



SHAPING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER

FOREWORD

Dear esteemed partners and readers,

I welcome you to this year's First edition of the One UN in Rwanda Newsletter dubbed "**Turi Kumwe**". This quarterly publication provides an insight into what the One UN in Rwanda have been doing during the quarter. Importantly, it shows how all UN agencies are working together - turi kumwe - delivering results as one. We have just renewed our commitment to contribute to changes in Rwandan people's live with our just concluded retreat of our UN country team!

As we all know, we are in such a challenging situation with the COVID-19 declared as a pandemic. Together, the UN, Development Partners are working hand in hand with the Government of Rwanda in COVID19 response for the well-being of all residents of Rwanda. Preventing further spread of COVID-19 is a shared responsibility for us all. "**We are in this together – and we will get through this together**" – UN Secretary General.

This year, UN marks 75th anniversary with the theme "**Shaping Our Future Together**". We hope to collaborate with you all in showcasing our collective contributions to reach those farthest behind.

In this Newsletter, you will read stories from FAO, IOM, UN Women, WFP, UNFPA, UNCDF, UN Volunteers and key events. I invite you to visit rwanda.un.org and to follow us 'as it happens' Twitter & FB: @UNRwanda.

As always, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Government of Rwanda and all our esteemed partners, and all my UN colleagues, for all the efforts you make every day for this country, its people leaving no one behind and for our UN family.

Turi kumwe! We are together! This message of togetherness, solidarity and compassion is more relevant in this very challenging time for mankind. Our humanity is tested. However, I have the strong conviction that we shall overcome! Together!

Fodé Ndiaye
United Nations Resident Coordinator

VIRTUAL LAUNCH OF THE UNCDF'S PROJECT OF INCLUSIVE GROWTH OF 37,000 VULNERABLE POPULATIONS.



On 18th March 2020, UNCDF held a virtual kick off meeting with all its four partners who will be working on the project of "**Expanding Financial Access and Digital & Financial Literacy in Rwanda**" (REFAD). The project goal is the inclusive growth of **37,000 vulnerable people** (Farmers, Youth, Women, etc.) to lead productive and healthy lives through access to and usage of digital financial education,

informal and formal financial products thus contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To achieve this target, **UNCDF** partnered with four partners: one NGO (World Relief), two financial institutions (Equity Bank and Umutanguha Finance Company (UFC)) and one non deposit private company (Inkomoko). These institutions have been working in the financial sectors for many years, serving medium and low income earners.

UNCDF is bringing in its digital finance expertise to support reach out to the 11% of the Rwandan population who have been excluded from the formal and informal financial services. The project is contributing to three SDGs goal namely SDG 1: **Ending Poverty, SDG 5 achieving Gender Equality and SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth.**

SHARING WATER IN RWANDA'S BREADBASKET

Improving farming practices and increasing seasonal harvests



The Nyagatare district (Eastern Province) is Rwanda's breadbasket - a vast area of agricultural land providing food for the entire country. The people of this district are mainly farmers, rearing livestock and cultivating crops such as maize and rice, but they suffer a long dry season stretching from June to mid-September and, consequently, water has always been a vital, much-sought-after resource - with competition for it high. In 2015, the Rwandan government, together

with financial support from the World Bank, constructed a **USD10 million dam and water reservoir**. Before long, however, farmers cultivating the upper hillside would cut off at least an eighth of the rainwater that flowed into the catchment below, leaving farmers and cattle keepers downhill struggling.

Conflicts arose and a solution to the problem was needed. With the support from the **European Union (EU), FAO of the United Nations** implemented the project "**Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS)**" to help individuals, organizations and national bodies involved in innovating agricultural sectors to navigate problems and improve collaboration through dialogue. Athanase Mahoni, one of the farmers involved, said that the CDAIS training "**empowered farmers to solve their own problems.**"

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MONTH IN RWANDA



This year's International Women's Day celebrations marked the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Under the international theme of "**I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights**" the International Women's Day celebrations brought together change makers of all ages and genders to advocate for, and tackle the unfinished business of empowering women and girls by demanding for **equal pay, equal sharing of unpaid care and domestic work, an end to sexual harassment and all forms of violence against women and girls, health-care services that respond to their needs, and their equal participation in political life and decision-making in all areas of life.**

In Rwanda, the National Celebrations was held at Amahoro Stadium in Kigali on 8th March under the theme of "**Transformational change: Women at the Forefront**". The Minister of Gender and Family Promotion, the Mayor of City of Kigali, the UN Resident Coordinator, UN Women Country Representative and key partners working on gender equality attended the event.

