

Research Report

Community Philanthropy: Home-Grown Solutions as an Approach for Nation Building and Resilience in Rwanda

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ABSTRACT

This research article seeks to map community giving in its many dimensions, including community foundations in urban and rural contexts. Within the Rwandan Community setting, the research explores the home-grown solutions as adopted approaches of philanthropy. The rural and urban settings were explored, and key successes of the initiatives were collected as case studies, and through interviews and group discussion, key results are discussed.

Keywords: Philanthropy, community philanthropy, home-grown solutions, sustainability

In my visits around Rwanda, I have seen for myself how Girinka has transformed the lives of poor people. Many have told me that this is the first time they have ever owned anything, the first time they have ever earned anything. Now their families are better fed and they are earning money.

H.E. President Paul Kagame at the fifth anniversary of Girinka in Rubavu, on 3 March 2011

INTRODUCTION

The 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi left Rwanda as a failed state in almost all aspects of state-building. This left a deeply traumatised and divided society. The utmost priority of the transitional government of National Unity led by the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) was on rehabilitation and development of important key areas of nation-building, notably the socio-economic, sociopolitical and security dimensions. To tackle the above-mentioned issues, it was necessary for Rwandans to find out practical and pragmatic solutions to the situation. As a matter of fact, this called for the development and adoption of home-grown solutions (HGSs), geared towards sustainable development. Rwanda's HGS are culturally owned approaches translated into sustainable development programmes to address a number of challenges the country faced in the aftermath of the genocide against the Tutsi. HGS are based on national heritage. They are imbued with historical consciousness and are reminiscent of self-reliance spirit. Partially based on deeply entrenched cultural values and influenced by the debate about the aid efficiency and the latter's potential harm in the long term, HGS are Rwandans' responses for home-owned policies, based on positive experiences from the past and easy to articulate in the present.

Theoretical Review on Philanthropy and Home-Grown Solutions Culture in Rwanda

Philanthropy is literally "love of humanity". Philanthropy enhances what it is to be human through the process of giving and receiving – private giving for the betterment of others. It gives to society in many ways, and sometimes its contributions are making up for the failure of governments or the marketplace.

Most philanthropy is directed to supporting individual and collective human initiative and ingenuity, an expression of belief that the answers to societies' toughest challenges lie not in one institution or set of actors, but in the vast array of individuals and institutions who make up those

societies, who represent different beliefs and perspectives and approach the same problems with different solutions.

Philanthropy refers to activities (mostly private) performed with a goal of promoting well-being. It takes many forms, including individuals giving to non-profit organisations; diaspora communities funding relief and development projects in their home towns; foundations and charities supporting community projects, social investments and programme-related investments.

In addition, it refers to corporations undertaking cause-related marketing campaigns as well as multi-million-dollar disease treatment programmes; members of religious organisations undertaking short- and long-term missions to help in orphanages, individuals using technology such as SMS to transfer funds to disaster victims and donating to overseas projects through internet giving websites; and the use of entirely new financial tools, such as social stock exchanges, to promote well-being.

Much data about philanthropy is difficult to compile, and most philanthropy around the world is not planned, monitored or reported according to global development frameworks like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), or global reporting standards like the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). The UNDP report on the role of philanthropy indicates that The US Foundation Centre data shows, for example, that in 2011 alone, at least 300 US foundations contributed over \$770 million towards MDG Goal 1 of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. To help address this reporting gap, the Foundation Centre is in the process of beginning to both expand and refine its data on giving related to the MDGs and, eventually, the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

But the emergence of philanthropy should not be viewed principally as a "gap filler" for Official Development Assistance (ODA). Instead, and crucially, philanthropy brings a complementary and beneficial set of new actors, approaches and types of funding. Philanthropy often supports under-funded sectors like social inclusion, human rights and gender equality. It has often supported

grantees and partners at the nexus of different disciplines and approaches, thereby creating new fields that are then taken up by the official donor community – such as community-based natural resource management, land rights for the poor and urban climate change resilience.

Moreover, given the growing importance and enthusiasm around South–South cooperation and linkages, the burgeoning philanthropy originating in the global South, which has not been well-documented, is particularly important to explore and analyse.

Global and Africa Region Context of Philanthropy

In Global Emerging Markets, Philanthropy is considered an expression of human generosity and exists in every culture and reflected in most of the world's cultures and religions. It is not dependent on wealth or institutional structures, but greater wealth has inevitably led to expanding levels and types of philanthropy. Jenny Hodgson of the Global Fund for Community Foundations has noted that the growth of local philanthropy is not just a response to tighter North–South aid flows, but also a recognition of the shortcomings of mainstream development, with its issue-based silos, short-term project horizons and upward accountability to external donors.

The SDG funders group notes that “greater wealth accumulation across the world has produced expanding levels and types of philanthropy”. These have included small and huge foundations established by corporates, wealthy individuals, celebrities, sports personalities and former presidents among others. Others include community-based foundations, trusts and many voluntary-based organisations. Individual giving also constitutes another form of philanthropy and so is religious and other faith-based form of giving.

Aina and Moyo (2013) detailed in their book the different forms and expressions of philanthropy in Africa. They show that the growth of formal philanthropic activity in developing countries has been significant, marked by home-grown philanthropists, and new institutions and initiatives that are potentially better attuned to local needs. The growth in local forms of philanthropy – in part – is a recognition that locally or continentally funded initiatives can take a more holistic, long-term and flexible approach to development of African communities and their assets. Further, the creation of sustainable local philanthropy institutions reduces the dependency of African development programmes on Northern Funders and potentially gives Africa greater say and influence in determining her development priorities.

Undoubtedly, this is an interesting time for philanthropy in Africa and a defining one for African philanthropy. Never before has philanthropy in general been this momentous and never in the history of Africa has African philanthropy taken a central role in questions of development, sustainability and more increasingly in policy spaces as it does

now – from South Africa to Rwanda and Kenya among others. If is not South Africa looking at how its Treasury Department can involve philanthropy or the Department of Science and Technology establishing a unit responsible for foundations, it is Kenya and Ghana establishing Philanthropy Platforms, and the African Union establishing an African Union Foundation to harness voluntary and private contributions. And globally, at the adoption of the SDGs in New York in September 2015, philanthropy was high on the agenda. The SDG Philanthropy Platform (www.sdgfunders.org) records that philanthropy supported MDGs to a tune of \$30,599,904,222 globally and \$6623,378,079 to sub-Saharan Africa. Strikingly however is that this figure does not include philanthropic flows to other areas outside the MDGs and neither does this include flows from African philanthropic organisations and philanthropists to Africa – as well as in kind contributions such as home-grown initiatives in Rwanda. When all this is aggregated, philanthropy becomes a huge potential for alternative investments for any developmental enterprise. Research shows that most international giving to Africa is mostly from the United States of America. The Foundation Centre and Africa Grantmakers' Affinity Group (AGAG) both note that US foundation funding for Africa increased exponentially between 2002 and 2014 from just under \$290 million to close to \$1.5 billion⁵. The bulk of this funding is directed towards the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria; agriculture, water and sanitation, women's empowerment, young employment and education. An interesting trend though is that more than 75% of US foundation funding to Africa is administered by intermediary organisations headquartered outside Africa. Only about 25% of the funding for Africa goes directly to organisations headquartered in Africa. These organisations are only in 36 of the 54 countries. The largest African recipient is the Kenya-based African Agricultural Technology Foundation, which received a total of \$55.1 million worth of grants in 2012 alone. And the largest global recipient of US foundations giving is the World Health Organisation, based in Switzerland, which received grants totalling \$133.6 million in 2012. In 2012, 12 of the top 15 recipients of Africa-focused US foundation funding were headquartered outside of Africa. According to this report, Rwanda received in 2012 about \$2115,252, making it the 13th funded African country by US foundations. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has over a decade accounted for more than 50% of US Foundation grant dollars going directly to organisations headquartered in Africa in 2012 (\$212.8 million), surpassing the other top funders of organisations that have offices in Africa; such as the Ford Foundation (\$41 million), William and Flora Hewlett (\$15 million), Rockefeller (\$11.9 million) and Coca-Cola (\$11.5 million).

