

Rwanda and Belgium have entered a new bilateral cooperation agreement for 2024-2029. The signing of the new agreement took place this Tuesday at Rwanda's ministry of finance in Kigali.

Dr. Uzziel Ndagijimana, Rwanda's Minister of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN) penned the agreement with Heidy Rombouts, Director General of Development Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation representing the Kingdom of Belgium.

Worthy €95 million (approximately Frw 131 billion), the cooperation programme strategically allocates resources across key sectors including agriculture, urbanisation and health, as well as in public finance management. Building on the results of the ongoing cooperation programme 2019-2024, the new programme aims for continuity and impact. Both countries herewith reinforce their joint commitment to sustainable growth and pressing global challenges.

Minister Ndagijimana said, "The latest program represents a crucial stride forward, reaffirming our dedication to vital sectors such as agriculture, health, urbanization, and public finance management—a cornerstone for Rwanda's socio-economic advancement. This agreement underscores the sustained collaboration between our two nations, a partnership that has consistently delivered tangible progress across diverse sectors of our engagement."

According to Rombouts, with this new program Belgium and Rwanda renew their longstanding joint commitment to sustainable development. I am proud to stand here as a partner to Rwanda's ambitious agenda on the access to healthcare, the transformation towards sustainable food systems and the development of climate-smart inclusive cities.

The new program will be implemented jointly by MINECOFIN, technical ministries and agencies, and Enabel, the Belgian development agency. The program will complement another ongoing bilateral cooperation programme on decent work and social protection (EUR 17 million, 2022-2027). Part of a broader Team Europe approach, the programme also aligns with those of other EU development partners.

Sectoral focus

Health: Health system strengthening, improving quality healthcare for all. The programme has a particular focus on sexual and reproductive health, as well as the

fight against gender-based violence.

Agriculture: Increasing access to and the consumption of quality food for the growing population within an enabling environment for food system transformation. The programme does so through the development of sustainable, resilient and inclusive agricultural value chains in a context of increasing urbanisation.

Urbanisation: Supporting the development of sustainable and attractive satellite cities by enhancing the living conditions of its population, especially the most vulnerable. This way, the programme aims to contribute to a socioeconomic and environmental ecosystem that is inclusive and climate-proof.