

# RWANDA Dispatch

AN INSIGHT INTO RWANDA

MARCH 2022, ISSUE 74



## BUILDING AN ALL-INCLUSIVE PLATFORM FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

**Power cuts may be history in Rwanda, after May 2022 | PG10**

**Why sports has a huge potential to empower women and girls | PG48**



# Best View Hotel



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## Publisher's Note

Rwanda is recognized as a world leader in promoting gender equality and offers an encouraging example of how post-conflict countries can seize the reform momentum after conflict to build better.

The country is listed among the top 10 countries in the world for closing the gender gap in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index. Rwanda is also the second highest-ranking country in the same index for sub-Saharan Africa. This progress in gender equality is owed in part to conscious legal reforms initiated by the Rwandan leadership and the efforts are already paying off.

In this issue, we explore an emerging sector of women entrepreneurs and unlike ever before they are showing a significant force in Rwanda's private sector.

For its part, the Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs established under the auspices of the Rwanda Private Sector Federation is providing effective and

tailored support streamlined to meet the needs of women led-businesses and also enable them to build better while unlocking opportunities for a sustainable development.

To unlock women's full potential, government should continue to support women entrepreneurs to build their capacities while removing bottlenecks like socio-cultural negative perceptions, favourable tax systems, accessibility to finance, market linkages among other things.

Also in this magazine, we look at the regional electricity interconnection project spearheaded by the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI). The project in its final stages of implementation will connect up the power grids of five East African neighbours including Rwanda, Burundi, DR Congo, Kenya and Uganda. As a result, the power cuts impacting regional economies may be solved, at least for now.

### Editorial



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## said and Quoted



"Gender inequality lives on, despite the innovative, and at times heroic, feats that many women around the world have achieved..."

**JEANNETTE KAGAME,**  
FIRST LADY OF RWANDA



"We should revive and reactivate trade between Tanzania and Rwanda, and this is what the road projects financed by Japan are aiming for."

**IMAI MASAHIRO,**  
JAPANESE AMBASSADOR TO RWANDA,



"Gender equality for tomorrow starts today."

**MS AUDREY AZOULAY,**  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO



"For democracy to flourish there must be a continuing stream of individuals of integrity and ideas with promise."

**RUPIAH BANDA,** FORMER ZAMBIAN PRESIDENT



"Climate change is real. It is happening right now"

**LEONARDO DI CAPRIO,**  
AMERICAN ACTOR AND FILM PRODUCER



## On the world scene

### RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

Global focus on Covid-19 pandemic shifted after more than two years following Russia's full-scale war on Feb. 24 into Ukraine. Russia continues to bomb the country's cities in a bid to topple Ukraine's government. The largest mobilization of forces Europe has seen since 1945 is underway and observers fear this may escalate in a global conflict.

## Numbers that speak volumes

**120 million**

THIS IS THE AMOUNT OF MONEY THE WORLD VOLLEYBALL GOVERNING BODY HAS ORDERED RWANDA VOLLEYBALL FEDERATION (FRVB) TO PAY AS A FINE AFTER THE COUNTRY WAS DISQUALIFIED FROM THE 2021 AFRICAN WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP FOR FIELDING INELIGIBLE PLAYERS.

**30 million**

SAFARICOM'S MOBILE MONEY SERVICE M-PESA CROSSED 30 MILLION CUSTOMERS USING THE SERVICE EVERY MONTH IN KENYA AND IS RANKED AS AFRICA'S LARGEST FINTECH PROCESSING MORE THAN 61 MILLION TRANSACTIONS A DAY. THE MILESTONE CAME A FEW DAYS AFTER M-PESA MARKED ITS 15TH YEAR SINCE ITS LAUNCH ON 6TH MARCH 2007

**6 million**

ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT, 6,000,000 PEOPLE ARE BEING VACCINATED AGAINST COVID-19 ON AVERAGE EVERY WEEK. THIS NUMBER IS FAR BELOW TO THE REQUIRED 36 MILLION TO REACH 70% OF THE TARGET AGREED GLOBALLY.

**186,386**

SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN 1999, THE RWANDA PRIVATE SECTOR FEDERATION (PSF) HAS A REGISTERED NUMBER OF 186,386 BUSINESS OPERATORS IN RWANDA. PSF IS AN UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION THAT GROUPS 10 PROFESSIONAL CHAMBERS DEDICATED TO PROMOTE AND REPRESENT THE INTERESTS OF THE RWANDAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY.



### Dear Editor,

I'd like to express my deep concern about the rising prices of essential commodities that has had a significant impact on all types of trade.

Most people are suffering as a result of the recent price increase, and it has become impossible for them to make ends meet hence breaking the common man's back.

Commodity's prices have risen sharply, as the rise in the price of fuel has had a significant impact on all types of things.

The rise in the prices of essential commodities such as rice, sugar, and cooking oil is also putting a strain on low income earners.

Basic household budgeting has become difficult to manage, because the rising prices. Sugar for instance, has become a luxury item, at one point the price increased three folds in moments.

In morning, the price of a kilogram was Rwf1,200 at mid-day the prices jumped to Rwf1500, and before we knew it had surged Rwf1,800 depending on location.

Given the circumstances, the government should take the necessary steps to improve the overall situation as soon as possible.

Your editorial column should also help to shape public opinion.

The costs of transportation and travel have risen dramatically, which is causing concern among many people.

Thank you, for the platform!

**JONAS NSENGIYUNVA,**  
KIGALI.



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## Robert Bafakulera re-elected as PSF Chairperson



**ROBERT BAFAKULERA** was re-elected for the second term as the Chairperson of the Private Sector Federation (PSF). He received overwhelming votes to secure

his reelection at the helm of the institution he has been leading for the last three years.

The in-coming 1st Vice Chairperson

of PSF is Jeanne Françoise Mubiligi who replaces Eric Gishoma at this position. Mubiligi an investor in real estate, has also been heading the Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs

Another new entrant is Aimable Kimenyi elected 2nd Vice-Chairperson to replace Eugenie Mushimiyimana.

**Bafakulera pledged to work in the interest of business community and the citizens in general, to steer the economy from the Covid-19 effects.**

The elections at national level which took place at Kigali Serena Hotel came after having been postponed last year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. They were a culmination of elections at cell, sector, district, province levels and Kigali city as well as the elections of representatives of the five clusters of PSF.

## Rwanda signs bilateral relations with Guinea-Bissau, Chad



**THIS MARCH** has been eventful in all aspects but most especially, diplomatically. President Kagame

welcomed to his office early in the month President Umaro Sissoco Embaló, of Guinea-Bissau who was

in the country for a three-day official visit. The two Heads of State held bilateral talks and witnessed the signing of MoUs on economic and trade cooperation, education as well as tourism, business and conservation.

President Kagame also welcomed the Chadian President General Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno for a two-day visit. The two witnessed the signing of a General Cooperation Agreement, further strengthening bilateral cooperation in areas of mutual interest that included economic, security matters among others.

President Kagame said that African countries forging ties has never been so beneficial than now when the continent is looking to improve intra-Africa trade.



## Kagame, Gen. Muhoozi meet again to fix relations

**LT-GEN MUHOOZI** Kainerugaba, Uganda Senior Presidential Advisor on Special Operations and Commander of UPDF Land Forces arrived in Capital Kigali on his second trip to Rwanda in less than two months.

The second visit was said to be a "private visit", and it came seven weeks after he met with President Paul Kagame in Kigali on a mission to restore bilateral relations.

Lt-Gen Kainerugaba's first visit was later followed by Rwanda's announcement that the Uganda-Rwanda border, closed since 2019, would reopen on January 31.

Analysts who are watching the political scene in Uganda have said: "[Lt-Gen Kainerugaba] is the only person to reconcile Uganda with Rwanda after 'several other leaders' had failed."

## Gen Kazura hold talks with French counterpart

**THE CHIEF** of Defence Staff of Rwanda Defence Force (RDF), Gen. Jean Bosco Kazura recently held a 4-day visit in Paris with a number of meetings aimed at strengthening cooperation between Rwanda and France.

According to Rwanda's Ministry of

Defence, bilateral discussions between Gen Kazura and his counterpart Gen. Thierry Burkhard of France, were centred around opportunities to revive and strengthen defence cooperation in areas of mutual interest. Also discussed were regional and global security dynamics.

▼ **Rwanda inches closer to WHO's global target to vaccinate 70 percent of its population**



**OF ITS** 13 million habitants, Rwanda has fully vaccinated 60 percent of it's population against Covid-19.

This March, the Ministry of Health announced that 7.8 million people out of its 12.9 million had been vaccinated against Covid-19 with two doses.

By March 6, Rwanda had fully vaccinated 7,889,839 people and 1.8 million people had received their booster shot.

The country has instituted Covid-19 vaccine mandates for the public to access basic public services in a bid to reach the targeted 9.1 million people by July this year.

As the vaccination rate increases, Covid-19 cases have dropped significantly since January. The trend has given government the confidence to lift curfew and fully open activities for the first time in two years.





## Gov't initiates subsidies to minimize raising prices

**RECENT INFLATION** numbers from Rwanda are creating serious concern over the rising cost of food items in the country.

Government has however initiated a number of subsidies to control this upsurge in cost.

According to the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), prices surged by 8% since January of 2022, up from a 7.8% rise in the previous month.

Traders and consumers agree that price increase was largely prevalent in processed food items including cooking oil, and sugar, which are often dominated by imports.

A 50-kilogramme sack of imported sugar which used to cost Rwf51,000, is costing about Rwf63,000, an increase of over 23 percent.

While a 20-litre of cooking oil that was Rwf38,000 now costs over Rwf48,700, out of the capital Kigali representing over 78 percent increase.

One of the factors causing the increase is said to be depreciation of the Rwanda Franc against foreign currencies such as the US dollar.

Prime Minister, Dr. Ngirente explained that the increase in commodity prices is being felt across the globe, given how the pandemic disrupted economies and markets.

He further said that agricultural output was not only affected by Covid-19 but also other factors, including climate change, which has been blamed for the changes in weather and seasons.

## Rwanda, Burundi on a reconciliation path



**SINCE 2015**, the relations between Rwanda and neighbouring Burundi have been rocky. However, talks are ongoing and the relationship has warmed, to a degree. Both governments are working on a new chapter in their dealings.

Officials from both countries have met at the level of military intelligence, provincial governors, foreign affairs ministers and senate presidents.