African giving is also in the increase expressed through corporate, family foundations, trusts, individual giving, voluntarism and community philanthropy among others.

On the increase are entrepreneurs such as Aliko Dangote of Dangote Foundation, Strive Masiyiwa of Higher Life Foundation who made his fortunes through telecommunications, and Tony Elumelu who made his wealth through investment banking. According to the World Wealth Report (2016), the population of Africa's High Net Worth Individuals (HNWIs) increased by 5.2% in 2014 to 0.15 million while their wealth increased by 7.0% to US\$1.44 trillion. This is a population of 14.65 million HNWI worth US\$56.40 trillion globally.

Thus, Africa has the fastest growing market of HNWIs in the world. It is further projected that Africans with assets more than US\$30 million will double by 2025 – a growth of 59% over the next 10 years compared to 34% of the global growth. Globally the number of philanthropists from the technology industry is growing. Inventions such as Facebook, Amazon, Uber and so forth have become a global sensation, generating substantial wealth and giving. There is also evidence that the numbers of individuals with high net worth is increasing in China and Asia Pacific in general. As the number of HNWI increases throughout the world, philanthropic endeavours are also correspondingly growing.

There is however a paradigm shift in the way philanthropy is being done. Philanthropists from the corporate sector have introduced private sector tools. The Africa Philanthropy Forum is a global platform for promoting giving by HNWIs.

Arab philanthropy has largely either focused on smaller familial networks or related issues or has been tied to the spread of particular religious practices and beliefs.

Finally, there is an emergence of continental and global platforms that are harnessing the power and developmental value of philanthropy. These include national, regional and global philanthropy platforms, such as the Africa Philanthropy Network (APN), East Africa Association of Grantmakers (EAAG), AGAG and national philanthropy platforms in Colombia, Indonesia, Kenya, Egypt, Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa. In July 2014, the Post-2015 Partnership Platform for philanthropy was established to create vital linkages between an emergent philanthropy sector from around the world, the United Nations (UN) and governments. The SDG Philanthropy Platform has also helped create a global knowledge and database regarding philanthropy's significant role in development, growth and environmental sustainability trends and other developments place philanthropy at the centre of this decade's developmental discourse. If it is not the growth in institutions in Africa that are either philanthropic or beneficiaries of philanthropy, it is the increase in the literature on philanthropy. The database accompanying this strategy gives a list of philanthropies that operate in Africa in general and Rwanda in particular. If appropriately supported by an enabling regulatory environment, philanthropy can become the government's reliable partner in alternative development financing; self-reliant economic structural

transformation; universal social protection for the populace; raising household savings, income and purchasing power; enhancing local economic development (LED); building local or micro infrastructure as well as developing micro-enterprises linked to the broader national economy. In the long run, the investments by philanthropy can contribute immensely towards political stability, well-being, social cohesion and resilience.

In the case of Rwanda, after 1994 Genocide against Tutsi, Rwanda has innovated other alternative sources of financing Vision 2020 and the EDPRS11 that include remittances, impact investing, venture capital, public private partnerships and home-grown initiatives such as Ubudehe, Gira Inka Munyarwanda, Ingando, Imihigo, Umuganda among others. The significance of this rich tradition of philanthropy captured in these initiatives and steeped in the country's sociocultural history is well articulated by the EDPRS11, NST1 and vision 2050 at large.

This is further confirmed by Ndahiro and others who write that, "To many observers, Rwanda is an example of how traditional culture can be a source of inspiration in finding solutions to modern day challenges" (2015: 132). Evidence exists showing that home-grown initiatives have led to positive changes in people's lives. Ndahiro et al. (2015) argue that the Abakangurambaga b'ubuzima (public health-care mobilisers) who were trained in hygiene in every province contributed towards saving many lives. They further demonstrated that health-care insurance (Mutuelle de Sante) has covered more than 76% of Rwandan population. This is an area where a combination of good health policies and HGSs has produced effective results (p. 103).

However, in order to optimise this potential philanthropy dividend, Rwandan authorities need perceive its full potential as both a social impact investment and charitable tool. There are many options to consider such as community foundations, diaspora philanthropy, corporate social responsibility (CSR); venture philanthropy, impact investing; and humanitarian assistance among others. But most importantly, is the need to place philanthropy in a national, regional and global perspective as a potential source of supporting government to deliver its national agenda.

METHODOLOGY TO DOCUMENT COMMUNITY PHILANTHROPY IN RWANDA

COVID-19 protocols imposed significant limitations on travel and gatherings generally in Rwanda. In order to undertake the research necessary for compiling this report, the consultants used a combination of secondary and primary research methods to cope with restrictions. These include field visit to organise focus group discussions, zoom calls and phone calls for key informants and desk review.

Research questions: This study is classified as qualitative research and all methodologies and approaches used were designed in way that generate more information on

the status of community philanthropy as well as the level of perception and appreciation of community and leaders. In this regard, open-ended questions were used for both key informant and community and consultant ensured active participation and inclusion of women, youth, people with disability and elders (refer to research questions).

Desk Reviews and Stakeholders' Mapping

Desk review was used with purpose to understand giving traditions and community philanthropy in Rwanda as well as policies regulating the culture and strategies to implement and coordinate. In this regard, Rwanda has documented a good number of communities' philanthropic initiatives through (mainly) Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) under HGSs and Rwanda Cooperation Initiative (RCI). Some case studies are already known outlined such as Umuganda, Gira Inka (one cow per family) and others, including their contribution to country economy. In addition, policy review was done, including the community development policy, the social protection policy, the LED policies as well as other policy in key sectors where philanthropy is reflected such as education, environment, agriculture, EDPRS and NST1, vision 2020–2050. Other reports include EICV, Rwanda philanthropy and outreach strategy.

Field Visits for Community Consultation through Focus Group Discussion

Due to COVID-19 movement restrictions, limited field visits were organised, respectively, in two districts, instead of four. Those are Kicukiro District of Kigali City and Bugesera District in Eastern Province (Rural). The districts were selected randomly but emphasis was put on their nature, being rural and urban areas. The purpose of the visit is mainly for qualitative data with aim to collect views of communities including (1) their understanding of giving culture and philanthropy in general and its application in their daily life, (2) what type of philanthropic initiatives within their communities, (3) what motivates them to embrace them, (4) is there impact from families and communities in general? (5) what can be improved—recommended for more philanthropic initiatives in the community and in the country?

