



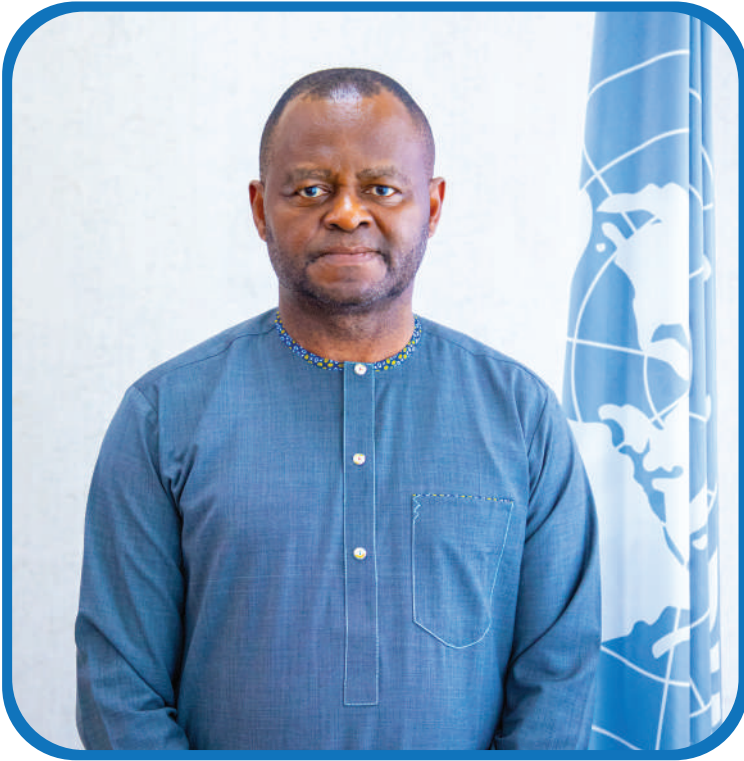
UNITED  
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RWANDA



# TURI KUMWE

Newsletter | 2022 Quarter 4

# FOREWORD



## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

**Mr. Ozonnia Ojielo**  
UN Resident Coordinator

Esteemed Partners and Readers, Murakaza Neza!

Welcome to our quarter 4 edition of “Turi Kumwe” – the last in the year 2022, covering October, November, and December. It provides an insight into what the One UN in Rwanda together with partners has done to advance Rwanda’s development priorities.

It speaks to our joint bold and transformative actions towards sustainable development and resilient communities. Together we have taken bold steps on youth engagement and gender equality, we have raised the game on climate action, increased efforts in transforming agriculture, strengthened cross border trade and social cohesion, made more strides in health, nutrition, and inclusion, all in a bid to effectively serve the communities and step-up efforts to fast-track the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and accelerate the realization of Agenda 2030.

Among notable achievements over this quarter was the 5th edition of the YouthConnekt Summit hosted in October by the Government of Rwanda (GoR) in collaboration with Development Partners including the UN system. The Summit convened about 10,000 young innovators and leaders across the world, in Kigali for a power-pact 3 days of conferences, masterclasses and networking sessions. Under the theme “Accelerating investments in Youth: Resilient Youth, Resilient Africa”, participants discussed different ways to promote growth and advancement for the youth of the African continent. The Summit provided the much-needed platform for participants to explore measures and chart a way forward on how to involve the youth in Africa’s trade, health, climate resilience and financing, technology, and skills for the future.

The Government and the UN uniquely celebrated UN day last October as Rwanda also marked its 60th anniversary of membership to the UN. To celebrate the joint achievements, together with the GoR, we held an official High Level Celebrations Forum including participation in a special Umuganda. We commend Government’s leadership and strides in many of the country’s best practices in home grown solutions and identifying mitigative measures against risks – more on this in the next pages!



In November, UN Rwanda supported the Government to establish a Green Investment Facility (GIF) referred to as "Ireme". The Facility was launched by President Kagame at the COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh. The UN supported the development of the Rwanda Sustainable Finance Roadmap, which was also launched at COP27. The Roadmap is a guiding document to mobilise domestic and foreign resources to promote green investment, de-risk green business and attract the private sector into a zero-emissions programme.

Recognizing the influence of sports as a driver of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, we are delighted to have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Veteran Clubs World Championship for the preparation, organization, and sustainable impact of a Legends World championship that will be hosted in Kigali in 2024. The event will bring together over 150 football legends to take part in a soccer tournament and a series of forums on peace, investment, technology, tourism, health, and education. We are excited!