President Kagame has also given hope for further normalization of relations after he praised the progress between the two countries in mending ties.

This month, Burundi President Evariste Ndayishimiye received a high-level Rwandan delegation led by Minister of Defence Major General Albert Murasira, in the capital, Gitega, who was carrying President Kagame's message.

## Divine Nshuti Muheto crowned Miss Rwanda 2022

**AFTER WEEKS** of intense pressure, high school graduate Divine Nshuti Muheto was crowned as Miss Rwanda 2022.

The 19-year-old beauty queen, who is a high school graduate, won the crown overcoming a stiff competition, closely behind her were Maolithia Keza and Darina Kayumba who emerged first and second runners-up respectively.

As the winner, she will get many prizes among was a brand-new Hyundai car courtesy of Hyundai Rwanda.

Muheto admits all the top three deserved to be crowned Miss Rwanda 2022 but insists the hard-earned crown was a result of tough challenges that she went through during the campaign that was 'tough' but full of lessons.

Muheto's journey to winning the coveted crown started from Rubavu auditions where she, among other eight contestants and earned a ticket to represent the Western Province.

The provincial auditions left 70 contestants selected from the four provinces and the City of Kigali which as a result recorded the highest representation with 29 contestants.



Meanwhile, Jeannette Uwimana another contestant made headlines throughout the campaign, she was the first person living with a disability to contest for Miss Rwanda since its inception in 1993.

She decided to run for the beauty contest crown despite being deaf, and her project about pig farming became the 'Most Innovative Project'.

It will be fully funded by Bank of Kigali besides becoming the bank's brand ambassador for the next twelve months during which she will be receiving monthly allowances of Rwf500,000.

Meanwhile, Kellia Ruzindana became Miss Heritage and will walk away with a cash prize of Rwf5,000,000 from Bralirwa through their brand Primus.

Queen Ndahiro Mugabekazi emerged Miss Photogenic while Amanda Saro who excited revelers with exceptional skills in playing a piano became the Talent winner.

Marlene Uwimana was announced the Sports winner while Divine Muheto added the Miss Popularity prize to her crown.





# POWER CUTS MAY BE HISTORY IN RWANDA, AFTER MAY 2022

BY DISPATCH REPORTER;

A REGIONAL electricity interconnection project is in the final stages of implementation that will connect up the power grids of five neighbours including Rwanda. As a result, the power cuts impacting regional economies may be history, at least for now.

High voltage transmission lines run from south-western Uganda into Rwanda. Another similar linkage is

between Uganda and Kenya. The same is with Rwanda and Burundi, as well as Rwanda and eastern DR Congo.

The interconnectivity program will link Rwanda, DR Congo, Uganda, Burundi, and Kenya. Once fully switched on, the system will interconnect the power grids of all these countries – meaning should there be a shortage in one region, that can be covered up by a surplus in the other.

As of March 2022, the missing link to activate this system has been the Uganda-Rwanda section. The Kenya to Uganda link was completed back in the 1950s. Rwanda-Burundi is operational. Rwanda to eastern DRC is also in place.

To interconnect these different national grids, which have completely differing capacities, the project envisaged establishing substations in each country. These facilities are receiving the power from other

countries via a dedicated transmission line, store the power to be shared locally, and then send some of that power to the neighbouring country.

For Rwanda, it is being served by substation located at Mirama, in Mbarara, south-western Uganda. This connects to the Shyango (Shango) substation located in Nduba Sector, Gasabo District of Kigali. The 220/110kV substation has two 220kV lines bays to interconnect with Uganda network, two 220kV line bays to interconnect with Northern Eastern DRC network through Rubavu substation and two 220kV line bays to Western Tanzania network through Regional Rusumo Falls hydropower plant.

## GETTING RID OF ISLANDS IN REGION

These substations are a small piece of big puzzle to light up the region spearheaded by the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI), an intergovernmental partnership that brings together 10 countries that share River Nile and these are; Rwanda, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Burundi, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

Shyango (Shango) substation was completed in December 2019, and so was the Mirama substation which has been there for a while.

“What is remaining,” explained Eng. Alloyce Oduor, Project Manager for the NBI Regional Rusumo Falls Hydroelectric Project, “is coordination, harmonization and synchronization of the power system protection and telecommunication equipment because these two substations must communicate. They must exchange power system data. The protection systems must communicate as they protect the line. The control engineers in Lugogo control centre in Uganda and those at national control centre



“The five countries; Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and DRC will be interconnected. Look at it that, [currently], Kenya-Uganda are in one island electrically, Rwanda-Burundi-DRC in one island electrically. The separation is Uganda-Rwanda which we want to close. If its closed, then we will be in one network.”

at Gikondo in Rwanda must be able to visualize the take-off of power.”

The previous timetable had been that the interconnector system was to be switched on this February. Eng. Oduor said in interview that a new operational deadline has been set for May 2022. “There were some challenges with contractors who underperformed and all countries are aware of that,” he said.

“The five countries; Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and DRC will be interconnected. Look at it that, [currently], Kenya-Uganda are in one island electrically, Rwanda-Burundi-DRC in one island electrically. The separation

is Uganda-Rwanda which we want to close. If its closed, then we will be in one network.”

With the availability of Shango substation, it adds up to a total 28 substations in Rwanda. The Rwandan government has set a target to have 44 substations by 2024. Similarly, installed capacity currently is 225.5MW, with a target of 556MW in the same period.

By October 2021, the cumulative power connectivity rate in Rwanda was at 67.1 per cent of Rwandan households, according to data from Rwanda Energy Group (REG). From this national total, 48.6 per cent households are connected to the national grid and 18.5 per cent accessing energy through off-grid systems, mainly solar.

In Kigali, like other regional capitals, the interconnectivity cannot come soon enough. The system will strengthen transmission networks and reduce power losses to ensure reliability of electricity supply. The interconnection projects like Shango substation are vital for regional power exchange and trading across borders, hence access to cheaper power sources.



RWANDA CAN PRODUCE 1,613 MW

Rwanda’s electricity generation comes from different sources including hydropower, methane gas and solar. Very soon, peat energy will be added as 80MW Peat-Fired Power Plant constructed cost of \$350m is turned on in a matter of weeks. Hydropower makes up approximately 46.8% of the total installed capacity, the biggest percentage will be coming from River Nyabarongo that also leads up to River Nile. It is followed by geothermal energy (26%) and methane (14%) peat 7% and 4% solar energy.

With the economy growing at rapid rate over the past two decades, the government must avail electricity to maintain the growth rates.

Experts however, point out that the country can generate electricity economically with local resources estimated to total around 1,613 MW. The country is therefore utilizing less than 10% of its local electricity potential.

Inside Rwanda, a confluence of different small streams serve their waters to Rivers Nyabarongo and Akanyaru. These two merge to form River Akagera which flows into Lake Victoria. As a result, 0.7 per cent of Nile Basin water surface is based in Rwanda.

In addition to these interconnection substations linking Rwanda to its Nile basin neighbours, the NBI has eight other investment projects at varying stages.

The investment projects are to benefit 706,940 direct beneficiaries, supply 333 million cubic metres and generate 113.5 MW added to the national grid.

Other benefits also include 620 km transmission lines, four sub-stations, 5,981 hectares irrigated land and 765 hectares of watersheds to be restored.

Rwanda’s Private Sector Federation



(PSF), the umbrella grouping of the business community, is excited about the regional power project. Though in recent years power supply has increased locally, interruptions still exist. It is this loophole PSF hopes will be rectified.

WHAT ABOUT RWANDA-UGANDA FIGHT?

Mr Theoneste Ntagengerwa, the PSF Spokesperson said in interview: “As the private sector, our desire is to always have a high supply of power without any interruptions. We expect that the impact of the regional power project will be two-fold: sustainability of supply and reduction in cost of power”

“There are places, especially designated free economic zones and industrial areas where there is sufficient power supply. However, for our members operating in other areas, say for example residential suburbs, the power is either on or off, or the power has low intensity which affects their machines. We would want to see all machines operating smoothly.”

“The other aspect is that as quantity of power increases since the supply from regional neighbourhood is steady, we expect that it will further bring down the cost of electricity. Yes, power is relatively cheaper in Rwanda, but for

us businesspeople, the cheaper raw materials and inputs cost, the less the cost of production which eventually reduces on prices of final goods.”

Rwanda and Uganda have been embroiled in bitter geopolitical fight which broke into the open in February 2019. Since then, in addition to accusing Kampala of planning regime change in Rwanda, it also alleges the Ugandan government of President Yoweri Museveni has been sabotaging Rwanda’s economy.

Kigali alleges Uganda sabotaged a planned railway line from the Kenyan port of Mombasa, to Kampala, on to Kigali. Instead, says Kampala, Uganda prefers line heading to South Sudan.

There have also been reports that Uganda blocked export of Kenya electricity to Rwanda, as well as some supplies from Ethiopia.

Eng. Oduor, the Project Manager for the NBI Regional Rusumo Falls Hydroelectric Project, downplayed the suggestion that the fight between Rwanda and Uganda is what is delaying the regional electricity interconnection scheme.

The two governments have actually been pushing for quick implementation, he said.

AFRICA’S LUCKIEST WOMEN  
WOMEN BORN IN RWANDA  
ARE LUCKIEST IN AFRICA

Very often when discussing the phenomenon “gender”, it is misunderstood as government programs favoring women over men. It actually benefits both sexes by creating an environment where both enjoy unhindered.