Participants in the **Focus Group Discussions** are as follows: community health workers (CHWs), youth representative, teachers, local leaders, women representative, religions, Itorero, volunteers. In addition, representatives of private sector and civil society and local leaders especially at Umurenge (Sector) level were part of Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Sampling of FGDs comprised 12–15 people and selected based on criteria related to urban and rural aspects as defined in the inception report. Previously, the plan was to visit one district in four provinces (refer to inception report) and due to COVID-19 restrictions (movement, meetings, etc.) in Rwanda, it was not possible.

Interview for Key Informants

Using structured questionnaire, interviews were organised with key informants below to mainly and strategically understand the policy dimension of philanthropy in Rwanda, its historical background, impact on country socio-economic, cultural and cohesion, the future plan and how it is spotted as contributor to country 20–50 vision, including the reduction of dependency on donor. The key informants were Leaders from the following government and non-governmental institutions consulted:

- RGB: regulations of HGSs
- RCI: status, best practices, success and strategies for replication in other countries
- National Institute of Statistics: (data, documentation and contribution to national account/GDP)
- National Bank of Rwanda: remittances and financial value
- District of Kicukiro-City of Kigali and Bugesera District in Eastern Province

Data Analysis and Report Writing

Data collected from the field, desk review and key informant were triangulated to generate a general picture with response to the objectives of the study outlined in terms of reference, and a report on community and individual giving is compiled.

Note: Due to the COVID-19 restrictions in Rwanda characterised with repetitive lockdowns and movement restrictions to districts and provinces as well as significant reduction in government staff in offices, it was not possible to implement the methodology as planned. Online interviews were conducted with key informants and some of the representatives of district leaders. Most of analysis is based on available and reach documentation around HGSs in Rwanda and this is a commendable Initiative of Government of Rwanda to establish RGB and RCI who are doing, respectively, the regulation and promotion of HGSs.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Historical Background of Philanthropy in Rwanda

Pre-colonial

Prior to colonial interruptions in the progressive growth of the state in Rwanda, strong and closely knit extended family ties combined with cultural expectations ensured that the weak and vulnerable ones were shielded by the more able family members. In the event of the absence of immediate or extended family members to step in, communities would often take on the task of caring and providing for the weak and vulnerable ones¹.

¹Mouton (1975) and Illife (2005).

Focusing on health care as an illustration for instance, primary health care during that epoch was very much a family affair where adults usually held knowledge of medicinal herbs, bark, roots and therapies to treat common illnesses. Provision of advanced and professional health-care services was in the hands of traditional medical healers. Because they thought that charging fees for their services was forbidden by the gods, the services were mostly free². Tokens of appreciation upon recovery, according to one's financial level, were common, but never demanded or even expected. At the minimum, however, every citizen in need could access a health-care practitioner, be it a bonesetter, midwife, herbalist, physician and/or a spiritual healer. In the pre-colonial Rwandan state, there was little emphasis on social policymaking at the state level as a result of customs and traditions that readily laid the burden of social service provision on community. The Rwandan state did provide some form of minimal social services, such as the education of certain children of the elites in the art of diplomacy, governance, warfare and tradition (Vansina, 2004).

Colonial

During the 1885 Berlin conference, Rwanda was carved out for Germany as part of its protected territories in Africa. Germany ruled between 1885 and 1919 but was forced to relinquish that hold when the League of Nations handed the territory over to Belgium after Germany's defeat in the First World War.

- (a) Germany's community and social policy interventions in Rwanda were minimal:** They put emphasis on the preservation of colonial structures and cultures with very little novel input as the feared that educating the natives or providing them with basic Western social services to ensure a longer and better quality life would lead to a revolution³. German colonialists were not actively in support of providing education, health care or other social services to Rwandan citizens. Instead, missionaries were more involved in social service delivery, specifically that of provision of health and education. In the late 1800s, the first school was established in Rwanda by the Catholic missionary order of White Fathers and by 1918, there were close to a dozen Catholic missionary schools operating in the territory identified as Rwanda (Hoben, 1988).
- (b) Belgian colonial rule in Rwanda:** It was longer and more intense, spanning the period from the end of the First World War to the granting of Independence in 1962 and seeing to the full integration of Rwanda into

the global political and economic system. Much more so than the Germans, the Belgians were interested in social policy formulation and implementation, often working closely with missionaries and other faith-based civil society organisations. For instance, the Belgians actively courted missionary groups in the provision of social services, such that between 1919 and 1943, Belgian Presbyterians, Seventh Day Adventists, Anglicans, Baptist, Pentecostals and Methodists flooded the country in addition to the existing Catholics. The content and forms of education were shaped by the interests of missionaries and the colonisers without reflecting local needs. Some of the missionaries were interested in giving just "enough schooling for the masses to master the catechism and accept the church's teaching ..."⁴, while some wanted to also make available higher education for the production of a cadre of African clergy and lay ministers.

Post-independency

The newly independent Rwanda continued with the governance system it inherited from the colonial masters. Succeeding administrations in Rwanda invested more in the provision of social services, working together with international development partners and a budding civil society and private sector. Rwanda's Ubuntu philosophy, which is shared by much of the Bantu occupied region of sub-Saharan Africa, calls for the protection of the weak and vulnerable by the stronger members of the society.

Education, health care, agricultural inputs, food and other social services were either free or highly subsidised since political independence was viewed as meaningless without a concomitant rise in standard of living and quality of life of the citizens. However, social protection policies were utilised as a tool for state-building and even power consolidation on the part of the political class which extended free education, health services and other amenities to their entire population⁵.

In brief, the colonial and post-independency period did not provide and preserve the social cohesion of Rwandans, and social and community-based initiatives were done usually with minimum participation of the population which was not encouraged by the colonialists for fear of it turning into a platform of organisation by citizens to rebel against colonial rule. The dependency on foreign aid was also prevailing, therefore reducing the resilience culture which HGSs approach is trying to restore in the Rwanda post-genocide.

²Vansina, Jan 2004; The Antecedents of modern Rwanda; The Nyiginya Kingdom.

³Steinmetz 2008. The Colonial State as a Social Field: Ethnographic Capital and Native Policy in the German Overseas Empire before 1914. American sociological review. 73(4), 589-612. doi.org/10.1177/000312240807300404.

⁴Hoben, Susan J. 1990, School, work and Equity: Educational Reform in Rwanda. African study review. doi 10.2307/524194.

⁵Kumssa and Jones 2014. Conflict and Migration: The Case of Somali Refugees in Northeastern Kenya. Global social welfare. 1(4); 145-156. Doi: 10.1007/s40609-014-0006-9.

Post-Genocide against the Tutsis: Concept of Home-Grown Solution to Rebuild

Rwanda's immediate post-genocide government actively crafted policies aimed at both addressing endemic poverty and decreasing inequality among the populace. One of the surest ways to achieve was to empower Rwanda's majority rural inhabitants and make sure adequate social protection and household economic improvement lies in meeting the people where they are, in terms of their knowledge, geography and available resources. The Government of Rwanda therefore began to emphasise home-grown, grassroots and indigenous knowledge-based approach to social policy-making that will depend very little on external parties and much on the citizens themselves.