Over this quarter, the UN Country Team (UNCT) held its first joint UNCT field visit. This provided a critical lens for the UNCT to appreciate the importance of our joint collaboration and impact as well as interact with our partners and beneficiaries at the community level. To further reflect on what the UN system is doing well on, and to consider how we can improve on our shortfalls and define the UN's collective and strategic offer to Rwanda – the UNCT also held its Retreat in November. The UNCT mapped out how to jointly strengthen delivering as one on programmes, how to best support the Government and the people of Rwanda in their commitment to achieve the SDGs, leaving no one behind.

Marking the end of the year, in December I co-chaired the UN Joint Steering Committee meeting with Dr. Uzziel Ndagijimana, the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, to assess the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). The meeting weighed in on UN's work, its joint programmes, the results, and impact over the year. The GoR commended the UN's contribution through the UNSDCF implementation, noting its full alignment with NST1. On our part, the UNCT remains committed to make our contribution towards the efficient implementation of NST1 and its successor programme.

It would be remiss if I did not make reference to my courtesy call on President Paul Kagame as part of my assumption of office. President Kagame's words of encouragement, visionary leadership, and commitment to the development of this country are unparalleled. All the more reason the UN system stands with Rwanda on its structural transformation agenda, enabling inclusive development, innovation, digitalization and private sector led growth.

The UN Family has united behind the principle of leaving no one behind and for that I am grateful. Kudos to the UNCT, staff and volunteers for living up to the full promise, potential and hope of the United Nations. Congratulations to everyone for playing your part! The year ahead requires more action and more commitment – may we continue these efforts with even more vigour and energy in 2023. I am confident that our dedication to advancing the goals will yield great results.

I wish you and your families, peace, health, and success in the new year.

Wishing you a good read.

Murakoze!



Activists during the 16 days of activism solidarity run in Kigali

## 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM: A CALL TO TACKLE GBV FROM THE ROOT CAUSES



*"Ending violence against women and girls can be achieved through partnerships and advocacy, coupled with coordinated action or services across different sectors such as justice, health, and education among others."*

Reiterated by Jennet Kem, UN Women's Country Representative in Rwanda during the launch of the 16 days of activism against Gender-Based violence (GBV) campaign in Rwanda.

The campaign, which started on November 25, coincided with the day the world observes the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG). It is at a time when the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion indicated that the past 5 years have seen a significant increase in gender and domestic-related violence.

Under the theme "UNITE. Build a Violence-free Society", the campaign aimed to mobilize more people to show solidarity and support to end VAWG at a time when the world at large is facing pushback against women's rights. During the launch, 107 couples from Kagano, Kanjongo and Bushekeri Sectors in Nyamasheke district legalized their marriages aimed to build trust between couples and reduce family conflicts including violence.

Also, as part of the campaign, residents of Kigali were joined by the UN team, government officials, private sector, and civil society representatives in the car free day sports activities, painting the streets of the city orange in solidarity of ending GBV.

A consultative and policy dialogue on GBV Prevention and Response in Rwanda: From Policy to Practice was also organized to share experiences, good practices but also challenges and recommendations for policy and decision makers.

These were not just events to check the box, rather platforms to re-ignite a shared mission among grassroots activists, women human rights defenders, survivor advocates and individuals. The objective is to continue to push forward to end violence against women and girls, tackling it from small communities and families to schools, religious settings, and digital platforms. As emphasized by Prof. Jeannette Bayisenge, Rwanda's Minister of Gender and Family promotion, *"It is also a good time to think about the measures put in place to prevent, and to help the victims get full help and also to think about new measures that will help us find a lasting solution to eradicate violence, especially against women and girls."*



©FAO/Eugene Uwimana

FAO facilitates the training of 100 beekeepers on improving the quality and standard of honey products

**1** NO POVERTY

**8** DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

**17** PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



## CAPACITY BOOST FOR BEEKEEPERS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND STANDARD OF THEIR PRODUCTS

Bee keeping is an important economic activity, that is not only a source of income but also plays a big role in biodiversity and crop yield improvement from pollination of plants, trees, fruits, and crops. However, its productivity needs to be enhanced.

