families creates jobs and improves livelihoods, paving the way to self-reliance of the refugees and at the same time, increasing the productivity and income of the host community. Moreover, this collaboration fosters social cohesion between the host community and the refugees. Through the Misizi Project, refugees work hand in hand with the host community, forming cooperatives that help in providing seeds, tools, fertilizers, harvesting, milling, and packaging for their crops. This also eases access to larger markets and the potential for group financing and savings. This initiative by UN agencies (UNHCR, WFP & FAO) and the Government (Gisagara District provided access to the land for free), with funding from national and international donors, has attracted more partnerships including reliable private buyers of the produce in the country (such as Africa Improved Foods).

The Misizi Marshland Model provides an example of the triple nexus approach, linking the humanitarian (refugees), development (focusing on self-reliant income and sustainable livelihoods, incl. host communities) and peace & security pillar (social cohesion incl. host communities).

Repatriation Efforts

252. Rwanda has historically experienced various mass movements of its people for different reasons including politically, ethnically, or economically motivated migration. The main displacement history of Rwanda's people includes the year 1959 (with over 700,000 refugees) and 1994 when the genocide against the Tutsis also resulted in an exodus of over 2,000,000 people. The last decade witnessed the return of over 3.4 million Rwandans. On 31 December 2017, the implementation of the Cessation Clause for Rwandan refugees (who fled the country between 1959 and December 31, 1998) came into effect as recommended by UNHCR. In this regard, the GoR, with the support from its partners (including IOM, UNHCR, WFP, etc) established sustainable programmes and mechanisms for effective repatriation and



reintegration of Rwandan refugees see Table 10. It is also important to note the launch of the repatriation of Burundian refugees from Rwanda in August 2020. The return of Burundian refugees was amongst conditions put forward by the Burundi authorities leading to a normalization of relations between the two countries.

Table 10: Repatriated refugees from 1994 to 2020

	Country of origin	1994-1998	1998-2003	2004-2008	2009-2013	2014-2020	Total
1	Burundi	534,485	867	17,698	50		553,100
2	Tanzania	847,127	44,565	16,501	14,443		922,636
3	Uganda	333,755	629	7,184	8,226		349,794
4	DRC	1,421,425	107,201	42,231	49,548	26,239	1,646,644
5	Others	2,466	1,133	532	759	345	5,235
6	Total Civilians	3,139,258	154,395	84,146	73,026	26,584	3,477,409
7	Ex armed groups				5,925		5,925
8	Ex armed groups family				7,436		7,436
	Total members				13,361		13,361

Source: MINEMA/UNHCR, Repatriation and reintegration programs for Rwandan refugees, 2020

253. Given the importance of the Rwandan diaspora in national development and in the spirit of the policy of inclusion, the Government strongly believes that the diaspora is an important constituent that cannot be ignored and whose contribution, if well harnessed, can contribute to national socioeconomic development. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in close coordination with the Government has conducted 4 diaspora mapping exercises (in Germany, Belgium, NL, and UK). Currently IOM is implementing two diaspora engagement projects, within the Health and TVET sectors. In 2019, IOM and the Directorate General for Immigration and Emigration (DGIE) developed the first Migration Profile for Rwanda which is currently pending Government approval. The Profile aims to support evidence-based migration policy formulation and the mainstreaming of migration issues into the country's development plans. The Profile provides knowledge and enables better planning and policy formulation to enhance the positive impact migrants have on Rwanda's economy and society that goes beyond remittances, but also address issues such as skills transfer¹³⁸.

254. In addition, Rwanda is currently implementing the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR) and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), a United Nations global agreement on a common approach to international migration in all its dimensions that also provides a plan to achieve the migration dimensions of the SDGs. The adoption of the GCM, which is linked to the 2030 Agenda creates new impetus to achieve the migration-related SDGs. The Rwandan Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration (DGIE) is also leading the finalization of the first Migration Governance Indicator (MGI) profile for Rwanda¹³⁹.

¹³⁸https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Booklet-Repatriation_and_Reintegration_programs_for_Rwandan_refugees_and_an_overview_on_socio-economic_progress_in_Rwanda.pdf

¹³⁹In 2015, IOM developed a Migration Governance Framework (MiGOF) to help define what "well-managed migration policy" might look like at the national level. The MiGOF was welcomed by IOM's Member States the same year. The Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) were developed to assess national frameworks and help to operationalize the MiGOF. The MGI is a tool based on policy inputs, which offers insights on policy levers that countries can use to develop their migration governance. The MGI is not meant to rank countries on the design or implementation of migration policies, but rather to be a framework to help countries in the assessment of the comprehensiveness of their migration policies, as well as to identify gaps and areas that could be strengthened.



255. Another important aspect related to migration within the Great Lakes region, remains cross-border trade, which is critical for economic growth and development. However, intra-regional trade in Africa is constrained by limited infrastructure as well as inter community tensions. Improved infrastructure at the border, including the recently established “One Stop Border Post (OSBP)” at the borders with neighbouring countries aim at reinforcing cross-border exchanges. The CCA consultations also informed the team of a number of challenges with trade related to corruption, different fees, and lack in knowledge among traders.

256. In recent years, the Government of Rwanda has also made significant achievements in countering trafficking in persons in the country including passing a new law in 2018,¹⁴⁰ training Government officers and conducting awareness raising events in border communities. In 2019, IOM in partnership with the Ministry of Justice (MINIJUST) and Never Again Rwanda (NAR) reported that Rwanda is a transit country, and to a lesser extent a country of origin. In order to inform the implementation of effective policies and programs for combatting human trafficking, through the support of USAID, the IOM and the MINIJUST commissioned Never Again Rwanda (NAR) to conduct research on Human Trafficking in Rwanda. The research examined both the national and international legal frameworks of human trafficking. The report highlights evidence-based strategies to combat human trafficking while proposing recommendations that can be implemented by the Government, NGOs, communities, families, and individuals.

257. In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Government also put in place Point of Entry (PoE) surveillance toolkit, flow monitoring initiative for policy and data gathering as well as surveillance initiatives and coordination during the pandemic. IOM conducted the first ever Rwanda Population Mobility Mapping (PMM) in Ruzizi in the autumn of 2020. The PMM aims to understand the dynamics of human mobility and identify vulnerable sites for public health interventions within and outside the border of the targeted district/region.

Peace and Sustainable Development

“Without peace there is no development, and without development there is no peace.” Jan Eliasson, UN Deputy Secretary General 2012–2016

258. Peace and security have remained one of the pillars of the post-genocide regime and a base of development and social stability in Rwanda. In light of this context, aspects such as safety and security have been established as important measures of good governance in the country and included monitoring tools such as the Rwanda Governance Scorecard (RGS) and Rwanda Reconciliation Barometer (RRB). Among other aspects of society, these tools monitor issues such as maintenance of security, national security, personal security, unity, reconciliation, and social cohesion. Recognizing these aspects as important to national peace and security, the GoR, through its security organs, primarily the Rwanda National Police (RNP) and other partners, has laid out robust measures including a comprehensive legal and policy framework and strengthened institutional capacity to prevent and respond to incidents that cause insecurity. The GoR has also heightened citizen engagement in ensuring national security through initiatives such as community policing.

259. Citizens express highest satisfaction (99.1%) with the ability of the Rwanda Defense Forces (RDF) and Rwanda National Police (RNP) (89.8 %) to maintain national security. However, there

¹⁴⁰ Law n° 51/2018 of 13/08/2018 relating to the prevention, suppression and punishment of trafficking in persons and exploitation of others.



is still a considerable level of dissatisfaction in personal and property safety. Also, even though 96.2 percent of Rwandans report that they perceive unity and reconciliation has been achieved, there are still some concerns around cohesion and mutual trust that score 75.8 percent, well below most of the other related sub-indicators. The main challenges highlighted by the reconciliation barometer that present risks to peace and unity include continued ethnic-based stereotypes expressed by 27.9 percent of citizens, persistent genocide ideology (25.8 percent) and unhealed psychological scars emanating from the divisive past and genocide (4.6 percent) (RGS 2020).

260. As Rwanda continues to ensure a stable and peaceful environment, the GoR remains cognizant of the country's need to contribute to maintenance of regional and international peace, security and conflict resolution. Rwanda's commitment to contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security is based on the firm belief that the international community has a responsibility to prevent conflict and to act when confronted with challenges to peace and security. This principle is influenced by the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi and the failure of the international community to intervene. In this regard, Rwanda deployed its first peacekeepers to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) in 2004. Since then, Rwanda has grown to be the 2nd largest troop and police contributing country to UN peacekeeping with 6,378 personnel including 5,210 troops, 1,073 police, 28 military experts and 67 staff officers in seven UN Missions. Beyond the numbers of deployed peacekeepers, Rwanda also created a regional peacekeeping training Center called the Rwanda Peace Academy which has been playing a key role in building the capacities of civilian, police and military to professionally contribute to peace building and peace consolidation. Efforts for professionalisation in the police and military through their respective academies also contributed to create professional security organs which meet the standards for deployments in peace keeping missions.

