

Rwanda – 2019 Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report

Main Messages

Twenty-five years ago, the Genocide against the Tutsi left Rwanda far behind on all development indicators and its entire socio-economic fabric destroyed. Rwandans embarked on a rebuilding process driven by a shared *Vision 2020* based on three fundamental choices: unity, ambition, and accountability. The country undertook several reforms aimed at creating an inclusive and fair society with respect of human rights and rule of law.

Since 2000, Rwanda has registered inclusive growth, averaging 8% annually leading to millions being lifted out of poverty and good progress in all development sectors.

Rwanda has integrated the *Africa Agenda 2063* and the *SDGs* into its national development agenda through the draft *Vision 2050, National Strategy for Transformation* (NST1, 2017-2024) and related strategies at different levels.

The preparation of the VNR report followed a consultative approach and provides information on Rwanda's progress, challenges and lessons learned focusing on Goals; 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 & 17 along five thematic areas;

1. **Human Capital Development:** In line with the *SDG 4* focusing on quality of education and learning, the *Education Strategic Plan* is hinged on: (i) scaling up pre-primary enrolment (ii) improving learning outcomes (iii) improving relevance of curricula (v) promoting science, technology and innovation and (vi) access for all including those with special needs.

Progress on nutrition has been made especially regarding wasting and underweight, however stunting remains a challenge despite falling from 51% (2005) to 38% (2015). The Government has put in place a multi-sectoral programme and strategy, the *National Early Childhood Development Programme* to eradicate malnutrition.

2. **Inclusive Economic Growth:** Economic growth has reduced both income and multidimensional poverty. With a share of 43.5% of the population in the labor force, youth is regarded as a key driver of growth, requiring the economy to accelerate job creation. NST1 is targeting to create 1.5 million decent and productive jobs by 2024 supported by the *National Employment Programme*.
3. **Environment and Climate Change:** Rwanda targets to become a green, climate resilient and low carbon economy by 2050. A green fund (FONERWA) is in place since 2012 to mobilise resources. The *National Disaster Management Policy* has been revised in line with the Sendai Framework, a shift towards more integrated and anticipatory disaster risk management system in Rwanda.
4. **Good Governance and Access to Justice:** Citizen participation and home-grown solutions such as *Imihigo* (performance contracts) and *Umuganda* (communities come together to perform activities of public interest) have been key to Rwanda's development. Innovations like the *Rwanda Governance Scorecard* and the *Citizen Report Card* have further enhanced citizens' participation and demand for accountability. Rwanda has also operationalized a decentralized civil registration system and reformed its judicial system to further enhance access to quality justice.
5. **Strengthening the Means of Implementation, Global Partnership and Data for SDGs:** More efforts are put into domestic resource mobilization, prudent debt management and macroeconomic stability. Attracting private investments in key development sectors through Public Private Partnerships will be key to achieve SDGs. The *National Strategy for the Development of Statistics* and the *Data Revolution* have been adopted to strengthen statistical capacity in monitoring SDGs. Rwanda is also hosting the *SDGs Center for Africa*.

Leaving No One Behind: Women, youth and people with disabilities are represented at all levels of decision making with highest women representation in Parliament (61.3%) and equal number

of women and men in Cabinet. The Extreme poor are supported through social protection programmes. Rwanda is also piloting the comprehensive refugees' response framework for their socio-economic inclusion.

Lessons learned:

1. Visionary leadership, effective governance, and accountability are critical for achievement of SDGs.
2. Home-Grown Solutions rooted in the Rwandan culture are resource-efficient and play a major role in enhancing ownership and accelerating development outcomes.
3. A full integration of SDGs in the national planning and monitoring framework is critical for effective implementation.

Areas for support:

1. Significant external resources are needed to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs and to scale up successful interventions.
2. There is need to support the national statistical capacity both technically and financially to cover all applicable SDG indicators (currently producing 60% of the required indicators).