

# RWANDA Dispatch

AN INSIGHT INTO RWANDA

JAN - MAR 2023, ISSUE 76



## RUSIZI ON THE RIGHT DEVELOPMENT PATH



**WE'RE BRACING FOR A GREEN CITY**  
- MAYOR KIBIRIGA



**WHY INVESTORS NOD RWANDA'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY PATH | PG10**  
**RDB expands One-Stop Centre to facilitate investors | PG5**





# Mantis Kivu Marina Bay Hotel

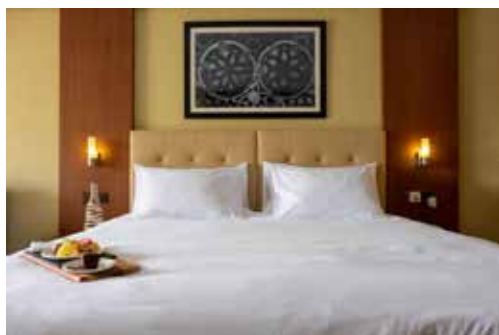
A MANTIS HOTEL EXPERIENCE



Mantis Kivu Marina Bay is a deluxe hotel comprising 79 rooms with views overlooking Lake Kivu with its resort lifestyle, cultural experiences and tea and coffee tastings at some of the best plantations in Africa. The hotel compromises an upscale lobby, restaurant

and bar, spa, gym, convention centre, lake view swimming pool, and parking area.

Located in close proximity of Lake Kivu and Nyungwe National Park in the western region of Rwanda. Located just 1km from Kamembe Airport in Cyangugu, Rwanda.



For enquiries and to book, please call reception on +250 252 557 557

## Publishing Credits

### CONTRIBUTORS

Aimable Twahirwa  
Steven Nsamaza  
Jeje Muhinde  
George Kalisa  
Gonzaga Umuganwa  
Elizabeth Tanganyika  
John Mugisha  
Viateur Nizeyimana

### DESIGN AND LAYOUT MARKETING MANAGER MARKETING EXECUTIVES

UserX Designs Ltd | 0784 510 388  
Robert Mugabo  
Camarade Innocent, Alex Ntaganzwa

### TO EXPRESS VIEWS WRITE TO:

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Rwanda Dispatch, Remera - Gisementi  
P.O. Box 453 Kigali Rwanda.  
Administration and Editorial: +250 788 306 472  
Marketing and Subscription:  
+250 785 450 077 / 0781 540 672  
Email: [rwandadispatch1@gmail.com](mailto:rwandadispatch1@gmail.com)  
Twitter: [@rwandadispatch1](https://twitter.com/rwandadispatch1)  
[www.rwandadispatch.com](http://www.rwandadispatch.com)

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## Publisher's Note

As of March 2023, the guns in Eastern DRC had not been silenced, intense fighting between the M23 rebels and FARDC, the government armed forces in the territories of Rutshuru and Masisi continue. This has derailed regional efforts for ceasefire to negotiate a peaceful outcome.

The war that erupted nearly 10 years following a relative peace has attracted concerted efforts from the 7-member state EAC bloc. Some of the EAC states have already deployed forces to the troubled region adding to other already existing efforts.

However, M23 is not the only troublemaker, the region hosts more than 120 rebel groups alone that continue to operate across large swathes for over two decades. But Kinshasa administration has vehemently accused Rwanda of supporting M23 to which Kigali has denied, mentioning clear indications of DRC's internal issues.

This time, stakeholders need to address one of the longest crisis in North Kivu

rather than treating symptoms.

Meanwhile, in this publication we divulge into success stories of Rusizi District, formerly perceived as Rwanda's isolated and underdeveloped region. Rusizi has recorded milestones in socioeconomic transformation, especially in housing, agriculture, tourism and construction sectors.

Rusizi resort city that is undergoing a facelift boasts of a vibrant hospitality sector with many hotels.

The district has embarked on development of the secondary city through various efforts including turning it into a green city, building of modern structures and expanding list of tourist attractions.

In other news, the findings from the fifth Population and Housing Census were released during the 18th National Dialogue Council, Umushyikirano 2023, an event held after two years of absence due to COVID-19 pandemic.

*Editorial*



## Table of Contents

In 30 Days	5
Why Investors Nod Rwanda's Economic Recovery Path	10
Rwanda's population growth rate is now 2.3%	12
One on One: Rusizi changes face as authorities fast track ambitious trajectory of turning into Green City	14
Rusizi on the right development path	16
EMLR/Kinyaga Conference Education, Health, Development and the Gospel are inseparable	18
Emeraude Kivu Resort Vantage location and classic services position it as the best destination	22
Serene and quiet environment define Centre Diocésain de Pastorale Incuti	24
VIVE Hotel & Apartments: Hospitality germ ready for discovery	28
COCOCHAUMA Highlights use and benefits of lime	30
Nezerwa Project Ltd: Promotes manufacturing with local raw materials	34
Rusizi Progress Hote: Unmatched ambiance, modern gardens behind growing clientele	38
Centre d'Accueil St François d'Assis: Defined by excellent services delivery and unmatched customer care	40
PARAMOUNTCY Ltd boosts fishing and water transport	42
Rwandan motorsport missing-out on sector potentialities	44
Eritreans continue to shine in Rwanda cycling competition	46



## said and Quoted



"Africa's push for food sovereignty and resilience depends on investments and partnerships."  
**AKINWUMI ADESINA**, PRESIDENT OF AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP (AfDB)



"Public health is about the capacities of countries to take appropriate actions to protect, and care for the health of citizens."  
**DR. EDOUARD NGIRENTE**, RWANDAN PRIME MINISTER



"Africa is hungry for energy, and nuclear power could be part of the answer for an increasing number of countries."  
**MIKHAIL CHUDAKOV**, DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL AND HEAD OF NUCLEAR ENERGY AT THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA)



"The continent's progress on infrastructure is real but the challenges are also real."  
**PRESIDENT MACKY SALL**, PRESIDENT OF SENEGAL AND THE CURRENT CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION.



"For us, we have our belief, and our belief cannot be taken away by the law. We are not opposing the law, but our belief does not allow us to support abortion,"

**DR. LAURENT MBANDA**, THE ARCHBISHOP AND PRIMATE OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF RWANDA



## On the world scene

Ukrainian service members from nom-de-guerre battalion, fire a howitzer M119 at a frontline near the city of Bakhmut, amid ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

Since February 24, 2022 full-scale attack, the war has caused devastating consequences including death, destruction and global economic recession, plus more than eight million Ukrainians resulting in the greatest exodus of refugees that Europe has witnessed since World War II.

## Numbers that speak volumes

45 per cent

RWANDA'S AGRICULTURAL EXPORT EARNINGS CLIMBED BY 45 PER CENT REPRESENTING MORE THAN \$788.7 MILLION (ABOUT RWF859.5 BILLION) EARNED BY DECEMBER 2022, AN INCREASE FROM THE \$543.1 MILLION (ABOUT RWF591.8 BILLION) IN THE SAME PERIOD OF 2021.

172 Goals

QATAR FIFA WORLD CUP 2022 SAW SOME EDGE-OF-THE-SEAT FOOTBALL ACTION WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF GOALS SCORED TOTALING 172 IN 64 MATCHES, AVERAGING 2.68 GOALS PER MATCH. IT ECLIPSED THE 1998 AND 2014 WORLD CUPS WHICH PRODUCED 171 GOALS.

3,000 Schools

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS THE RWANDAN GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO CONNECT TO THE INTERNET BY 2024. ICT MINISTER PAULA INGABIRE SAID THE COUNTRY HAS ABOUT 6,756 SCHOOLS, INCLUDING PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND TVET SCHOOLS. 44.4 PER CENT ARE NOT YET CONNECTED.

80 Billion Dollars

AMOUNT OF MONEY INTENDED TO FINANCE THE GRAND INGA DAM PROJECT WHICH IS TOUTED TO HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO SUPPLY GREEN ELECTRICITY TO THE ENTIRE SUB-SAHARAN REGION. IT IS AN ENHANCEMENT OF THE EXISTING 351 MW INGA 1 AND 1,424 MW INGA 2 PLANTS COMPLETED IN 1972 AND 1982, RESPECTIVELY.



## RDB expands One-Stop Centre to facilitate investors

The One Stop Centre at Rwanda Development Board (RDB) has been expanded to have all services required by local and foreign investors needed to do business in the country in one place.

Clare Akamanzi, CEO of RDB said that, the expansion is a significant milestone in improving the ease of doing business in Rwanda.

With the expansion, clients can follow up on or pick up their licenses and permits at the One Stop Centre. All licenses and permits required for business setup or import and export operations will be issued at the ground floor of RDB building.

Currently, the expanded One Stop Centre will offer over 23 licensing services.

"The One Stop Centre will reduce the time spent moving between institutions for licensing and

enhance the investor experience. RDB encourages investors to take advantage of the services provided at the centre," says Akamanzi.

The list of license and permit services offered include;

- Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Desk,
- Agriculture (Export) Licensing,
- Aviation and Drone Permits,
- Building Permits,
- Capital Market Licensing
- Consumer Protection, Inspection and Registration Licensing,
- Customs Tax Exemption Services,
- Domestic Taxes Services,
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA),
- Financial Center Services,
- Financial Services Licensing
- Food and Drugs Inspection,
- Registration and Licensing,
- Forestry Permits,
- Immigration Business Permits,
- Incentives Management Services,
- Investment Registration Services,
- Mining Licensing,
- Private Education Facility Licensing,
- Private Health Facility Licensing,
- Public Utilities Licensing,
- Standards Services,
- Water Use Permits,
- Public Notary Services.







Car Free Day | Kigali, 22 January 2023



The 29th National Heroes Day Ceremony | Kigali, 1 February 2023



National Prayer Breakfast | Kigali, 15 January 2023



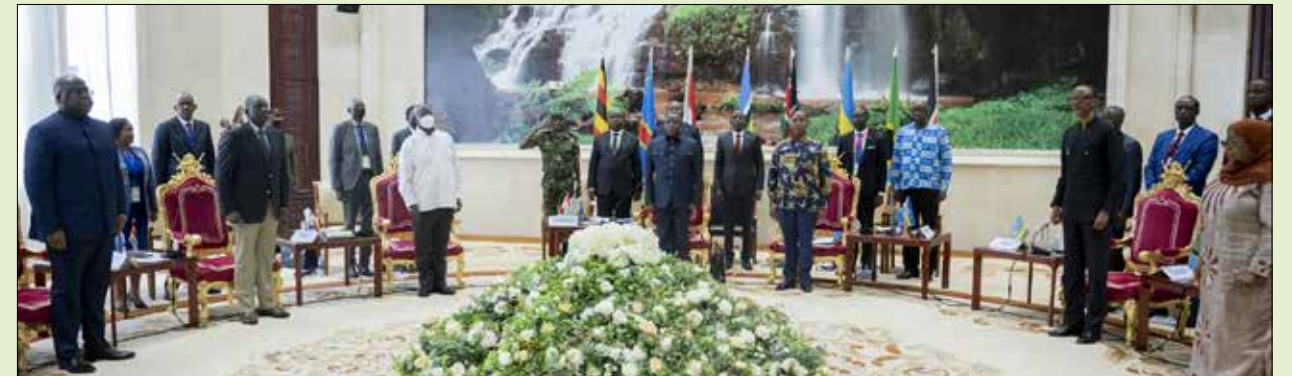
Diplomatic Corps Dinner | Kigali, 8 February 2023



36th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union | Addis Ababa, 18 Feb 2023



18th National Umushyikirano Council | Kigali, 28 February 2023



20th Extra-Ordinary Summit of EAC Heads of State | Bujumbura, 4 February 2023.