261. Rwanda supports Peacebuilding in the Great Lakes Region as the "Joint Programme DRC– Rwanda cross-border project shows. The aim is project is to create peace dividends for women and youth through increased cross-border trade and strengthened food security." To support Peacebuilding in the Great Lakes Region and specifically to contribute to strengthening ties between Rwanda and DRC, this JP cross-border project aims to address food and economic insecurity at the local level in cross border-communities in DRC and Rwanda, as a driver and root cause of conflict and instability in the area. The project aims to strengthen Peacebuilding and social cohesion by deepening economic integration through increased cross-border trade, fostering mutual understanding and dialogue between border communities, and strengthening food security, livelihood and income opportunities, particularly for women and youth. Thus, this project shows another concrete example of the triple nexus work as it covers the humanitarian, development, and peace & security pillar. This means that through peace and security as well as to economic integration, humanitarian intervention can be prevented.

The collective outcomes of the Joint Programme (UNDP, FAO, WFP):

- Social cohesion and peace dividends in the Goma-Rubavu border through cross-border trade
- Enhance food security
- Increase livelihoods and income opportunities particularly for women and youth.

Achieving collective outcomes is one of the key

262. Regarding regional peace, Rwanda is signatory to the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region (PSC Framework) that



was established in 2013. Following partners' meetings in 2014 and 2015, six key areas were identified as the pillars upon which strategic interventions would be focused on. These six pillars include: mobility; youth; gender; trade and food security; energy; and justice and conflict prevention. The justice and conflict prevention pillar is both a standalone pillar and cross-cutting theme, while the energy pillar covers sustainable natural resources and the trade and food security pillar addresses economic integration as well. Despite these commendable efforts to ensure peace and security in the region, the situation in eastern DRC, Burundi and the entire region remains fragile. The PSC framework faces persistent challenges in its implementation including outstanding issues in the implementation of the Nairobi Declarations of the Kampala Dialogue, slow progress in the neutralization of armed groups, and the lack of meaningful progress in the surrender or defeat and disarmament of the FDLR¹⁴¹ in the eastern DRC. These factors perpetuate mistrust in the region and inhibit meaningful dialogue between leaders in the region to address root causes of conflicts and lead to continued unrest and insecurity in the region.

Working Towards the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus

263. Through consultations it was clear that there is no common understanding of the nexus between humanitarian, development, and peace actors among UN Agencies. However, there is a lot of information and clear pathways of actors involved in refugees, emergencies, development, and peace interventions. Indeed, a number of stakeholders think of opportunities in undertaking joint programmes.

“UN has a big opportunity to influence peace and security in the region and contribute to conflict resolution. Being international present in both (DRC-Rwanda) countries it can participate in analyzing the root causes of conflict at source in this region and contribute in peace building activities.” Stakeholder view.

264. The Great Lakes area that is often characterized by conflicts and misunderstandings that have often created refugees is a case in point. There are experiences and past interventions in strategizing, peacekeeping and peace building. Rwanda past and recent experiences can provide lessons for collaboration between the actors. During the conflict between 1990 and 1994 there was experience of conflict and need for humanitarian intervention especially after April 1994. Humanitarian action and support was directed also to preparing for development in rehabilitation and recovery to the economy. It was possible to start the journey of development after 2000 by mainstreaming peace and reconciliation in all planning and strategizing.

265. The New Way of Working will improve the scope for comprehensive and coherent responses bringing development programming into crisis contexts earlier. Transition and recovery programming will be key for creating conditions that are more conducive to development efforts.

266. As part of the response to migration crisis in the Mediterranean area, the African Union, UNHCR and Rwanda established an emergency transit mechanism (ETM) to assist stranded refugees and asylum seekers in Libya to safely transit through Rwanda. Cases are then assessed and submit for resettlement. So far 515 refugees and asylum seekers have been evacuated from Libya out of which 203 refugees have been resettled. This transit mechanism provides emergency protection and lifesaving assistance until durable solutions can be found (UNHCR, 2020).

¹⁴¹ FDLR: Force Democratique pour la Liberation du Rwanda



267. Rwanda also has a well-elaborated methodology for demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants particularly from DRC to Rwanda, using insider mediation and working with host-communities to ensure a peaceful and successful reintegration.

268. A total of 3,456,307 Rwandan refugees returned between 1994 and October 2019 with majority (99%) coming from the DRC. With the continuation of the enhanced return package and continued unrest in eastern DRC, the operation anticipates more voluntary returns to Rwanda in 2021 once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

269. The existence of Regional blocks and UN activity in the countries and regionally provides a unique opportunity. UN has a comparative advantage of intervening in refugee, migration, disasters and normative work of development. Mechanisms to enhance common understanding on the triple nexus should be a part of the Cooperation Framework between the UN and the development partners.

Stakeholders views

- Donors have tended to prefer humanitarian work
- Many stakeholders decouple the three and consider each alone
- How much do we tell the story of Rwanda with regard to the collaboration between the actors
- CSOs in HDP are voiceless
- Could be enhanced by more Thematic Approach and Joint Programmes among UN Agencies
- Development communication has not been adequate enough
- Rwanda does not seem to have large humanitarian issues like eg Yemen
- Humanitarian part gives good political visibility to actors
- There is need to use HDP best practices from around. Mauritius, Botswana, Seychelles and Nairobi Hub to apply it to Rwanda
- Knowledge of many threats to peace need to be analysed. eg contestations over water
- But UN has worked together in CRRF, UNDP etc and should collaborate in HDP

11. FINANCIAL LANDSCAPE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Overview of Rwanda's Aid Effectiveness and Development Cooperation

270. Rwanda is generally regarded amongst low-income countries as having a strong architecture in place to promote effective development cooperation as well as aid effectiveness. Although areas of improvement exist, for example in systems development and tracking as well as institutional coordination, a strong foundation exists to bolster development support by the UN family, through well-coordinated approaches and joint dialogue to target gaps and priority areas.

271. Rwanda's development is financed through many different sources and its development finance flows represent both public and private sources, as well as domestic and international ones. Total recorded financial flows in FY 18/19 were estimated at US\$ 5,126 million¹⁴². Roughly 39 percent of all development finance flows are estimated to come from external sources,

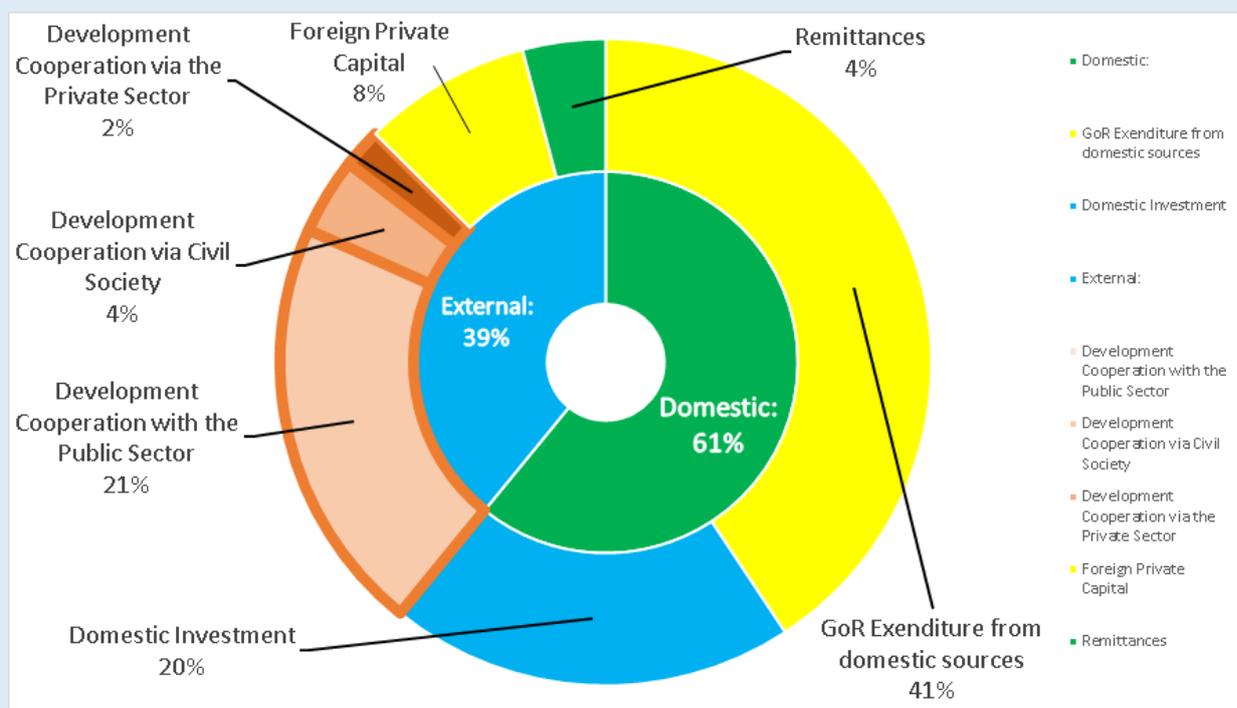
¹⁴² MINECOFIN. *Rwanda External Development Finance Report FY 2018/19*.



versus 61 percent from domestic sources. Traditional development cooperation support comprises about 27 percent of total resources.

272. Almost one-third the state budget is funded with external sources of support, representing an even mix between grants and loans (Figure 25). In recent years, the share of loans as compared to grant support has been increasing. Moreover, in the last several years, on-treasury delivery has gained 7 percent in volume, with a concomitant reduction in project-based support. Some donors, such as the U.K. and USA have country development cooperation strategies suggesting over time an increasing proportion of support being provided through non-traditional ODA grants in favour of loans and support for improving the bankability of private investment through their DFIs. There is a need for the GoR of Rwanda to encourage all development partners to put in place the country development cooperation strategies and to review existing ones to ensure that those strategies reflect the needs and development objective of the country. For instance, the current ODA in Rwanda fails to address some critical issues like climate change adaption while this is highly recommended by OECD.