As a remedy, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with the Rwanda Agricultural and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB) and Rwanda Standards Board conducted a series of training for 100 beekeepers.

Trainers focused on key areas of intervention in the entire beekeeping value chain with the aim of meeting national and international quality and safety requirements and standards for honey and other bee products.

The topics ranged from traceability in the beekeeping value chain to the equipment, and machinery used in the beekeeping value chain, the safety of bees, avoiding pests that affect bees, and how to increase, both the quality and quantity of bee products to satisfy market demand.

Celestin Munyankindi is one of the beekeepers from Gicumbi Beekeepers Cooperative (GIBCO) that gained from the training, and he testifies how it has helped him address issues he faced and how the capacity boost has improved his production.

*“The training has helped me to improve ways of producing honey from the point of where bees collect honey ingredients to the final product which is honey. The trainers taught us how to take care of the bees and their surroundings and how to improve the quality and standard of products for them to be competitive both on the local and international markets.”* Munyankindi Said.

This initiative aims to improve and move the sector from traditional to modern beekeeping practices by ensuring that beekeepers are well equipped with the latest technology and modern beekeeping equipment that will facilitate them to improve the quantity and quality of honey acceptable at the local and international market.



©WFP/John Paul Sesonga

Gorette Uwitije, a happy beneficiary of the rural women economic empowerment project



## SOLAR-POWERED IRRIGATION: CHANGING LIVES OF RURAL WOMEN FARMERS IN NGOMA DISTRICT

According to the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), the agriculture sector contributes nearly 31% to the country's economy. Yields in the eastern part of the country are mainly maize, beans, fruits and vegetables, which are highly susceptible to climatic impacts.

Ngoma district in Eastern Rwanda is a semi-arid region with limited rainfall. The district is one of the poorest throughout the entire Eastern Province, with 48% of the population being classified as poor. In this district there are 113 females per every 100 males. Over 70% of these females are employed in agriculture, compared to 63% of their male counterparts. They face serious challenges resulting from erratic and unevenly distributed rains as well as a long dry season, which leads to below-average agricultural harvests and pastoral production, and at times even total crop failure that affects household food security, increases poverty levels, and malnutrition in children.

With the aim of finding sustainable solutions to these challenges, the Joint Programme 'Accelerating Progress Towards Rural Women's Economic Empowerment' (JP RWEE) is empowering women in Ngoma district through the establishment of solar-powered irrigation systems,

started in the three most affected sectors of Jarama, Murama and Sake. Solar-powered irrigation systems are more sustainable, easy to use and cost-effective for rural women in the region to address the climatic conditions.

*"I am happy the programme supported my cooperative with a solar powered irrigation system. Before receiving the irrigation system, members of my cooperative including myself were experiencing many challenges including crop failure due to limited rainfall, and this negatively impacted on our household income and food security. Now I'm very happy our cooperative earnings have increased from less than RWF 200,000 to over RWF 2 million per season through the sale of fruits and vegetables from the solar irrigated land."* Said Gorette, President of the women's cooperative - Twaguke Murama in Ngoma district. Gorette's cooperative is one of the many that have been supported under this programme that is contributing to reducing child malnutrition in the wider region.

The JP RWEE is a global initiative to secure rural women's livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development.





©Ministry of Environment

Rwanda's Minister of Environment signing an NDC facility partnership with Germany's Federal Minister of Economic Cooperation and Development at COP 27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt



## COP 27: UN SHARES RWANDA'S CLIMATE ACTION VISION

The Government of Rwanda and its citizens have stayed committed to a green economy and have continuously taken up several climate actions to tackle the effects of climate change, including landslides, floods, and droughts.

The country has banned plastic bags, embarked on massive reforestation and tree-planting drive, put measures to protect and restore degraded ecosystems such as wetlands, lakes, and natural forests, established smart cities and put the environment and climate change at the heart of national development.

The country is also intentional at positioning itself for green investment opportunities. This was evident at 2022's UN Climate Change Conference (COP27) that took place in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.

With the support of the UN, Rwanda with its greenest pavilion, Rwanda used the platform to promote itself as an ideal destination for green investment and highlighted the country's track record in delivering climate action and vision for a carbon neutral future by 2050.

At COP27, the Government launched the Green Investment Facility (GIF) known as "Ireme", which mobilised USD 104 million as a capital fund to implement green and climate-resilient projects. Whilst Euro 46 million was raised for National Determined Contributions (NDCs) partnership. The country also launched its Sustainable Finance Roadmap, the NDCs Facility and the Future of Carbon Markets in Rwanda.