Press Conference with President Kagame | Kigali, 1 March 2023



Tour du Rwanda 2023 | Kigali, 26 February 2023





## Rwanda, UAE sign trade and investment deals

**VARIOUS TRADE** and investment agreements were concluded at the recent business forum bringing together more than 200 senior executives from Rwanda and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The agreements aimed at strengthening partnerships and deepen joint economic relations between the two countries will provide more opportunities for investment cooperation in various sectors, raise the level of trade exchange, and find new paths of cooperation.

Held in the Gulf nation, the forum commenced on February 21 to 25, 2023 running along with a mini exhibition of made-in-Rwanda products and services.

The business-to-business engagements between Rwandan investors and their counterparts in UAE will see a joint business council established, enhance cooperation among women entrepreneurs in both countries and collaborate with the

UAE's Sharjah Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Trade between Rwanda and UAE has been steadily growing where it surpassed \$1 billion (approximately over Rwf1 trillion) in 2022. Rwandan envoy to UAE, Amb Emmanuel Hategeka, revealed that trade between the two countries had a ten-fold increase from around \$100 million back in 2012.

He said investments by UAE companies in Rwanda reached \$248 million (over Rwf273 billion) at the end of 2022.

The Rwandan delegation at the forum included among others, members of the Private Sector Federation (PSF), its CEO Stephen Ruzibiza and Chairperson Jeanne Mubiligi. Ambassador Emmanuel Hategeka and CEO of Rwanda Development Board (RDB) Clare Akamanzi were also present to witness the signing of various deals.



## Informa Markets to launch Africa Energy Expo in 2024



**INFORMA MARKETS**, organizers of the Middle East Energy event, has announced the launch of its latest exhibition, the Africa Energy Expo to be hosted at the Kigali Convention Centre, starting February next year.

The Africa Energy Expo aims to support Africa's COP27 climate commitments and align with the Africa Power Vision by bringing together key energy stakeholders from across the world.

This will increase the amount of international support and facilitate access to sustainable energy in Africa.

Speaking on the sidelines of Middle East Energy at Dubai World Trade Centre, Emmanuel Hategeka, Rwandan ambassador to the UAE said, "We are delighted to host this event in Rwanda, a country that has made positive advancements in the energy transition to renewables but is also the second most attractive MICE destination on the continent."

Africa Energy Expo will help build a network of government and regulatory authorities, investors, contractors, project financiers, distributors, local manufacturers and more to gather and start the groundwork for developing cost-effective energy solutions, bridge the investment gaps, and finalise the next steps of implementation.



## Umushyikirano 2023 call for hard work and result oriented

The 18th National Dialogue Council, Umushyikirano 2023 was held on February 27 and 28, 2023 after two years of absence due to Covid-19 pandemic. Chaired by President Paul Kagame it brought together participants from government, civil society, diplomatic corps, political parties and faith-based organisations, among other participants.

The president urged Rwandans to work hard in order to achieve real development and uphold what has been achieved.

Rwandans have come from nothing to something in terms of economic and social development and cannot afford to fall back on these gains, pointed out the president. He called for positive change to better citizens, community as well as national interest.

Pointing out things that were derailing national development, he sent out a stern warning to leaders who are not doing their work and lack commitment to deliver on their duties.

During Umushyikirano, Prime Minister Edouard Ngirente presented the achievements Rwanda has registered over the past two years since the last national dialogue in 2019, the impact of Covid-19 as well as inflation and what the government has done to rejuvenate the economy.

In30Days



## UN court halt Felicien Kabuga's trial over dementia claims



**THE TRIAL** of Felicien Kabuga, suspected mastermind of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda was put on hold at The Hague, over claims he has dementia and was not fit to stand trial.

The International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals agreed to a pause while his health is assessed. Three medical experts who compiled the medical report were to testify, thereafter the prosecution and defence before judges finally decide what next.

Kabuga, 90, a wealthy businessman was arrested in 2020 after evading capture for 26 years. French investigators tracked him down to an apartment in Paris where he had been living under a false identity.

He was one of the allegedly mastermind of the genocide against the Tutsi by broadcasting inflammatory hate speech. He is said to have used his large fortune made in the 1970s tea trade to buy machetes used to arm the interahamwe militia. He has denied all the charges.





# WHY INVESTORS NOD RWANDA'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY PATH

BY GEORGE KALISA

The adverse economic effects hugely blamed on the Covid-19 pandemic have left nearly all economies on their knees with more appalling economic shocks in Sub-Sahara Africa.

Economists widely predicted this situation during 2020 and 2021 when the pandemic bit the global economy into its marrows. Rwanda like many economies of the developing world had her economic share by sinking from GDP growth rate of 8% between 2010 and 2019 to -3.4%, statistics from Rwanda Development Board (RDB) indicate.

To deal with the situation, the Government of Rwanda (GoR) launched many measures to mitigate the pandemic's negative effects, which included supporting key sectors - Manufacturing, Agro-processing and Real estate. To this effect, in 2020, a two-year Manufacture and Build to Recover Programme (MBRP) to boost economic recovery efforts was launched and implemented between 2021-2023 amidst outstanding global challenges that the GoR considered to extend the programme.

While presiding over this event that attracted over 600 participants, Prime Minister Edouard Ngirente noted:

"The incentives offered under the program are very unique and extensive and will contribute significantly towards scaling investment projects, exploring additional opportunities within value chains or starting new business ventures. Given the positive impact of the MBRP over the last two years, it is evident that we need more of such innovative and targeted interventions to address our unique challenges and achieve our ambitious aspirations."



Prime Minister Edouard Ngirente

"Despite the current global economic shocks, brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and the global geopolitical tensions, Rwanda's economy has shown strong resilience and recovery over the last two years from the effects of COVID-19," he added.

The PM said this recovery was due to the swift and robust response to the COVID-19 pandemic initiated by his government to safeguard businesses and jobs, and stressed that one of the programmes that was implemented to stimulate private sector recovery and post pandemic growth is MBRP with a focus on manufacturing, agriculture and construction.

The three sectors were identified as critical drivers of growth through value addition, job creation, and enhanced production to recapture the country's domestic market and diversify our exports according to Rt. Hon. Ngirente. The government believes that though there is still a considerable backlog lingering on, Rwanda will realize the economy of its dream by 2050.

"Rwanda can't achieve its ambitious aspirations to become a middle-income country by 2035 and a high-income country by 2050, without a strong private sector driving this growth," said the Premier.

"These sectors are crucial not only for job creation but also post pandemic growth," remarked Clare Akamanzi, CEO of RDB at the Invest Rwanda Forum in the capital, Kigali on March 2, whose objective was to launch the extension of MBRP following the Cabinet's decision in early 2023.

"The objective is to officially launch the extension of the Manufacturing and Build to Recover Programme for another 2 years. This means that for another 2 years, members of the Private sector here present and those a far can apply to benefit from this programme until



Clare Akamanzi, CEO of RDB

2 years with some project completing implementation thereafter," announced Akamanzi.

## RELEVANCE OF MBRP IN BUILDING A RESILIENT ECONOMY

To offset the effects of the pandemic, the GoR injected a staggering of \$350 million, sources from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN) confirmed during the launch of phase 2 of MBRP of which \$150 million has already been dispatched.

The extended MBRP has boosted the economy due to its potential to attract investors in the three aforementioned sectors where incentives have translated to successful implementation of the projects.

Investors in the General Construction enjoyed VAT exemption and customs duty exemption on imported construction material not accessible in the East African Community (EAC), and VAT exemption on local construction materials.

"General Manufacturing with a minimum investment value of \$1million green income value of beneficially by 20% VAT exemption on machines and raw materials sourced domestically. VAT exemption duties on construction materials, raw materials from EAC," reiterated Akamanzi.

## LEAD STORY

Akamanzi said that investors in Agro-processing with a minimum investment of "\$100,000 or more, also, receive VAT exemption and custom duty exemptions as investors in the first two categories.

The total of customs duties and domestic taxes forgone by the GoR amounts to Rwf 8.2 billion.

## GAINS OF MBRP PHASE 1

At least 101 projects 27 of them are in Agro processing, 41 in manufacturing and 33 in construction were registered.

"Out of all the 101 projects we are pleased to report that 52 companies representing 51% are foreign owned while 49 companies are locally owned. Out of 101 projects, twenty six (26) are fully operational, 44 projects are under construction and 31 are yet to start in the extended period of two years," revealed Akamanzi.

"These projects will increase significantly in numbers of affordable housing, hospital ...health and commercial space for the country. They will also increase exports, reduce imports by availing important products like cooking oil , hygiene products, medical syringes, construction materials , beverages, furniture et cetera," she added.

## MBRP GOAL AND CHALLENGES

The goal of MBRP was to mobilize investment totaling \$1.17 billion and create 27,394 jobs according to RDB. As of December 2022 when the first phase of MBRP concluded, approved projects were worth more than \$1.75 billion and are committed to creating more than 36,000 jobs, exceeding the targets by 150% and 132% for committed investments and job creation, respectively.

The implementation of the projects faced outstanding challenges during





first phase most of them were beyond the government's control and hence that made the extension crucial.

"COVID-19 measures and travel restrictions extended the planned project timelines for many investors, impacting their ability to deliver on time while other parts of the world began to relax international travel and other restrictions, China, a major source of imports for many MBRP beneficiaries, experienced prolonged and recurrent lockdowns," said top officials from Rwanda's investment body.

Also, economic analysts contend that the construction sector represents a significant portion of the beneficiaries of MBRP, and this industry requires time to mobilize resources, particularly finance.

RDB's Chief on the matter also noted that some financiers release funds based on progress made on the ground.

The delay by some companies to take off was blamed on the ongoing war in Ukraine that has tangibly disrupted global logistics, causing a dramatic increase in costs and unexpected delays. Such factors have led to increases in project costs, which have had a negative impact on investors' cash flows.

All the above are the main reasons that

led the cabinet to extend the incentives under the Manufacture and Build to recover program for 2 more years said Akamanzi.

"Rwanda Development Board has worked on the top 100 investment opportunities that you can readily venture in from the agriculture and livestock value chains (from farming, processing and distribution); the manufacturing from glass manufacturing, e-mobility assembly plants; pharmaceuticals, real estate and construction; a detailed session on these opportunities is scheduled here in the afternoon."

"In order to harmonize and focusing strategies and interventions for strong private sector growth; One-Stop Centre services at RDB have been expanded to house all licenses and permits requested by investors at the business set-up and implementation phases. With a competent and specialized delegation representing in total 22 government institutions providing services on business licensing, the investor's journey will start and end at RDB."

#### BENEFICIARIES OF MANUFACTURE AND BUILD TO RECOVER PROGRAMME SPEAK OUT

"Investing in real estate right after COVID-19 was not easy but with

the incentives, the project became more affordable. And now with the programme being extended, we are looking forward to working on a new project," said Moise Nsengiyumva of Wild Urban International Developments.



**"To the different investors, the Government has already done a good job at identifying what the private sector needs. I think you simply need to prepare, read the rules and the proper documentation to have the process facilitated," Ray Power, CEO at PowerX Ltd notes.**



**"We wanted to invest in Rwanda because of its stable political situation, economic development and social security," observed Dang Bianlian the Manager of Anjia Prefabricated materials.**

By and large, at the forum on the extension of MBRP there was also networking and learning sessions with a range of topics discussed including Rwanda's Investment Code, Special Economic Zones and Export Development, taxation, advantages of trading through the African Free Continental Area (AfCFTA) and project financing.