Figure 28: Estimated Total Resource Flows



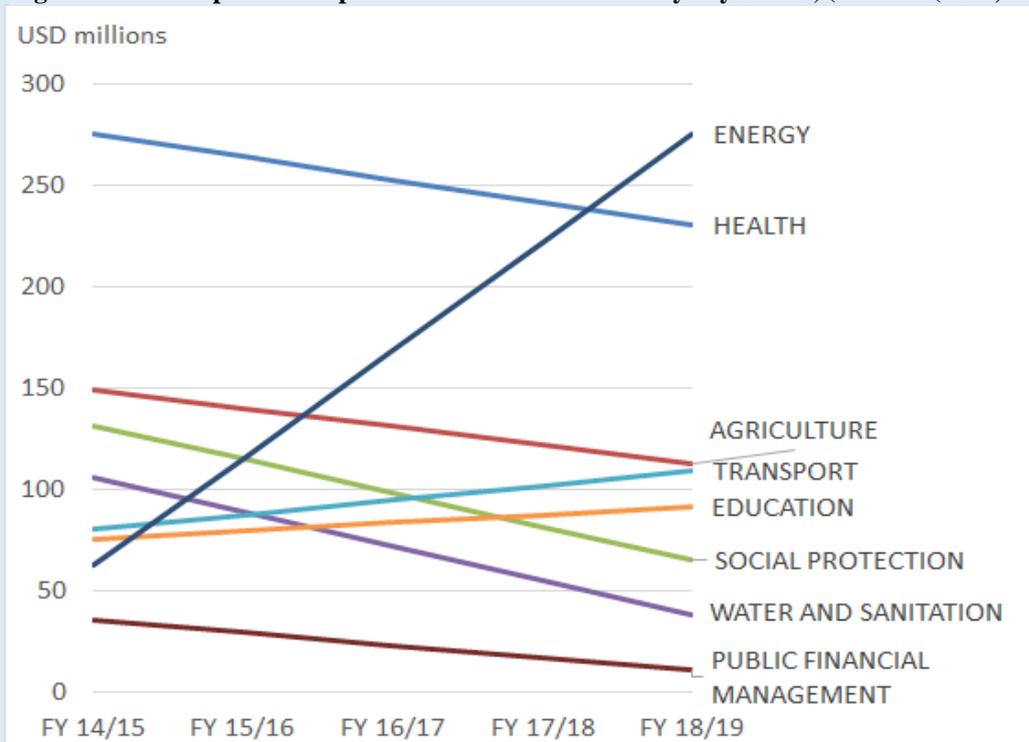
Source: MINECOFIN 2018/2019

273. Over the past 5 years, the share of external development support provided by Multilateral actors has steadily increased, matched by a decrease in the share of support from OECD Bilateral partners. For example, the combined support of the World Bank, the African Development Bank, and the Global Fund, account for about half of all development finance support to Rwanda's public sector. A large volume of new multilateral aid to address the COVID-19 economic recovery from World Bank, IMF, and African Development Bank in 2020 is very likely to further accelerate this trend. In the past years, a few non-OECD bilateral partners have initiated support to the country, albeit on a relatively small scale and generally slanted toward trade and investment support and technical cooperation.



274. There is a wide variation in the focus of external support by sector, with investment in energy rising considerably, followed by transport and education as sectors also receiving a boost in support as compared to other areas, (Figure 27). In part due to GoR priorities, external support has tended to be directed more toward infrastructure and economic sectors such as agriculture, compared to the social sectors and human capital development. However, the large increase in health and social protection funding linked to the COVID-19 Economic Recovery may well reverse some of these trends. There is a need for the UN to examine in its future strategy to ensure greater funding is devoted to those sectors that may have suffered from underinvestment in the past overall by external partners. A sectoral view can also obscure the degree to which resources are being adequately devolved to local governments and actors on the ground to address priorities driven by local communities and the district development plans.

Figure 29: Development Cooperation with Public Sector by key Sector, (2014-19 (USD, Millions)



Source: MINECOFIN 2018/19

Context of UN Support in the Broader Landscape

275. Even though UN is not a donor, the UN in Rwanda it has a comparative advantage in the broader development finance landscape by virtue of having strong complementary capacities amongst its agencies, and strong on-the-ground operational capabilities in all regions of the country. Indeed, an increasing number of UN programmes are being collectively designed and implemented taking advantage of complementary areas of expertise across two or more agencies. The UN's well-established relationships with the Government, Civil Society Organizations and Development Partners further provides a strong foundation for the success of interventions and its impartiality lends credibility and convening power to bring together a broad range of actors to address common issues of concern. Another comparative advantage of UN funding is its ability to combine technical assistance with institutional capacity building in ways that not all development partners can provide, while also leveraging the UN's global presence to twine countries experiencing similar development challenges and to innovate solutions appropriate to Rwanda's context. Finally, the UN's norming role allows it



to conduct effective advocacy including on sensitive topics with the Government of Rwanda, such as on human rights and refugees.

276. The development cooperation landscape in Rwanda is becoming more complex, characterized by a growing importance of new actors, such as emerging market governments including India, China, UAE and Qatar, as well as new multilateral development banks such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the New Development Bank (NDB). For example, in early 2021 China inked a US\$60 million development cooperation agreement in the form of grant financing with Rwanda and agreed to forgive a further US\$6 million in outstanding sovereign debt to the country. A number of private foundations disburse more funding to projects in Rwanda than traditional bilateral ODA partners do, working either through CSOs or directly with government ministries such as MINAGRI. This all points toward the need for the UN to diversify the sources of its own funding partnerships and to strengthen a case for its unique comparative advantage.

277. As at FY2019/20, UN funding support to the Rwandan public sector accounted for roughly 7 percent of all development support. This represented a decline in absolute terms compared to FY 2017/18; however, as a share of total support from all partners, it has increased slightly over the past five years. Most UN agencies provide project-based grant funding to the public sector, with the largest volume of support by agency coming from World Food Programme (WFP). IFAD is an important exception, providing mostly loan support for subsidizing agricultural finance to market actors through MINAGRI. The majority of all UN funding is first disbursed through a Government implementation agency, with about 20 percent through direct on-treasury disbursement for its execution. Some UN funding is channelled to local civil society organizations.

278. While boosting trade, private investment, and economic partnerships are important aspects of Rwanda's development agenda, relatively limited UN funding appears to be targeted to, or channelled through the private sector, including microfinance and non-depository financial institutions that already serve marginal groups such as refugees. This is a comparative weakness of the UN, with donor partners generally preferring to channel funds through their own development finance institutions for private sector and financial sector development. While UNCDF provides support to financial sector actors, to date it has been grant-based support as opposed to through credit enhancement facilities or lending guarantees¹⁴³. Given the shifting landscape of development finance flows, more consideration should be given to the UN's catalytic role in leveraging new sources of investment and catalysing additional actors including in the private sector to fulfil the SDG agenda.

279. Rwanda is initiating efforts to support development cooperation as a providing partner, including support to integrate refugees and contributing highly to global peace-building efforts. It is promoting 'home grown' development solutions and innovations abroad, as a key player in South-South Cooperation and has invested in an institutional platform to further facilitate this—the Rwanda Cooperation Initiative (RCI). A specific strategy for South-South Cooperation is also under development, spearheaded by RCI. UN support to Rwanda in the future will need to reflect the growing role of Rwanda in South-South and triangular development cooperation.

¹⁴³ Except UNCDF the other UN Development agencies (EXCOM) are not allowed to provide loans.



Debt Profile and Risk of Debt Distress

280. The vast majority of Rwanda's sovereign loans are provided through multilateral institutions and are on highly concessional terms. While Government did not report any borrowing from international capital/money markets in FY 2018/19, some non-concessional borrowing is projected for FY20/21 to support the recovery. A sovereign Eurobond placed on international debt markets to fund strategic public investments will also come up for repayment soon.

281. In June 2020, Rwanda acquired significant new debt (over US\$300 million) to address immediate health, social protection and economic recovery needs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In their reassessment of the risk, the IMF/WB rated Rwanda to be at 'moderate risk' of debt unsustainability, a worsening view from a previous categorization as being at "low-risk". In early October 2020, Moody's downgraded Rwanda's sovereign credit outlook to "negative" citing a risk of further fiscal and trade imbalances, and the risk of political and climatic shocks having a more pronounced and protracted effect on the economy's ability to recover from COVID-19. A future UN country assistance programme will need to reflect the medium and long-term impacts that a tighter fiscal space will bring toward reducing inequalities and leaving no one behind. Indeed, there may be a stronger role for the UN to ensure that gaps in service delivery are filled and environmental sustainability is achieved in the government's economic recovery strategy, which is likely to extend well beyond the critical initial years of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

282. Rwanda runs the risk of budget shortfalls in the context of a global fall in traditional untied development assistance and a rising amount of inflows comprised of loans and aid for trade, which are skewed toward middle income countries. In addition, the country's rising albeit sustainable debt burden in foreign denominated currencies will entail higher debt servicing costs over time, constraining increases on budget spending for development priorities like human capital development and increasing access to health coverage. To reduce this risk, Rwanda is increasingly hedging debt interest payments using various instruments and is increasing the share of its debt denominated in local currency or using a basket of currencies in order to reduce long-run debt servicing costs.