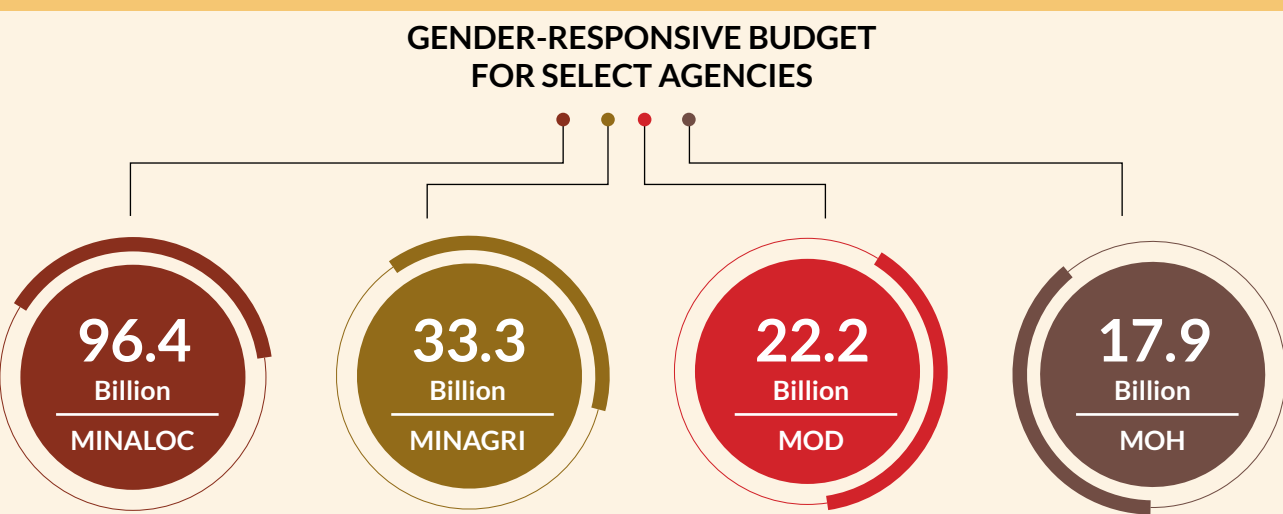
For nearly two decades, all Rwandan institutions from the lowest administrative units to the central government have been allocating the national cake in rather unconventional way. Rwanda’s government agencies have devised a formula whereby a portion of the budget goes to advancing gender balance. It is a process known globally as Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB).

Over the years, various countries have made attempts to create women-centric schemes and allocate funds for them. Gender-Responsive Budgeting goes beyond this; it is related explicitly to allocating portions of national budgets to promote women’s advancement and study the gendered impacts of such allocations to different government departments. It also considers how money is raised to make the budget, in terms of direct and indirect taxes and fines, and how this affects men and women differently.

Rwanda has been doing this as a policy stance since 2013. It is a legal requirement to have a gender-

responsive budget. The Organic Law on State Finances and Property Law No.12/2013 makes gender balance in public financial management a fundamental principle. Under this law, it is mandatory to include a gender budget statement as one of the annexes to the national budget framework paper submitted to Parliament, and all public entities are required to submit activity reports to specify how plans for gender balance have been implemented.

A review of the current revised 2021-2022 budget, shows that from district level, up to the ministries, each has allocated as much as 30% of the development budget



to aspects that support gender development. We have provided a preview of the budget.

The United Nations adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1979, which mainly contained pledges and guidelines for countries to reduce gender inequality. Although CEDAW does not include a specific provision on budgets, its principles require that women have both formal and substantive equality, which means that policies should account for differences in their impact on men and women. Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) was first introduced at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 in Beijing, China, to inculcate in decision-makers the principle of looking at national budgets through a gendered lens.

With representatives from 189 governments, over 17,000 participants and two weeks of debate, the GRB was brought into the mainstream at the event, and governments, NGOs, civil society organisations and academics have advocated for its use since then.

The Fourth World Conference produced the Beijing Platform of

**For the case of Rwanda, every year, the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, together with the Gender Monitoring Office, compile key sectoral gender and family issues. They then propose priorities and targets to inform the concerned sectors and institutions for consideration when planning and budgeting.**

Action, which contained the specific reference of using budgets for the advancement of women, in chapter VI (Financial Arrangements) clause 345:

“Full and effective implementation of the Platform for Action, including the relevant commitments made at previous United Nations summits and conferences, will require a political commitment to make available human and financial resources for the empowerment of women. This will require the integration of a gender perspective

in budgetary decisions on policies and programmes, as well as the adequate financing of specific programmes for securing equality between women and men.”

For the case of Rwanda, every year, the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, together with the Gender Monitoring Office, compile key sectoral gender and family issues. They then propose priorities and targets to inform the concerned sectors and institutions for consideration when planning and budgeting.

For example, in the last financial year, the Agriculture ministry had various targets including; increase percentage of rural women accessing agricultural loans from 8.9 per cent to 12.8 per cent. The energy sector set a target of reducing the percentage of households using firewood for cooking for at least 58.6 per cent. In the transport sector, one of the many targets was to ensure there are seats on public transport which are reserved for pregnant women. The Ministry of Defense is scheduled to begin construction of female quarters in all its barracks, in addition to a whole host of other projects.

The introduction of GRB initiatives was aimed at achieving equal opportunities for men and women in the labour market and enabling equal access to the means of production. These factors were expected to facilitate overall improvement in population welfare and higher national growth rates.

Since 2006, the Global Gender Gap Report has measured the extent of gaps between women and men on the parameters of health, education, economy and politics. In terms of closing the gender gap in the domains of economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment, a regional analysis shows that Rwanda is the best-performing country in Sub-Saharan Africa, and Bangladesh is the best-performing country in South Asia.

In July 2020, the Observer Research Foundation released a comprehensive study analyzing the budget programmes of Rwanda, India, and Bangladesh. The study found that Rwanda “has moved beyond considering gender as a cross-cutting area in various strategies and has fully integrated it as a separate entity in the planning and budgeting process”.

**In July 2020, the Observer Research Foundation released a comprehensive study analyzing the budget programmes of Rwanda, India, and Bangladesh. The study found that Rwanda “has moved beyond considering gender as a cross-cutting area in various strategies and has fully integrated it as a separate entity in the planning and budgeting process”.**

In 2010-11, MINECOFIN submitted the national budget with the gender budget statements of four pilot sectors—governance, agriculture, infrastructure and the private sector—following the issuance of the first budget call circular.

This budget call circular was the launch of the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, which prompted the different “budget Agencies to start preparing their budgets” from a gendered lens. Since then, gender budget

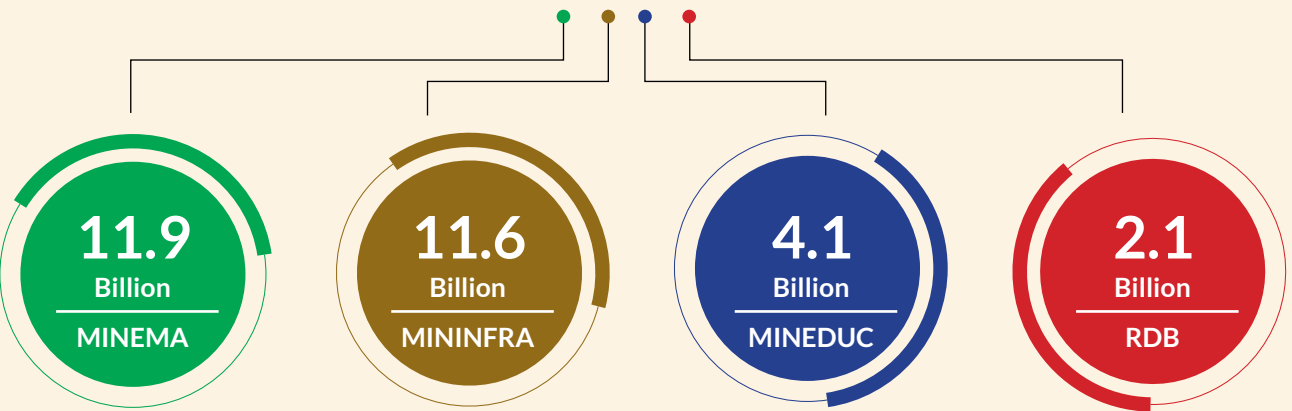
statement reports are prepared and submitted to MINECOFIN and presented to parliament during budget hearings every year.

MINECOFIN prepares a ‘Budget Framework Paper,’ which includes the ‘Consolidated Gender Budget Statements’ in its annexe.

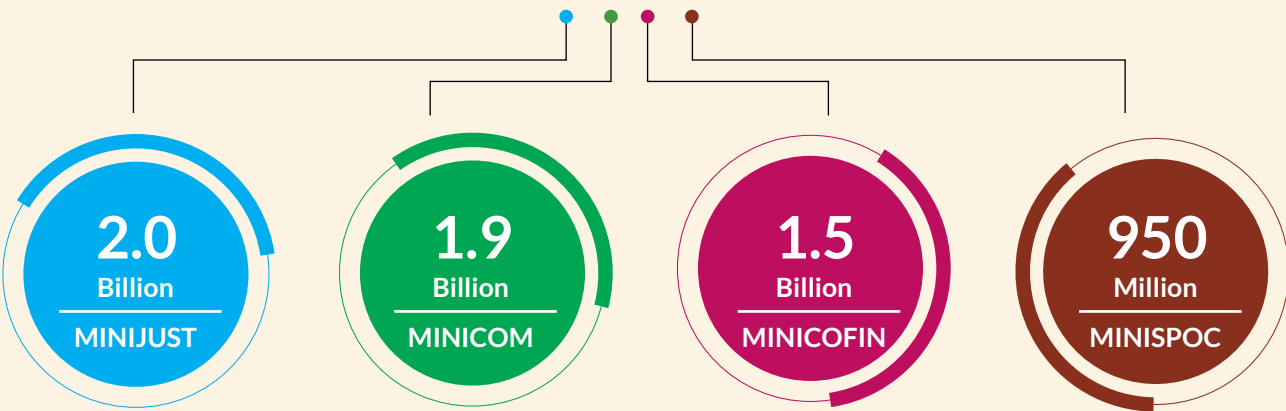
Article 68 of the Organic Budget Law on State Finance and Property is a follow-up to the gender budgeting statement plans, wherein all ministries, departments and agencies must prepare and submit annual implementation reports. These contain sections on output planned activities, accomplished activities, planned targets achievement against planned targets, approved budget FY, and executed budget vs approved budget comment/reasons for variance.

“While the objective of the ministries is mostly common, in attempting women’s advancement in economic, political and social participation, Rwanda seems to have also successfully implemented legislation and auditing in the governance department,” reads the study by the Observer Research Foundation.

GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGET FOR SELECT AGENCIES



GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGET FOR SELECT AGENCIES





# Rwanda

**Rwanda is listed among the top 10 countries in the world for closing the gender gap in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index. Rwanda is also the second highest-ranking country in the same index for sub-Saharan Africa. Rwanda's progress in gender equality is owed in part to conscious legal reforms which have been aimed at fostering gender equality and strengthening protection against gender-based crimes.**



Rwanda has ratified most international and regional treaties and conventions which promote gender rights, such as The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), various gender related UN Resolutions and Declarations, the African Union's Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, the African Union Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, the African Union Gender Policy, among others.