## NATIONAL CENSUS

### RWANDA'S POPULATION GROWTH RATE IS NOW 2.3%

BY AIMABLE TWAHIRWA

Rwanda's population is estimated at 13.2 people in 2022 as compared to 10.5 million in 2012, according to official data released by the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR). While current population growth rate stands at 2.3%.

Data from the fifth Population and Housing Census (RPHC5) show that the Life Expectancy at birth is 69.6 years from 51.2 years in 2002 and 64.5 years in 2012. Overall, there were 6,817,068 females representing 51.5% of the population, which is slightly higher than 6,429,326 males, representing 48.5% of the population.

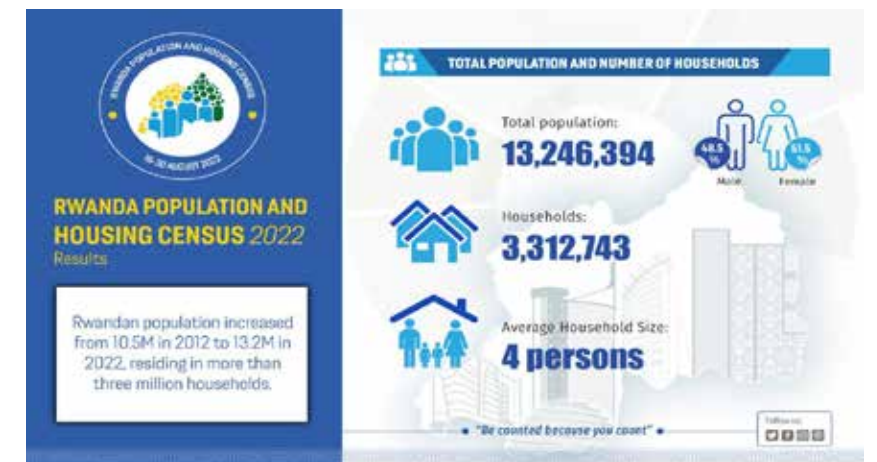
The ratio of Rwandan urban-rural population indicates that there are approximately three urban residents (27.9%) for every seven rural residents (72.1%). The City of Kigali is the most urbanized Province (86.9%) while the Southern Province has the lowest urban population (14.8%).

The provincial population distribution shows that Eastern and Southern Provinces are the most populous, constituting half of the total population of Rwanda.

Regarding divorce and separation, the RPHC5 findings show a reversed situational change where divorced population decreased from 1.5% in 2012 to 0.2% in 2022 while separation increased from 0.5% in 2012 to 1.7% in 2022.

#### DENSITY AND MIGRATION

According to the census, the least densely populated Districts are from the Eastern Province: Kayonza (338), Nyagatare (373), Kirehe (398) and Gatsibo (435). Estimates show that the most densely populated Districts are found in the City of Kigali: Kicukiro (2,944), Nyarugenge (2,830) and Gasabo (2,056). Rubavu with 1,614 inhabitants per square kilometre in the Western Province has the highest



population density outside the City of Kigali.

In terms of origin, the City of Kigali, Southern, and Western Provinces are the most migrant sending provinces, as each of them sent fifth of the total recent out-migrants.

The results also indicate that about 7% of children in Rwanda lost at least one parent and that 0.5% of children lost both parents. The proportion of Children who lost their fathers (4.6%) is more than twice as high as the one of those who lost their mothers (1.9%).

#### THE YOUTH

In Rwanda, the youth which are defined as population aged from 16 to 30 years, constitute 27.1% (3.6 million) of the total population of Rwanda.

According to latest official estimates, most of this category reside in rural areas (2.4 million) compared with the urban areas (1.2 million). It said that sixty-nine percent of youth are single, while 30% are married.

The analysis of RPHC5 shows that, most of private households in Rwanda (65%) reside in the planned rural settlements « Umutugudu ». About 15% are found in the

dispersed/isolated housing settlements while 9% in spontaneous/squatter settlements.

Almost all housing units occupied by private households in Rwanda have their roof mainly made either of iron sheets (74%) or of local tiles (26%). Iron sheet roofing is more predominant in the City of Kigali (99%), in the Eastern province (99%) and in the districts of Rusizi (99%), Gicumbi (94%).

#### SANITATION

In the area of sanitation, data show that more than 72% of the private households in Rwanda use unshared improved sanitation facilities (toilets). The distribution of the private household by type of used toilet facilities reveals that most households (89%) use pit latrines with constructed floor slab of which 69% are unshared.

Around 2.3 million Rwanda's households (69 percent of private households) practice agricultural activities. Around 2.1 million households (63 percent of private households) do crop farming. Major crops grown in Rwanda are bean (80 percent of households farmers), maize (56 %), cassava (49 %), sweet potato (44 %), and banana (24 %). Around a half of households grow at least one fruit type.



# RUSIZI CHANGES FACE AS AUTHORITIES FAST TRACK AMBITIOUS TRAJECTORY OF TURNING INTO GREEN CITY

Rusizi secondary city is undergoing a facelift that has seen several shanty houses beautified by willing residents in order to catch up with the city's master plan. District authorities launched the planting of ornament trees such as palm trees on several streets. In the Imihigo District rankings, Rusizi significantly improved from the 30th to the 6th position in 2021/2022. Dr. Anicet Kibiriga, the Mayor talked to Rwanda Dispatch's George Kalisa and Steven Nsamaza about developments in his district.

Dr. Kibiriga, an academician-cum-Politician who served as a Research Specialist, Senior Advisor to DG REB and Economics Lecturer was elected to Mayorship in November 2021.

**QN: MAYOR, WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR PRIMARY INTERVENTIONS?**

MAYOR: Since my election as Mayor of Rusizi District in November 2021, I have presided over many development initiatives and reforms including popularizing the slogan of the district known locally as 'Tujyanemo'. Rusizi city was Kamembe Sector extended to Gihundwe, Mururu and some cells of Nkombo, Nkanka, Giheke and Nyakarenzo.

**QN: CAN YOU PLEASE GIVE US SOME FACTS ABOUT RUSIZI?**

MAYOR: Thank you so much, Rusizi District with a population of 485,529 inhabitants sits on 940.95 square kilometres. It borders Burundi to the South and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to the west. The district constitutes of 18 sectors which are; Butare, Bweyeye, Gikundamvura, Gashonga, Giheke, Gihundwe, Gitambi, Kamembe, Muganza, Mururu, Nkanka, Nkombo, Nkungu, Nyakabuye, Nyakarenzo, Nzahaha,

Rwimbogo and Bugarama. It largely depends on trade, crop husbandry and livestock.



Dr. Anicet Kibiriga  
- Rusizi Mayor

**QN: WHAT MAKES RUSIZI UNIQUE FROM OTHER DISTRICTS?**

MAYOR: Rusizi borders two neighbouring countries with Rwanda – Burundi and DRC. Its location makes it benefit from cross-border trade with these countries. Secondly, Rusizi soils are favourable for food production particularly the sectors of Nzahaha, Bugarama, Gikundamvura, and Nyakabuye. You have heard of the Bugarama rice, grown in the vast plains and Rusizi is Rwanda's model district as regards the growing of fruits. We grow patchouli oil plants that are used as raw materials in the processing of perfumes.

Rusizi was the first district in the country to establish a coffee wasting station to produce high quality coffee dubbed Rusizi Speciality Coffee.

Also, King Musinga shortly stayed in Kamembe after he had been deposed on November 12, 1931 by the Belgian colonial administration hence the area's great historic significance.

In addition, the district is endowed with other natural wonders like the hot springs in Bugarama that are part of the tourist attractions of the district.

**QN: YOU HAVE TALKED OF CROSS-BORDER TRADE, WHAT ARE THE EFFORTS IN PLACE TO PROMOTE IT, ESPECIALLY AFTER THE SLOWDOWN CAUSED BY COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS?**

MAYOR: As a district working with different development partners, we have constructed modern markets targeting the Burundian and Congolese market. Rwandan small-scale traders sell commodities across the borders whereas the Congolese traders from Bukavu bring a variety of commodities to Rusizi markets.

**QN: WHAT ARE THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES THE DISTRICT IS INVOLVED IN THAT HAVE CHANGED THE FACE OF YOUR CITY?**

MAYOR: Rusizi as a secondary city should be similar in many development aspects with Kigali city. It has, thus, undergone a facelift that has seen several shanty houses either demolished or renovated by the residents. And, the unfinished buildings that formerly made the city look underdeveloped and remote have been completed by willing residents. A number of storied and modern commercial buildings have been constructed according to the city's master plan alongside planting of ornament trees on several streets. The district encourages dwellers to maintain cleanliness and many strategies to beautify our home city are in place.

For instance, we have embarked on the planting of ornamental trees like palm trees in Giheke, Kamembe, Mururu, Rwimbogo, Gihundwe, Gashonga and Nzabarugama. The palm tree planting will roll out to all streets and sectors.

Planting the palm trees is part of the strategies to fast track our vision of making Rusizi a Green City. Construction of roads is ongoing as well and many have been completed.

**QN: ANY EFFORTS DIRECTED TOWARDS THE PROMOTION OF TOURISM IN THE DISTRICT?**

MAYOR: We've a variety of tourist attractions in Rusizi both natural and man-made, for instance, the number of hotels that are highly competitive is growing. Mantis Kivu Marina Bay Hotel, Progress Hotel, Centre Diocesan de Pastorale Incuti, Vive Hotel, Emeraude Kivu Resort are some on a long list. In the past, we never had such modern hotels in the area, and thus, this achievement is worth celebrating by residents, and guests can now be accommodated in decent hotels. There are two new 4-Star hotels under construction right in Lake Kivu and we're hopeful they will enhance hospitality services in Rusizi.

Mantis Kivu Marina Bay Hotel enjoys a vantage location where guests can enjoy the serene views of L. Kivu and the landscape of DRC. The hot springs in Bugarama also attract both local and international visitors.

Aside, cultural tourism is encouraged in Rusizi. For instance, the traditional dance known locally as 'Gusama' of the Abashi communities on Nkombo island and their language, Amashi form potential tourist attractions. Close to 80% of the residents here depend on fishing for a living and the district leadership has already considered how fishing in general can be promoted by availing fishing equipment.

**QN: HOW ARE YOU HANDLING THE RECOVERY PROCESS OF COVID-19 EFFECTS, ESPECIALLY IN TRADE?**

**Most small-scale traders had exited business. Nonetheless, through government recovery plans and working with partners many are resuming trade. They were supported with capital to restart and encouraged to form cooperatives among other interventions.**

**In the past, we never had such modern hotels in the area, and thus, this achievement is worth celebrating by residents, and guests can now be accommodated in decent hotels. There are two new 4-Star hotels under construction right in Lake Kivu and we're hopeful they will enhance hospitality services in Rusizi.**

MAYOR: Trade was negatively impacted. Before the Coronavirus pandemic, traders were working for nearly 24hrs. Following preventive measures imposed to contain the plague, working hours were limited up to 3pm currently which has reduced the volume of cross border trade.

Most small-scale traders had exited business. Nonetheless, through government recovery plans and working with partners many are resuming trade. They were supported with capital to restart and encouraged to form cooperatives among other interventions.

For security issues, Rusizi is very secure and security has never been part of the problems of the district, and we have not received any reports of mistreatment of Rwandan nationals on the DRC side where many trade.

**QN: HOW DID THE COMPLETION OF KIVU BELT MEAN TO THE DISTRICT?**

MAYOR: Surely, it was a positive response to the transport problems. Today, Rusizi dwellers have options to reach Kigali either through the traditional (old) Nyungwe route or via Karongi. The cost of transport for both passengers and goods reduced as a result.