Box 11: Role of Civil Society, Philanthropic & Humanitarian Funding

- A significant portion of development finance is delivered through and/or implemented by International and National NGOs. The former amounted to around US\$200 million in FY18/19, whereas the volume of funding delivered through the latter is not well known. Anecdotal evidence suggests that a growing amount of financing is coming from international foundations, the most significant of which are the Howard G. Buffet Foundation, the MasterCard Foundation, and the Global Partnership on Education.
- A 2020 report on humanitarian and development aid in Rwanda (Trocaire: 2020) led by a consortium of NGOs found slow uptake of the 'localisation' agenda, despite evidence that in some cases local NGOs were able to deliver social protection and basic services as effectively compared to international NGOs. Local NGOs can support humanitarian interventions to be more sustainable through collaboration with local governments and participatory processes that ensure local actors are at the heart of aid delivery models. Boosting financial management systems, capacities, and giving more opportunities for local NGOs to gain experience are important precursors to strengthening the leadership of local actors and civil society in social protection. These lessons can be integrated into future UN programming and on-grant support to CSOs to ensure that humanitarian and social protection funding contributes more effectively to community and household asset building.



Boosting Domestic Revenues, Remittances, and Financial Inclusion

283. Levels of domestic savings and investment are low in relation to comparable countries. The vast majority of firms, from large enterprises to micro-enterprises, use retained earnings to finance investment rather than external credit. Currently there are 10 listed companies on the Rwanda Stock Exchange (RSE), however, 50 percent represent cross-listings of companies registered in Kenya or South Africa. The RSE is also working with the World Bank to interconnect the platform to other country stock exchanges in Tanzania and Uganda, which is expected to boost liquidity and spur private investment. Recent data from the National Bank show a deceleration in remittance flows to Rwanda, linked to the global economic shock of COVID-19. A UK-based charity has been attempting to arrange a diaspora-investment-linked mortgage bond for affordable housing; at time of writing, however, market placement was not issued.

284. Rwandan culture is predisposed to savings in physical assets such as housing and livestock, with limited participation by average citizens in financial instruments or savings accounts. This can result in an over-concentration of investment at household level in assets susceptible to short-term impacts from extreme climatic events and natural disasters. Several microfinance institutions have been piloting new products aimed at women, obviated the need for collateral or co-signatures by men to access services. In 2020, Bank of Kigali announced the development a new investment product like a unit trust, in recognition of the limited range of products available to domestic investors. In addition to these, the Government aims to increase home ownership particularly for its civil servants through the design of affordable housing schemes and creation of a dedicated national mortgage financing bank.

285. The proportion of Rwandans who are financially included has dramatically increased, from 48 percent in 2008 to over 92 per cent in 2019. Most of this growth has come from participation in the formal sector (bank and non-bank financial institutions) and through the development of microfinance institutions or savings and credit cooperatives called Umurenge SACCOs. SACCOs are playing a key role in promoting access to finance by micro-enterprises including as part of the rollout of funds to protect jobs and businesses as part of the national COVID-19 Economic Recovery Fund. Some SACCOs and MFIs have also developed new lending and savings products specifically geared toward women and women entrepreneurs, which show promise for further scaling up. The gender gap in financial inclusion still exists though it is closing with 8% women excluded from financial inclusion as compared to 7 percent amongst male counterparts, while for youth age group of 16 – 24 years are financially excluded at 18% points, this is significantly higher compared to the national average of 7 percent exclusion. Gender gap is also manifested in access to mobile phone which could be used to promote financial inclusion. Access to mobilise phone for women stands at 84 as compared to men 90 percent (Rwanda Finscope 2020).

“In Rwanda it is easy to start a business. But there are still challenges to run them.”
Stakeholder view

286. The Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA) has been working on upgrading and digitizing many aspects of tax collection and assessments. These are bearing fruit, and overall tax collection rates are improving. MINECOFIN and RRA are also elaborating a medium-term debt strategy that seeks to enhance domestic revenue generation. The lion's share of agricultural production continues to fall outside of the scope of the formal tax system, representing a large opportunity for increasingly formalizing economic actors and bringing them into the tax base. Curbing illicit financial flows has also been the focus of cross-border trade and customs reforms.



Fiscal reforms that can promote more progressive systems and aligning incentives for the informal sector to enter the formal economy would be important areas for UN development support to leverage broader gains to sustainable financing of the country's development plan.

Private and Blended Financing – Status and Trends

287. A UNDP funded report for MINECOFIN on blended finance undertaken in 2019 identified that at least six projects in Rwanda had reached financial closure in 2018 using blended finance, and that over thirty projects were under development. A few examples include the establishment a new tea factory with an extensive out-grower scheme, and a government partnership with a private health company to deliver blood and critical medicines to remote areas using drones. Some of the most pivotal mechanisms established to leverage public development funds to leverage private capital include the Renewable Energy Fund, the Rwanda Innovation Fund, the Export Growth Facility, and the Affordable Housing Financing Scheme.

288. The volume of finance that can be categorized as 'Climate Finance' and additional to traditional ODA, is growing. This includes large projects funded by the Green Climate Fund, Development Finance Institutions such as the FMO, as well as purchases of carbon credits and market-based support for activities in the sphere of both mitigation and adaptation mainly procured through the World Bank. In 2019 and 2020, FONERWA, with support from UNDP, launched an initiative to establish a dedicated Green Investment Fund modelled on the global green bank approach, and UNDP and AfDB had already mobilized initial resources from the GCF and the Nordic Development Fund toward its initial capitalization. This recognized the high level of financing need to combat climate change and the growing role for blended finance in this space, as opposed to sourcing funds from traditional aid channels.

289. In September 2020, Rwanda officially launched its process to develop an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) comprising and financing strategy and a policy reforms action agenda for accelerating implementation of the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) and Rwanda's national action plan for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The INFF is expected to assess the longer-term impacts on sources of development finance from the COVID-19 pandemic including on debt, the trade balance, and domestic revenue generation, private lending and foreign direct investment. The INFF will strengthen alignment between planning processes, financing policies and financial management systems on the basis of future diagnostics and risk-informed projections. The INFF will be an important platform for the UN to promote blended finance and green financing, digital innovations, and financial regulatory reforms to ensure an enabling environment for private-led development and more inclusive finance.

12. MULTI-DIMENSIONAL RISKS AND CONCLUSION

290. This CCA has provided an opportunity to assess recent developments, track progress as well as identifying potential risks that could derail Rwanda's development agenda if not well managed. These have been analyzed by an Independent Consultant¹⁴⁴ on the basis of the analysis made under each thematic area, the CCA consultations with stakeholders and the probability of a threat(s) affecting the trajectory of the specific sector in the medium term (2024). The risk assessment is captured under two main broad areas: (i) Risk Analysis by the Thematic Areas (Table 11); (ii) SDG Risk Analysis (Table 12). Thus, even when there is a known

¹⁴⁴ Professor Herman Musahara, CCA 2021 Consultant UN RCO Rwanda



performance rate of a sector or a single aspect of an SDG the risk is based on how the current analysis shows possible high, medium or low effect on the development trajectory of Rwanda in the medium term. The classification makes use of traffic lights with red as high, yellow as medium and green as low. Finally, there are proposed Early Warning Indicators to monitor the risks (Table 13).

Table 11: Risk Analysis by Thematic Area

Thematic Area	Current and emerging risks that can affect economy	High Risk	Medium Risk	Low Risk
				
Macroeconomic stability	Vulnerability to exogenous shocks related to the after effects of the global pandemic, pending second and third wave could immediately reverse Rwanda's recent economic gains. Fiscal slippages maybe occur with increased expenditure required to contain the pandemic and at the same time caution the socioeconomic front against shortfalls in domestic revenues and slowed economic activity. This could lead to higher deficit and debt path, resulting in the serious risk of increased domestic borrowing from the private sector, which risks crowding out productive sectors, which in turn will depress investment and growth leading to income losses for households and economy at large. <i>Medium to high impact</i>			
Political stability	Stability has been prerequisite to investment and rapid economic growth since 1994. <i>There is low and no emerging risk of political instability that may affect Rwanda's development.</i>			
Population	Population growth rate of 2.6 percent per annum (2019) and density of population above 500 per square kilometer are a challenge to real growth rates and full realization of the demographic dividend. The fertility rate of Rwanda has declined from average 8 children per woman in 1970s to the current 4. This is a good sign of reducing the risk of population compromising the carrying capacity of Rwanda. <i>Medium risk</i>			
Democratic space	There have been criticisms from some individual scholars and opposition in diaspora. Low performing institutions; not increased CSO participation; overall governance structure not increasing inclusion will negatively impact people participation and access to inclusive and performing service delivery. Nonetheless there is adequate democratic space by commitments and elections. Economic growth has been high. <i>Low impact.</i>			
Social cohesion, gender equality and non-discrimination	Highly possible community tensions with the liberation of the Genocide against the Tutsis perpetrators and their reintegration back to their communities need to be addressed systematically over the medium to long term. Governance and Gender score reflect good progress. However, GBV and limited access to local positions by women and to STEM were cited in consultations. Cultural and norms and family level practices are still			