**THE RWANDAN CONSTITUTION**, which was adopted in 2003 (and replaced the 1991 Constitution), enshrines upfront in its preamble, that the people of Rwanda are committed to building a state based on the principle of equality between men and

women. The devastating effects of the 1994 Genocide fundamentally altered Rwanda's demographic configuration resulting in women representing 70% of Rwanda's total population. Therefore, it became necessary to enhance women's role in the public sphere (as further discussed below).

In addition to the Constitution, gender rights are established in the Penal Code, Civil Code and various other laws, including the property laws, labor laws, as well increased protection of women in various criminal laws. These include the following:

**PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES:** Most notably, the Constitution requires

that women should occupy at least 30 percent of positions in national legislative bodies. Accordingly, the Constitution also designates that 24 of the 80 seats in the Chamber of Deputies (Lower House of Parliament) comprise women, and that at least 30 percent of elected and appointed Senators must be women. As a result, Rwanda is now among the top four countries in the world for political empowerment, with over 50% of women holding positions as parliamentarians and ministers. With increased female participation in politics, women parliamentarians have been able to successfully push for key legal reforms aimed at strengthening gender equality in Rwanda.

## PROPERTY RIGHTS:

These are guaranteed for women under the Constitution, Civil Code and relevant land legislation. This includes the Matrimonial Regimes, Liberties and Successions Law No.22/1999 which governs marital property and inheritance rights; Organic Law No. 08/2005 on the use and management of land in Rwanda which prohibits any discrimination based on sex or origin in matters relating to ownership or possession of property; Law No. 43/2013 which prohibits all forms of discrimination in relation to access to land and the enjoyment of real property rights; and Law No. 27/2016 governing matrimonial regimes, donations and successions, which provides for equal treatment of legitimate male and female children in succession.

## LABOR LAWS:

Various iterations of labor laws over the years have provided for and strengthened equal opportunities and pay for men and women. Law No. 51/2001 which establishes the Labor Code, provides for equal working conditions and equal salary for all employees irrespective of their sex. Law No. 120/2009 prohibits employment of pregnant or

breastfeeding women in conditions which may be harmful to their lives or those of their babies and provides maternity rights. Law No. 3/2016 establishes and governs the maternity leave benefits scheme and guarantees security of employment and pay for women on maternity leave. Labor Law No. 66/2018 on regulating labor provides for working conditions for pregnant and breastfeeding women, such as the requirement to protect such women by removing health risks at work and entitled breaks for breastfeeding. Consequently, at 84% Rwanda has one of the higher rates of female participation in the labor force compared to the global average of around 47%.

**GENDER-BUDGETING:** Gender issues have also been factored into national budget considerations. Namely, the Organic Law on State Finances and Property Law No. 12/2013 makes gender balance in public financial management a fundamental principle. Under this law, it is mandatory to include a gender budget statement as one of the annexes to the national budget framework paper submitted to Parliament, and all public entities are required to submit activity reports to specify how plans for gender balance have been implemented.

**PROTECTION AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE:** Finally, there are also laws in place to protect against gender-based violence such as Law

No. 59/2008 which criminalizes and penalizes several forms of gender-based violence. In line with Article 10 of this Law,

The Prime Minister's Order (No. 001/03 of 2012) sets out the modalities through which government institutions should prevent gender-based violence. These include for example, the need to put in place programs to prevent and fight gender-based violence, a requirement for Rwanda's National Police and Defense Forces to have 'Gender- Desks' as well as an emphasis on education, training and awareness raising programs.

In addition to the legal framework, Rwanda has implemented several strategies and established institutional mechanisms to promote gender

equality. A National Gender Policy formulated in 2010 addresses gender issues in various sectoral policies and programs, including in the areas of

(i) education for girls (ii) women in agriculture (iii) gender-based violence and (iv) sexual and reproductive health. This builds on other existing policies such as the Ministry of Education's 2008 Girls Education Policy and aligns with Rwanda's Vision 2020, which considers gender equality as a cross-cutting issue. Furthermore, Rwanda has established strong institutional mechanisms to promote and protect gender rights, including a Ministry in Charge of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), a Gender Monitoring Office (established by Law No. 51/2007) and a National Women's Council (NWC) (established by Law No. 27/23 of 2003).

The combined effect of these legal reforms accompanied by strategic implementation plans and relevant institutional mechanisms has enabled Rwanda to put in place a progressive framework for gender equality and seen Rwanda achieve notable progress in this regard.





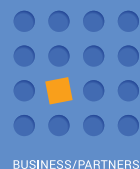


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SO, WHO ARE WE?

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INTERNATIONAL.



BUSINESS/PARTNERS



## Building an All-Inclusive Platform for Women Entrepreneurs

WOMEN IN RWANDA HAVE TAKEN A RESOLUTE STANCE TOWARDS THEIR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND THE TIDE OF THEIR WILLPOWER HAS TAKEN MANY FORMS IN RECENT YEARS. THE RWANDA CHAMBER OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS HAS SINCE 2005 PROVIDED THE PLATFORM FOR WOMEN BUSINESS EXECUTIVES TO EXCEL AT PERSONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL LEVELS.

**SINCE ESTABLISHMENT**, it has empowered Rwandan women in business by facilitating them through addressing challenges they face, which as a result, is propelling national growth and

sustainable development across different sectors.

Rwanda Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs (CWE-Rwanda) was established under the

auspices of the Rwanda Private Sector Federation (PSF), the national umbrella organisation for the business community. The Chamber's aim was to improve the socio-economic status of women entrepreneurs in both urban and rural areas by creating opportunities for their development through enhanced economic participation.

The Chamber empowers women entrepreneurs in the country by supporting them to access tailor-made business development services that help raise competitiveness on the market.

Ms Jeanne-Françoise Mubiligi, the Chairperson of CWE -Rwanda observes that the chamber unites and supports women in business - hence building competitiveness, profitability, and sustainability of their businesses.

The Chamber offers business services spread across eight business sectors, including;



Ms Jeanne-Françoise Mubiligi, Chairperson of CWE-Rwanda





Tourism, Liberal professionals, Arts and Crafts, ICT, Agriculture, Industry, Commerce and Services, and Finance.

The Chairperson's target is to reach out to all individual women in business making them feel part of this union while advocating for their empowerment.

CWE-Rwanda supports women entrepreneurs in five key ways; Advocacy, Networking, Capacity Building, Market Access Facilitation and other business development support services.

Ms. Mubiligi pointed out that the Chamber organises a series of advocacy and outreach campaigns, as well as participation in national and international events which avail them with Business-to-Business networking opportunity.

Alice Uwimana is a member of CWE-Rwanda. She is the President of Turimbe Co-operative that provides tailoring services in Kigali. She says that joining the Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs has evidently raised the cooperative's brand hence increased the visibility and growth in the business.

**The Chamber supports women entrepreneurs in five key ways; advocacy, networking, capacity building, market access facilitation and other business development support services.**

"Due to the advocacy of the Chamber, for example, MTN Rwanda gave us tailoring machines," Uwimana revealed.

Through networking, members are able to meet each other and make new connections for market and partnerships. These sessions put the women entrepreneurs in same place with experienced business personalities. This supports upcoming entrepreneurs, and win-win collaborations are realised among other things.

"To be a member of the Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs has

helped me mostly in networking and this supported my marketing efforts of my business," observes Jeanette Rugera, an entrepreneur in tourism sector and proprietor of Greenwich Hotel.

For Suzan Asimwe, a wholesale trader who joined the Chamber in 2017, she has reaped many benefits. She has received different trainings from the Chamber, in addition to networking opportunities with women in her sector.

"I have been exposed to other successful business people because of the Chamber," underlined Asimwe.

## REACHING OUT TO WOMEN IN BUSINESS

The Chamber also facilitates women entrepreneurs to access more market opportunities through trade exhibitions and expos whereby many have participated in local and international trade fairs, international seminars and conferences.

Currently, the chamber has a network of 345 members. All are women owned businesses registered under the umbrella. However, as the Chamber continues to enhance services, an



ambitious target has been set to reach at least 16,000 members by 2025.

Statistics show that there are more than 57,000 formal registered businesses, but also a significant number of informal small-scale businesses owned by women in Rwanda. The Chamber is mobilizing to reach all registered women-led businesses and wants to help the micro businesses owned by women to grow.

"We have a responsibility to bring on board all those women-owned businesses so that they can all gain from the benefits that the Chamber offers," underlined Ms. Mubiligi, adding that supporting the small ones will ensure growth and sustainability, which translates into socio-economic transformation of the country.

To achieve this ambitious road map, the Chamber has designed and is implementing a four-year strategic plan that runs from 2021 to 2025.

While formulating this plan, the Chamber set forward the ambition to safeguard the interests of Rwandan women entrepreneurs, enable them



conduct profitable businesses, thereby contributing to the overall economic development of the country.

Specifically, to empower women

**Agnes Samputu, the Executive Director of CWE-Rwanda**

entrepreneurs, the efforts are envisaged to contribute to job creation, recapture domestic market, increase exports, raise business growth and revenues while increasing private investments of citizens.

At a more personal level, the benefits of empowering women entrepreneurs will lead to increased household incomes, increased confidence and dignity of the woman, which will have a spill-over effect on the development of households.

The Chairperson of the Chamber explains that they identified three areas of focus to guide the strategic orientation of their plan in the next four years. These include; delivering impact, gaining strategic visibility and sustaining significant relevance.



## CHALLENGES TO WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

All the responses that the Chamber applies are intended to mitigate the challenges that women have faced in the past, and continue to face. Women encounter negative



socio-cultural perceptions about their entrepreneurial spirit and activities.

A report by Trademark East Africa observes that women feel more constrained than men in terms of mobility and working hours, networking, leadership and confidence, and access to finance. They continue to struggle to find support from their male counterparts and fellow women when initiating and developing their business.

For women entrepreneurs, lack of working capital remains one of the biggest obstacles in both product and service sectors. Many fail to apply for loans with the belief that their applications will not be accepted.

Other major constraints are insufficient demand for services and high level of taxes and fees.

Women who deal in export sector consider lack of linkages to foreign clients and lack of information on foreign export markets, as the main barriers to export trade, as well as logistics, transport and strict quality standards.