**QN: LASTLY, WHAT ARE THE ONGOING PROJECTS YOU HAVE?**

MAYOR: The palm tree planting is part of the broad strategy to overhaul the city's cleanliness and is underway. Tujyanemo Rusizi is undertaking a 500 houses project which aims at building the houses for the most vulnerable residents that are currently homeless. Recently, we met with the natives of Rusizi living and working across the country as well as those in the diaspora and all are literally positive about our development initiatives. Our aim is to ensure that no one is left behind in development.





# RUSIZI ON THE RIGHT DEVELOPMENT PATH

STEVEN NSAMAZA

Located in the triangular region bordering Burundi and DR Congo, Rusizi district sits on a total surface area of 940.95Km2 and inhabited by 485,529 people. The district borders Nyamasheke to the North, Nyamagabe and Nyaruguru in the East with a big part of Nyungwe National Park in between.

The district’s topograph rises from Lake Kivu and connects to Lake Tanganyika, with a network of rivers. The region is characterized by the great plain of Bugarama, a chain of plateaux and the Congo-Nile basic where the Nyungwe tropical rain forest is situated.

Nyungwe forest is a habitat of diverse flora and fauna, including many

endangered, rare and endemic species. A total of 960 individual trees representing 70 different species are found here. There is, also, a long list of animals including blue monkeys, owl-faced monkey, range-restricted L’Hoest’s monkey, chimpanzees, bushpigs, duiker species, birds of different species among others attract many tourists as they offer an amazing experience.

Therefore, Nyungwe forest as a unique habitat to various primate species serves as a potential tourist destination. The forest is a vital source of protected watershed that is critical to Rwanda, contributing to over 70% of the country’s water resources. Today, Nyungwe is a popular tourist destination, being one of the last remaining natural forest in the country.

Along the shores of Rwanda’s biggest lake, the district is a gateway to Lake Kivu Islands that are regarded as key zones in the country’s biodiversity conservation and host a number of rare and endemic plants and animal species that are a source of tourism and recreation.

Despite the pressure on the land, the soils of this region are generally permeable and rich in iron. Hence, Rusizi district is capable of producing sufficient food for its people and crop husbandry is carried out in the vast plains of Bugarama, Muganza, Nzahaha, Gikundamvura and Nyakabuye. The district in the South Western tip of Rwanda is the country’s model district as regards to horticulture particularly the growing of patchouli oil plant, a raw material for perfumes processing.

Rusizi was the first district to establish a coffee wasting station to produce high quality coffee dubbed Rusizi Specialty Coffee and boasts of thousands of hectares occupied by tea plantations.

## POTENTIAL TOURISM DESTINATION

Designated as one of country’s secondary cities, Rusizi boasts of numerous opportunities to support sustainable urban development with trade and tourism activities high on the list. Its tourism potential is enhanced by the presence of Lake Kivu and a network of rivers, tea plantations and Nyungwe natural forest.

Having a waterfront and multiple border entrances to Burundi and the DR Congo with Bukavu City nearby, Rusizi one of the best performing border cities.

It’s trade track with the two neighbouring countries, an agro-industry and legacy in various forms of tourism increases chances for cumulative trade opportunities in regional with cross border at the centre.

The district is also endowed with other historical and natural wonders like where King Musinga stayed after his deposition and the hot springs in Bugarama that are part of the tourist attractions.

In November 1931, when King Musinga was deposed by the Belgian colonial masters, he was first exiled to Kamembe before finally going to Kilembwe, in the southeastern Congo, where he lived the rest of his days.

Having a waterfront and multiple border entrances to Burundi and the DR Congo with Bukavu City nearby, Rusizi one of the best performing border cities.

The village where the king stayed with his family and servants until 1940 was later named after him, its found in the present day Kamatita Cell in Gihundwe Sector.

Today, it’s a touristic attraction because of its great historic significance. The garage where he was imprisoned by the Belgians has broken down but there are plans to restore it so that visitors get this bit of Rwanda’s history.



As Rwanda’s frontier to the southwestern tip, the city has developed and expanded from a small border and fishing city to one that attract investors. It’s has expanded from the original three sectors of Gihundwe, Kamembe and Mururu to five sectors including Giheke, Nyakarenzo, Nkanka and Nkombo Island.

Dr. Anicet Kibiriga, the Mayor of Rusizi District notes that the area is now a tourism hotspot with a variety of attractions both natural and man-made. Highly competitive number of hotels are growing with different vantage locations where tourists are assured of great experiences.

Rusizi district is known as popular destination for hot springs, locally known as Amashuza. The much-adored hot springs are a touristic attraction where many flock the area because of the reported healing factors in the water.

Aside, cultural tourism is encouraged in Rusizi. For instance, the traditional dance known locally as ‘Gusama’ of the Abashi communities on Nkombo Island and their language, Amashi form potential tourist attractions.

Nkombo community is also known for fishing, 80% of the residents depend on fishing for a living and the district has already considered how fishing in general can be promoted by availing fishing equipment.





and geographical spread as we have seen above. The expansion signifies that Jesus Christ's Gospel is being spread, which is the key pillar of EMLR.



In addition, EMLR/Kinyaga Conference has recorded fundamental achievements in Education and Health over the time. Ignorance and illiteracy will not only affect the wellbeing of the people but also the total liberation of a person since the issues present major threats to their socio-economic development. In response, EMLR/Kinyaga Conference directed enormous efforts to establish schools right from Pre-Primary.

Investing in Education

Today, there are 37 Nursery schools either at the premises of the 12 Primary schools or the Churches. With the exception of one private primary school, 11 Primary schools are government aided. To this effect, Pastor Habiya mbere extends gratitude to the government of Rwanda for the unfailing support in the area of education.

"The Church partners with the government in increasing access to education. They have for instance helped with infrastructure development, teachers, instructional materials among others," he observes.

EMLR/KINYAGA CONFERENCE  
Education, Health,  
Development and the  
Gospel are inseparable

C ELESTIN HABIYAMBERE, Superintendent of Kinyaga Conference of Église Méthodiste Libre au Rwanda (EMLR) says that although the mission of his Church is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, liberation of the people from all forces of infliction such as poverty, ignorance and disease was regarded critical.

Therefore, to achieve the goal of creating a holistic Christian,

EMLR prioritizes investing in the four pillars – education, health, economic development and supporting the most vulnerable. Since the Methodist Church arrived in Rwanda in 1942, it has directed enormous efforts towards enlightenment of its followers and Rwandans in general on various socioeconomic issues with the aim of empowering them to deliver themselves from poor living standards.



Pastor Celestin Habiya mbere, Superintendent of Kinyaga Conference of Église Méthodiste Libre au Rwanda

Historic background

In 1942, the Gospel had already arrived on the African Continent and Christian missionaries were spreading it to as many parts as

possible. At the time, American missionaries Frank and his wife Hazel Adamson set up the first Free Methodist mission station at Kibogora in Nyamasheke District in South Western Rwanda.

In 1982, the missionaries planted a Church at Kamembe which doubled as the first Parish. Since then, Kinyaga Conference has been expanding from one Parish to 19 Parishes and 97 local Churches as of 2022.

Pastor Habiya mbere revealed that there are at least 460 groups under

the local churches. Each group constitutes of about three to nine homes.

Kinyaga Conference of the EMLR has presence in the sectors of Rusizi except Rwimbogo, and in the five sectors of Nyamasheke – Karengera, Ruharambuga, Nyabitekere, Bushenge and Shange. According to EMLR's action plan, the Church will reach all villages.

The Free Methodist Church has expanded by leaps and bounds in terms of the numbers of Christians







Healthcare

To create a holistic person, Église Méthodiste Libre au Rwanda (EMLR) also considers increased access to healthcare as critical in ensuring followers and Rwandan people enjoy healthy lives. The Church achieves this goal through establishing health posts and boosting awareness about prevention of diseases and teaching about the importance of having healthy diets.

Currently, EMLR/Kinyaga Conference owns and runs at least eight (8) health posts, and two (2) Hospitals in Gikundamvura and Kamonyi. The leader of EMLR/Kinyaga Conference told Rwanda Dispatch Magazine during an exclusive interview in February that the two hospitals have already assumed the status of a University Teaching Hospital.

“We sponsor trainings aimed at buttressing and popularizing a health culture among the residents where we have presence. They learn the importance of proper hand washing as part of hygiene lessons. Besides, we teach how to prepare health diets and link between healthy feeding and prevention of diseases,” he says.

Mass awareness about hygiene and sanitation starts from the top and trickles down to the local churches and Christian fellowships (groups) in the villages.

Community development

Over the years, EMLR/Kinyaga Conference has been responding to a horde of problems that confine residents of Kinyaga region to poor living standards. These range from grinding poverty and

education in Rusizi for not only the followers of the Free Methodist Church but all Rwandans in general.

Adult education is another area invested in to help promote literacy among the adults. The classes manned by qualified teachers are mobilized at the Church premises.

“We have qualified teachers and relevant modules and facilities, and beneficiaries receive a certificate on completion of the short courses of adult education,” noted the Superintendent of EMLR/Kinyaga Conference.

He reveals that preaching of the Gospel is one of the major activities conducted in all the Church owned schools.

At this backdrop, EMLR/Kinyaga Conference is building a University that will double as a branch of Kibogora Polytechnic. The management of EMLR/Kinyaga Conference is optimistic that the completion of this University will enhance access to University

EMLR/Kinyaga Conference is currently responding to the needs of University education in this region. Rusizi District as we speak is lacking a Private University. Students have not escaped constraints and challenges of studying from far away. At all odds, some students study at Kibogora Polytechnic in Nyamasheke while others go to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Hostel fees and transport are some of the outstanding challenges the learners are facing today.



unemployment to ignorance, lack of shelter and food insecurity.

“We encouraged and mobilized members of the Church to create saving groups. And, when the funds grew to amounts that they could not efficiently handle according to rules and regulations governing savings groups we encouraged them to come together and form a Savings and Credit Cooperative (SACCO) whose formal registration is in advanced stage,” says Pastor Habiyaambere.

The SACCO brings together all residents – both believers of EMLR/Kinyaga Conference, Christians belonging to other denominations and nonbelievers. Members can access loans and are fast becoming more bankable.

During the interview the Superintendent of EMLR/Kinyaga Conference revealed that they had already contacted Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA) and the central bank (BNR) for official registration of the SACCO in



the pipeline. He said that local authorities at the sector and Rusizi District recommended them to the relevant authorities including RCA.

With the growth of the Savings and Credit Cooperative, they are optimistic that many of the members will enjoy financial inclusion and the facility will continue to solve the problem of access to finance by members who need to solve day-to-day needs such as school fees, community health insurance known locally as mutuelle de sante, household items, building a house among others.

To jump out of the circle of poor harvests and food insecurity, the EMLR/Kinyaga Conference mobilized its members to start an Agriculture Project that promotes organic farming through making liquid organic fertilizers. The development came on the heels of inability by a considerate number of Christians to engage in productive, commercial modern farming, as they could not afford to buy industrial fertilizers.

Pastor Habiyaambere says that the mixture of the liquid fertilizers and the organic manure is a better fertilizer that has solved the problem of lack of fertilizers. The

programme that has so far spread in three sectors of Rusizi and three sectors of Nyamasheke will roll out to all sectors in the two districts.

Productivity per unit of land has increased as a result of applying the locally made fertilizer whose efficacy is much more than the industrial fertilizers.