	binding on the gender equality. <i>Medium risk to economic growth mainly from lower levels.</i>	
Human Capital Development	Rwanda has a HCI of 0.38 reflected by low human capital formation this could erode the efforts of building a knowledge-based economy. The effects of COVID-19 particularly the education sector also present a substantial generational threat to social capital. <i>High impact</i>	
Regional and global influences	Current disputes with Burundi and Uganda have for instance interfered CBT which is an issue that affects livelihoods of women and traders as well as supplies to ordinary consumers in city of Kigali and towns. Also, the ongoing instable situation in Eastern DRC, continues to affect Rwanda. The regional instability such as the recent misunderstandings with Uganda and Burundi pose a real risk to reaping full dividends of regional integration. <i>Medium to high impact.</i>	
Internal Security	Internally secure. Crime and terrorist activities have been stemmed and Rwanda is regarded as the safest place in the region. However, there is cross border insecurity with some neighbours. <i>Medium impact.</i>	
Justice and Rule of Law	Score cards show improvement except in some consultations access was sighted. <i>Medium impact.</i>	
Infrastructure and access to social services	Roads network in Rwanda is good and access to education and health improved. Standard Gauge Railway being laid to join Rwanda and Tanzania through Isaka. Bugesera International Airport will be completed in the next months. Access to health is improving despite multiple challenges in the sector. But COVID-19 on health and education and quality on education present a possible impact on learners and those needing health services most. As Rwanda embarks on Vision 2050 infrastructure also includes digitalization. The digital divide in the population has to be constantly narrowed be it in accessing and using internet or smart phones. This category of risks also includes internet and energy which are important for building a knowledge-based economy by 2050. As at 2018 the internet penetration was 52.1%. <i>Medium risk</i>	
Displacement and Migration	Government has a ministerial level entity MINEMA. There has been a lot of attention to this by Government and IOM, UNHCR. Some of the refugees have been integrated and/or repatriated, while others are still in camps. Rwanda is receiving refugees from Libya who are being resettled to other countries. But the root causes need to be pinned down and prevention mainstreamed. Risk that the refugee/displacement/migrant situation deteriorates and interferes with the country's development is <i>medium</i> , especially with climate change effects. At economy wide level the risk is low	
Public Health	COVID-19 pandemic is still a threat and the major risk is impact of shocks of demand and supply. Other uncertainties that need to be addressed in the post COVID-19 are challenges of non-resilient institutions especially in systems and their ability to manage threats and the economic negative consequences such as zoonotic pandemics. <i>High risk.</i>	



Food and nutrition security, agriculture and land	The level of food insecurity is about 20 percent, extreme poverty is up to 16 percent, whilst stunting has reduced to 33 percent (remaining very high). Addressing stunting is still a major priority to be able to meet the targets, Agricultural productivity is still low and the dependency of climate-sensitive produce is high. Women have land rights de jure but there are disputes that arise at level of family. <i>Medium risk</i>	
Environment and climate	Land degradation is still rampant. Biodiversity and ecosystem services are depleted. Wetlands degraded. Floods, landslides and drought, unsustainable production and consumption still prevalent. A high international figure has predicted possible two new global disasters resulting from effects of climate change or bioterrorism ¹⁴⁵ . <i>High risk</i>	
Financing	With falling ODA, fiscal space narrowing and overall contraction of growth, alternate sources of financing to meet the demands and objectives of the SDGs and NST1 are now even more critical. Efforts at Blended financing, and INFF need to be accelerated. There are also possibilities of philanthropic sources of finance as well as non-financial. <i>High impact on economy.</i>	
Private Sector Development	The low level of development of the private sector will adversely affect the option of a private sector-led economy. Given the political will and the passion to stimulate rapid economic growth, domestic and foreign direct investment the support to the private sector is a priority in policy and strategy. <i>Low risk</i>	
Leaving No One Behind	Poverty in Rwanda has been reduced from over 60 percent in early 2000s to 38.3(EICV 5). However extreme poverty is still around 16 percent of the population. Inequality using the Gini coefficient was reduced from 0.494 in 2017 to 0.437 in 2018. Performance of SDG1 and 2 is dependent on the rate of reducing poverty which at the moment has been undermined by the latent effects from COVID-19 that have translated into a contraction of the economy which by extension continues to be a threat to the principle of leaving no one behind.	

291. Basing on assessment of SDGs progress from Chapter 4, Table 2, the SDGs are grouped under three risk areas: low (green), medium (yellow) and high (red) in Table 12. Low means there is low probability impacting SDGs implementation of the risk area basing on the SDGs clustered in it and high means there is high probability impacting SDGs implementation of the risk area basing on the SDGs clustered in it, whilst medium means there is medium impact.

Table 12: SDGs Based Risk Analysis

SDGs	Risk Area	Risk level
 	Democratic space	Low
 	Displacement and migration	Low
 	Population	Medium

¹⁴⁵ [s://www.marca.com/en/lifestyle/2021/02/08/6021b90f268e3e4d5f8b4580.html](https://www.marca.com/en/lifestyle/2021/02/08/6021b90f268e3e4d5f8b4580.html)



			Macroeconomic stability	Medium			
					Environment and climate	High	
					Food and nutrition security, agriculture and land	Medium	
					Internal security	Low	
						Infrastructure and access to social services	Medium
						Justice and rule of law	Low
						Political stability	Low
						Public health	High
						Regional and global influences	Low
						Social cohesion, gender equality and non-discrimination	Medium
						Human Capital Development	High
						Financing	High
						Private Sector Development	Low
						Leaving No One Behind	Medium

292. Going forward, emphasis should be put on prevention and improving early warning systems. The first challenge is building capacity for forecasting and data collection and analysis and sharing. This also entails preparedness and rapid response to risks. There is need to have coherent indicators that can help monitoring of these risks. The aim is to have a set of indicators that can be monitored and updated periodically as suggested in Table 13.



Table 13: Processes and Early Warning Indicators

Thematic Area	Processes	Early warning indicators	Source
Macroeconomic Stability	Economic performance on monetary, fiscal policy, financial institutions, budget and trade	Macroeconomic indicators periodic reports, inflation, depreciation, trade and budget deficit and debt sustainability	UNDP, MINECOFIN, MINICOM, BNR, IMF, WB
Political stability	Peaceful political processes e.g., elections	Number of political Instability incidents	UN reports, Internal mechanism, regional and subregional entities
Democratic space	Institutions of democracy in place and working	Protests by civil society and human rights activists	RGB Civil Society report
Social cohesion, gender equality and non-discrimination	Unity and reconciliation entrenched; women positions enhanced	GBV Gender Score Card	GoR, RGB, NISR, UN reports
Regional and global influences	Integration institutions, policies and processes	-International Tensions -Fragility in neighbouring countries	Great Lakes Documentation UN RBs, RECs reports, AUC
Internal Security	Free movement of people and goods during the day and night, Incidents related to non-state armed group, internal conflicts, crime and terrorism and/or cross-border insecurity	Internal conflict Non state armed groups Crime and terrorism Cross border insecurity	GoR Ministerial Reports, RIB, UN
Justice and Rule of Law	Courts, institutions, Ombudsman	Annual numbers of security forces acting outside the law	RGB, UN
Infrastructure and access to social services	Budgets allocations and affirmative social services improvements	Roads and infrastructure built, Access to health, education WASH	NISR HDR
Displacement and Migration	Instability, disasters, mobility processes	IDPs Refugees Migrants	MINEMA IOM UNHCR
Public Health	State of health and human capital	Select health indicators and statistics	MoH, RBC, WHO
Food and nutrition security, agriculture and land	Food systems and land ownership by categories of people	Food insecurity measure, Stunting rate Land rights disputes	CFSVA, DHS
Environment and climate	Mitigation and adaptation processes	State of the Environment Report	MINEMA reports
Financing	Increase or decrease of funds by volume and mix	Annual Budgets	UN, MINECOFIN, IFIs Annual Performance Reports
Population	Population structure, dynamics and growth and quality of life	Population growth rate, fertility rate, per capita growth rate	UNFPA, MINECOFIN, MoH
Private Sector Development	Private sector contribution to GDP, tax revenue, FDI	Proportion of private sector growth in GDP	UNCDF, UNDP, PSF, MINICOM, RDB, RRA



13. CONCLUSION

293. This CCA assesses factors affecting the lives and livelihoods of women, men, girls and boys, and addresses historical, current and emerging social, economic, disaster and environmental risks—and the impact of COVID-19 across sectors. The report finds that some groups may be more vulnerable than others or are at risk of being further left behind. In addition to women, youth, girls, PwD and refugees – the CCA also considers the vulnerable groups of migrants, aging population, internally displaced people, people living with HIV and the LGBTQ community. The CCA concludes that macroeconomic stability, building resilient, inclusive societies, underpinned by peace and security and human rights are fundamental for Rwanda's development agenda.

294. An important conclusion of the CCA is that the UN should strive towards multi-sectoral approaches and coordinated efforts in all areas of work. The UN is already well placed in this space with strong complementary capacities amongst its agencies, and strong on-the-ground operational capabilities in all regions of the country. The UNCT collective response towards COVID-19 is a case in point. Through its assessment of the development landscape, identifying key issues and priorities, the CCA will inform the revision of the current UNDP II (2018-2023) to conform it to the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), as the most important planning and implementing tool of the UN Country team as per the new guidelines.



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Annexes

Annex 1. Rwanda GDP Performance at Q1 to Q3 (% change from previous year)

Like other countries in the region, the Rwandan economy was seriously impacted by the global economic crisis due to the COVID-19. The fall in GDP in the second quarter of 2020 was particularly sharp in many of the tradeable goods and services sectors, such as hotels, transport, export crops, wholesale and retail trade and mining and quarrying (Figure 17).