All these are positive steps, as just like many developing countries, Rwanda requires external financing to meet the challenges posed by the climate crisis and a direct and urgent response to address loss and damage.

Rwanda has an ambitious plan to reduce emissions by 38% by 2030 and its through partnerships with national and international entities that it hopes to achieve this goal.

*"Rwanda is like a laboratory of ideas in Africa, and the UN system is very excited to work with the Government and its citizens, including the youth. I would tell potential investors to come to Rwanda. It is your prototype ground. You come here, you test, and you see it works well and you can scale up."*

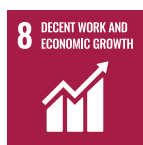
Mr. Ozonnia Ojielo in an interview with UN's Africa Renewal.





©ICT Chamber

Beneficiaries in one of the onboarding sessions



## MSMEs GO DIGITAL: EXPANDING E-COMMERCE IN RWANDA

In 2021, during the COVID-19 lockdowns, the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) in partnership with the Ministry of ICT and Innovation (MINICT) and the ICT Chamber piloted the 'MSMEs Go Digital project' to onboard micro-, small- and medium- sized enterprises (MSMEs) to e-commerce platforms to improve their sales, drive more customers to buy online, while promoting awareness of e-commerce and building digital literacy within the wider community.

In an assessment done in 2022, it was indicated that over 1,200 new MSMEs had been onboarded to e-commerce platforms. Some of these include VubaVuba, Murukali, Olado, Imigongo and Mariketa, exceeding the target of 1,000 MSMEs that was set out as the initial goal.

Tadhim Uwizeye is the founder and CEO of Olado Business Group, an e-commerce enterprise that she co-founded in 2017 with a mission to change and make the Rwandan shopping experience easier through e-commerce. Her platform, Olado, is one of the e-commerce platforms that played a key role in onboarding MSMEs to digital commerce through the 'MSMEs Go Digital Project'.

*"Being supported by the project has pushed us ahead. We are trained on the basics of building a successful business but more importantly we are given access to a network of other startups whom we could exchange ideas. We were able to secure basic support from different partners who appreciated our initiative, and we are now a recognized e-commerce platform, with promising opportunities ahead."* said Tadhim.

Many businesses and platforms expressed the need for digitalization, as well as optimism that growth will begin once the initial stages of the onboarding process are completed.

The assessment made also highlighted the key achievements and lessons learned from the pilot that can be applied to projects that aim to boost e-commerce both in Rwanda and globally, given the growth in interest in digital transformation for both businesses and clients.

The project was seen as helpful in not only awareness raising, but in building trust in digital sales and showing the public how to access and purchase from e-commerce platforms. More information is available [here](#)







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Volunteers working together on a tea plantation in Gicumbi District on 5th December 2022 during IVD celebrations



## SOLIDARITY THROUGH VOLUNTEERING: CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY (IVD), SUPPORTING THE VULNERABLE

Volunteers facilitate and support people’s engagement in planning, implementing, and monitoring the SDGs by raising awareness, inspiring, and engaging in grassroots efforts.

Volunteerism harnesses the power and participation of individuals and communities to empower those who are furthest behind.

To achieve the SDGs, engagement of Government, United Nations, Volunteer Involving Organizations and Civil Society is essential.

In Rwanda, volunteerism is embedded in the Rwandan culture, tradition and featured through self-help and activities to care for the weak and rendering community service.

The main motivation behind volunteerism in Rwanda is to alleviate socio-economic constraints experienced by individuals or their communities and improve their quality of life.

On 5 December 2022, UN Rwanda together with the government celebrated the International Volunteer Day (IVD) in Gicumbi district, in a national event that brought together government officials, civil society, development partners and youth from various backgrounds.

The youth in the community joined by many other volunteers understood the theme of the year “Solidarity through volunteering”; they combined efforts to support a vulnerable old woman with iron sheets for her house that they will construct themselves. Through their kindness and support, they helped her maintain a positive outlook and to remain engaged and hopeful in her community.

Through their sense of selfless service, they showed the best of humanity. Their actions stood as a reminder to act together for the future of the planet and specifically, in the case of Rwanda, the “Rwanda we want”. Their spirit of giving inspire acts of solidarity and enriches all.