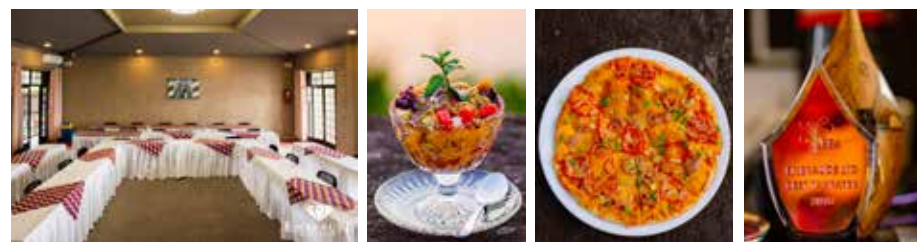
However, stressed that there is uneven pace of individual development. Some Christians and residents were lagging behind in development with some still homeless. Moreover, it is the principle of EMLR not to leave any person behind in development.

EMLR/Kinyaga Conference considers the plight of the needy people and pays medical insurance for the most vulnerable people in collaboration with the local authorities that identify them.

“Local leaders, right from the village to the district, cooperate with the Church by identifying the most deserving beneficiaries from the bracket of the most vulnerable residents. As a Church we help build a house for one homeless resident every year, which we hand over to them before the local authorities who make records of all the beneficiaries of our charity work,” he says

The leader of EMLR/Kinyaga Conference, however, decried the widespread mindset that is still a problem on the way to development. He said that some residents don’t have land where they can cultivate and the Church is sensitizing them to think of other economic activities that they can engage in rather than limiting their minds to agriculture. He said mega efforts have been directed to deal with mindset issues.





# EMERAUDE KIVU RESORT

## VANTAGE LOCATION AND CLASSIC SERVICES POSITION IT AS THE BEST DESTINATION

BY GEORGE KALISA

**E** MERAUDE KIVU RESORT is located at the centre of a triangular region in close proximity with Rwanda, Burundi and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Magnificent views, a super standard restaurant, gym, massage and deluxe rooms are some of the phenomena that position Emerald Kivu Resort as one of the best destinations in Rusizi District, Western Province. It is also famous for hosting conferences with state-of-the-art equipment like sound system and projectors in a 80-capacity conference room.

Have you been to Emerald Kivu Resort? If yes, don't suffer from nostalgia, you can visit the hotels that meets the taste of all visitors. The upgraded facilities and unmatched customer care make the



“**Eugène Rutagarama and his wife are the brainchild behind this hotel. The couple is well travelled with vast knowledge and wide experience about hospitality and tourism sectors in the East African regional bloc.**”

hotel one of the best destination, not only tourists and holidaymakers but also merry-makers.

Established at the shores of Lake Kivu, Emerald Kivu Resort enjoys



a vantage location that enables guests to enjoy fascinating views of Lake Kivu and the beautiful landscape of DRC just across the waters.

The visitors at Emerald Kivu Resort get fascinating and memorable experiences at the shore due to various leisure activities offered by the hotel. These include water sports activities like swimming and a ride on an engine boat. Hotel services are in full swing here because the hotel values recreational activities as core on the hotel services package. Relaxation and refreshment are guaranteed throughout the week at Emerald Kivu Resort.

Secondly, being situated at the shores of Lake Kivu the hotel guests enjoy the cold breezes that emanate from the lake that hosts the border of Rwanda and DRC in Western Rwanda.

The serene environment of Emerald Kivu Resort include spectacular, spotless, trimmed gardens, a restaurant, free shuttle service, a 24-hour front desk, free WiFi and a spacious parking. A professional staff of 26 permanent members ensures that all guests are catered for.

### ROOMS

Some rooms at the property feature a terrace with a lake view. All rooms features a flat-screen TV with satellite channels, microwave, a kettle, a shower and a desk. All guest rooms will provide guests with a toaster. The resort offers a continental or American breakfast.

The classy facilities and high standard of services qualify Emerald Kivu Resort as the best

destination. The specifications of the rooms conform the standards and requirements of hotels in East Africa (EA). Eugène Rutagarama and his wife are the brainchild behind this hotel. The couple is well travelled with vast knowledge and wide experience about hospitality and tourism sectors in the East African regional bloc.

The wife, who is currently the manager of the hotel's restaurant holds a Master's Degree in Hotel Management. While Rutagarama holds a Masters in Biology Conservation from the United Kingdom. Therefore, both boast of a wealth background of tourism. Rutagarama had worked in the tourism sector since the early 1990s as a senior technical officer in ORTPN before he fled the country due to the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

When he returned back he served as the Deputy Executive Officer of ORTPN. He later worked in Nyungwe for three years before assuming a post of a Programme Officer for an NGO in Virunga for nine years.

The couple have spent a great deal of their active years carrying out study tours to parks and vibrant cities in the EA region. This passion of learning more about the hospitality sector was great motivation for them to visit many booming cities in the region. They have been to Mombasa, Malindi and Nairobi.

“I would take photos of fascinating views. And, I followed the guidelines for a 3\*Hotel specifications and minimum standards and I had the picture of my dream hotel and I had mastered whatever I wanted. Therefore, I



### HOSPITALITY



helped the architects to come up with the perfect design of this hotel,” recalled Rutagarama.

Rutagarama's work background provided an opportunity for him to gather fundamental knowledge and skills in the hospitality and tourism sectors.

Accommodation capacity has been expanding from eight rooms at its beginning in 2010 to 34 rooms as of January 2022. In addition, they have established facilities (self-contained) where families with children can be hosted and entertained under maximum comfort and security. The classy beds in the rooms and top-class mosquito nets along unparalleled room services is one of the factors that have enabled the hotel gain clients' confidence in just 12 years.

### HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Mr. Rutagarama's account is characteristic of moments of hard times whereby continuity meant sacrifice, hard work, patience and more investment. At one time, rutagarama says they did not have collateral and entirely depended on their savings. Lack of enough initial capital was hugely the reason why Emerald Kivu Resort was constructed in three phases.

“.....  
**Accommodation capacity has been expanding from eight rooms at its beginning in 2010 to 34 rooms as of January 2022. In addition, they have established facilities (self-contained) where families with children can be hosted and entertained under maximum comfort and security.**”

After completing the first phase, he secured a loan from commercial institutions, which revamped the construction activities and the hotel got a new facelift.

The Chairman of this hotel who is also the Founder says that they chose Cyangugu as the location because his goal was to invest in tourism and at the time there was no single facility in the category of 3\* Hotel. His passion, therefore, was to start a hotel that attract governmental officials, diplomats, high profile business persons, members of international non-governmental organisations and the middle class community in general.

Mr. Rutagarama hails Rusizi and he had the passion to develop his home area as well. In 2017 when he embarked on phase two of the hotel's construction, the hotel had expanded to 34 rooms.

Before they started on the foundation of the hotel, the couple had ventured into restaurant business in Kigali City though none of the two restaurants they started was economically viable. The challenges they faced in Kigali never made the couple back down on their dream of establishing a hotel in Rusizi.

The Chairman says that the development of water transport on Lake Kivu, which is in the offing will increase convenience for the clients of the hotel to connect easily between major cities like Rubavu, Karongi, Bukavu and Goma. Currently, this poses a main challenge to expanding the clientele.





## SERENE AND QUIET ENVIRONMENT DEFINE CENTRE DIOCÉSAIN DE PASTORALE INCUTI

BY GEORGE KALISA

**S**ERENE AND QUIET environment, friendly staff and good dishes distinguish Centre Diocésain de Pastorale Incuti from other hotels in Rusizi district. The multilingual staff uses French, English and Swahili, a factor that relieved their esteemed clients of language barrier and many foreign guests find the hotel a home away from home.



Edouard Sinayobye, Bishop of Cyangugu Diocese

One of a few hotels with a Chapel in the country and started by the Catholic Diocese of Cyangugu, Centre Diocésain de Pastorale Incuti is located in Cyangugu cell, Kamembe Sector in Rusizi. Its location at the shores of Lake Kivu is of paramount importance to its development since it allows guests to access spectacular views of the lake and the eastern part of neighbouring DRC.

Aside from the waters of Lake Kivu, its location is endowed with a variety of evergreen vegetation ranging from rain tropical forest tree species to swampy vegetation along the lake.

### AMENITIES

This hotel boasts of modern accommodation facilities with standardized beds and beddings. The hotel premises also host a spotless garden where beautiful ornamental trees and flowers are flourishing.

Father Benjamin Bapfakurera, the Managing Director of the hotel, therefore, invites visitors that are in need of relaxation and

refreshment to take advantage of the serene climate available.

A visitor receives all services including delicious dishes at affordable prices and guests at this hotel that is famous for going an extra mile in all its services are encouraged by the management to feel free whenever they visit. When they sit outside they are greeted by the cool breezes emanating from the lake, and if the coldness is beyond a client's expectation hot showers are readily available in all rooms.

.....  
**Aside from the waters of Lake Kivu, its location is endowed with a variety of evergreen vegetation ranging from rain tropical forest tree species to swampy vegetation along the lake.**  
.....



Father Benjamin Bapfakurera, Managing Director of the hotel



Sea food lovers should note that no guest will miss fresh tilapia at the hotel. The free fast internet (WI-FI) will make a guest's stay more comfortable as they will be able to connect to the globe while they are at the hotel.

The hotel boasts of a spacious, secure and free parking so clients are free to come with private vehicles.

Apart from the availability of public transport, Centre Diocésain de Pastorale Incuti is located in close proximity to highly demanded facilities by travelers and tourists. For instance, Rusizi Airport is located at about 2km almost 15 minutes away for guests riding in a car while the Bus Park is located 3km away.

### CLIENTELE

According to Fr. Bapfakurera, who is also a serving Priest in the Diocese of Cyangugu, the hotel receives tourists from all walks of life including holiday makers from Rwanda and overseas.

In addition, it hosts both local and regional meetings. The Father notes that the location of the hotel makes it more convenient to organisers of meetings by countries in the Great Lakes region like DRC, Rwanda and Burundi. "The well furnished conference rooms with a modern sound speaker and projectors have the capacity of between 120 and 130," revealed Fr. Bapfakurera.

Esteemed clients can book electronically through email and

the hotel website. Equally, they can book by calling the hotel reception.

### HISTORIC BACKGROUND

"Since its inception in 2012, the hotel has been expanding from a small guest house for about 10 guests to 80 guests as we speak," says the Father during an exclusive interview with Rwanda Dispatch Magazine.

The Father noted that the Diocese never had the plan of starting the hotel at the beginning. The idea of upgrading the small centre where mainly clerics would be accommodated to a hotel was a direct response to the huge demand for accommodation and restaurant services in the area.

They did not have sufficient starting capital and hence decided to construct the



hotel in phases. He expressed gratification that the hotel was providing jobs to people from different social classes, especially during the expansion projects like construction.

He said that they enjoy a collaborative partnership with the authorities of Rusizi district and the hotel usually gives a priority to the local people whenever there is a recruitment exercise of workers.

Apart from the limited capital that affected the hotel particularly at the beginning, low business seasons also affect the hotel as the number of clients significantly goes down.

Secondly, the perennial insecurity in the DRC has reduced the number of clients from the conflict-ravaged country.

He notably said that they work harder every day to take the hotel from a 3-STAR to the next level.

.....  
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# CENTRE DIOCÉSAIN DE PASTORALE INCUTI

SERENE AND QUIET  
ENVIRONMENT



One of a few hotels with a Chapel in the country, located in Cyangugu cell, Kamembe Sector in Rusizi, at the shores of Lake Kivu allows guests to access spectacular views of the

lake and the eastern part of neighbouring DRC.

The hotel boasts of a spacious, secure and free parking so clients are free to come with private vehicles.

The well furnished conference rooms with a modern sound speaker and projectors have the capacity of between 120 and 130 persons.