Rwanda GDP National Accounts 1st-3rd Quarters 2020

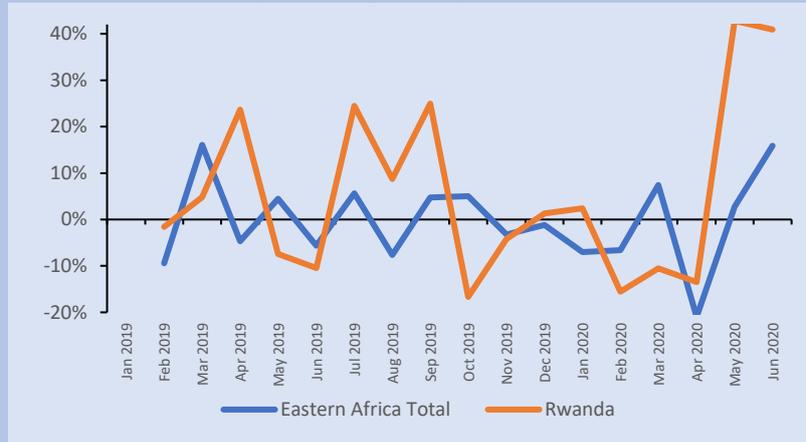
Activity description	Qtr 1	Qtr2	Qtr3
Education	-3%	-67%	-57%
Hotels & Restaurants	3%	-62%	-55%
Transport	0%	-41%	-33%
Mining & Quarrying	-26%	-53%	-24%
Fishing	5%	-48%	-20%
Administrative & Support Service Activities	1%	-8%	-9%
Export Crops	-16%	-19%	-8%
Construction	5%	-20%	-6%
Textiles, clothing & leather goods	11%	-13%	-5%
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP)	3.7%	-12.4%	-3.6%
Chemicals, rubber & plastic products	5%	-9%	-3%
Financial Services	-5%	-8%	-3%
Wood & paper; printing	-11%	-27%	-1%
Wholesale & Retail Trade	11%	-22%	0%
Real Estate Activities	0%	-7%	1%
Public Administration & Defense; Compulsory Social Security	14%	-3%	1%
Cultural, Domestic & Other Services	-1%	-4%	1%
Electricity	4%	-6%	2%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Activities	-1%	-6%	2%
Food Crops	-2%	-2%	3%
Water & Waste Management	2%	1%	3%
Forestry	4%	3%	4%
Beverages & tobacco	6%	-13%	4%
Non-metallic mineral products	-6%	-14%	6%
Human Health & Social Work Activities	32%	5%	6%
Livestock & Livestock Products	8%	8%	8%
Furniture & other manufacturing	0%	-42%	14%
Maintenance & Repair of Motor Vehicles	1%	-43%	14%
Metal products, machinery & equipment	-2%	-31%	31%
Information & Communication	34%	33%	43%
Taxes less subsidies on products	9%	-9%	-4%

Source: ECA calculations from [NISR \(2020\)](#) data.

With the exception of ICTs, services have been badly impacted, and tourism and MICE-related income have suffered an unprecedented fall. It is unclear thus far whether the downturn will be long-lasting, changing basic patterns of consumption and investment internationally, or whether these industries will enjoy a quick revival once COVID-19 is under control. Although the [recovery of regional trade](#) after the sharp falls caused by economic lockdowns across the region has been quite marked (Figure 19 and [TMEA/ECA/AERC, 2020](#)), the crisis is likely to have a profound effect on some of Rwanda's existing strategies of economic engagement with the rest of the region.

Going forward, Rwanda has a number of important strategic choices to make in terms of the reorientation of its economy. The high-end tourism and MICE strategies in particular have been called into question by the crisis. One way of tackling this is, in line with the aspirations of the AfCFTA, to boost the dependence on domestic and intra-regional tourism, which entail a diversifying the range of tourism products from the predominantly nature-based to more cultural-based such as the urban tourism concept. Similarly, a stronger integration into regional value chains may well provide a more solid, resilient base for the further development of Rwanda's manufacturing sector.

Eastern Africa monthly % change in Exports, Jan-2019-June 2020



Source: ECA calculations from [IMF DoTs \(2020\)](#)

A similar dilemma surrounds the prospects for RwandAir, the state-owned airline which, prior to the crisis, had been making good progress both in terms of increasing passenger volumes and cargo. The Government had committed itself to make the large investments necessary to make the company both a profit centre for future growth and a way to leverage the country's geostrategic position. This included the construction of a second airport for Kigali at Bugesera. At least over the short- to mid-term, the COVID-19 crisis has left an interrogation mark over revenues from these tradeable services.

Annex 2. Congruence of the NST 1 and the SDGs

NST Pillar	NST 1 Priority	Associated SDG
Economic Transformation Pillar	Create 1,500,000 (214,000 annually) decent and productive jobs	1 NO POVERTY, 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
	Accelerate sustainable urbanization from 18.4% to 35% by 2024	7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY, 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH, 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
	Establish Rwanda as a globally competitive knowledge-based economy	4 QUALITY EDUCATION, 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH, 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
	Promote industrialization and attain a structural shift in the export base to high-value goods and services with the aim of growing exports by 17% annually	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH, 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
	Increase domestic savings and position Rwanda as a hub for financial services to promote investments.	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH, 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
	Modernize and increase the productivity of agriculture and livestock	1 NO POVERTY, 2 ZERO HUNGER
	Promote sustainable management of the environment and natural resources to transition Rwanda towards a Green Economy.	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH, 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION, 15 LIFE ON LAND

Social Transformation Pillar	Promote resilience to shocks and enhance Graduation from Poverty and extreme Poverty through improving and scaling up core and complementary social protection programs	1 NO POVERTY, 2 ZERO HUNGER, 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
	Eradicate Malnutrition through enhanced prevention and management of all forms of malnutrition	1 NO POVERTY, 2 ZERO HUNGER
	Enhance the Demographic Dividend through ensuring access to quality health for all. Focus will be on improving health care services at all levels, strengthening financial sustainability of the health sector, and enhancing capacity of health workforce.	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
	Enhance the Demographic Dividend through Improved access to quality education. Focus will be on strategic investments in all levels of education (pre-primary, basic and tertiary), and improved teachers' welfare.	4 QUALITY EDUCATION
	Move Towards a Modern Rwandan Household through ensuring universal access to affordable and adequate infrastructure and services.	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION, 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY, 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
Transformational Governance Pillar	Reinforce Rwandan Culture and Values as a Foundation for Peace and Unity	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
	Ensure Safety and Security of Citizens and Property	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
	Strengthen Diplomatic and International Cooperation to Accelerate Rwanda and Africa's Development.	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
	Strengthen Justice, Law and Order	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
	Strengthen Capacity, Service Delivery and Accountability of Public Institutions.	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
	Increase Citizens' Participation and Engagement in Development	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
Cross-cutting areas	Capacity Development	4 QUALITY EDUCATION, 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
	HIV/AIDS and Non-Communicable Diseases	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
	Disability and Social Inclusion	1 NO POVERTY, 2 ZERO HUNGER, 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING, 4 QUALITY EDUCATION, 5 GENDER EQUALITY, 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH, 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
	Environment and Climate Change	13 CLIMATE ACTION, 15 LIFE ON LAND
	Disaster Management	13 CLIMATE ACTION
	Regional Integration and International Positioning	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
	Gender and Family Promotion	1 NO POVERTY, 2 ZERO HUNGER, 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING, 4 QUALITY EDUCATION, 5 GENDER EQUALITY, 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH, 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Annex 3. SDG Financing Landscape in Depth

- Rwanda's widest gap in reaching its financing plan comes from private domestic and international sources. Private sector participation in SDG aligned investing needs to be further emboldened. Mobilizing private investment in Rwanda including Foreign Direct Investment is hampered by the fact that the country is landlocked presenting challenges due to the high cost of transport and longer time required both at the importation of raw materials as well as exports of finished goods (VNR 2019). Moreover, the cost of capital for commercial activities and lending is very high in Rwanda, with low level of risk-

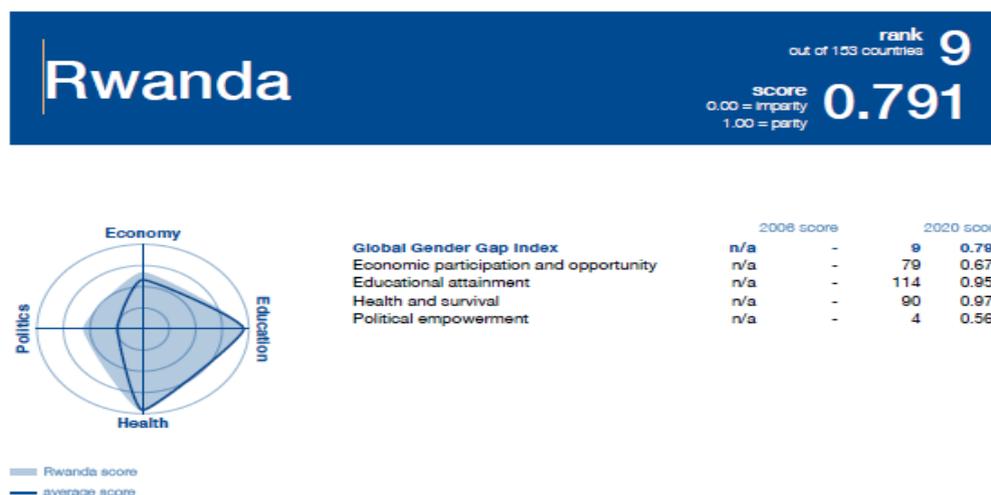
differentiated terms for different sectors and sub-sectors. As a result, despite the country's high rankings in terms of ease of business, and evidence of a large number of private investment deals being financed every year, there is limited evidence that foreign direct investment flows are substantially increasing year-on-year.