One of the first steps taken to concretise this ideal was the transformation of the country from the unitary and centralised system bequeathed by the colonial masters to a decentralised form of administration in 2000, therefore making Umudugudu, the lowest administration, a centre for social and community-related initiatives as well as citizen participation and mobilisation. Most of HGSs are initiated and implemented within Umudugudu, including the Ubudehe, which is an indigenous knowledge and grassroots-based approach to community development. This has been scaled up to conform to the requirements of modern rural administration and grassroots governance through categorisation according to poverty levels.

Policy Environment and Institutional Framework of Home-Grown Solutions

Cultures values of self-reliance and solidarity are imbedded in strategic country policies and laws as strategy to achieve transformative socio-economic development.

The Rwandan Constitution of 2003 amended in 2015, in its Article 11 of Chapter 3, states Rwandan culture as a source of HGSs: In order to build the nation, promote national culture and restore dignity, Rwandans, based on their values, initiate home-grown mechanisms to deal with matters that concern them⁶.

Vision 2050 of Rwanda has two overarching goals, including economic growth and prosperity as well as high quality and standards of life for Rwandans. The Vision 2050 was requested by the 13th National Umushyikirano Council in 2015, which is another HGS. Subsequently, broad stakeholder consultations and citizens' engagement were conducted to define what the Rwanda citizens want to see by 2050 under a slogan "THE RWANDA WE WANT: PROSPERITY AND HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL RWANDANS". In its formulation, HGS are stated as one of the three key considerations for a successful implementation and achievement of Vision

2050 "Promoting Positive Values supporting Societal Transformation".

The Vision 2050 states that Rwanda recognises the importance of her culture and values in providing a platform for sustained socio-economic transformation and prosperity and these values include self-determination, including self-sufficiency as a nation (Kwigira), solidarity and dignity (Agaciro); unity and reconciliation and the Rwandan identity/culture; equity (including gender) and Inclusiveness; citizen-centred governance.

The Vision states further that it will focus on the following Rwanda's HGSs: Girinka, Ubudehe, Imihigo, Umuganda, CHWs, Universal Health Insurance, Gacaca courts, National Umushyikirano Council, Abunzi and Access to Justice Bureaus.

In brief, HGSs remain at the heart of Rwanda's socio-economic development.

National Strategy for Transformation (NST1): Home-grown solutions is placed among the key considerations for elaboration and implementation of NST1: "The NST 1 targets are ambitious but achievable. Realizing this target will require strengthening collaboration and partnership among all stakeholders and enhancing ownership at all levels. Rwanda has achieved a significant progress in the past, and will build on the same principles while tapping into our Home-Grown Solutions and Values"⁷. This is reflected on priority areas of NST1 as follows:

- **Priority Area 1:** Promoting resilience and enhancing graduation from poverty and extreme poverty. In this regard, the management of Girinka Programme "One Cow per Poor Family" and other social programmes run at the village will be improved and revised to ensure support to poor households to acquire small livestock.
- **Priority Area 4:** Enhancing the demographic dividend through improved access to quality education: HGSs will be leveraged by mobilising the population in the construction of classrooms using **Umuganda** and other community-based activities in order to upgrading and increasing school infrastructures.
- **Priority Area 3:** Strengthening diplomatic and international cooperation to accelerate Rwanda and Africa's development by putting in place mechanisms to raise awareness of Rwanda's HGSs locally and internationally to support development (scale up).
- **Priority Area 6:** Increase citizens' participation, engagement and partnerships in development: The strategy will promote the culture of self-reliance, teamwork spirit, integrity, solidarity and patriotism among Rwandans and develop HGSs to problems encountered by different categories of our society; strengthen the voluntary national service programme (Urugerero) under the national civic education institution (Itorero ry'Igihugu)

⁶https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Rwanda_2015.pdf?lang=en

⁷Prime Minister Edouard Ngirente (Ph.D.), foreword, NST1 2017-2024.

with the objective of developing the Rwandan youth into citizens who aspire to become self-reliant and hardworking:

Social protection policy: It states that it will strengthen the use of HGSs (Parenting, Umuganda, Kuremera, etc.) to provide support to vulnerable households. Given limited resources and the importance of promoting social cohesion and values of solidarity and community self-help, it will further strengthen the use of key HGSs to provide support to the most vulnerable, for example, through the construction/rehabilitation of houses and latrines for the elderly and people with disabilities. Similarly, it will also step up efforts to engage the private sector to support poverty eradication and nutrition through CSR initiatives⁸. Finally the social protection sector will strengthen the use of household performance contracts to strengthen household-level planning and accountability for pursuing self-reliance (Imihigo).

Agriculture policy: It sees HGS as an opportunity for asset building of vulnerable groups under its agriculture insurance strategy: The policy states that vulnerable farmers are also those most exposed to shocks, including climate-related shocks and food price volatility. They are exposed to land degradation and own too little land to farm their way out of poverty. It goes on by saying that a solution has been to distribute cows to vulnerable households through the **Girinka Programme** in order to increase the return on their land. The linkages between agriculture and social protection programmes ensure that services are targeted towards the asset building programme, to enhance opportunities for food production and income. Experience has shown that distribution of small-stock is also suitable for poorer communities. This will be achieved through broadening the focus from cows to distribution of small livestock as well as strengthening the linkages between existing agricultural support and the Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP) social protection programme known as Ubudehe.

Community development policy: The policy sees **Ubudehe** as the heart/centre of the community development process. Its vision and mission reinforce HGSs (page 9): Immersing community development-based initiatives, establishing Umudugudu at community level.

Sustainable development goals integrate home-grown solutions: Rwanda has also learned that building on HGSs, which are rooted in the Rwandan culture, resource efficient and adapted to the national context, allows for popular ownership and participation, ensures effective and faster delivery of development, and strengthens accountability⁹.

Home-Grown Solutions as Contributor to Socio-Economic Development of Rwanda

Two Focus Groups Discussions were organised, respectively, in Kicukiro and Bugesera District Eastern Province.

In Kicukiro, the FGD was held in Kanombe Sector and in Bugesera at Nyamata Sector. The FGD brought together 6–12 people, respectively, in Kanombe and Nyamata.

Participants represented different categories of community, including local leaders, women's leaders, youth leaders, private sector, NGOs and faith-based representative, as well as people with disability. The sessions were officially and respectively opened by good governance officer and good governance director in Kanombe and Bugesera district to make introductory remarks and welcoming participant to an open and fruitful discussion. Discussions were held based on questions provided in the inception report and the following are the outcomes and recommendation from discussion.

Origin of HGS

First of all, The HGS's approach is embedded in Rwandan culture and has been transferred generation to generation. It is used to overcome societal challenges in general and to those of vulnerable people in particular through community actions known as **Umuganda** and other form of donations such as food, feeding children, offering milk for those families without cows to feed kids and pregnant women, etc. The approach played a key role in promoting unity and solidarity of Rwandan community and has enhanced the culture of patriotism (to defend the country in the period of war and danger).

Participants expressed the concern that this culture was hampered during colonial period as reflected in the desk review and appreciated the fact Government of Unity revived the culture after 1994 Genocide against Tutsi as an approach to rebuild the country and to unify Rwandese today.