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## VIVE HOTEL & APARTMENTS

The spectacular view of the vegetation and close proximity of Lake Kivu shores presents an intimate, restful and modern refuge for travelers looking for a joyous experience.



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- HOUSEKEEPING
- SPACIOUS PARKING
- SUN TERRACE
- BBQ FACILITIES
- GARDEN
- KITCHEN
- FOOD & DRINKS
- SPECIAL DIET MENUS (ON REQUEST)
- BREAKFAST IN THE ROOM
- BAR
- RESTAURANT
- RECEPTION SERVICES
- CONCIERGE SERVICE & LUGGAGE STORAGE
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### CONTACT INFORMATION

PHONE: 0788309235 | EMAIL: [TWIZEVIKING@GMAIL.COM](mailto:TWIZEVIKING@GMAIL.COM)





# VIVE HOTEL & APARTMENTS

## HOSPITALITY GERM READY FOR DISCOVERY

Tucked 700 meters away from Kamembe Airport and 750 meters from Rusizi city center, as well as 1.5 kilometer to the Rwanda DR Congo frontier, Vive Hotel & Apartments is a hospitality germ strategically located.

The spectacular view of the vegetation and close proximity of Lake Kivu shores present VIVE HOTEL &

APARTMENTS an intimate, restful and modern refuge for travelers looking for a joyous experience.

A peaceful retreat for many Rwandans travelling to the Southwestern city of Rusizi and tourists mostly from the neighboring DR Congo, the hotel features a collection of relaxing rooms and suites.

“We officially opened Vive Hotel & Apartments in 2017 with a target to provide services to a range of people who travel to our city and fail to get hotel services,” explains Vicent Twizeyimana, the owner and founder of the hotel.

As a businessman in Rusizi who was in transportation, Twizeyimana spotted a business opportunity when he realized that many people travelling to his home town lacked decent facilities to stay and enjoy the tranquility of the area.

To taste the waters in the hospitality sector, he first built Umunini Motel which opened in 2008 and still operational. As clientele increased and demand for hotel services grew, Twizeyimana mobilized more resources to build a bigger facility.

He says that building the new hotel was developed from the old motel, perfecting every step from the experience while bringing out the wishes of customers.

Boasting the best value, Vive Hotel & Apartments is spacious with 54 Rooms including apartments, a Bar and Restaurant with African cuisine as well as conference facilities.



The largest conference hall can accommodate up to 1,000 people well seated and four smaller ones of 300, 100 & 50 people respectively.

The proprietor notes that, the hotel attracts a big number of guests from DR Congo and local clientele specifically enjoys the conference facilities like conducting retreats and wedding receptions.

Guest Rooms at Vive Hotel & Apartments are cozy fitted with flat-screen TV, private bathrooms equipped with a bath or shower, free toiletries for the ultimate Rusizi vacation.

The hotel takes care of transportation for clients from Kamembe Airport and are equally returned for the next flight.

However, the current situation in the hospitality sector was greatly affected by COVID-19 restrictions and Rusizi was not immune to the pandemic. The founder of the hotel notes that the clientele from the neighboring DRC significantly decreased in number.

As the economy recovers from these devastating effects, so are business activities in Rusizi city. Establishments like Vive Hotel are regaining their niche but business from across the border has not yet resumed, this is mostly because operational hours at the Rwanda - DRC border were reduced.

Twizeyimana, also the Chairman of the Hotel and Restaurants Association in Rusizi District, calls upon the government to look at challenges faced by hotels in Rusizi. Some



policies, also, affect the sector like the recent Prime Minister regulations prohibiting government institutions to hold workshops in hotels.

Government being one of the biggest customer should look into ways to give business to hotels, says Twizeyimana. He adds that this will allow quick economic recovery in this sector as they look for business elsewhere and it will allow more job creation.

Vive Hotel & Apartments has created hundreds of jobs in Rusizi including hotel staff and ready market for suppliers.

Through social corporate responsibility, the hotel supports small scale women traders dealing in vegetables.



### HOSPITALITY

The hotel supported them become formal traders working together in form of associations, improve quality of their products and provide a ready market.

The founder of Vive Hotel & Apartments observes that, the development of Rusizi requires efforts of everyone and is undeniable because of the region's potential and the political will of the leadership in place.

#### HOTEL AMENITIES

High speed WIFI  
Flat-screen HDTV  
bathtub and shower  
housekeeping  
Spacious parking

- Sun terrace
- BBQ facilities
- Garden
- Kitchen
- Food & Drinks
- Special diet menus (on request)
- Breakfast in the room
- Bar
- Restaurant
- Reception services
- Concierge service & Luggage storage
- Shared lounge/TV area

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

Phone: 0788309235

Email: [twizeyiking@gmail.com](mailto:twizeyiking@gmail.com)







# COCOCHAUMA HIGHLIGHTS USE AND BENEFITS OF LIME

**AGRICULTURAL LIME**, locally known in kinyarwanda as 'Ishwagara' has been used by farmers for years as a soil improver. Ishwagara is used to reduce soil acidity which enhances productivity potential in agriculture.

Applying granulated lime helps to neutralize soil acidity while increasing essential mineral content, including high calcium and magnesium, essential for plant & grass growth and controlling plant temperature which results in improved crop growth and yields.

COCOCHAUMA, a cooperative located in Mashuza, Nyakabuye Sector in Rusizi District owns a factory that produces Ishwagara for agricultural use and burnt lime for construction use. The factory is among the few in the country that blends lime and grade 1 fertilizers for agricultural purposes.

Védaste Uwimana, the Coordinator of the Lime Factory notes that lime is very important mineral with significant uses in agriculture, metallurgical and construction sectors.

Lime is the versatile mineral. In Rwanda where much of the soils are acidic, Ishwagara is an important component to improve fertility and with fertilizers it enhances production.

Owing to several benefits of lime, the Rusizi based factory has supplied lime to water utility institutions to purify water. It is said that lime kills all the macrobiotics, harmful to human bodies.

In construction, the dominant use of lime is in soil stabilization for roads,



“People should know the importance of agricultural lime for example checking acidity in the soils. He calls on Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB) to increase research related to the processing and use of Ishwagara.”

earthen dams, airfields, and building foundations. With many buildings in Rwanda facing humidity issues, lime can be a key ingredient, also used in plaster and retards the aging process.

The coordinator of the factory said that they produce two types, that is agricultural lime, which is usually crushed limestone, not a product of a lime kiln. The other type is the burnt lime or quicklime for construction and water purposes.

He observes that they are doing research to find out more uses of lime particularly for energy purposes.

However, there is a low market in the country for lime which is responsible for the underutilization of the factory in Rusizi. The Coordinator calls on government support in stepping up awareness campaign about the importance of lime.

People should know the importance of agricultural lime for example checking acidity in the soils. He calls on Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB) to increase research related to the processing and use of Ishwagara.

Uwimana explains that they have had market from government agencies or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like those in farming that purchase Ishwagara to distribute to farmers.



He notes that people should individually start buying lime because of its importance instead of waiting for handouts from government or NGOs

Improving the welfare of communities

COCOCHAUMA which dates back in 1968, started with a small tea house and bakery. The founders who were ADEPR Christians in Nyakabwende had an idea to engage in commercial activities, when a Belgian who mined lime in the area left, the cooperative bought his business and started producing Ishwagara.

When local authorities realized the potential of Ishwagara and the cooperative's contribution in development, they advised them to broaden the cooperative by admitting more members from all beliefs.

The cooperative grew at the time admitting up to 35 members, however, as years went by, some members left while others died and today the cooperative is made up of only 26 members.







Nonetheless, the impact of COCOCHAUMA has grown over the years to become a pride of the communities for many reasons.

The cooperative has brought many developments and built the first hospitality establishment in Nyakabuye Sector. COCOCHAUMA owns a motel, an idea initiated as a way to develop the area where no such facility existed. People visiting the area wouldn't find anywhere to stay a night and locals had no decent place to seek hospitality services.

Tourists and travelers to the famous Cyamudongo forest or this region are known to make a stopover at the motel to refresh or stay a night. The motel is an important facility to the area as it facilitates development.

Uwimana said that, as development continues to take shape in the area they are thinking of expanding the motel to even the level of a hotel in regard to demand.

From the various commercial activities by this cooperative, the community gains employment in hundreds, at least 50 permanent workers are employed at the factory. More jobs have been created by the motel including permanent staff, casual workers and suppliers.

COCOCHAUMA supports vulnerable communities where it pays community basic health insurance (Mutuelle de Santé) for residents benefiting at least 100 people every year.



**COCOCHAUMA supports vulnerable communities where it pays community basic health insurance (Mutuelle de Santé) for residents benefiting at least 100 people every year.**



Vulnerable households have benefited houses built by the cooperative and others have benefited from the free paint of lime to beautify their houses.

The cooperative also supports its workers and needy residents to diversify their incomes by keeping animals with a short gestation period and high returns. They are given pigs

among other livestock.

Uwimana is grateful to the government of Rwanda and Rusizi District in particular for the support in facilitating to acquire the required certificates or licenses as well as provide market for their products. He underlines unwavering commitment as partners in development.

## NEW MOTEL COCOCHAUMA



Tourists and travelers to the famous Cyamudongo forest or this region are known to make a stopover at the motel to refresh or stay a night. The motel is an important facility to the area as it facilitates development.



### CONTACT INFORMATION

**0786 737 354 / 0783 549 825 / 0788 827 976 / 0783 090 512**





## MANUFACTURING

The farming activities have become very beneficial to the neighboring communities since most are farmers, Nezerwa Project introduced modern farming techniques and provided training to willing farmers to raise their productivity both in quantity and quality.

The neighboring community has not only benefited in improving agriculture but vulnerable families are given livestock by Nezerwa project (when they produce they are given to their neighbors), built houses for the vulnerable households, market for their produce and employment to the residents.

The development of Karenghe has a lot to credit Nezerwa Project, the area had no hospitality services until it was established and anyone who wanted to go out or stay a night had to travel to Rusizi city.

Muragije notes that they have a vision to develop the place as much as it has its own potential but has limited means for some developments. The road to the area is still poor which requires the intervention of the district as the area can attract more tourists and investments.

# NEZERWA PROJECT LTD PROMOTES MANUFACTURING WITH LOCAL RAW MATERIALS

**IN 2014**, Ernest Muragije officially launched Nezerwa Project Ltd to start making alcoholic beverages, strategically setting up a factory in Rusizi District to produce ginger flavoured drinks which became his signature product. This has gained ground in Rwanda and is exported to neighboring Bukavu in DRC and Burundi.

The geographical position of Rusizi District makes it one of the rare strategic regions of Rwanda.

In business the area has a big market potential both locally and as a neighbour to two countries to the west and south which are Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Burundi respectively.

Rusizi's potential in commerce includes the available market locally and the good road communication between the towns of Bukavu & Uvira (DRC) and Bujumbura (Burundi) as well good linkage through Lake Kivu, accessing Karongi and Rubavu towns in the North West of the country, and to Goma (DRC).

The strategic location of Rusizi



Ernest Muragije, the Chairman of Nezerwa Project

is one the main reasons Ernest Muragije established Nezerwa Project in the district to tap into the local market as well as the export market to the neighboring countries.

According Muragije, the Chairman of Nezerwa Project, as an entrepreneur

the district presented a business opportunity as a virgin region with availability of agricultural raw materials and wide market stretching beyond borders.

Muragije was equally inspired to be enterprising by the economic progress and development of Rwanda facilitated by visionary leadership. The political will of the country make investments thrive and gives confidence to young entrepreneurs.

Located 24 km from Rusizi city in Karenghe, Rwimbogo Sector of Rusizi District, Nezerwa Project is developing the area at a rapid speed. The residents are employed and many now have a steady market for their produce.