- Macro-level shocks such as COVID-19 also tend to “punish” least developed countries by inducing a broad pullback in risk appetite in emerging market investment toward safer, more mature markets. Rwanda's SDG financing strategy will need to contend with these broader trends, and to identify niche areas and high SDG impact investment opportunities for which viable risk-sharing mechanisms can be instituted using public funds as well as increased support mobilized from donors, philanthropists and impact investors. Remittances, which currently comprise around 4 percent of all external finance flows, have weakened in the wake of the COVID-19 global economic shock. Although efforts have been initiated to improve Rwanda's outreach to the Diaspora and to structure dedicated investment products appealing to them, few have come to tangible fruition, suggesting an opportunity for greater UN engagement and partnership in future.
- Moreover, since climate and development are intrinsically linked, financial innovations and greening finance can have fundamental transformative impacts on enabling climate-resilient growth pathways in key sectors such as agriculture, energy, and construction. Through the INFF process and other UN programming, the ecosystem for private SDG financing is being strengthened including through partnerships with Rwanda Finance and other financial regulatory bodies to enhance financial regulatory frameworks, corporate social responsibility and SDG aligned investment models, and mapping of SDG investment areas. These next steps will help crowd in new sources of capital and business partners on the SDG Finance agenda, while ensuring the Rwandan economy in a post COVID-19 world effectively pivots toward more gender-inclusive, and green growth trajectories.
- Financial innovations and greening of the financial service sector has a central role to play in ensuring Rwanda's transformation to a climate neutral and resilient future. The creation of the Kigali International Finance Center, the Rwanda Innovation Fund, and Rwanda's National Climate Fund (FONERWA) are all clear examples of the pioneering spirit and vision in Rwanda. The INFF process can leverage these gains by operationalizing new models for private sector financing and mechanisms for innovative development financing partnerships. This includes a dedicated Green Investment Facility being set up to mobilize significant investments in green growth and sustainable energy transformation, as well as a dedicated Blended Finance Facility. Additional strategies under support by the UN are also expected to include a road map for greening the financial sector and promoting SDG-aligned, socially responsible investment. These initiatives, as well as a dedicated multi-agency partnership to crowd in private and impact finance for primary health care demonstrate an increasing recognition of the need for the UN to promote a shift from funding to financing as a means toward achieving the SDGs.
- With support from the UN and other development partners, such as the EU, IMF, and World Bank, the INFF process will enhance private SDG financing, including stronger development cooperation as well as SDG-aligned and corporate social responsibility investment frameworks. Among the top SDG-related issues that these frameworks will address are gender parity and the creation of workplaces conducive to working parents, preventing exploitation of child labour, and promoting environmentally and climate-

friendly business operations. Increased private SDG-aligned finance can address an existing gender inequality gap in terms of unemployment that has been exacerbated by COVID-19¹⁴⁶. These envisioned next steps will help crowd in new sources of capital and business partners on the SDG Finance agenda, while ensuring the Rwandan economy in a post COVID-19 world effectively pivots toward more gender-inclusive, and green growth trajectories.

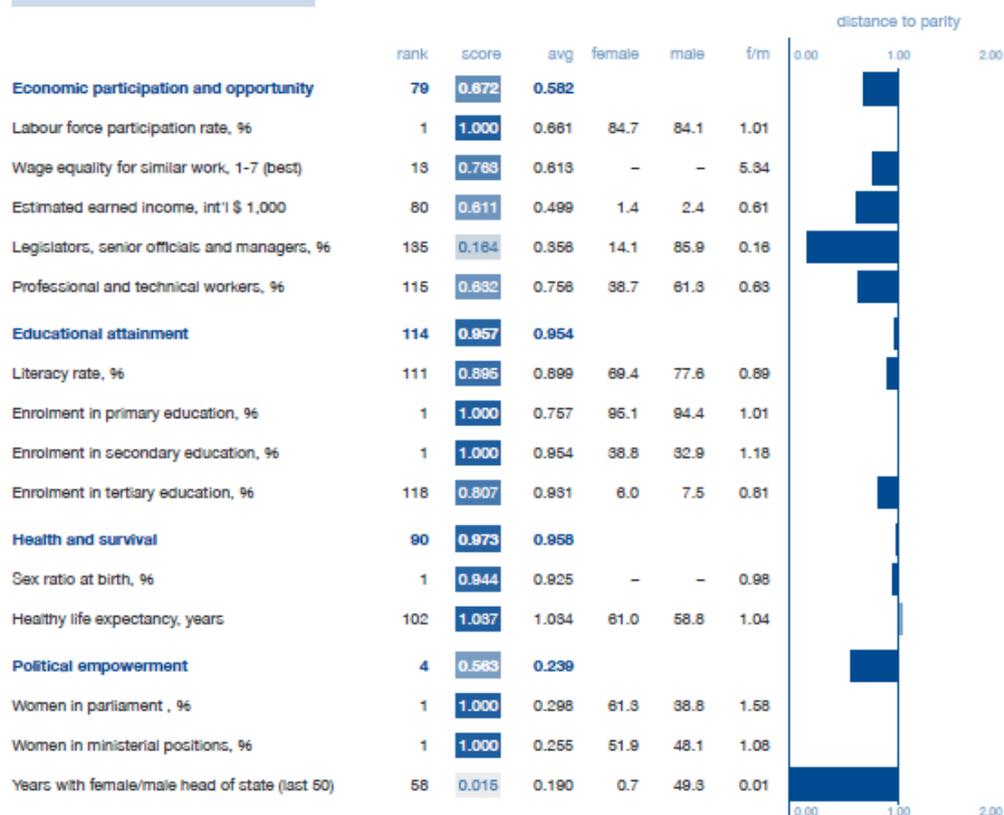
- Data availability on some types of non-public financial flows, such as foreign investments, remittances and climate finance, and the lack of clarity in the methodology and measurement of some of the SDGs indicators remains a challenge to fully unpack the SDG financing landscape. The INFF process is attempting to rectify this gap. Moreover, reliable health information is essential for meeting the health-related SDGs and measuring progress towards achieving Universal Health Care and addressing national health priorities. While some information is compiled through the Demographic Health Survey every five years, gaps remain for some key indicators, rendering it difficult to ascertain the adequacy of social spending to meet health and related SDG targets. The ongoing updates of the global indicator framework will help to resolve this issue. There is overall need for more investment and partnerships to further develop capacities and implement innovative information systems to produce required data for effective monitoring of SDGs. UN is likewise strengthening the capacity over time of MINECOFIN and Rwanda Governance Board to improve their monitoring and tracking of resource flows including public overseas development aid and philanthropic support to CSOs in order to better understand the gaps that exist to meeting specific SDG areas.

Annex 4. Global Gender Gap Index



¹⁴⁶ Among the many possible explanations for this widening gender inequality include the increased pressure on women and women heads of households to provide caretaking services during the pandemic, the high proportion of women employed in hard hit economic sectors such as hospitality and tourism, and the dominance of women in external informal trading sector.

COUNTRY SCORE CARD



Source: World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report 2020

Annex 5: Gender Lens: Access to economic opportunities

- The 2017 Establishment Census results showed that women owned 32.7 percent of the total businesses/ establishments in Rwanda. However, the same report reveals differences in the size and profitability of female-owned compared to male-owned businesses. The findings show that 59.5 percent of female-owned micro establishments (employing 1 to 3 workers) reported they had annual turnover of less than FRW 300,000 compared to 54.6 percent of male-owned businesses.
- Public procurement is an important factor contributing to boosting business and entrepreneurship opportunities. However, this significant source of opportunities has been found with a profound gender differential. The Law N°62/2018 of 25/08/2018 governing public procurement in Rwanda seems "gender neutral, or simply gender blind". The current law governing public procurement in Rwanda does not refer to any gender dimensions and does not take into account barriers and challenges preventing women-owned businesses from participating in public tenders. This constitutes a missed opportunity for women economic empowerment and a significant limitation for women-owned businesses to fully participate and contribute to the national economic development.
- The findings from a Study on Gender Responsive Procurement in Rwanda conducted in 2019 confirm very limited participation of women-owned businesses in current tendering processes. From an indicative sample of 332 public tenders awarded in 2016/2017 and 2018/19, in the fields of agriculture, infrastructure, education, gender, trade and social protection -- the proportion of tenders won by women-owned businesses is estimated at

13 percent only compared to 85 percent won by men-owned businesses with a monetary value of less than 5 percent.