Prior to the National Celebrations, the European Union Delegation to Rwanda,

in collaboration with the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda and UN Women, organized a roundtable discussion on the production and use of gender statistics on 4th March 2020. The roundtable discussion brought together gender activists, policy makers, development partners, experts and media.

In his remarks, the Head of EU Delegation to Rwanda, Ambassador Nicola Bellomo said; "**The ultimate objective of the workshop is for all of us to reflect on how we could contribute to refining Gender Statistics in Rwanda with the target of sustaining the gains, going further and leaving no one behind on this development journey we have all committed to**". He also added that "**Because we are concerned about gender; we are also concerned to have a sound basis of evidence to guide our policies and measure our results on gender**".

The celebrations culminated in a panel discussion with University students from the Africa Leadership University (ALU), University of Kigali, Kepler University and Akilah Institute who debated on the economic benefits of a gender equal world and the role of entrepreneurship in achieving this.

IOM SUPPORTS RWANDA'S MINISTRY OF HEALTH TO ENGAGE WITH THE DIASPORA



Kigali – The International Organisation for Migration, **IOM** is collaborating with the Government of Rwanda to tap into the skills of Rwandan medical practitioners in the Diaspora.

Through the 'Diaspora Engagement in the Rwandan Health Sector' project, implemented by IOM in coordination with the Ministry of Health (MoH), the government will reach out to Rwandan nationals with medical expertise residing in Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom and who are willing to contribute to Rwanda's development by transferring their skills to local medical practitioners while at the same time providing health services to the local population on a temporary basis.

IOM will support the Government of Rwanda to ensure that the diaspora medical practitioners who will participate in the skills and knowledge transfer will be able to provide high quality health services to the local population. In addition, this project will also safeguard sustainability by providing diaspora members with information on the available labour market, business and investments opportunities, encouraging them to invest in their country of origin.

As part of the 'Diaspora Engagement in the Rwandan Health Sector' project, IOM and the MoH, organized a four-day training for Rwandan Health Officials and conducted needs assessments in identified hospitals across the country.

"We greatly appreciate IOM for working closely with the MoH on diaspora engagement initiatives including the capacity building of health officials and identifying the gaps and needs of 10 identified hospitals in Rwanda," said Darius Uzabakiriho, the Health Systems Analysis Specialist at the Ministry of Health.

"Additionally, through the financial support of the IOM Development Fund (IDF), we are eager to receive Rwandan diaspora health professionals to support the local community," he added.

Helene Fors, IOM Rwanda Chief of Mission, expressed her appreciation for the excellent working relations between IOM and the Ministry of Health. She reaffirmed IOM's commitment to support the Government of Rwanda to engage highly skilled Rwandan Diaspora members.

IOM, in close collaboration with the government, hopes to receive the first wave of Rwandan diaspora soon. IOM will continue to strengthen its working relationships with the Government of Rwanda on migration management initiatives.

For further information on the 'Diaspora Engagement in the Rwandan Health Sector' Project, please contact Alice Karara, IOM Rwanda, at Email: AKarara@iom.int

TACKLING TEENAGE PREGNANCY WITH YOUTH-LED INNOVATION



Kigali, Rwanda, 13 December 2019,
The Awarding Ceremony of the Innovation Accelerator (iAccelerator) Phase II took place at Intare Conference Arena, Kigali.

Under the theme: “Availing adolescent sexual reproductive health information & services as a way of preventing teenage pregnancies” iAccelerator Phase II is being implemented by Imbutu Foundation in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Ministry of Youth and Culture, with the support of the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

Following the pitching of the top 10 solutions to teenage pregnancies in Rwanda, the 3 best solutions were awarded during the “Youth Forum Series,” which opening was officiated by H.E the First Lady of Rwanda Mrs Jeannette Kagame.

Addressing around 600 youth, parents, leaders and partners at the Youth Forum, HE The First Lady of Rwanda stated that challenges that the youth face, including drug abuse and teen pregnancies, need to be discussed collectively, and encouraged partners and stakeholders to continue to work together and support innovative programmes such as I Accelerator.

