

Rwanda's imports from Kenya fell more than 80 percent between October 2024 and October 2025, marking the steepest annual decline ever recorded along the Northern Corridor, according to data released Dec. 10 by the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR).

The figures appear in NISR's October 2025 Formal External Trade in Goods report, published on the same day. The agency said Rwanda imported goods worth \$23.33 million from Kenya in October 2025, down from \$117.90 million in October 2024.

The year-over-year loss of \$94.57 million reduced Kenya's share of Rwanda's total imports to 4.85 percent, pushing Kenya to seventh place among Rwanda's major suppliers.

NISR said the 80.22 percent decline is the largest annual drop recorded in trade between Rwanda and Kenya within the Northern Corridor system, the route that connects Rwanda to the Port of Mombasa through Kenya. The decline underscores major shifts in transport costs, logistics decisions and supply reliability that have affected traders over the past year.

Tanzania also experienced a decline in exports to Rwanda but remained a stronger supplier overall. NISR reported that Rwanda's imports from Tanzania fell from \$54.69 million in October 2024 to \$44.38 million in October 2025, an 18.85 percent decrease.

Despite the drop, Tanzania still supplied nearly twice the value of goods that Kenya did, supported by continued reliance on the Central Corridor and the Port of Dar es Salaam, which remains a primary entry point for petroleum products, construction materials and machinery.

The October report also showed emerging shifts outside East Africa. Cameroon entered Rwanda's top ten import sources for the first time after supplying \$27.36 million worth of goods in October 2025. NISR said no goods were imported from Cameroon in October 2024. The sudden rise placed Cameroon fifth among Rwanda's import partners, ahead of both Kenya and Uganda, reflecting new routing through the Port of Douala.

NISR data shows Rwanda's total imports declined 2.08 percent in October 2025 compared with September. China, India, the United Arab Emirates and Tanzania remained Rwanda's leading import partners that month.

The trade developments accompanied continued inflation pressure. In figures also released Dec. 10, NISR reported that combined urban and rural consumer prices rose 5.1 percent in October 2025 compared with October 2024. The agency said increases were driven by food and nonalcoholic beverages, alcoholic drinks and tobacco, housing and utilities, medical services, transport and restaurant costs.

Urban inflation rose 7.1 percent over the year, while rural inflation increased 3.8 percent, according to NISR.

The latest data indicates the Northern Corridor's role in Rwanda's import system may continue to weaken unless improvements are made to reduce transport delays and costs along the route.