## BREWING GINGER FLAVORED DRINKS

Nezerwa Project has a factory that makes different alcoholic beverages, practices modern farming and owns a hospitality establishment, the only of its kind in the area, this includes a restaurant, bar and lodges.

The Chairman says that they choose to make the drinks because of the importance of ginger to people's health, the demand and the availability of agricultural the raw materials in Rusizi.

Nezerwa Project's premier product is INEZA 'Ginger Flavoured' drink that are in different packages like bottles of 750ml and 330ml as well



as drinks in cans of 500ml. The latest drink is Ikara Wine made from sugarcanes that are abundant in Rusizi.

INEZA drinks are available countrywide with distribution outlets in Kigali and Rusizi. The factory currently produces 3,000 to 5,000 litres per day and has production capacity to produce more given the market demand.

Muragije explains that the factory has capacity to increase production

but had scaled down due to the effects of Covid-19. He says that they are able to increase production depending on the market and they are ready to satisfy any demand.

When the factory started, as an agro processing unit it had waste materials that are used as fertilizers. This encouraged the founder to put this to use, thereby starting farming activities that would as well supplement in providing the factory with raw materials.







**NEZERWA PROJECT LTD**



**PHONE: 0788 630 947**

# RUSIZI PROGRESS HOTEL



## A SERENE ENVIRONMENT WITH:

- Modern gardens with a capacity of 800-1000 people
- State-of-the-art nightclub.
- Sauna and massage
- 30 standard furnished rooms and fast Wi-Fi.



KAMEMBE, RUSIZI DISTRICT, RWANDA • TEL: +250 781 060 088, +250 788 306 527



# RUSIZI PROGRESS HOTEL

## UNMATCHED AMBIANCE, MODERN GARDENS BEHIND GROWING CLIENTELE



Tens of thousands of clients that have been to the facility suitably called Rusizi Progress Hotel a house of ambience and stress reliever. The 2-STAR hotel provides the basic recreational services ranging from sauna and massage, nightclub to a bar and modern gardens.

Rusizi Progress Hotel derives its uniqueness from the vantage location. Opening doors in 2017, it's situated right in the heart of Rusizi city and in close proximity with sources to highly demanded services. Banks and Kamembe Airport are just located within the hotel's vicinity.

This airport serves Rusizi city with at least 11flights a week. In essence, this qualifies the hotel to be near Kigali and more convenient to all esteemed customers since it does not suffer from transport barrier.



Mr. Alphonse Ndayambaje, the Manager of the Rusizi Progress Hotel

Mr. Alphonse Ndayambaje, the Manager of the Rusizi Progress Hotel is optimistic that the hotel will sooner than later aspire for either a 3-STAR or 4-STAR status. To this effect, he extends gratitude to Rwanda's investment body (RDB) for the undying support and guidance on the requirements the hotel needs to move to the next level.

"Today, Rusizi Progress Hotel is a

● ● ● ● ●  
"Today, Rusizi Progress Hotel is a 2-STAR hotel, but we are itching to become either a 3-STAR or 4-STAR hotel as soon as we fulfill the minimum requirements including construction of a swimming pool" observed Ndayambaje.  
● ● ● ● ●

2-STAR hotel, but we are itching to become either a 3-STAR or 4-STAR hotel as soon as we fulfill the minimum requirements including construction of a swimming pool," observed Ndayambaje.

### MILESTONES

Nonetheless, Ndayambaje is happy for the milestones recorded within just a space of five years. Rusizi Progress Hotel boasts of a variety of critical services that induce a smile and great sense of gratification, relaxation and refreshment.

The facility was previously occupied by the defunct Ten-to-Ten hotel from the early 2000s boasts of luxurious and up-to-date accommodation with 30 standard furnished rooms and fast Wi-Fi.



In addition, the hotel manages three conference rooms each with a different capacity. The conference rooms hosts guests ranging from 35 people, 60 people and a multipurpose room with a capacity of hosting 200 guests. This one is instrumental to hosting events and functions such as wedding ceremonies, meetings and conferences regional or otherwise.

The serene environment that is augmented by the presence of modern gardens is another factor that no visitor can miss to notice and appreciate. Ndayambaje says that the gardens of Rusizi Progress Hotel have the capacity of between 800-1000 people and conveniently hosts weddings since it can accommodate big tents.

What makes this hotel unique is the presence of the state-of-the-art nightclub that has won it name for its high quality entertainment of lovers of nightclub services of all ages and economic status including travelers and young people.

The hotel, also, offers sauna and massage services and clients through feedback available on social media platforms appreciate the services of the hotel, a reason why they find visiting the hotel as worth of their monies. They go with fatigue and stress and leave stress-free and rejuvenated, particularly after quality hours of sauna and massage.

The management of the hotel



pay tribute to their esteemed clients for the support they show by opting for their services. They say the government, which is their principal client, deserves special mention.

Other regular clients include NGOs and corporate companies, Ndayambaje adds that members of the general public also seek different services from the hotel.

### RELEVANCE OF THE HOTEL

The Manager disclosed to Rwanda Dispatch Magazine team that the hotel gives first priority to the residents of the area when it comes to staff recruitment. To the effect, he revealed that at least 80% of the staff are residents of the district.

He added that the hotel regularly and timely pays taxes to local authorities and thus its presence in the area translates in increased revenues of the district through taxation.

Rusizi District is one of the most vibrant tourist destinations in the country located in a region that serves as a convergence of three East African nations – Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda.

This implies that tourists to those three countries can visit the hotel for relaxation and refreshment.

● ● ● ● ●  
The serene environment that is augmented by the presence of modern gardens is another factor that no visitor can miss to notice and appreciate.  
● ● ● ● ●

Secondly, the region is endowed with rare natural geographical features such as Nyungwe Nature Forest and Cyamudongo forest that is home to many wild animals that tourists wish to view.

Home to hot springs and the oldest cement processing plant in the country are located in the district. Ndayambaje, therefore, encourages visitors to these phenomena to visit the hotel whenever they are on a tourism adventure in this region.

The region is endowed with the largest lake in Rwanda, Lake Kivu which also offers fascinating views including many small islands. Relatedly, they have traditional dances known locally as 'gusama' provided by the inhabitants of Nkombo Island.

Agricultural tourism based particularly on coffee and tea is a big potential in this region.

However, Ndayambaje decried the dwindling number of visitors and attributed it to global economic challenges linked to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions and the Russia-Ukraine crisis that have had an impact on traveling.





# CENTRE D'ACCUEIL ST FRANÇOIS D'ASSIS

## DEFINED BY EXCELLENT SERVICES DELIVERY AND UNMATCHED CUSTOMER CARE

**C**entre d'Accueil St François d'Assis (CASFA) was founded by the Catholic Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters back in 1983 and received its official recognition in the government gazette later in 1987.

The location of CASFA Rusizi, a One-Star Hotel, within the vicinity of the shores of Lake Kivu, has since its establishment, been one of the advantages it enjoys. Tens of thousands of tourists – local and foreign - visit the area to view both the manmade and natural tourist attractions endowed in this part of the country.

"We encourage visitors to keep coming to the region because its abundantly endowed with amazing tourist attractions



**Sister Philoméne Mukamugenga, the Manager of CASFA- Rusizi.**

including Nyungwe tropical rain forest, Cyamudongo forest and Lake Kivu. Surely, they will not miss the great views including the splendid landscape of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) just across the lake when we host them at CASFA in Rusizi," observes Sister Philoméne Mukamugenga, the Manager of this hotel.

Unlike several hotels, management here has been at the frontlines of fighting immoral activities. They require couples to be legally married before they check in and/or occupy the classic double rooms.

She revealed that revenues raised from the hotel subsequently help to finance a hospital established and managed by the Franciscan sisters. Therefore, guests that frequent CASFA facilities indirectly support the promotion of health services for vulnerable citizens.

### SUPERB SERVICES DELIVERY

Sr Mukamugenga made exciting revelations during a recent exclusive interview with Rwanda Dispatch Magazine team that included the menu, extraordinary order, cleanliness and the status of the rooms. The rooms, with bathroom, are basic, but very clean. Mosquito nets and hot water are readily available in all rooms.

Unlike several hotels, management here has been at the frontlines of fighting immoral activities. They require couples to be legally married before they check in and/or occupy the classic double rooms. The Sisters, nevertheless, spare no effort in as far as protecting their integrity and spiritual mission is concerned and hence closely monitor the reputation of their establishment by distancing themselves from guests who

will tarnish their hard-earned reputation.

On the hotel menu, Sr. Mukamugenga categorically said that most clients here love the hotel potage (stews made from mushrooms, fish et cetera).

She also says that the cool and serene climate at the hotel in Rusizi enhanced by the cool breezes emanating from Lake Kivu makes the hotel the best place for people that need restful, relaxing and refreshing environment after a long day.

### CASFA KICUKIRO, RWANDEX

During the last 39 years of the existence of Centre d'Accueil St François d'Assis, a lot has been achieved not only in terms of service delivery but also infrastructural development.

Two other branches of the hotel have been established in Kicukiro, Kigali City and Musanze in Northern Province.

Adjacent to COPEDU Bank at Rwandex in Kicukiro of Kigali City, CASFA is housed in a beautiful complex constructed using profits from the parent hotel in Rusizi.

Sr. Enatha Musabyemariya, the Head of CASFA Kicukiro Rwandex says that the facility offers Hotels & Travel services, accommodation activities such as Bed and Breakfast.



**Sr. Enatha Musabyemariya, the Head of CASFA Kicukiro Rwandex**

Services at CASFA in Kicukiro are replicate of those offered by the parent hotel in Rusizi. This includes an excellent menu, extraordinary order, cleanliness, spacious rooms, beautiful gardens and conference facilities.

The third branch established in Musanze District, shows how fast CASFA is gaining popularity due to unmatched customer care, organization and cleanliness.

### HOTEL'S ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT

Sr. Mukamugenga says that Centre d'Accueil St François d'Assis enjoys good working relations with the district authorities and reiterated commitment to maintain it.

She adds that whenever they have employment opportunities, the first priority is offered to local youth, and by so doing they partner with government in its ongoing efforts to create

Services at CASFA in Kicukiro are replicate of those offered by the parent hotel in Rusizi. This includes an excellent menu, extraordinary order, cleanliness, spacious rooms, beautiful gardens and conference facilities.

When we have employment opportunities, the first priority is offered to local youth, and by so doing they partner with government in its ongoing efforts to create employment and poverty reduction.

employment and poverty reduction.

The hotel also regularly and ardently pays taxes, hence is part of the tax base with an excellent track record in tax responsiveness.

Besides, the hotel management cooperates with local authorities to regularly participate in the implementation of all district programmes that aim at uplifting the wellbeing of citizens. Among others, they participate in the monthly community work known locally as Umuganda and other programmes such as building houses and paying medical insurance (Mutuelle de Sante) for the most vulnerable residents.

The Head of CASFA is grateful to the Almighty God for helping the hotel emerge gradually from the economic effects of the pandemic. The travel restrictions imposed to prevent further spread of Covid-19 grossly reduced the hotel's clientele between 2020 and 2022 when the plague was surging.

For Rusizi, Sr. Mukamugenga notes that limiting the hours for border crossing between Rwanda and DRC has greatly reduced visitors from DRC. But, she expresses optimism that sooner or later the situation will return to normal.

She concluded by calling on Rwandans and international travelers to come enjoy the unique experiences offered at CASFA.







# PARAMOUNTCY Ltd

## boosts fishing and water transport

Lake Kivu is the largest water body in Rwanda and provides a long borderline with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The lake offers economic activities including fishing and water transport, which is one of the most cost-effective methods of moving large, perishable, and heavy products across.