However, with a combined effort from different sides, including those of Rwanda Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs (CWE-Rwanda), society's perceptions on women entrepreneurs, that they cannot succeed in business, are changing.

The Chamber's Chairperson, Ms. Mubiligi, says that there are numerous success stories of women excelling in all sectors. With this pool of successful women business leaders, the Chamber has started a programme of mentorship where experienced members inspire and support other women with skill to grow their businesses.

To maintain the positive impact of their work, CWE-Rwanda



employs key inter-related channels that include increasing institutional effectiveness, implementing targeted national and sector-wide member mobilization, coordination and outreach. The third channel is through engagement in impactful and relevant research as well as advocacy initiatives. Ultimately, the goal is to empower entrepreneurs with the required skills, resources, tools and networks to be competitive.

The Chamber has established a dedicated team of experts at its Secretariat to ensure that its programmes and projects run smoothly and unhindered.

Agnes Samputu, the Executive Director of CWE-Rwanda, explains that they provide support to all their members by advocating for the removal of any bottlenecks that may hinder the growth of their businesses.

Among the latest initiatives is the SheTrades Rwanda Hub hosted and implemented by the Chamber.

SheTrades, a global initiative of the International Trade Centre (ITC) has the goal of connecting women entrepreneurs to markets. The Rwanda Chapter of this initiative joined a network of more than ten SheTrades Hubs across Africa, Asia and Latin America steered by CWE -Rwanda.



In Rwanda, this project is intended to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of export growth initiatives and is also managed by the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MINICOM).

The Chairperson of CWE -Rwanda observes that SheTrades Hub will support Rwandan women entrepreneurs to improve their competitiveness, connect them to new markets and internationalize their businesses.

The Hub will also serve as a resource centre for women-owned businesses, giving them access to more than 100 relevant trade-related modules, webinars, and trainings, in addition to market access and investment opportunities.

To achieve its mandate, the Chamber works closely with the Private Sector Federation (PSF) as well as different partners including government institutions like Rwanda Development Board (RDB), Ministry of Trade and Industry (MINICOM), Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) and Gender Monitoring Office (GMO). The Chamber also works with international bodies and NGO's like UN WOMEN, International Trade Centre (ITC), Trademark East Africa (TMEA), USAID, African Management Institute, BPN and local bodies with shared interests among others.

### VISION:

To be a world-class umbrella organization that supports

women entrepreneurs to become active and successful economic leaders and catalysts of sustainable socio-economic development.

### MISSION:

To empower Rwandan women entrepreneurs by facilitating them to address their challenges hence building competitive, profitable, and sustainable businesses.

This mission is delivered through advocacy, networking, capacity building, market access facilitation, and other business development support services.

### VALUES:

- 1) Upholding the dignity of women
- 2) Integrity and excellence
- 3) Learning and innovation
- 4) Commitment and accountability

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"I joined the Rwanda Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs two years ago, where I have been able to get trainings on how to improve my business, I was able to meet with other ladies who are also running their own businesses, got media exposure, learnt about online business and was able to start using other social media platforms to market my products." - **Marie Claire Ingabire is an entrepreneur who owns a furniture business called 6K Furniture.**



"Am very thankful to the Rwanda Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs, they have impacted me with skills to run my own business, through trainings am better now on how to run my finances and gained more confidence to deal and negotiate with banks when I require their services." - **Susan Asimwe is a mother of three who is very passionate about business. She owns and runs Genuine Super Stores, an import and distribution company in consumer goods.**



# PHARMALAB Ltd

## Rwandan pharmaceutical targets massive regional market



and urine containers, Surgical face masks, and a range of medical consumables that meet regular market demands with high quality at a favourable price.

When Covid-19 pandemic struck, to control the spread of the disease, PharmaLab became the first Rwandan company to start the manufacture of medical face masks and help citizens access affordable products for their safety.

The idea to start the company began in 1998 with three Rwandan entrepreneurs; Jacqueline Karekezi, and her sister Cecile

Nkomeje together with Cyriaque Rugwizangoga.

Karekezi who manages the human resource department at the company reflects that they initially started by opening a medical shop, importing medical equipment from Switzerland.

"At the time, Rwanda was emerging out of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi and it was difficult to purchase medical supplies such as surgical masks, gloves, plasters, bandages, and syringes, so we developed an idea to import and supply back at home," She said.

However in 2004, that changed, when the founders took another stride; to become an exclusive distributor of GMBH, Germany Company Human Diagnostics, manufacturers of medical diagnostic devices.

"We signed a contract with a German company to sell laboratory equipment, at the time; the demand for lab equipment was high, thus PharmaLab, a company that specializes in lab equipment was born," Karekezi explains.



Today, Pharmalab still works with Germany Company, and all their products are supplied in all hospitals, clinics, and dispensaries across the country.

"Our niche is to focus on improved customer service, and to retain a longer customer relationship," She points out.

### BUILDING THE PHARMACEUTICAL PLANT

According to Cécile Nkomeje, the Managing Director of PharmaLab Ltd, having worked in the health sector in Europe for many years, after Rwanda's liberation she felt it was time to bring that knowledge and experience back home.

When the Rwandan government encouraged entrepreneurs to initiate production and manufacturing locally, Nkomeje

and her partners looked no further but the sector they knew better.

"We were encouraged to be more enterprising and we built a manufacturing plant in Kigali. From the huge piece of land we bought at the Industrial Zone in 2014, in less than two years we inaugurated a pharmaceutical plant in Rwanda," She said.

The plant set phases to accomplish their plans, where in the first phase of operation, the company had the potential to produce over 25 million medical plastic tubes and 4 million stool containers.

Well, the pharmaceutical began its operations prioritizing the local market but was also able to supply regional countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Burundi, and Tanzania.

The company is gradually expanding more in the region and has ambitions to be the top manufacturer of vitro diagnostics and medical consumables in East Africa.

Karekezi notes that, at first they were faced with low market uptake, spending over three years without steady customers and decided to expand to other countries.

Currently, business is booming, she revealed that their products are very competitive on the market because of quality with the biggest export market in Tanzania.

They export to most of the East African regional countries and want to expand to reach Benin, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, and South Sudan.

Located in the Kigali Special Economic Zone, PharmaLab Ltd is one of the first Pharmaceutical companies specializing in the manufacture of medical consumables and laboratory products in the region.

The pharmaceutical company is the first locally owned and leading supplier, distributor, and manufacturer of medical and laboratory equipment in Rwanda.

PharmaLab manufactures products like blood tube collections, stool,







# AUTO PLUS

## Offers impeccable services to motorists in Rwanda

**A**uto Plus Rwanda Ltd is a Rwandan professional fleet/car maintenance/service centre established in December, 2020 to bridge the gap of car professional maintenance in a secure, clean environment with modern high-tech equipment facility in Kigali.

Donnah Mariza, the Managing Director of Auto Plus revealed that, the company specializes in general car service/maintenance, sale of tires, rims/wheels, batteries, suspension parts, lubricants, diagnosis, wheel/tire balancing and car accessories to replace parts for automobiles at a competitive price.

With a business background and as an entrepreneur, Mariza spotted an opportunity in the automobile sector in the country that there were less companies offering excellent services and set-up one stop car serving facility in Kigali.



**Donnah Mariza, the Managing Director of Auto Plus Rwanda.**

With professional mechanics and modern equipment, many motorists have become more attracted to Auto Plus and business is growing. She says that they have gradually added more services at customer's request so everyone leaves satisfied.

Products and services are offered to a wide selection of customers ranging from individuals, retail motorists to dealers, garages, corporate, transporters, government and non-government organizations (NGOs), so as to strengthen the automotive industry.

Auto Plus Rwanda strives to become the market leader in the country in the sale of auto parts, accessories and servicing of vehicles by committing to deliver to customers' fast, efficient and truly superior products and services with an identifiable difference through the establishment and

implementation of a quality management system.

### Why service your car at Auto Plus facility;

**Honesty and Integrity-** We believe that all decisions are to be made with integrity. Leadership is setting good examples for others to follow, expecting as much from yourself and from others.

**Individual Responsibility and Accountability-** It's our responsibility to satisfy the needs of our customers for all our products and services. Individual accountability for our own performance and for the quality of our products will demonstrate to our customers we are enthusiastic about them and really care.

**Cooperation and Communication-** Support of one another is a fundamental tenant of ours. We value open communication and encourage new ideas, realizing that teamwork produces a better employee work environment and enthusiastic customers and suppliers.



Improvement- Constant improvement, and in the value of ongoing education in any form. We believe in providing opportunity for personal professional and organizational growth within Auto Plus company.

Those policies, forms the basis of Auto plus' values and objectives. They are communicated throughout the company and are reviewed at regular intervals in line with business trends and requirements of the quality management standards.

### Core goals and values that they offer include;

To be the leader in providing unmatched quality automotive products and services.

To consistently strive to meet the changing customer's needs.

And to provide an atmosphere that encourages employee teamwork, integrity and excellence.



Auto Plus Ltd offers a wide range of products and services that include;

### PRODUCTS

Tires | Rims | Batteries | Suspension Parts  
Engine Oils and Gearbox Oils | Brake pads  
Cleaning and Maintenance Detergents (Car Shampoo, Sprays, Sponge, etc)  
Car Carpets | Screen Wipers  
Cushions and many more.

### SERVICES

#### Free of charge diagnosis

General Car Service (change of Engine and Gearbox Oils)  
Hi-Tech-Wheel Alignment Corner  
Headlight Adjustment | Tire Balancing

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, YOU MAY

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# Gisozi based Romantic Gardens inspires ambiance

**A**nitha Urayeneza's business acumen started appearing at an early age while at school but would later perfect when she got a glimpse of what would be achieved after travelling to Dubai with the help of her future husband.

When Urayeneza completed her university, she didn't look any further but continued what was started at school selling products and never bothered looking for employment.

"During the University days I used to sell jewelry, clothes and bags to some of my school mates and would get a small profit. When I completed school and could not get a job right away, I decided to concentrate on my business but now not at school," observes Urayeneza.

As she gained more experience and capital she would expand and started importing from Dubai, even diversifying to different businesses.

Urayeneza met her husband while doing business and he was also in the same trade and after their wedding they continued the journey. She revealed that the husband also encouraged her to continue her passion.

Some of Urayeneza's notable businesses include, the Gisozi based Romantic Gardens, a luxurious hotelier property that offers ambience space for various functions like weddings. Recently, she opened a new distillery business under BNG Ltd.