“Excessive use of drugs and teen pregnancies are both a public health concern and family’ challenge. I commend you for your contribution to programmes, such as the Innovation Accelerator. Your work with us, is a significant contribution to our national efforts, in empowering youth in Rwanda”

she asserted. The teenage pregnancy rates in Rwanda have increased from 6.1% in 2010 to 7.3% in 2015 (RDHS 2015). Furthermore, 49.6% of teen mothers had their first pregnancy between the ages of 12 and 17. In line with Government priorities to fight the issue, iAccelerator Phase II employs social entrepreneurship to tackle teenage pregnancies by encouraging young people to think critically and creatively about issues related to their sexual and reproductive health and rights. **“The UN believes it is critical to invest in youth-led innovation by providing targeted & enabling support to youth-led organizations & initiatives to pilot new models & interventions to ensure that we do indeed raise a healthy generation”** Said Fodé Ndiaye, UN Resident Coordinator in Rwanda

Encouraging young people to innovate creative solutions to advance Sexual & Reproductive Health. The journey of the I Accelerator Phase II The Innovation Accelerator, first launched in 2016, is an initiative and model aiming at exploring new and engaging ways to tackle pressing population challenges in the country while promoting social entrepreneurship among young people.

The top 3 innovative solutions were awarded 10,000 USD each as seed capital for their businesses. The winners include **“Keza Game Application”**, an edutainment game that encourages positive attitudes and behaviour towards adolescent sexual reproductive health using a character named, “Keza”, **“Urukundo Board Game”**, an interactive game and informative pack consisting of a booklet and a game tool with Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health messages, and **“Flavours of Family Planning TV show”**, a show focusing on male engagement in family planning by using kitchen materials for simulations. The finalists will start their incubation and mentorship programme in early 2020. The iAccelerator programme will run annually from 2019-2022 in partnership with KOICA and national partners.

SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURIAL WOMEN IN RWANDA



WFP cash transfers boost the local economy in and around the camp, generating opportunities for both refugees and host communities.

Florence Mukayizera, a Burundian refugee, has lived in Mahama camp in Eastern Rwanda for almost five years with her six young children. "Life in a refugee camp is challenging. I was very worried what life would bring for my children and me, though I knew I would be welcomed in Rwanda," says Florence. With financial contributions from donors including the European Union, WFP is able to provide a hybrid model of cash and in-kind food assistance, permitting refugees to buy the food of their choice. WFP's cash assistance motivated Florence to regain a sense of normalcy in her life, by opening a small shop in Mahama camp to cater for other refugees redeeming their cash assistance. "Back home in Burundi, I started my own small shop selling staple food items," she recalls. Business was good for Florence before the instability began. Crossing into Rwanda from Burundi, Florence was forced to leave everything behind, including her family house and land, as well as her shop.

"Despite having to leave everything behind, I was able to bring along my small savings from my shop earnings. With this, I decided to make a fresh start with a new shop in Mahama, though I had to start very small," recalls Florence. Standing in her shop surrounded by bags of maize meal and rice, Florence puts on a smile as refugees line up

to buy items. ***"With cash assistance, my fellow refugees can buy food from my shop. This allows me to make a small profit and adds to the food I receive from WFP to make ends meet for me and my children,"*** Florence says. She feels proud of what she has built. "I am the only person in my family to ever own a business," she adds. Florence feels she has a good network of other retailers in Mahama market and hopes her business will keep growing and she will be able to respond to her family's needs.

The Ripple effect

The establishment of Mahama camp has also spurred business opportunities for host community members living around the camp. Eriane owns a shop in Kabeza market, only 200 metres from Mahama camp. After humanitarian partners began providing cash assistance to refugees, a number of shop keepers, including Eriane, moved their shops near the camp, with the hopes of increasing their business.

"My earnings have almost tripled since I've moved my shop closer to Mahama camp. I am able to offer a competitive price to refugees. That is why they like to buy from my shop," says Eriane, with a smile on her face. Refugees line up outside her shop, waiting to buy rice and maize meal at a competitive price. In 2016 a study conducted by a team of researchers from WFP and the University of California, Davis, provides evidence that assistance for refugees has a positive effect on the local economy where they live — an effect that is magnified significantly when the refugees' food assistance comes in the form of cash. The study found that refugees substantially boost incomes in local communities. For every US dollar of cash transferred by WFP, individual incomes in and around the camps increase by a staggering 150 to 195 percent annually. This is because there is an added need for goods and supplies from both community and refugee households.

