

More than 1.5 million Rwandans have escaped poverty over the past seven years, as the national poverty rate dropped from 39.8% in 2017 to 27.4% in 2024, according to new government data.

The 12.4% reduction was revealed Wednesday in the latest Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey (EICV7), published by the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR).

“This is not just a report,” Prime Minister Édouard Ngirente said at the launch event. “It shows where we have come from, and the progress we are making toward a better future.”

The triennial survey tracks household welfare and poverty trends. It found poverty remains highest in the Southern and Western provinces, with Nyamagabe District leading at 51.4%, followed by Gisagara at 45.6% and Rusizi at 44.2%.

Meanwhile, 16 districts recorded poverty rates below the national average. Nyarugenge District in the capital Kigali posted the lowest rate at 6.8%.



NISR Director General Ivan Murenzi presenting the study

NISR Director General Ivan Murenzi said the latest figures reflect “a real improvement in the lives of Rwandans.”

“In 2017, poverty stood at 39.8%. It now stands at 27.4%. That’s a reduction of more than 12%—a significant milestone,” Murenzi said. “These numbers tell a story of economic recovery, targeted programs, and greater access to opportunities.”

He noted that urban poverty declined slightly, from 18.9% to 16.7%, while rural poverty fell more sharply—from 44% to 31.6%.

The survey also showed that extreme poverty, defined as the inability to meet basic food needs, dropped from 11% to 5.4%.

Government officials say the decline is tied to long-term investments in human development, job creation, and pro-poor policies.



Prime Minister Ngirente said these gains stem from the implementation of Rwanda's first National Strategy for Transformation (NST1), which focused on improving livelihoods, expanding social protection, and strengthening public services.

"This progress was largely driven by government investment and the support of development partners," Ngirente said. "Our economic rebound after COVID-19 created new job opportunities, especially for young people ready to enter the workforce."

Rwanda is now in the second phase of its development strategy, NST2, which aims to consolidate the gains made over the past decade and further reduce poverty through inclusive economic growth.