Under the brand name UNITED, she's venturing into distillery business by producing both Gin and Whisky. UNITED Gin have already passed the quality standards and was launched to the market this March.

"The distillery already acquired all the necessarily documents including those from Food and Drug Authority and Rwanda standards after our products passed quality tests," She says.

The company is now engaging distributors to take the new brands to market and they are sure of customers after the whisky was tested by some and they say its going to be a game because of best quality.

NBG Ltd also runs other notable business that includes importation of products that are sold on the local market.

For Romantic Gardens, it has been offering unrivalled services to customers due to experienced staff and dedication of management and this is also another factor that has led to the expansion of the business.



The owner assures clients that, they should continue to expect world class services and more. "We have served local clients from all over the country and even others from around the world including Europe, Canada who call to make reservation," Urayeneza underlines.

"Most of our clients normally call us complimenting on the beauty of our gardens, they encourage us to keep the standards and this makes us aim higher as we believe the happiness of our



customers is the key to success of Romantic Gardens," she added.

Some of the notable services offered at Romantic garden include wedding parties' introduction ceremonies, birthday parties, and photo shoots among others.

Urayeneza says that the place has been expanded to accommodate different clients at ago this has been done by construction of same standard facility.

She says that like other business people who become complacent after earning money, Romantic Gardens maintains high standards always with regular re-investments.

**UNITED**  
GIN  
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Call: +250 791 433 232 | +250 791 433 231



# One businesswoman's dedication to starting a Barista training institute



**W**hen life blesses you, you bless others and that is what Perpetue Mukamusinga, a business woman and the first female Barista in Rwanda is doing, she is the owner and Managing Director of Integrated Barista Training Centre Ltd (IBTC).

Mukamusinga opened IBTC in April 2021 with the main goal of finding ways to open opportunities and be a part of the constantly-growing coffee industry in Rwanda.

An authorized Specialty Coffee Trainer (AST) in Barista Skills, Brewing skills, Green coffee and



Sensory skills, Mukamusinga has trained over 1,000 students through the coffee value chain. Certified in roasting and cupping, she has more than 12 years in the Coffee industry

where she oversaw marketing of the women coffee, elaborated and conducted the curriculum of the SCA (Specialty Coffee Association) coffee training for Sustainable Growers Rwanda's Social Enterprise Question Coffee.

Previously, she led a training programme for Barista Academy under the Hanga Ahazaza initiative and was also the national barista champion for SCA Barista Camp scholarship 2019 winner in Greece.

## STARTING OUT

While starting IBTC, the aim was to promote Rwandan coffee by educating SCA courses to coffee farmers, processors and exporters with focus on local and international consumption by training baristas and selling Rwandan coffee worldwide.

Over the past two decades, Rwanda has emerged as one of Africa's success stories and a model for reconstruction politically, economically and socially, thanks to the many reforms, developments and innovations like IBTC.

The first of its kind in Rwanda, the centre is aimed at providing the international Specialty Coffee Association coffee skills program to students and professionals in hospitality and tourism sectors.

IBTC provides and upgrades International courses on the whole Coffee value chain (Barista Skills, Brewing Skills, Sensory Skills, Green Coffee Skills and Roasting).

IBTC is accredited internationally by the Specialty Coffee Association and the initiative has already created and increased



“Creating jobs for Rwandan youth is another important target for Mukamusinga, this applies to both local and international markets. After completing trainings young certified Rwandans will be capable to compete at different market places of the coffee sector.”

the knowledge and skills in the Rwandan coffee sector and worldwide through collective trainings from the origin to the final elaboration.

The founder of IBTC notes that the courses aims to increase the value of Rwanda's domestic coffee market by offering barista and brewing specialty pathways, including an AST (certified trainer) pathway.

## IBTC GOALS

The Training Centre promotes local coffee consumption and is increasing the availability of specialty coffee to be the preferable premium beverage to the community at affordable prices.



Having more qualified Baristas at international level with the positive impacts of providing a good hospitality, maintaining the highest coffee quality in the cup and being full detailed of the coffee they are serving.

Maintaining the purity of coffee and its brewing so it meets its health benefits, nutritional values and safe to the consumer.

Mukamusinga said that the objective is to increase sustainable Capacity Building of the coffee community through collective trainings of the coffee industry, upgrading coffee skills on the high quality with positive impacts to change the coffee community, by increasing socio-economic and emotional attachment for coffee by Rwandans and Coffee Culture.

Creating jobs for Rwandan youth is another important target for Mukamusinga, this applies to both local and international markets. After completing trainings young certified Rwandans will be capable to compete at different market places of the coffee sector.

The training on barista and brewing is also intended to contribute to tourism and hospitality industry through different activities of coffee value chain, as Rwanda coffee is known worldwide for its quality, this attracts different foreigners to come and enjoy the delicious drink from its origin.

## IBTC ADDRESS

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# UBUDASA *Wall Paints*

## Women taking lead innovations in refurbishing



treatment painting, exterior and interior designs.

"When Covid-19 broke out in Rwanda, different businesses halted operations consequently affecting sources of income for many people who had jobs. We thought of what we could do to contribute in reduction of that but also do what we love on top of earning us income," Nishimwe notes.

Before registering the company, Ubudasa loosely translated as "uniqueness", the two used to work casually and most times they would offer free consultancy services to families and friends who had new houses to paint, advise expectant mothers on how to design rooms for their new born among other things.

The CEO of the company, Umugwizawase observes that the style of painting they do for interior and exterior wall paints is in 3D dimensions and have undisputed expertise controlling and fixing humid walls. She emphasises the use of quality paint on special orders from manufacturers together with humidity treatment and prevention mechanism (products, with use of other technologies).

The ambitions of these young ladies are not limited to uplifting themselves alone but to empower other women and

break stereotypes that hold women back at workplace. The company employees about 70% women to demonstrate their capability, neither do they shy away climbing walls to paint in what has been known as a male only profession.

Unique in perfecting their designs and painting, she says they order quality paint directly from manufacturers to maintain quality and this is at no extra charges to their clients. She also revealed ambitions to establish their own paint manufacturing plant in future to maintain quality.

Umugwizawase, her partner and their architects have received trainings from different countries to perfect the 3D dimensions and apply other artistic designs. Rwandans that used to look for such skills elsewhere can now source them from UBUDASA Wall Paints.

"We have carried out research and gained skills in fixing different kinds of humid walls. This has helped us find different solutions depending on whether the affected area is inside or outside," Umugwizawase explains.

She underlined that, "So far the laboratory tests conducted on their solutions have found them to be effective and testimonies from their clients have shown



"We use specific materials for our designs and the main problem is that they are not available on our local markets, but we are working hard to produce them locally and probably we will soon have enough materials."

that these solutions work very well."

However, Nishimwe says all has not been rosy as the company has faced a number of challenges including lack of raw materials on local market hence they are forced to import which is quite expensive.

"We use specific materials for our designs and the main problem is that they are not available on our local markets, but we are working hard to produce them locally and probably we will soon have enough materials," she notes.

This women-led business is unique as the company name states, they say that as women painters they understand that painting is a male-dominated field and at times some clients doubt whether they can do a proper job. "However this doesn't discourage them but rather encourage us with our team and we are able to deliver quality services that end up impressing everyone."

As business grows, UBUDASA Wall Paints is doing well locally and started looking to the west in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where they already expanded with a new branch opened in city of Goma and clientele is slowly growing.

Nishimwe calls on the youth and women in particular to grow their self-confidence and not fear going out to start doing what's their passion whether as main job or side activity.



As Rwanda battled Covid-19, one of the measures that were put in place was a lockdown across the country. The move was aimed at halting and controlling the spread of the virus. However, this measure affected operations of different businesses hence leading to loss of employment.

As the economy slowly re-opened, two ladies, Delphine

Umugwizawase and Henriette Nishimwe Dusabe realised they could use their childhood passion and dream of being artists to set up a company that would give people employment and also make them some money.

Nishimwe, the Managing Director revealed that in July last year, the two fulfilled their art dream when they officially launched UBUDASA Wall Paints Ltd dealing in humid wall







## THE INVINCIBLE CAPACITY, A PRECURSOR FOR DEVELOPMENT

**W**hen Honorine Mugorewase completed her studies she got a good job at a foreign import company but was never content as she always wanted to work for herself.

Equipped with experience from the pharmaceutical import business, Mugorewase in 2012 felt ready and confident to start on her own with the urge as a Rwandan lady to do what most felt women could not do.



**She started MNR East Africa Ltd, to venture into pharmaceuticals and commencing small with only three workers, the idea was self employment and to create jobs for the youth thus proving that Rwandan women are capable to being entrepreneurs.**

She started MNR East Africa Ltd, to venture into pharmaceuticals and commencing small with only three workers, the idea was self employment and to create jobs for the youth thus proving that Rwandan women are capable to being entrepreneurs.

Mugorewase explains that, the start was challenging with very little capital that could only purchase limited products but with enterprising ideas to develop and expand. Today, the company has grown big and can afford to handle bigger government tenders.

Currently, MNR East Africa has eleven permanent workers, and the company has established itself in the country



and has clients coming from neighbouring countries like DR Congo as well as Burundi.

Nevertheless, Mugorewase has ambitions to expand the business far beyond Rwanda and East Africa.

She notes that, the Rwandan leadership having promoted gender equality and supports women in undertaking different initiatives has given them more confidence and to believe in themselves.

Women are endowed with immense capacity, some only lack willingness to put it to

good use. They are capable and when they work hard its possible to achieve their wildest dreams while fulfilling their domestic obligations.

Mugorewase calls upon young women to be more confident in what they want to do and they will reach where they want to go. She advises that if a girl starts up a company, support her because she is able and catalyse the development of the country.

While we still live in a patriarchal society, whose mindset understands that only man has to engage in income generating activities, things are changing and hopefully we will overcome, she says.

With regard to national development, women entrepreneurs are greatly contributing through payment of taxes, offering employment opportunities and more engaged in production in different sectors which is speeding up development.

Mugorewase concludes that, as this year's theme on the women's International Day states, "Gender Equality Today, for a Sustainable Tomorrow," this implies that even the young people should be concerned, if there is equality today, it will pave way for a sustainable and better tomorrow.