Volunteers are true champions of UN’s work to advance peace, sustainable development, and human rights.





Charlene using a visual aid to explain to young people about CD4 count during her speech at 2022 World Aids Day, marked in Huye



### CHARLENE'S STORY: BORN WITH HIV AND USING HER STORY TO EDUCATE FELLOW YOUNG PEOPLE

Charlene Bykusenge is 28 years old, and she was born with HIV. She found out that she was positive at 9 years of age, a harsh reality that would change her life forever.

She had been carrying HIV since birth, transmitted to her and her younger sister by her mother before her untimely death. In the early 1990s, there were no Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) services, and HIV/AIDS awareness was practically non-existent.

Due to the stigma surrounding the virus at the time, Charlene's close family members abandoned her. Tragically, her father had also passed away in the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, leaving the sisters to fend for themselves. As a result, she went from being a normal kid to being "that orphan with HIV."

*"At school, students would shun me while teachers favoured me as they thought I was dying. Even nurses ill-treated me because they did not understand,"* Charlene recalls the stigma surrounding HIV when she was growing up.

However, since 2005, the Ministry of Health in Rwanda has worked to combat this by updating HIV guidelines every two years. The reforms included age-specific counselling and training for healthcare providers and vigorous media campaigns like "STOP SIDA" (stop AIDS) to increase understanding of the disease in the communities.

Today, Charlene is an activist, who has not only learnt how to navigate her life, love, school, and work aspects, but uses her story to educate fellow young people about HIV, voluntary testing, taking medications and being honest to declare their HIV status in relationships. She uses YouTube to share her story and educate her fellow young people. This is a link to her [channel](#)

Charlene has triumphed over HIV discrimination, becoming a successful solar electrical engineer. Through the support of the Rwandan government and the UN, Charlene's story showcases the power of collaboration in improving the lives of those living with HIV and the importance of access to tailored regimens, counselling, and friendly service delivery for those affected by the virus.



UN Country Team with GoR officials at the 60 years anniversary high level event marking Rwanda in the UN

**16** PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

**17** PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



## 60 YEARS OF RWANDA IN THE UN: CELEBRATING THE JOURNEY, LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Rwanda was officially admitted as a member into the United Nations (UN) in 1962. Since then, the Government of Rwanda (GoR) has partnered with the UN across diverse fields contributing to Rwanda's development goals - through interventions and joint programmes that have contributed to the social, political, and economic transformation of the country over the past six decades.

To celebrate the 60th anniversary of Rwanda's membership into the United Nations, the GoR through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the UN system hosted a high-level event, under the theme, "Partnering for a Better, Shared Future for All." The event was attended by UN representatives, government officials, diplomatic corps, CSOs, and private sector, and showcased a photo gallery allowing attendees to appreciate historical and current collaborative development work of the GoR and the UN to address challenges in the areas of socio-economic development, gender equality, peacekeeping, and climate change.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Dr. Vincent Biruta *commended the UN for its support to the country and for spearheading multilateralism and global cooperation. He reiterated Rwanda's commitment to the partnership in addressing common challenges in diverse areas.*

On his part, the Resident Coordinator (RC) to UN Rwanda, Mr. Ozonnia Ojielo *extended the UN's sincere appreciation to the Government and the people of Rwanda for the support and continued commitment to work closely for the benefit of the people – leaving no one behind.*

*He reaffirmed the UN's collective commitment and pledged cooperation and support in all forms to address shared objectives grounded on the UN Charter.*

The event was a testament to the success of Rwanda's partnership with the UN, and the positive impact the cooperation has contributed. Here are some of the key achievements that were highlighted:

- ▶ Enhanced opportunities for women and girls and continuing to remove barriers to their progress, thus contributing to gender parity.
- ▶ Improved health outcomes for the citizens through universal health coverage and the COVID-19 pandemic response and recovery efforts taken in collaboration by the UN and the GoR.
- ▶ Better agronomic practices, better access to seeds and better access to the technology that is needed to adapt agriculture to climate change, while growing more nutritious and abundant food supplies supported jointly by UN and GoR through programming and policy.
- ▶ The strong partnership that exists between the GoR and UN has also been catalytic in promoting opportunities and jobs for young people through initiatives that include: The Generation Unlimited, iaccelerator, YouthConnekt, ConnectedGirls.