Participants indicated that HGSs are part and partial of country development and transformation agenda as reflected in the Vision 2050. And the impact is visible in their day-to-day life through various initiatives as follows:

CHWs: All FGDs expressed a high level of pride for these initiatives as highlighted in the literature review. CHWs focus more on giving their voluntary services in prevention and first aid related to malaria, TB, hygiene and sanitation, health nutrition for children and lactating/pregnant women, etc.

Ibimina "merry-go-round": Mainly for promoting the culture of saving for investment and for support to social events, where community put aside small saving in a group that they would be able to use at a particular time to support someone with, i.e., wedding, school fees to pay.

Twambikane: Mainly to ensure that women and kids are clothed through saving of 200–400 FRW per week, they manage to buy clothes and kitenge for women so that they look nicely. This initiative is associated with hygiene and sanitation and nutrition promotion components.

Dusairane: Community (men and women) adopted the culture of saving to buy mattresses for households.

⁸Ministry of Local Government, Social Protection Sector Strategic Plan (SP-SSP), 2018/2019–2023/2024.

⁹National Voluntary Review, June 2019.

Tworozanye: Group-saving initiatives to promote livestock though small ruminants for each household. This initiative is in complementarity with Girinka Programme.

Irerero: A community centre for day care of young children (sort of kindergarten). Parents also learn from there the skills to wake up the brain of child.

Dutabarane: A total of 300 coins saving monthly to cater for funeral costs (coffin, corbillard, etc.).

Mutuelle de Sante: Community members in higher category contribute to health insurance of their fellow in low categories (solidarity).

Kwiharika: This is a youth initiative related to encourage each member to adopt entrepreneurship approach through small business activity that generates income.

Home garden: In the same spirit, youth have been promoting nutrition through construction of home gardens in poor, vulnerable households as well as elderlies.

Youth for education: This is an intensive and house – to house campaign to bring back pupils who dropped out school, where youth mobilise together small savings and go round houses holds to see which children have dropped out of school and support them to go back to school.

Youth volunteer against COVID-19: Youth played an important role to mobilise citizens to adopt prevention measures, including social distance, hygiene and sanitation in public places.

What made it possible

Leadership comes at number one with constant mobilisation and education for self-reliance and dignity “Agaciro”. In addition, they cited **family education, formal education, Itorero academy** which is a national programme to educate youth on positive values, including patriotism and volunteerism. Others mentioned **religions** as a source of positive values. In regard to **information and technology**, representatives of youth brought another innovative aspect related to growing use of social media and world digitalisation. “Every single minute they are observing what is happening elsewhere in the world and we feel challenged to think beyond their normal capacity to innovate. When we see for example how Singapore has developed, (via social

media), we feel obliged to think beyond and do things differently and in an unconventional way” – **Ubudasa**, statement from a youth representative.

Challenges

Respondents indicated some key challenges mainly related to lack of documentation of these community initiatives. They are good and impactful but it is not recorded to serve the future generation. In addition, CHWs expressed the need for the government to curbing the distance to community health centre for easy access to health services and referral. There is a plan by Ministry of Health to establish community health centre – health posts in each community and the plan is ongoing.

Participant-made recommendations for replication and sustainability and those include the following: (1) Integration of the culture of resilience into education curriculum for transmission to future generation, (2) government to curbing the distance to health posts in the rural areas, (3) responded proposed to organise frequent visits to other communities especially between rural and city to learn from and support each other. (4) Finally, participants argued that, although COVID-19 has caused lots of damages on one side, it has also reinforced the culture of resilience, solidarity and giving especially to those in difficult situations. Participants in FGD recommended to keep the momentum and promote the culture among youth. “During Lockdowns, we have seen and relied more on internal solutions than external. The situation told us that economic independency can be achieved through our consolidated efforts” Message from **Abakeramurimo** of Bugesera.

Home Grown Initiatives in Rwanda

Rwanda HGSs were identified and classified under four clusters to facilitate easy understanding as well as assessment of their level of impact as reflected in the following table:

In order to keep the focus, the study is putting much emphasis on four home-grown initiatives highlighted in the pink colours as case study and as recommended during consultations and review process. In addition, other

Governance	Social	Economic	Political
Governance month for accountability and/or transparency	Girinka (One Cow per Poor Family)	Umuganda (community work)	Umushyikirano (national dialogue)
Abunzi (mediation committees) and bureaus (MAJ)	Ubudehe (participatory socio-economic development mechanism)	Imihigo (performance contracts)	Governance month (civic education)
Access to justice bureaus (MAJ)	Community health workers (CHWs)	Agaciro development fund	Umwiherezo (national leadership retreat)
Gacaca courts	Universal health insurance	Land use consolidation	Itorero/Ingando (National Academy of)
		Crop intensification programme	Army week

community initiatives collected during FGDs are incorporated and reflected.

Girinka Programme

Girinka Programme is also known as **One Cow per Poor Family**. The word Girinka can be translated as “have a cow” and describes a centuries-old cultural practice in Rwanda whereby a cow was given by one person to another, either as a sign of respect and gratitude or as a marriage dowry.

The programme was revived after 1994 Genocide against Tutsi and was initiated by H.E. President Paul Kagame in response to the alarmingly high rate of childhood malnutrition and as a way to accelerate poverty reduction and integrate livestock and crop farming.

Girinka Programme is also conceived as one of the strategies to achieve social protection by strengthening the design and management of agricultural support schemes for poor and vulnerable households, particularly female-headed households¹⁰.

The objectives of the Girinka Programme as stated by the Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB, 2013: 2) are to:

(1) Fight malnutrition and more so from children and gravid mothers (the cow provides milk for family consumption as a fight against malnourishment); (2) increase crop productivity (the cow produces manure that is used to increase crop production); (3) increase household incomes through surplus milk sales, (4) and to promote social harmony/cohesion (the family passes on the first heifer to the next and in the Rwandan culture giving and receiving a cow from someone builds a strong bond of friendship).

Strategy and functioning of the Girinka Programme

The programme puts a particular emphasis on vulnerable groups, especially child- and female-headed households, fulfilling eligibility criteria prior to receiving the cow. According to the “Girinka Pamphlet” (RAB, 2013: 2): The recipient household should have the following:

(1) No current ownership of cattle; (2) have at least 0.75 ha of land, or a common area where a cow can be tended (igikumba rusange); (3) have prepared or being ready to prepare 0.25–0.75 ha of pasture, and (4) have a simple structure to house a cow and capacity to feed and water it.

The new beneficiaries are trained in animal husbandry (pasture establishment, housing, feeding, watering, disease detection and control). The cows selected must be approved for various standards of good health. Once the cows are distributed, they are monitored by veterinary staff (UNICEF, 2011: 3) at the sector level.

The Current Status, Achievement and Impact of Girinka Programme The programme targets the distribution of 350,000 cows to poor households by 2017 and by June 2016, a total of 248,566 cows had been distributed to poor households through government support, donations

by different development partners and supplemented by the pass-on/Koroza scheme.

The survey conducted on Girinka in 2014, on 385 households in the 10 districts as a sample indicated that recipients of cows from Girinka Were, respectively, 256 males (66.5%) and 129 females (33.5%). The survey also indicated the majority of households that received a cow from Girinka Programme are practising agriculture and livestock (75.8%) and cows distributed to these households were local breeds (Ankole) for 34% of the recipients, cross-breeds for 41%, while for 24.9% they were exotic cows.