# MEET THE GENIUS SUPER BUSINESSWOMAN BEHIND THE GENUINE SUPER STORES

“I started my own business in 2016 with just too little capital at hand, nevertheless I was determined to be accountable for it and in 2017 I joined the Rwanda Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs (CWE-Rwanda) that gave me trainings on how to run and manage my business.”

”

Susan Asimwe

**S**usan Asimwe is a mother of three who is very passionate about business especially importation of products. Despite having started with little capital that could have discouraged her from following her passion, she didn't let go of it.

“I started my own business in 2016 with just too little capital at hand, nevertheless I was determined to be accountable for it and in 2017 I joined the Rwanda Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs (CWE-Rwanda) that gave me trainings on how to run and manage my business.” said Asimwe.

The fact that the government of

Rwanda offers opportunities and empowers women to be financially independent, that encouraged her more to concentrate on her business and meet others in the business community thus enabling her expand her business.

She revealed that Genuine Super Stores, imports and distributes

consumer goods from different countries like India, Egypt and Malawi for Sugar, once the products are in the country, they are distributed to wholesalers who in turn also sell to the retailers and then to the consumers.

Genuine Super Stores is located in Kigali's busiest commercial hub opposite Kigali City Market complex.

According to Asimwe, the business sector plays a significant role to support the economy and that the government offers support to women to starting their own businesses which translates into a sustainable development.

## CHALLENGES ALONG THE WAY

The entrepreneur explains that the most challenging part she faced was the stereotypes in business where she was discouraged by people just basing on the fact that she was a young woman. People kept telling her how impossible it was for her to make it in the sector as a woman.

The other challenge was having very

limited working capital given the fact that the business she was venturing into required a lot more, meaning she had to struggle for the first and second year, fortunately was able to rise some additional finances to enable her business to expand.

Then the issue of managing stock as

the business expanded, but that also worked out better having gotten some training from the Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs, it took three years to cope up running her business well.

Asimwe explains that in years to come she sees herself among key players in this trade as she plans to leap higher but also focus on importation of needed goods and products, and leave the distribution to others.

As an inspiration to the young girls, she has an advice to pass on to them not fear starting out something even with the little you can get as long as the commitment is there. “Be confident to explore because opportunities are there.”

She further plans to expand her business in areas that can impact more people.

Am very thankful to the Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs, they have impacted me with skills to run my own business, through trainings am better now on how to run my finances and gained more confidence to deal and negotiate with banks when I require their services.” She underlined.







# La Divine International Christian School

## Offering a blended Curriculum for quality education

La Divine International Christian School has grown leaps and bounds since its humble beginnings six years ago with its contribution to the country's education sector recognised and transforming the community.

This primary and nursery school that started with only five pupils, today boosts over 300 pupils which has been achieved largely to the resilience and quality of education that the school offers. The school offer both international and local curriculum depending on the needs of the parents.



Rev. Mrs. Claudine Nyirandagijimana, a female entrepreneur and founder of La Divine International Christian School,

As more women are getting included in national building programmes such as education, health, manufacturing, financial

“After graduating in Business Administration in 2015, I asked myself as mother and a woman who has been emancipated what can be my contribution to nation building, with my love for children and passionate about education, I looked no further, it was a school,” she says.

Nyirandagijimana started a school the following year emphasizing on quality education with promotion of Christian values which are pivotal in success of pupils.

The motto of the school is, “Education & Knowledge based on obedience to God”

“I realized that my community didn’t have a school that grooms children with Christian values which will enable them to become God-fearing and upright citizens, thus the decision to

inclusion among others, they are breaking traditional barriers that held them back and investing in fields that used to be male dominated.

Rev. Mrs. Claudine Nyirandagijimana, a female entrepreneur and founder of La Divine International Christian School, a kindergarten and primary school located in Busanza, Kanombe Sector, Kicukiro District in the City of Kigali says she started the school as her contribution to nation building.



make it part of the education at my school,” She said.

The proprietor adds that, the school trains and prepares pupils to work in international settings on top of training them with a mind for job creation. From a young age, the pupils at this school are able to read and write English, French and Kinyarwanda.

The school also puts at the centre of its priorities at the wellbeing of all children through good feeding with recommended diets for younger ones, this has made an instant a success with more parents enrolling their children at the school.

According to Nyirandagijimana,



it is ensured that the teaching staff is well educated and trained professionals in the sector, personally the founder is an educationist with a masters degree in Education.



The school staff as per academic wise have received trainings and extended knowledge on the curriculum practiced per curriculum both international and local. As for other staff specialization and well equipment is must in the school.

Currently, La Divine International Christian School has 25 staff in different disciplines with 20 Classrooms, Library, Kitchen, Bakery and Vegetable Garden for improved nutrition of the children.

There are plans to expand the school from its existing infrastructure to build more blocks that can accommodate more pupils as well as opening more branches of the school in the country and exporting it to other countries.

The founder of the school stresses that, where there is a will there is always a way and as the world has become a global village, she is will take this quality education worldwide.

Nyirandagijimana calls on women to make use of the opportunities created for them by President Kagame and the country to contribute in nation building, she advises that women should undertake fields where their passions lie.



# The magnificent home or office décor with 6K furniture

Meet the magnificent world of Luxury at 6K Furniture and the person behind the brand!

Marie Claire Ingabire is an entrepreneur whose business is located in Kicukiro, City of Kigali. The company's workshop and store called 6K Furniture offers contemporary quality home and office furniture with affordable prices.

6K Furniture offers corporate solutions for all furniture and decoration needs from A to Z of hotel, cafe, restaurant, office and residence projects.

Rooting in the local market for two years now, 6K Furniture Ltd specializes in manufacturing whole office and house furniture, such as living room sofa, beds, dining furniture, coffee table set, and so on.

The company combines luxury, aesthetics and comfort in furniture, decoration and complementary accessories, there is quality production and corporate brand expertise in the products. 6K Furniture adds a magnificent style to all spaces it touches, from apartments to villas,

from residences to offices, from hotels to restaurants.

media platforms to market my products," observes Ingabire.

With its unconditional service infrastructure that does not compromise customer satisfaction, 6K Furniture offers quality solutions to all furniture and decoration needs of its customers all over the country.

Ingabire attributes some of her success from Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs Rwanda that she joined two years ago.

"I joined the Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs two years ago, where I have been able to get trainings on how to improve my business, I was able to meet with other ladies who are also running their own businesses, got media exposure, learnt about online business and was able to start using other social



She is thankful towards the Women Chamber for various initiatives that are benefiting upcoming women in business especially capacity building.

With support from institutions like the chamber and Rwanda's vision, Ingabire is hopeful about the future. "My future projection is to expand in this industry where I will be able to employ more people."

Currently, 6K Furniture employees 20 people and uses at least 80% of raw material sourced locally.

As an entrepreneur, Ingabire advises other women saying, "I would like to advice my fellow ladies not to allow inferiority complex hinder their plans of venturing into business as everything is possible to be done and seek advice."

However, she notes that her business has been encountering some challenges that still hold them



down like quality materials which have to be imported from China and Dubai.

Like all other business, Covid-19 pandemic has also affected the smooth operations of 6K Furniture Ltd too, as her travels for business were limited and could not import especially from China where the company sources some of the materials. Nevertheless, they have managed to try source most raw materials locally.

Looking for furniture to add warmth, love and functionality to your space? Reach out to 6K Furniture store or visit the showroom at Kicukiro to cater for your personal style and aesthetic.





# Great Generation Garments aims to excels in textiles

*Quick deliverance, reliability, flexible customization, and adoptability are qualities that define Great Generation Garments.*

**THE GREAT** Generations Garment Ltd, is one of the leading proponents of Fabrics Business and modern Fashion Apparel Sourcing solution firm, a privately-owned company established in 2018,

makes its primary business in the making of uniforms and other textiles for the Rwandan market.

The company plays a critical role in establishing the local textile and

apparel value chain, developing a large skilled labor force, contributing to import substitution, and meeting the local demands.

Great Generation Garments has built a solid foundation and is enjoying successful growth curve with more than 45 full time employees.

Products range in knitted garments for ladies, school orders and customized fabric as per customer needs.

While speaking to Rwanda Dispatch, Agnes Uzayisenga the Managing Director said that before 2018, she hadn't thought of opening a textile industry as she was engaged into other business that included the importation of products like used clothes.

"Prior to 2018, I was engaged into other business but changed when I spotted an opportunity to start a textile industry, this was after

government started discouraging the importation of second hand clothes," says Uzayisenga.

Great Generation Garments started with about 30 workers and trained them, progressively they increased to 100, but when covid-19 pandemic struck, the number reduced to 45 employees.

The company has received support from the Chamber of women and other stakeholders like SDF which funds trainings while the company provides internships where some are retained at the end of their trainings.

Uzayisenga explains that they have secured industrial sewing machines imported to support mass production. The company also conducts research through the marketing team.

To sale to the local markets, Great Generation Garments distributes to about ten shops in Kigali and others from Muhanga and Musanze districts.

But all is not well in running a smooth business as Uzayisenga explains that like all other business, Covid-19 pandemic didn't spare them, given the fact that their clientele was hindered with restricts to gatherings from church, wedding parties, and schools programmes



**The company has received support from the Chamber of women and other stakeholders like SDF which funds trainings while the company provides internships where some are retained at the end of their trainings.**

interrupted which meant the market was limited.

The market is still small with stiff competition of locally manufactured goods and those imported in the country. Even as second hand clothes have been banned or heavily taxed there is still that mentality with the locals consumers who consider that products from the west are better.

However, Uzayisenga is happy about the Made in Rwanda initiative,

"this is a good campaign that the government came up with, even though it is still in its early stages given the fact that many are still in a learning process, I believe with time things will be placed in right order and our production will increase."

"Made in Rwanda has a lot to teach the youth and there is much more into it that we have to learn. We always tend to encourage the workers to put more effort into doing something better and whole committed to it." She said.





# TEDGA'S BUSINESS GROUP LTD

## Offers best vocational hotel, wedding planner services

**WOMEN** have been paving the path for entrepreneurship in every industry for many decades and women entrepreneurs have been able to withstand economic and business pressures to become some of the best.

Today, the list of women entrepreneurs spans many industries, Marie Therese Niyomwungeri is one of those successful entrepreneurs who have made a significant mark of recent and have built a world-renowned brand through her own hard work and strong drive.

other industries, such as leisure and hospitality.