As the UN continues to support the GoR in its efforts to achieve the SDGs, the partnership will continue to have a positive impact on the country's progress and development. More about the event [here](#)





Minister of Environment and UNDP Resident Representative joining efforts to plant a tree



## SPECIAL UMUGANDA: CELEBRATING RWANDA'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY.

The UN partnered with the GoR through the Ministry of Environment, for a special monthly communal – Umuganda activity, to plant tree seedlings to launch the tree planting season. It was part of the events celebrating the 60th anniversary of Rwanda’s membership in the UN.

The activity gathered thousands of people to plant over thirty-six million seedlings across the country to contribute to reducing soil erosion, increasing forest cover, boosting climate resilience, and clean air as a step towards mitigating the adverse effects of climate change.

Under the theme “Plant a Tree, Save the Future,” the tree planting exercise was not only a great example of Rwanda’s commitment to climate action and sustainability, but also UN’s dedication to supporting Rwanda on its climate action journey and to helping the country build a more sustainable and resilient future.

The activity fostered community participation and their awareness of how a simple act like planting trees can have far-reaching and long-lasting effects.

*“Planting a tree is a simple yet powerful act of hope and and resilience that can have a lasting impact on both the environment and our communities.*”

*Such activities show us that every person has a role to play in climate resilience and planting a tree is an easy and effective way to begin.”* Stated Mukanyandwi Claudine, Resident of Kigali city.

Such activities are one of Rwanda’s efforts towards the Bonn Challenge, in which nations voluntarily increased their commitment to planting trees to mitigate the effects of climate change. Rwanda was praised as one of the few nations that had succeeded in demonstrating that reforestation goals might be met.

As the world seeks to slow the pace of global climate change, preserve wildlife, and support more than eight billion people to live fulfilling and productive lives, planting trees inevitably hold a major part of the answer. Establishing enough tree cover to make a sizeable impact on rising temperatures will require a global effort.

The United Nations is committed to continue building on Rwanda’s strong will, leadership and reforestation successes to support its efforts to scale up agroforestry across the country. The UN believes in a world where communities and nature sustainably thrive together.



RC delivering welcome remarks on the 1st day of the UNCT retreat in Bugesera District



## UNCT FAMILY RETREATED: REFLECTING ON THE COLLECTIVE AND STRATEGIC OFFER

In November, the UNCT convened for a three-day Annual Retreat in Bugesera District. The main objective was to reflect on how to strengthen the UN's collective and strategic offer to Rwanda, so as to optimize the current Cooperation Framework (CF), its alignment to the national priorities and Agenda 2030, as well as its effective implementation.

The highlight of the first day of the Retreat was a keynote address by the Governor of the Eastern Province, Mr. Emmanuel Gasana, who *highlighted the significant investment opportunities in the province, alluding to existing and successful cooperation between the province administration and the UN.*

He shared the key principles that inform governance in Rwanda to include citizen centered governance, a high degree of ambition, and commitment to service delivery, which will support the fast-tracking of attaining the goal of becoming a middle-income country by 2035. He challenged the UN to expand its cooperation and partnership with the province through uptake of the various investment opportunities in the region.

Members of the UNCT presented their key successes, challenges and gaps which need to be jointly addressed. Some of these include:

- ▶ How Joint Programmes respond to issues and the principles of their coordination and practice that need to be aligned to ensure joint planning, analysis, implementation, and reporting.

- ▶ How Joint Programmes respond to issues and the principles of their coordination and practice that need to be aligned to ensure joint planning, analysis, implementation, and reporting.
- ▶ The need for agencies to identify critical issues that need joint actions and leverage on the efforts and the capacities available.
- ▶ The need to transition from projects to programmes. Projects can be as proof of concept with a clear strategy on scale and impact.
- ▶ How the UN can strengthen its work with NGOs, as the front end partners.
- ▶ Working more with Private sector to create innovative financing mechanisms to fund projects that support the development goals.
- ▶ Strengthening UNCT understanding of green approaches and financing and identifying where to unite efforts on.
- ▶ Developing cross border and regional work with the support of existing instruments like the Doha plan of action, EAC vision 2050 etc.

Despite the threat of COVID-19 and other global challenges, this is still a Decade of Action, and it is only through combined efforts that significant acceleration towards both the country's development agenda and the SDGs can be achieved.