The Girinka Programme has generated a significant impact in general as follows:

- **Socially**, around 72.5% had very bad living conditions compared to only 1.9% today, which marks a significant change of 70.6%. After receiving a cow 63.2% stress that their living conditions are somehow improved against only 27% previously, while 35% indicate living better conditions compared to 0.5% before.
- **Health wise**, the number of households reporting having at least limited capacity to meet their members health costs increased to 50.1% (from 10.6% before), i.e., a net increase of 39.5%, while those reporting having “enough capacity” to meet health costs increased to 19.2%, i.e., 16.9% more than before Girinka Programme.
- **Improved nutrition conditions:** Prior to receiving a cow, 31.4% of households could not have food in their plate everyday but rather from time to time. This situation reduces to only 3.1% after joining Girinka Programme. On the other hand, 33.8% could afford one meal per day, 34.3% two meals per day and only 0.5% could eat three times per day.
- **Economic benefits: multiple economic benefits were outlined including the following:** The survey revealed that 43.6% of beneficiaries give out milk for free to their neighbours, 34.3% sell them milk, while 73.5% were giving out manure to their neighbours in addition to passing on a cow to someone else (42.9%) through the pass-on scheme (Koroza). For recipients themselves, it was found that most of them get manure (97.1%) which is sold or used in their own land, 61.3% indicate getting milk. Out of this production, 40.3% can make money, while 1.6% have succeeded to mount a biogas installation at home thanks to the cow from Girinka Programme.

In terms of monetary value, beneficiaries stress that after receiving a cow, the income brackets diversified significantly. Though a big number of households (45.5%) still report a monthly income in the bracket of RWF 5000–10,000, it is established that 41.6% earn beyond this figure, with some established that 41.6% earn beyond this figure, with some households making more than RWF.

- **Social cohesion:** When beneficiaries are enquired on the benefits, their neighbours got from the cow they

¹⁰Social Protection Sector Strategic Plan (SP-SSP) 2018/19–2023/24.

received, 43.6% stress that they give out milk for free to their neighbours, while 34.3% sell it. Similarly, 73.5% of the recipient households give out manure to their neighbours for free and 42.9% have passed on a cow to them through the “pass-on”-Koroza scheme. For those who gave out a cow to neighbours through “Koroza”, such a practice can be repeated several times. The assessment indicates that 92% of the households gave out a cow once and 7% two times. In the Rwandan culture, the practice of giving a cow one another “creates a special, quasi-sacred relationship between donor and beneficiary” (IFAD, 2011: 104) as already stressed.

Ubudehe

Historical background and concept of Ubudehe

Ubudehe refers to the long-standing tradition of Rwandan practices and its culture of collective action and mutual support to solve problems within a community (Shah, 2011). It is not known exactly when Ubudehe was first practised, but it is thought to date back more than a century.

Historically, **Ubudehe** is a term used to refer to the culture of collective work by community members aimed at either addressing general challenges or to assist individual households who are short of labour to address their own challenges such as the handicapped, aged and widows.

Ubudehe was resurrected in the modern Rwandan consciousness in 2001 and was repackaged as a platform for strongly encouraging collective action towards poverty eradication based on the Umudugudu structure. Ubudehe is designed to strengthen the government effort at decentralisation of governance in order to empower the grassroots. Ubudehe aims to balance governance from the top-down approach with a bottom-up or grassroots-based approach, through the strengthening of “democratic processes and governance starting from the people’s aspirations, ability and traditions” (Government of Rwanda, 2009: 4).

It is important to highlight that in 2008, Ubudehe has gained international recognition as a highly successful development programme, especially after the UN Public Service Award to Rwanda for “Better management: Better public service”. Because of Ubudehe, local communities can be involved in creating their own social maps, visual representations and collection of data measuring local poverty. As part of the programme, each community is provided with a bank account, with which they buy their own livestock, build clean water sanitation, classrooms, terraces and health centres.

The functioning and structure of Ubudehe

Ubudehe allows determining the nature and levels of poverty through a categorisation and social mapping system. The categorisation has been evolving since 2005–2006 to date. These categories were in 2014, narrowed down from seven categories to four (classified as 1, 2, 3 and 4) with

the last two categories being classified as able. Though named differently (as A, B, C, D and E), the new 2020 Ubudehe categorisation retained four categories but with a classification based on a family (especially the husband and wife) income per month. In the published document, the A and B are classified as A – those earning above RWF 600,000 per month, and B – for those earning between RWF 65,000–RWF 600,000¹¹. However, categories C and D will be considered the poor of the poor (needy ones) and category E as the elderly and weak ones.

The results have been widely used by different government programmes as a basis for selecting their beneficiaries. These programmes include the Mutual Health Insurance, the Student Financing Agency for Rwanda (SFAR) education sponsorships, VUP direct support and Girinka Programme.

Current status, achievement and impact of Ubudehe

In 2006–2007, 9000 communities undertook projects through Ubudehe and in 2007–2008 that number gradually increased to 15,000. By 2012, around 55,000 collective actions were being led by communities themselves with assistance from 30,000 Ubudehe facilitators (RGB, 2014).

Community Health Workers

Rwanda implemented a national CHW programme in 2007. The CHWs are recognised for their performance in community health mobilisation, disease prevention and control at the community level. An effective CHW chain helped Rwanda achieve its health goal over the past 10 years. The decrease in under-5 mortality has been attributed to the expansion of this community health programme, where CHWs began managing and treating children for some of the deadliest diseases at the grassroots level. Every village (around 100–250 households) has four CHWs, for a total of 45,516 CHWs deployed countrywide. At the initial stage, each village had three CHWs. Two of them – a man and a woman – make up a pair, referred to, in French, as *binômes*.

They focus primarily on case identification and referral for a variety of diseases, as well as treating childhood diseases such as pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria, and on community support for malnutrition. The third CHW in each village is a maternal health worker responsible for identifying pregnant women, conducting antenatal care visits, ensuring delivery at health facilities and following up with new-borns and mothers in the postnatal period. In 2018, the government added a fourth CHW per village, in-line with its priority of achieving universal health coverage. The fourth health worker is responsible for social affairs in the community and for compiling performance-based

¹¹<https://www.ktpress.rw/2020/10/revised-ubudehe-categories-draw-mixed-reactions/>

financing reports. CHWs receive performance-based financing through cooperatives.

Performance Based Financing (PBF) is an innovative health financing solution that structures the flow of resources to pay for results rather than simply paying for processes or reimbursing activity costs. Health facilities are paid based on the quantity and quality of services they provide, not on the processes it took to provide these services.

To further increase access to and use of facility-based services, CHWs are now actively involved in bringing these clients to health facilities. CHW cooperatives, groups of 20–150 CHWs, have been established by the government. Financial incentives are awarded to each cooperative based on the number of clients that are followed, referred and/or accompanied to a health centre for specific maternal child health services. The cooperative receives \$2–\$3.50 per service performed depending on the services. On average, each CHW cooperative earns approximately \$4000 per quarter¹².