Niyomwungeri is one of the women entrepreneurs who decided to venture into both medical industry, leisure and hospitality. A medical doctor by profession, wife and mother of five children is the proud owner of TEDGA's Business Group located in Gahanga of Kicukiro District.

"I started my business way back in 2013, having being disappointed by one of the wedding planners I had hired to organize mine which did not turn to my expectation." She says.

Niyomwungeri who was then running two clinics in Kicukiro and Nyamirambo then decided to open a discussion about her plans of providing services of wedding planner to her husband.

While women entrepreneurs are historically most known for running fashion houses or cosmetic companies, in more recent decades, many have made their marks in



Given the little capital that they had, she decided to start with a few things like hair saloon, wedding clothes, and vehicles for hire and later on contracted on a reception hall from Kicukiro district authorities for some time.

"The area that I had contracted has also space where I was able to utilize it into an amusement park for children but since my contract was coming to an end, we got some land in Gahanga and decided to relocate there, got some loan and was able to buy more land adjacent to ours for construction of a vocational hotel that I had initially planned for." She explains.

Currently, TEDGA's Business Group offers transit equipped houses for wedding guests, Rwandan from the Diaspora and all those who want to relax and refresh themselves from stress and fatigue.

Besides that the place has a vocational hotel with large garden, bigger and small tents for religious wedding ceremonies, birthday recreation center, meeting rooms for conferences, amusement park for kids, car rental and wedding planning services where they



decorate all types of decoration desired by the clients.

The vocation hotel caters for families that have children where

they have enough space for the children to play from while the parents are attending to other things.

Despite Covid-19 pandemic having stalled their work still in phase one that started in 2018, the big plan at Gahanga now is picking up.

Niyomwungeri is thankful towards the government of Rwanda for empowering women. "I am really grateful toward the call to empower women by the government as we can be able to handle multi tasks as much as men and sometimes even better.

Most entrepreneurs and executives still tend to be men, but more and more women are becoming business leaders and innovators.

While there are a handful of woman founders, the past few decades have marked a great upsurge in self-made women in business.





# BAL a sector ripe for investment

BY JEJJE MUHINDE

**IN AFRICA**, it is easy to witness that football is the most popular sport in almost all countries; the continent ignores professional basketball mainly because of lack of investment and poor infrastructure has made the game less popular.

However, things are changing, the inauguration of the Basketball Africa League (BAL) to the continent in 2019, plus the unveiling of NBA Africa in 2021, has brought excitement from fans, discovered a new talent and the sector is ripe for investment.

Honestly, the scheme is not expected to revolutionize Africa's sports ecosystem right away, but it is a jolt that can elevate basketball on the continent.

Again, BAL can offer a development success story while convincing investors of the vibrancy of African sports and creative industries in the long run.

The business operating in Africa is similar to its NBA China, which has grown to an over \$5 billion business.

Launched in 2008, NBA China is worth a \$253 million investment from partners including Disney.

NBA China allowed the league to gain more access to the world's top marketplace, as China has a population of about 1.4 billion, according to United Nations data.

Once again, this year, BAL season is back in action for the second season. The season kicked off on 2 March 2022 and will end with the final on 28 May 2022.

The group phase has just concluded in the Dakar Arena in Senegal and the Hassan Moustafa Sports Hall in Cairo. While the playoffs and finals will be played in the Kigali Arena for the second year in a row.



**Former President Barack Obama is one investor who joined a group of private investors in backing the new venture, including prominent Nigerian investors Babatunde "Tunde" Folawiyo of Yinka Folawiyo Group and Tope Lawani of Helios Fairfax Partners Corporation.**

Former President Barack Obama is one investor who joined a group of private investors in backing the new venture, including prominent Nigerian investors Babatunde "Tunde" Folawiyo of Yinka Folawiyo Group and Tope Lawani of Helios Fairfax Partners Corporation.

Several investment opportunities can be part of the division by looking at opportunities in content development, infrastructure, media, and sport diplomacy projects.

The inaugural season of the BAL played in Rwanda's Kigali Arena in May 2021 was a media success. It reached a global audience and attracted high-profile partners.

BAL was aired on ESPN, Canal+, BeIN Sports, NBA TV, and Tencent Video, targeting a global audience across premier sports channels.

Such TV stations and Telecom brands make up a substantial share of domestic sponsors. While at the same time, they make gains on broadcasting.

UK-based sports tech company Genius Sports has partnered with BAL, which will see the firm provide official real-time stats and incorporate new technology.

The agreement is the first step in introducing a wave of new sports data and gaming features for media and betting companies.

Africa has the youngest population in the world, with 70% of sub-Saharan Africa under the age of 30.

Such a high number of young mobile-driven people is an opportunity for unlocking a new following through digital streaming and innovation startups for the continent's growth.

In addition, BAL can also fuel immense growth in sports infrastructure investment, for instance, the new Dakar Diamniadio Sports City in Senegal attracted 25 percent equity from consortiums costing approximately €50 million.

In Rwanda, the construction of the Kigali Arena was a joint project of the government and Turkish firm Summa.

The infrastructures have the potential of auxiliary developments around stadiums such as restaurants, hotels which are used in job creation to ticket sales, and licensed merchandise to strategic sponsorship opportunities.

The new venture is also an opportunity for an investment in human capital such as the creation of youth basketball academies that will serve as a pathway for talent detection and growing the NBA's brand.







# Why sports has a huge potential to empower women and girls

BY JEJJE MUHINDE

**IN RWANDA**, there are still a lack of opportunities for girls and young women to engage in sports activities.

Structures of women in sports are still emerging and are not yet well developed.

Yet, when Rwandan national Salima Mukansanga became the first woman to officiate at the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) early this year, she became a source of national pride.

Such a triumph is rarely seen, and

As a woman, Mukansanga had to overcome serious obstacles to reach this level, especially in an industry where women are barely paid less than half of their counterparts.

Further, she proved that sports can also help young girls develop their capacity to communicate effectively, work well in a team, learn to respect their teammates and help gain self-confidence.

Apart from eradicating equality, sports can also be used to generate economic benefits for women who are lagging not only in terms

should give a forward push to more women as well as young girls with a passion for football to see themselves as professional players or referees in the future.



The programme helps women understand how important it is to identify their own strengths.



A women practises how to bat at Gahanga cricket stadium



Salima Mukasanga during AFCON 2022

of money but also in terms of tangential benefits.

In cricket, for example, Rwanda Cricket Association (RCA) and the charity group Cricket Builds Hope, have a programme that uses cricket as a tool for social change.

The programme, which introduced cricket to more than 300 women, is in line with RCA's vision to make cricket a game that is gender-balanced," the association says.

The aim is to help young women use Gahanga Cricket Stadium to understand how important it is to identify their strengths and nudge them towards a path of female empowerment.

Under the programme, participants are guided to bat and bowl, identify what they're good at, they go on to repeat the exercise with just one of those, and compare what happens to their performance once they begin to truly focus on what they are good at.

The programme is run under different topics which include; a week of public speaking, goal setting, identifying strengths, and working under a team. In addition, it has classroom-based sessions.

RCA underlines the long-term goal of the programme is, to see cricket getting into the community and to realize many people benefiting more from the sport.

Since the start of the programme in 2018, around 300 women aged between 15 and 25 have benefitted from the workshops.

Several of these participants are mothers, when they bring their children to the workshops and the cricket ground; it is expected to encourage a new generation to embrace the sport.

Mary Mainie, former captain of the Rwanda women's team, observes that, as a cricket player for a long time, the sport has nurtured her into the kind of woman she is today, and she would love to see more of that cricket effect spreading out there.

"One of the things we identified is that young women are less economically empowered, that is why we thought about a program designed to incorporate cricket," She explains

Still, an organization named 'Right to Play' founded by Johann Olav Koss, a four-time Olympic



Women practising cricket at Gahanga

medallist, aims to use sports programmes to educate children about leadership, health issues, and job prospects.

Under this organised child-led clubs, girls take on leadership roles, they're empowered to challenge gender stereotypes and to hold awareness-raising events for parents and caregivers on gender-specific learning needs.

The programme is implemented by volunteer coaches and has since increased school enrolment and attendance by bringing after-school programmes to underprivileged regions.

It is reported that students who participated in these activities had a ninety-five percent school attendance rate.

While projects like Cricket Builds Hope and Right to Play cannot address all problems of women in the country, they're helping to bring about constructive change, and other organisations can take inspiration to support gender equality in sports.

A group of mothers in a class session at Gahanga







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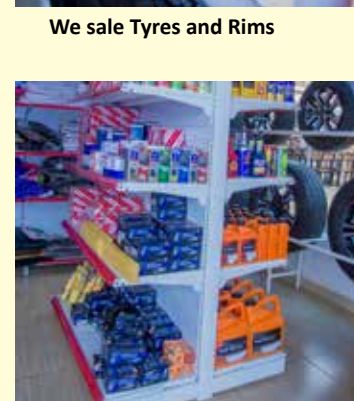
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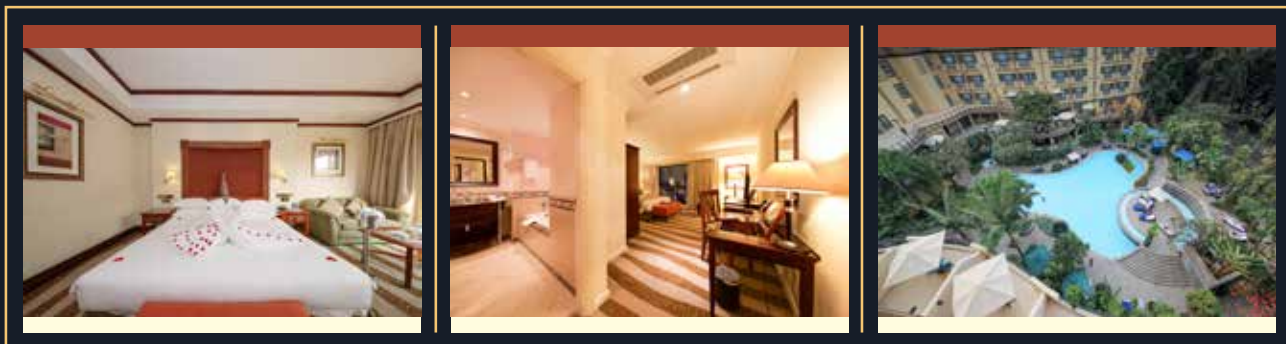


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