UNCT members listening to a lecturer about some of the programmes at IPRC Huye, during the joint visit



# UNCT JOINT FIELD VISIT: SEEING INTERVENTIONS IN ACTION, MEETING BENEFICIARIES, MAKING LASTING INTERACTIONS.

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Rwanda decided in July 2022 to host at least two UNCT monthly meetings in the field each year. This will allow the UNCT to gain valuable insights into how the UN-supported interventions are impacting people's lives, and how the team can further support their efforts.

The first of such meetings took place in October 2022, organized together with the Ministry of Youth and Culture, in Huye, in the Southern province.

For two days, joined by the Mayor of Huye district Mr. Ange Sebutege, the UNCT visited GreenCare Rwanda Limited, a company that recycles waste materials into fertilizer and paving bricks; the Huye Employment Service Center (HESC) that provides employment services to the youth by providing labor market information and Integrated Polytechnic Regional College (IPRC); a vocational training center that provides a wide range of technical skills to youth - around 1,800 students every intake.

They also visited a YouthConnect Awardee, Jean Paul Mukunzi, owner of a brewery in Sovu cell for production of Made in Rwanda alcoholic Banana wine; as well as a coffee growing cooperative, with a value chain for export market and an interlocutor for facilitating knowledge exchange with partners abroad.

As beneficiaries shared about their work, its impact on their community, and how it has improved their livelihoods, it showed evidence of the successful partnership UN has with grassroots entities.

*"Thanks to the support we received from the UN and the continuous support we get from the government; we have built a business that not only earns us some income but helps us solve some issues in our community. We recycle waste to produce fertilizers and pavement bricks. Today, we employ over 20 young people, and we only hope to keep growing and expand our activities to other districts."* Said Noel Nizeyimana, CEO of Green Care Ltd.

The field visit was climaxed with a dinner meeting with local government and key partners, which provided an opportunity for joint reflections on the collaborative development work in the district. Participants discussed about the opportunities and issues that can further inform the UN's continued partnership with the government in building inclusive and sustainable communities.

The UN aims to ensure that the support to the Government and the people of Rwanda is as coordinated and effective as possible, which is key to addressing the challenges Rwanda is facing now and, in the years, to come.



Julienne Mukabucyanimpundu in front of IPRC-Ngoma



## GIVING BACK AND LEARNING: A DIASPORA PROFESSIONAL REFLECTS ON HER PARTICIPATION IN DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

Rwandan diaspora play a key role in the country's socio-economic development. IOM works closely with the GoR to engage the Rwandan diaspora professionals residing in Europe, Canada, and the United States of America (USA) in the country's growth, specifically in the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Health, and Finance sectors.

Ms. Julienne Mukabucyanimpundu is one of the Rwandan diaspora who participated in the initiative. Born and raised in Rwanda, she then moved to France - her passion and commitment to being part of Rwanda's development did not cease even while living abroad.

After learning about the diaspora mobilization and engagement programme, Julienne successfully applied in 2021. She moved to Rwanda where she was first deployed to the Rwanda Polytechnic (RP) to support research activities and provide career development guidance.

Given the very positive outcome of this first assignment, Julienne was then requested to come back in 2022 to share her knowledge and skills with students and trainers of the Integrated Polytechnic Regional College (IPRC) in Kitabi and Ngoma.

Sharing her thoughts on the experience, Julienne highlighted the mutually rewarding nature of this programme as a way of transferring skills yet also learning and growing: *"My work went well. I was very happy, and it helped me to go through my studies again. I also learnt from IPRC students and trainers on some techniques that I haven't used for a while. If I could get a more extended leave from my work in France, I would come to work here for a longer period"*.

Julienne treasures this experience and wishes that more Rwandan Diaspora, particularly from the younger generation who have never been to Rwanda, will actively participate in the country's development. *"I will spread the word to my fellow Rwandans where I live, show them photos, and tell them about this project, especially to the younger generation. They can visit Rwanda first. Once they become familiar with the country, they can decide how they want to contribute to the country. A lot of people want to join in."*

The Diaspora mobilization and engagement programme is funded by the Government of Belgium and the IOM Development Fund.





# DONATE NOW



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White Cane Challenge

With 30,500 Rwf for White Cane or more, you can restore some one's hope.

57,213 people are visually impaired in Rwanda. Only 5% have White Cane. Thus, can't independently navigate the world around them.