- The African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) signed in Kigali in March 2018 offers a window of opportunity for African countries to boost intra-African trade and to diversify, structurally transform and meet the human rights objectives and poverty-related goals to which the continent is committed under Agenda 2063. As one of its general objectives, the AfCFTA commits to “promote and attain sustainable and inclusive socio-economic development, gender equality and structural transformation of the State Parties.”^[1]¹⁴⁷ Thus, ensuring that gender equality is promoted in all AfCFTA processes is at the heart of the agreement. In Rwanda, it is estimated that between 70 percent and 80 percent of cross-border traders (CBT) are women and 90 percent of these women traders rely on CBT as their main source of income thus if well leveraged within the context of AfCFTA, it could serve as women’s niche and spur gender equitable distribution of AfCFTA opportunities.
- Access and use of land for production among women has generally improved because of the legal reforms and effective implementation of the Land Tenure Regularization programme initiated in 2008. The revised reforms provide the equal access to land for men and women (50-50). According to the 2019 National Gender Statistics report, 59.9 percent of married women and men (couples) own land while 24.6 percent of women own land alone and 14.3 percent of men own land alone.

Annex 6: Compliance with International Human Rights Law

Acceptance of International Norms:

- To prove commitment to adhere to its human rights obligations, Rwanda has ratified 8 out of the 9 core international human rights treaties. It is not party to the Convention against Enforced Disappearances (CPED) but it considered that the current domestic framework already prevents arbitrary arrests, prohibits torture and degrading treatment. Rwanda is therefore not considering ratifying the CPED.
- Rwanda adopted legislation (Law No. 18/2013) to become party to the Optional Protocol to the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights but has not yet deposited its instrument of accession with the UN Secretary-General. It is also neither party to the Optional Protocol to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights nor to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure.
- Rwanda is party to the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity. It has not ratified the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court nor the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court. Rwanda is not party to the ILO Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189). Rwanda withdrew its declaration under Art. 34(6) of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights recognizing the competence of the court to receive complaints by individuals and non-governmental organizations in 2016.

Cooperation with International Human Rights Mechanisms and Special Procedures:

- To comply with its international human rights obligations, the Government of Rwanda has prepared and submitted its report to different international and regional mechanisms for the protection of human rights, but there are few due reports.

Status of drafting and submission of reports to Treaty Bodies:

¹⁴⁷ [UN Women \(2019\) Opportunities for Women entrepreneurs in the context of African Continental Free Trade Area](#)

- To comply with its international obligations, the Government of Rwanda established the National Treaty Body Reporting Taskforce. The Task Force brings together representatives from the various Government Institutions that play a key role in the implementation of human rights standards. The Task Force also has representatives from nongovernmental institutions including civil society and human rights defenders who are important partners for Government in the promotion and protection of human rights.
- Since the last review, Rwanda submitted its national reports for the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Convention on the rights of the Child, International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. At the regional level, Rwanda submitted the report on the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and its Optional Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.
- However, the status of due reports for Rwanda stands as follows: CAT: Next report due 6 December 2021; CCRP: Next report was due 31 March 2019; CEDAW: Next report due 31 March 2021 (not yet received); CERD: Next report was due on 16 May 2020 (not yet submitted); CESCR: Next report due 18 May 2018 (not yet submitted); CRC: Next report due on 22 February 2025 and should also include information on CRC-OP-AC and CRC-OP-SC; CMW: Next report due in 2025; CRPD: Next report due 14 January 2023. This figure of due reports is an opportunity for UN Rwanda to assess the support to be provided to the Government of Rwanda in its obligation of submitting reports to treaty bodies on time.

Standing invitation to UN Special Procedures:

Rwanda issued a standing invitation to all UN Special Procedures on 27th June 2011, thus reflecting its willingness to engage with UN human rights mechanisms. Following the standing invitation, 3 UN Special Procedures (UN Independent Expert on Minority Rights, Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living and the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, visited Rwanda and had engaging dialogues with the key Government and nongovernment institutions concerned with their respective mandates.

Annex 7: Status on Inclusive Participation and Democratic Governance

- The Rwandan State is an independent, sovereign, democratic, social and secular Republic. The principle governing the Republic is "government of the people, by the people and for the people". Rwanda recognizes a multi-party system of Government with power sharing between political organizations while state powers are held by the three branches of Government (executive, legislative, judiciary), which are separate and independent from one another but are all complementary. Rwanda has undertaken several reforms aimed at building democratic, citizen-centered and inclusive governance as stipulated in the country's constitution. In this regard, the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC) ensures the coordination of good governance and high-quality territorial administration programs that promote economic, social and political development throughout the nation. The Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) is mandated to promote governance principles and practices in all sectors as a precursor for national transformation.
- Though citizens generally feel that local level representation is accessible to them and that local Government performance is adequate (with citizen perception of local government performance standing at 70.7% in 2019¹⁴⁸), there are still challenges that need to be addressed. For example, there are issues with the electoral system itself, which is not private

¹⁴⁸ Citizen Report Card 2019

or confidential. Village, and cell elections are conducted in a public forum with voters standing in line behind their candidate of choice. With a strong focus on reaching targets and performance contracts, the chain of accountability tends to go upwards towards higher authorities and not downwards towards the community. This argument is backed by the low levels of citizen satisfaction in their participation in decision-making (63.9%) and citizen satisfaction in their participation in elaboration of district budget and plans (53.6%)¹⁴⁹. Furthermore, the decentralization process is challenged by imbalances in the allocation of functions and resources including human resources (only 15.2% of the national budget is allocated to local government budgets¹⁵⁰), ineffective coordination frameworks and capacity constraints at the decentralized levels, among others¹⁵¹. These challenges are also confirmed in a baseline assessment report on enhancing and reinforcing Rwandan citizen participation in existing local Government and consultation processes and platforms, produced by Never Again Rwanda and Interpeace¹⁵².

- In the context of local governance there is a gap in the capacity of both state and non-actors to implement the SDGs. In consultations with grassroots groups, it was apparent that they had no knowledge of what the SDGs are. The annual Imihigo¹⁵³ performance contract does not have deliberate or aligned targets and indicators to SDGs. It may be a question of articulation of action, targeting and use of the relevant indicators mainly because these are considered to be part of the NSTI goals. The SDGs in domestication were translated in the vernacular Kinyarwanda language however there has been expression of limited knowledge of and Agenda 2030 at local level even among the elite of Civil Society Organizations. Given the scope of social protection schemes, the relevance of SDGs and knowledge of UN Principles – there is need for minimum capacity building for monitoring Agenda 2030 implementation at grassroots level. While the alignment of SDGs to NSTI goals is clear there is a need to articulate how this is understood at local government levels and the capacities required to realize Agenda 2030 at all levels of governance.

Annex 8: Rwanda Performance on Agenda 2063

	AU Goals among African countries	Per cent
1	High standard of living, quality of life and well being	81
2	Well educated citizens skilled revolution and STI	100
3	Healthy and well-nourished citizens	83
4	Transformed economy and job creation	32
5	Modern agriculture for increased productivity	1
6	Environmentally sustainable climate resilient economy	100
7	United Africa	100
8	Key Financial and monetary institutions established and functional	100
9	World class infrastructure across Africa	79
10	Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and rule of law entrenched	100
11	Peace, security and stability are preserved	100
12	Stable and peaceful Africa	100
13	A fully functional and operational Africa Peace and Security Architecture	100
14	African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent	70
15	Full Gender Equality	100

¹⁴⁹ Citizen Report Card 2019

¹⁵⁰ Rwanda Governance Scorecard 2019

¹⁵¹ MINALOC, Assessment of the Impact of the Decentralization Policy Implementation in Rwanda (2001-2017), October 2017.

¹⁵² Never Again Rwanda and Interpeace, Baseline assessment report on enhancing and reinforcing Rwandan citizen participation in existing local government and consultation processes and platforms, 2019.

¹⁵³ To hold public officials accountable, the government chose to adapt the idea of performance contracts to a traditional practice of setting and achieving goals called Imihigo.

Source: AU 2020. Agenda 2063 First Continental Report

Appendices

- The CCA 2021 has used mainly qualitative methods. These have consisted of collecting both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected during consultations carried out with major stakeholders, including field participants. Instruments were designed to engage and elicit information on progress, gaps, root causes, challenges, and opportunities for UN support to the Government of Rwanda through the interface between SDGs and objectives of NST 1 and Vision 2050. Data collection at primary level was done through a purposive sample of stakeholders attached as Appendix 2. Secondary data was extracted from existing data sets, nationally, regionally, and globally and most especially through reviewing reports and documents featuring the changes since CCA 2017 and implementation of UNDAP II.
- The process incorporated a wide stakeholder engagement through interviews aligned to the stakeholders’ mandate and collaboration with the UN. There were generally six broad areas of discussion; (i) Progress on SDGs, (ii) Gender and Women’s Empowerment, Leaving No One Behind and Human Rights, (iii) Impact of COVID-19, (iv) Environment and Climate Change, (v) Triple Nexus: peace, humanitarian and development, and (vi) Proposed areas of future collaboration and focus for the UN going forward (see Appendix 1 for sample questionnaires). The consultations involved 36 stakeholders/groups, 6 cooperatives and 6 individual interviews, 14 stakeholders from 2 refugee camps with a total of 148 stakeholders consulted in person or virtually.

Appendix 1. Sample instruments

(i) IOM



INSTRUMENT 1 Nov
2020+ UNCT - IOM.ç

(ii) MINEMA



MINEMA Guiding
Questions.pdf

(iii) Private Sector,
Bankers Association



Guiding Questions
- Bankers_Private Se

Appendix 2. Stakeholders consulted



Appendix 2 List of
Stakeholders_CCA :

Appendix 3. List of UN Joint Programmes



Appendix 3 List of
UN Joint Programms