Universal health insurance

From the 1980s until the 1990s, Rwanda adopted a community-based health insurance scheme, where the rich paid a higher contribution than the poor; this practice later stopped during the genocide war. The insurance system resumed in 1999 as a pilot project and the government definitively adopted the policy in 2004–2005. This is the insurance used by most of Rwanda's 9.6 million people. Contribution payments depend on a household's Ubudehe category: 1, 2, 3 or 4. Households in categories 2 or 3 pay RWF 3000, while those in category 4 (0.5% of the population) pay RWF 7000 (MoH, 2010). Those in Ubudehe 1 do not pay anything.

The goal of community-based health insurance is to provide Rwandans with an equitable and universal access to quality health-care service. The policy is backed up by solidarity and equitable principles by increasing the cost of health-care membership for people in the non-public sector, who are able to get private insurance.

Status and impact of Mutuelle de Sante

So far, the mutual health insurance scheme has emerged as a key driver for Rwanda's sustainable development (MoH, 2010) and has reduced mortality and contributed to improvements in the quality of life for children under the age of five and their mothers: (1) 70% of mothers now give birth within the health-care system, (2) child mortality dropped from 193 per 1000 live births to 55 in 2012, in 2014, Rwanda topped the rankings of sub-Saharan countries in the area of health care. Since then, the subscription rate for health care has increased from 73% in 2013/2014 to 75% in 2014/2015. Rwanda has established 368 health-care positions, 503 health centres, 42 district

hospitals and 5 referral hospitals; SACCO facilitates the subscription charge payment and Rwanda Social Security Board (RSSB) is facilitating the management of Mutuelle de Sante.

Umuganda

As part of Rwanda's reconstruction efforts after the genocide, the Government of Rwanda mandated that every last Saturday of the month would be known as "umunsi w'umuganda" or "contribution made by the community", during which all traffic would be stopped for 3 h in the morning in order for Rwandans to clean up the war-torn capital. Umuganda as it exists presently was instituted in 2009¹³ and the Law 53/2007 of 17/1120107 establishing community works in Rwanda.

Objectives of Umuganda: (1) Supplement national resources by executing specific activities; (2) instil a culture of collective effort in the population; (3) resolve problems faced by the population by the use of locally available resources; (4) restore the dignity of manual labour.

Strategy and functioning of the Umuganda

Umuganda is regulated by the Law 53/2007 of 17/11/2007 establishing community works, and the Prime Minister Order No 58/03 of 24/08/2009 determining the attributions, organisation and functioning of "Community Works Supervising Committees" and their relations with other organs. Apart from these legal provisions, the work done is organised by the community members and is done without remuneration.

Umuganda is held on the last Saturday of the month from 8:00 am to 11:00 am by all able persons aged between 18 and 65 years and expatriates residing in Rwanda are also encouraged to participate in community works. Upon consultations with the population, the Community Works Supervising Committee specifies the activities to be carried out, the place where they are to be carried out and the tools to be used. The population in consultation with relevant authorities may however, where necessary, decide to carry out community works more than once a month¹⁴.

After community works, participants hold a meeting and are informed of the results, discuss different issues on the agenda and decide where the next community works shall take place and the activities to be performed (Law 53/2007, Art. 11). Community works provide also a forum to the local administration and the population to interact.

¹³No 58/03 of 24/08/2009 Prime Minister's Order determining the attributions, organisation and functioning of Community Works Supervising Committees and their relations with other organs 29 No 58/03 du 24/08/2009.

¹⁴Law 53/2007, Art. 1.

¹²Management Science for Health-msh, the Next 50 Years.

Current Status, achievement and impact of Umuganda

According to the recent impact assessment of Umuganda (2007–2016)¹⁵ by RGB, Umuganda contributions are of two dimensions. First, it contributes to the socio-economic development of the community through infrastructure development, environmental protection and cleanliness as well as the implementation of government programmes. Second, through meetings held in its framework, Umuganda contributes to information sharing and fostering social cohesion and peace building in the country.

The same report shows, there has been a significant increase of Umuganda monetary value, from 4 billion FRW in 2007 to 19 billion FRW in 2016. This means that economic benefits of Umuganda multiplied almost five times in just one decade. Umuganda was particularly the key to the successful implementation of Nine- and Twelve-Years Basic Education (9&12YBE) programme where it contributed nearly 62% of total cost of classrooms constructed.

Its impact can be classified under three major's components

Economic impact: The most critical input of Umuganda is in terms of economic development. As already stressed, the value of Umuganda activities as consolidated by MINALOC is 106 billion FRW or “127 million in USD” for the period 2007–2016. This is a huge support to the national budget; the resources that would have been disbursed to have the activities carried out are saved or allocated for further development activities.

Specifically, the surveyed households pointed out that (1) Umuganda is a crucial tool for infrastructure development such as good roads (93.3%), and bridges built therefore facilitating the transport of goods and people (56.5%), (2) erosion that would have destroyed agriculture is controlled through soil stabilisation activities (52%), contributing to the improvement of agriculture productivity (19.7%) and trees planted are contributing to the environment protection (22.1%).

Environment protection: To a great extent, most activities of Umuganda countrywide are linked with environmental protection. Generally, people participate in cleaning streets, cutting grass, trimming bushes alongside the roads, planting trees and repairing public buildings.

As the President of the Republic of Rwanda, Paul Kagame explained, “The concept of Umuganda is a good idea to maintain a clean society and this has helped the country to gain its new face. He added that the concept does not only propagate a clean society but also; community work (Umuganda Rusange) presents an opportunity for people to join hands to achieve set objectives, on top of fostering harmony among residents”.

Governance and social cohesion impact: Doing Umuganda strengthens cohesion between persons of different backgrounds and provides to the community an opportunity to articulate their needs and express their opinions on various issues. As well, Umuganda contributes to unity and reconciliation through conflict arbitration between community members.

Specifically, the assessment found that Umuganda enables the population in the neighbourhood to know each other (67.8%); it has allowed the population to engage in a friendship and enables mutual assistance in the community (56.4%). They also indicate that community works allow them to analyse together the development needs of their villages as indicated by 42.3% of the households, and to develop home-based solutions from among themselves as confirmed by more than 40% of the household.

Social protection and environment protection and beautification: It has also contributed to social protection of the needy ones, including the construction of houses for the needy ones (59.2%), schools (65.3%), health facilities closer to communities (15.5%) and preparation of sites for settlement (31.5%), Umuganda has made possible access to clean water, hygiene and sanitation, environmental protection and neighbourhood beautification (16.3%).

Visibility and replication: Delegates from different countries all over the world come to visit Rwanda, and they are impressed by the achievements of HGSS especially Umuganda. As well, Rwanda Defence Forces peacekeepers wherever they are deployed, introduce and practice Umuganda by cleaning areas surrounding their military camps and beyond. They, in fact, engage local communities to take part in community works; enabling a clean neighbourhood and protected environment. Umuganda also enables one to spread the good image of the country:

- Inspired by the success of Umuganda in Rwanda, the Mayor of Johannesburg, Herman Mashaba, introduced a volunteer clean-up programme called *A Re Sebetseng* in August 2017¹⁶, Mashaba’s monthly, city-wide volunteer cleaning campaign, *A Re Sebetseng*, was launched in August last year. It is based on the successful monthly cleaning campaign of Kigali, named *Umuganda*.
- In a tweet on Thursday, Mboweni compared the city’s roads to those in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, which he said are “clean and beautiful”. “What a contrast!” said Mboweni. He added in an updated tweet, “all of us had a responsibility to keep our towns, cities and the countryside clean and habitable. If we don’t throw dirt around and the municipalities collect rubbish regularly, we can achieve a lot”.
- In Addition, earlier this year, at the World Economic Forum meeting in Davos, Switzerland, UN Environment

¹⁵RGB, Impact Assessment of Umuganda 2007–2016, October 2017.