Target  
**5000**  
**White Canes**  
LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

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**1,000 white canes by December 2022 and 4,000 White Canes by May 2023.**



## WHITE CANE DONATION CHALLENGE: ENSURING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

On one evening, the UN Resident Coordinator Ozonnia Ojielo alongside some colleagues from the UN Rwanda attended a unique event, dubbed "a night in the dark," which was organized by MTN Rwanda to raise awareness and funds in support of the Rwanda Union of the Blind.

*"Nothing and no one could have prepared him for the humbling experience of that night,"* he said. On arrival, each participant was ushered into a dark room, blindfolded, given a white cane, and then asked to follow a voice to guide them to their seats. The guides were visually impaired. With a white cane and a voice leading them to their designated tables, people still stumbled on chairs and staggered at the fear of slamming into a wall or falling off stairs.

Expected to serve their dinner at a buffet setting - you can imagine the food they served - and they had to network with their neighbours while following the proceedings of the events - at least they had hope that the blindfolds would be removed after about 2 hours.

Participants could not help but think about the visually impaired that must stay in that state of darkness all their lives (90% of whom have no white canes).

That evening, the event wound up with a fundraiser, where a few hundred white canes were raised. Ozonnia left the event with an inspiration and the urge to act. He shared the idea with the UN family, who immediately embraced the noble cause to raise at least 5,000 white canes by May 2023.

At the recent UN staff party, the white cane donation challenge was launched. The Heads of Agencies and Staff, moved by the poignant story of Dr. Donatille Kanimba, the Executive Director of the Rwanda Union of the Blind, donated through cash and pledges, to a tune of over RWF10 million and the envelope will just keep growing through partnerships with varied institutions.

As the UN Rwanda development work is hinged on the principle of leaving no one behind; this donation challenge is another practical way of inclusiveness. With the availability of and access to the white canes, the visually impaired persons will be more enabled to move around easily and independently.

Details on how to participate in the donation challenge can be found on the poster above.





# THE QUARTER IN PICTURES



Participants taking a selfie at the YouthConnect Africa summit that convened thousands of youths and leaders from across the world.



The 145th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in session, under the theme: Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world.



WFP Rep & Country Director with a citizen in a joint special Umuganda to celebrate Rwanda's 60th anniversary in the United Nations.



UNCT members listening to a student talking about his carpentry project at IPRC Huye, during the joint visit.



RC delivering welcome remarks on the 1st day of the UNCT retreat in Bugesera District.



Ozonnia Ojielo, RC and Fred Siewe, Chairman VCWC signing an MoU to collaborate on the preparation, organization, and sustainable impact of VCWC 2024 to take place in Rwanda.



Activists during the 16 days of activism solidarity run in Kigali.



Group photo of participants of the UN Women gender dialogue on placing women's leadership at the center of sustainable nutrition in Rwanda.



UN joined GoR to celebrate World Human Rights Day under the theme "Dignity, Freedom, and Justice for All" in Huye.



UNCT members in a group discussion during the SDG Leadership Lab, developing prototype solutions to address systemic complex challenges in the community.



PS in Rwanda's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Ms Clementine Mukeka receives Mr. Nikhil Seth, UN Assistant SG and ED of UNITAR.



Participants having a light discussion at the 4th General Assembly of the Parliamentarian Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition.

# THE QUARTER IN PICTURES



Volunteers in a tea plantation during the International Volunteer Day celebration in Gicumbi District.



Group photo after the Joint Steering Committee that convened GoR, UNCT, Development Partners, CSOs and private sector to discuss the progress and lessons from the joint programmes.



Ozonnia Ojelo, RC after a meeting with the CEO of Equity Foundation and Group Holdings, Dr. James Mwangi to discuss opportunities for partnership.



The 81st Development Partners' Coordination Group, a quarterly consultative meeting in session, to discuss short, medium and long-term responses to varied national challenges.



Dr. Christine Giraneza Uwantege, Co-founder and Public Relations Director of URUKUNDO Initiative sharing her thoughts at the 60th Anniversary.



UNCT members with the UN Assistant SG, after discussions on Scaling Up Nutrition Movement and the support needed to reduce stunting in Rwanda.



World AIDS Day 2022 celebrations in session at the national event in Huye District, under the theme "Equalize."



Sports activities part of the celebration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities held in Gicumbi district.



FAO representative Coumba Dieng Sow feeding children in Muhanga District, during the official celebration of World Food Day."



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