JOINT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND CONTRIBUTION TO UN RWANDA FOR SOCIAL PROTECTION



The joint SDG fund allocated US\$ 2,000,000 that will support and accelerate the Government of Rwanda's efforts for integrated social protection to end poverty in all its forms, leaving no one behind. The programme will be implemented over a two-year period from 2020-2021 by UNICEF, WFP, FAO and the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator (RCO) with a coordinating role, through a partnership with the Government of Rwanda and national partners; Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC) as lead, Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA), Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI), and Local Administrative Entities Development Agency (LODA) focusing on Kirehe, Karongi, Burera, Nyamagabe, and Rutsiro Districts. The three implementing agencies added their own resources to the joint programme with an amount of 1,040,000 USD putting the total available funds at **3,040,000 USD**.

"The Government of Rwanda is strongly committed to eradicating poverty through strengthening partnerships and collaboration with the One UN. This Joint Program will accelerate graduation of poor households, create opportunities for the local communities and individual households to live a decent life, and build resilience. The principle of "leave no one behind" is embedded in Government of Rwanda's policies and programs. We're therefore pleased to partner with ONE-UN in the implementation of this joint programme, which aims at transforming lives of the local communities, through innovative approaches and solutions, that will contribute to the achievement of the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) and the Sustainable development goals (SDGs); Hon. Prof. Shyaka Anastase, Minister of Local Government.

The joint programme will also contribute to achieving the ambitious SDG targets and is a part of the United Nations Development Plan for Rwanda (UNDAP 2018-2023) and it is aligned with Rwanda's National Strategy for Transformation **(NST1 2017-2024)**

"We commend the government of Rwanda that stands out as exemplary in its strong structure, clear goals, and effective commitment to achieving tangible results. This provides a conducive context for the UN to work, and partner with the Government and national stakeholders and contribute to the development of the country and the wellbeing of the people leaving no one behind, through the very relevant for poverty eradication of the social protection framework". Fode Ndiaye, UN Resident Coordinator



KEY EVENTS

UN Resident Coordinator and UN Heads of Agencies joined the Embassy of Israel and Embassy of German in commemoration of Holocaust at Kigali Memorial Center. Minister of Youth and Culture Hon. Rosemary Mbabazi graced the commemoration as the Guest of Honor joined by other dignitaries.



UN Women joined the Rwanda Stock Exchange and the International Finance Corporation in hosting the "Ring the Bell for Gender Equality event" along with 90 other stock exchanges around the world to draw attention to the critical role that business and markets can play and must play in tackling gender inequalities.

In her remarks at the event, Fatou Lo, UN Women Representative in Rwanda called for bold, ambitious, inclusive and urgent action for advancing gender equality.



UN Rwanda and Ministry of Local Government launched the Joint Program on Social Protection with financial contribution from the joint SDG Fund to be implemented by UNICEF, WFP and FAO in 5 Districts of Kirehe, Karongi, Burera, Nyamagabe, & Rutsiro

Steering committee for Joint Program on Youth held a meeting chaired by Minister of Youth and Culture Hon. Rosemary Mbabazi. Attended by Imbutu Foundation Director General & staff, UNDP Resident Representative & staff, UNFPA Representative & staff, and KOICA Officials.



WHAT VOLUNTEERISM MEANS TO ME



I have been working with UNDP Transformational Governance Unit since 2017. One of my roles is to identify key result areas in my unit's programmes and develop stories that focus on mainstreaming Gender Equality, Human Rights, disability and Inclusion while leaving no one behind. Last year's IVD theme was "**Volunteer for an Inclusive future**". This struck me and triggered me to question myself as an

individual and relate to my work beyond the social media visibility; as a UNV, **what does volunteerism mean to me? How am I practicing volunteerism for Inclusion?**

Definitely one of the most exciting things about being a UN Volunteer is having the chance to work across diverse activities that impact people in a variety of ways. Working with the Governance Unit at the UNDP has given me such an opportunity to engage in activities that promote a positive change in people's lives through reducing all forms of inequalities.

For example; in my daily work within the Governance portfolio, I am happy to be among the UN Volunteers practicing volunteerism for Inclusion via projects such as Gender Accountability in the Private Sector. Therefore, Volunteerism for me it means being given a chance to contribute to peace and development and having the passion and willingness to make it happen.