Remy Ugirashebuja, a businessman born and raised in Rusizi District took the commercial opportunities that the lake offers venturing first in fishing and later into water transport.

Born from Nkombo Island in Lake Kivu, Ugirashebuja kicked off his fishing career at a young age of 16 years in the mid 1970s. At the time, going to school was not



Remy Ugirashebuja

common and when he was given an opportunity to join the fishing crew he never looked back.

Fishing at the time was done with the use traditional fishing boats (canoes) and they would take many nights and days away from home waiting for a good catch. Nonetheless, he persevered

working his way up to an old man and still loves the fishing job.

"During the early days when I started fishing, we moved many kilometers into Lake Kivu, for example from Rusizi to Nyamasheke and would spend there at least three weeks," explains Ugirashebuja.

Development was slow at the time and the use of traditional equipment produced literally low fish catches. It took Ugirashebuja years to own a boat, but he continued to save as he had spotted another business opportunity in the waters which was transportation.

Water transport was underdeveloped in those years, but was vividly a potential employment opportunity, mainly moving goods because of lack of good inland road network infrastructure.

The Waterways transport sub-sector is one of the oldest economically and environmentally sustainable



modes of transportation and in some areas, the only means of mobility and access to basic services as the case for Nkombo.

In 1993, Ugirashebuja acquired his first cargo boat with capacity to load 35 tonnes operating in Kivu waters. He worked hard whereby in the following year, he bought another 70-tonnes boat and in 1998 acquired his third boat with 180 tonnes capacity.

He continued with the two businesses, fishing and water transport. Today, he conducts fishing together with his colleagues in a 24-member cooperative that employs over 80 workers.

With his vast experience in the

sector, Ugirashebuja previously served as the head of a union of fishing cooperatives that has more than 470 members in Rusizi District.

These businesses have created employment starting with fishermen and others in the value chain as well as those working on the cargo boats. When loading one boat, about 70 workers are employed for the job.

He notes that he had an urge to continue his business ventures as a way to develop his home area. Rusizi and Nkombo Island which were particularly underdeveloped in many ways and he felt providing employment and services was a step in rebuilding his motherland

**The inspiration behind Nyumbani Guesthouse was to develop Rusizi because of its serene and beautiful scenery that is a big tourism potential.**

that had been devastated by the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.

### VENTURING INTO HOSPITALITY SECTOR

After recording achievements in business, Ugirashebuja found more reasons to invest in development ventures and this time it was the hospitality sector.

Having founded Paramountcy Ltd, the company ventured into hospitality by building Nyumbani Guesthouse. This facility currently offers rooms to guests with an ultimate target to introduce more hospitality services.

The inspiration behind Nyumbani Guesthouse was to develop Rusizi because of its serene and beautiful scenery that is a big tourism potential.

Ugirashebuja notes that Rusizi has a big potential as a district that neighbors Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi. He says that trade to the two countries passes through Kamembe and therefore leaves something for the area as well.

The Founder of Paramountcy attributes Rwanda's progress to the current leadership that has put citizens at the centre of development. The political will to develop the country has ensured that citizens are well catered for to improve livelihoods.

Ugirashebuja observes that places that had lagged behind in previous regimes like Nkombo now have a say. Nkombo Island is no longer the remote island but has basic necessities like health facilities, schools, electricity and water.





# Rwandan motorsport missing-out on sector potentialities



BY JEJJE MUHINDE

**TODAY**, motorsport events are recognized as a tourism niche with significant economic potential. Typically, they attract both domestic and international participants who are then supported by an audience.

In countries like Kenya, Malaysia or South Africa, the sport is used to contribute to economic growth through accommodation, logistics and tourist spending.

In 2019, the global

motorsports industry generated \$187.92 billion of business to the world economy, according to a report by the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA).

As the late honorary Rwanda Automobile Club (RAC) President Dismas Kayibanda once said, “Motorsport is a key attraction that has to be looked at through active sports tourism, if the sector can reposition itself to reap from events such as Mountain Gorilla Rally.”

“Motorsport is also a game of numbers and these numbers contribute to domestic tourism. However, this can be achieved if investments are channeled in the sector to attract tourists while government needs to come in handy with policies that would encourage and boost the industry,” he said.

The Godfather of motorsport in Rwanda believed that investments can change the sector, and it would encourage the young talents who would, also, be motivated to join the sector in turn

boost the economy through domestic tourism, road safety and protection of the environment.

He noted that organizing annual competitions like the popular Mountain Gorilla Rally would create a huge impact in terms of demands for food and accommodation, flights, and hotels as fans worldwide would fly to Rwanda to watch or participate in the rally.

Mark Kironde, a veteran journalist says that Mountain Gorilla Rally attracted a good number of entry crews in the past, however, he adds, “the sport needs to be secured.”

“In 2003, the event attracted 25 entries, which rose to 38 in the 2010 edition. Other than Rwandese teams, several other foreign teams from Uganda, Burundi, Belgium, South Africa, Zambia and Kenya participated in the race,” he revealed.

The journalist shares the view that the sport needs collective responsibility, if it is to be protected. He notes that drivers such as 2003 female champion Nathalie Cox and Claude Kwizera have retired, the likes of Christakis Fitidis moved to Uganda where the sport is more competitive and well organized.

Well, the unkind economic impact of the pandemic has, also, affected motorsport, the purchasing power of cars such as Ford Fiesta, Skoda or Mitsubishi Lancer Evo's pocket unfriendly.

“Motorsport is not like athletics where you slop to Nyabugogo to purchase running shoes to run a marathon. Cars need insurance, maintenance;

repair and they need crew to service them,” Kironde underlines, adding that rally drivers and organizers need to work together to relish the rich heritage of the sport.

Yusur Kagimu a rally expert in Uganda says that RAC should develop a long term strategic plan that will address key challenges in motorsport.

“They need a proper functioning motorsport body, with structures including marketing and finance to position the sport as a brand that will attract corporate partners,” he points out.

“In Kenya for instance, motorsport is experiencing growth. They’ve managed to host the Safari World Rally Championship every year because the government committed the financial investments to secure the rights.” Kagimu explains that Kenyans have also partnered with the FIA and M-Sport Poland to provide Ford Fiesta R3 cars for Kenya’s top upcoming junior drivers to compete at the Safari rally.

“The initiative has improved driver’s competitive edge, enhanced the young drivers’ skills, and confidence. In Uganda, the motorsport calendar is packed with more action races including motor bike competition in different districts,” the rally expert notes.

Well, RAC has an annual calendar however it has less than four events which include the Spirit Rally which is the opening round of the

season, the Nyirangarama Rally, Mountain Gorilla and Rallye des Mille Collines.

Dady Nshimiye, a former rally marshal says that the challenge is sponsorship. Drivers in Rwanda struggle to attract corporate sponsorship.

“Events like Butare Rally, and Rally of the Rains were scrapped off the calendar because of lack of sponsorship. More needs to be done for instance; approaching the government for duty exemptions for spare parts and equipment for rally cars if the sport is to grow,” he notes.

Even though the sport is tumbling, RAC is trying to rejuvenate the sport by introducing new initiatives such as E-Sports and Go Karting.

## E-SPORTS

In partnership with Kigali Arena, RAC launched E-Sport for games among others World Rally Championship (WRC9), Formula 1, and Dirt Racing. E-Sport is a form

competitive round events with Go-kart racing in Kigali.

## SAFETY

The other factor that RAC is urged to reconsider is safety. In 2014, Rallye Des Mille Collines had a fatal accident that claimed the life of a navigator, Christophe Desquene. The accident that happened on the final day of the two-day rally event left driver Claude Kwizera also seriously injured.

The crew went off road and hit a tree that crunched in on the right hand side of their car, which led to the death of Desquene.

Jean Claude Regis says that drivers racing at such high speeds face the risk of getting into dramatic accidents, the most important key issue is safety in rallying.

“Rallying is very dangerous, especially if you participate without having the relevant safety equipment. It is vital that drivers thoroughly study the rules, join rally training schools beforehand to understand the safety requirements,” Regis points out.

“Drivers retire because of accidents, it is therefore important that you’re well protected in case of an accident with safety clothing, such as gloves, boots, elements or a racing suit, or upgrades to your vehicle,” he adds.



of competition using video games.

Christian Gakwaya, President of Rwanda Automobile Club says that it is primarily used to promote motorsport from the grassroots using car simulators. He adds that anyone from age six is welcome to join in on the fun at Kigali Arena.

## GO-KARTING

Go-karting is the other activity on the RAC’s list of enjoyable outdoor motorsport activities, also aimed at building the motorsport from the young generation.

This is a road racing variant of motorsport with open-wheel, four-wheeled vehicles known as go-karts or shifter karts. RAC put in order of







# Nyumbani Guest House

## Eritreans continue to shine in Rwanda cycling competition

BY JEJJE MUHINDE

Fortune dictates that you can lose the Tour of Rwanda in the blink of an eye, but flip that fortune over and you can just easily win.

That is what Eritrean cyclists have been doing; they've been on a mission, and have continued to shine not just in the Tour of Rwanda but on the continent.

This year, Henok Mulubrhan clinched 15th Tour of Rwanda to become the 4th Eritrean to realize few things taste better like achieving a stage victory wearing the leader's jersey over your shoulders.

On record, the Asmara born join his predecessors; Natnael Tesfatsion winner of Yellow jersey both in 2022 and 2020 editions, Merhawi Kudus who clinched the 2019 edition and Daniel Teklehaimanot champion of 2010.

Having scooped four out of the last six Yellow Jerseys in Kigali, it is fair to point out



that Eritreans have mastered the Tour of Rwanda since it was classified as 2.2 in 2018 by the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI).

One analyst recently said that, cycling is in their blood,

they're bold and brave. They seek and see opportunities and push themselves to limits. When it comes to cycling, they come from another planet.

The last day of this year's Tour du Rwanda had

everything; it was like a long victory parade, with sprints, attacks and counterattacks, attempts, and laughter.

Henok, the African cycling champion 2022, controlled the other riders to the same finish line, where even the president of Rwanda, His Excellency Paul Kagame was an exceptional witness of the last meters of the day.

Walter Calzoni and William Junior Lecerf from the Pro cycling team and Soudal Quick-Step Devo finished second and third respectively.

Tzen Marc Oliver was named best climber, at 21 years, Calzoni Walter claimed the best young rider title.

They'll say the 2023 Tour of Rwanda was one to remember, and it'll certainly be hard to forget the Eritrean wonder body Henok Mulubrhan. No wonder that Eritreans started calling the race the Eritrean Tour of Rwanda.



The inspiration behind Nyumbani Guesthouse was to develop Rusizi because of its serene and beautiful scenery that is a big tourism potential.

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# EMERAUDE KIVU RESORT

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Emeraude Kivu Resort offers luxurious, comfortable and affordable accommodation. The resort is close to Nyungwe National Park, the Green Hills Tea Estate and its factory Shagasha, Cyamudongo Chimp's Forest, Mashyuza Hotsprings, the Bugarama Valley amongst other attractions. When at the resort you will have the view of Nkombo

and Gihaya Islands – home to most fishers on Lake Kivu.

On entering Emeraude Kivu Resort, you will immediately sense its unique atmosphere from the decor – a mixture of African Tradition and a contemporary touch. All rooms and facilities overlook Lake Kivu

and have access to the lush and well maintained garden. Complimentary to your stay, you can enjoy free access to the fully equipped gym.

The unique charm and cosy mood of Emeraude Kivu Resort make it a perfect venue for a comfortable stay, business meetings and training workshops.

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