¹⁶<https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2018-12-27-mboweni-slams-filthy-embarrassing-joburg-cbd-streets-after-rwanda-visit/>

Programme head Erik Solheim referred to Kigali as the “cleanest city on the planet”, both in terms of lack of rubbish on the streets and green initiatives¹⁷.

- **BBC** in its article “the Most Inviting City in Africa” reported that “though there are many factors that have led to its solid infrastructure and its booming development, one thing stands out as the organising principle: *Umuganda*”¹⁸.
- “The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) instituted a similar programme in South Sudan in June 2019”.

Umushyikirano

Translated, Umushyikirano means “a place to meet, share knowledge and question each other”. This is governed by the Rwandan constitution 2003, Article 140, where the forum is designated to debate on the country’s issues, national unity and local government. This annual meeting began on 28 June 2008 and is coordinated by the office of the Prime Minister in close collaboration with Ministry of Local Government.

Chaired by the President of the Republic, the National Dialogue Council brings together the President of the Republic and citizens’ representatives to discuss issues relating to the state of the nation and to national unity. It gives Rwandans the opportunities to discuss and ask questions directly to their leaders in different ministries and departments. The president invites people from overseas to the forum, such as members of the diplomatic community, the media, local government, representatives of the Rwandan community abroad (Diaspora), cabinet and parliament. The National Dialogue is broadcast live on TV, radio and social media and citizens are offered toll-free telephone lines to call in and express their grievances or use social media platforms. These demands are expected to be addressed quickly by the relevant institutions of the state.

Umushyikirano is a very powerful mechanism incentivising local and central government officials to perform well and avoid being publicly exposed. Non-participants can also contribute to discussions through social media, such as Twitter, SMS and Facebook, and can follow live on radio and TV (RGB, 2014).

In addition, presidential visits to the districts are often organised, with similar effects to **Umushyikirano**, during which the population can speak directly to the Head of State and express their concerns. These assemblies are broadcast live on national radio and television.

What made it possible: sociocultural values

In order to achieve socio-economic transformation, the Government of Rwanda has embarked on the promotion of

underpinning values of self-reliance and self-determination, dignity, unity and Rwandan identity, integrity, equity (including gender), transparency and openness, participation in the global community, good governance and accountability, community participation, local innovation and national stability.

According to RCI, a designated agency to promote HGS, the effectiveness of Home Grown Initiatives (HGI) in the Rwandan context hinges on a number of factors:

- The first factor is **cultural acceptance**, which is a built-in strength of HGI. Their home-grown nature enables actors to intimately understand the social setting in which activities are undertaken and to provide a common framework for mutual understanding, between both citizens and administrators. This also promotes genuine ownership.
- **Political will**: The potency of HGI is also linked to the larger developmental context in which they operate. In this regard, the political intentions set by the Urugwiro Village Discussions were crucial. These discussions had been conceived to find lasting solutions to the deep-rooted problems facing the country and devise the transformation of Rwanda. Meetings were held every Saturday from May 1998 to March 1999, bringing together 164 participants from all sections of society. Two dominant orientations emerged from the discussions: strengthening national unity as the ultimate goal to which all policies must converge, and the idea that citizens must be put at the centre of politics and of development strategies. Subsequent development strategies reaffirmed the political will expressed during the Urugwiro discussions. HGI were thus critical vehicles for placing citizens at the centre of the development and transformation of the country. Since the Urugwiro discussions, HGI have adapted to the changing developmental context, often becoming more technical for the sake of efficiency and transparency.
- **Local government and decentralisation**: Local government is one vehicle that allows HGI to fully express their potential. Local government underwent a profound reform in 2006 seeking to improve the effectiveness of service delivery, primarily by making administrative and social services more accessible. The point of supply for these services was moved from districts to sectors, which are lower on the administrative hierarchy; however, sectors were expanded from their previous size. A new, more accessible, administrative level was added closer to the population: the village or Umudugudu. The capacity of sectors and districts was raised by raising the professional profiles and remuneration of their managers. Local leaders became an essential and indispensable link and intermediaries between the administration and the population, largely utilising HGI to spur local development.
- **Monitoring and accountability**: Accountability mechanisms have further enhanced the effectiveness of HGI. Whilst actions taken by local government are

¹⁷<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-rwanda-green-pollution/cleanest-city-in-africa-kigali-scrubs-up-idUSKBN1HR2F8>

¹⁸ <https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20200105-the-most-inviting-city-in-africa>

subject to oversight by classical accountability institutions such as the Office of the Auditor General, other accountability mechanisms have been established, notably **Imihigo** and Umushyikirano, that allow for more active involvement of citizens in-line with the philosophy of HGI.

Replication and sustainability of home-grown solutions

- **Integration of HGS in national planning** The fact that HGSs are an integrated one in the national strategic planning instruments such as Vision 2050, NST1 and other sectoral policy and strategies is a strong basis to sustain them and ensure accountability. The same applies to local decentralised entities through Imihigo and District Development Strategies (DDSs).
- **Policy regulation and protection of HGS: An interview conducted with Dr Felicien Usengumukiza**, the Head of Research Department, he stressed on the role and mandate of RGB as provided by the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003 amended in 2015. Rwandans, based on their values, initiate home-grown mechanisms to deal with matters that concern them in order to build the nation, promote national culture and restore dignity. In this regards, RGB was created with the following mandate in relation to HGS: (1) To preserve, protect and promote the use of HGSs and Good Practices (GP) in Rwanda and devise strategies meant for applying them efficiently; (2) to give pre-authorisation and follow up studies and researches carried out in Rwanda on governance and HGS whether by a Rwandan or a foreigner. He added that in order to fulfil the previous mandate, RGB conducts research to assess whether a given innovation qualifies as an HGS, thus, confirmed.
- In the line of protection, Dr Felicien indicated that the Government of Rwanda has taken further steps to register and protect HGS, which are protected both locally and internationally.

In this regard, 10 HGS initiatives are protected under intellectual property and those are Abunzi Committees, Gacaca, Girinka, Imihigo, Ndi Umunyarwanda, Ubudehe, Umuganda, Umwihirero, Umushyikirano, Kwita Izina, while three are protected internationally, including Abunzi, Imihigo, Umushyikirano. He also concluded that, in order to sustain the culture of HGS for future generations, the Government of Rwanda in collaboration with civil society, private sector, communities-based organisations and development partners will continue the Mobilisation of Citizen with focus on youth through a promotion of culture of volunteerism. He stressed that the impact of youth involvement is visible in different sectors of development and he emphasised on their contribution in preventing and fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, especially during lockdowns. They supported the population to comply with prevention guidelines, including respecting social distance and hand washing mainly in public spaces, distribution of food and non-food Items, etc.

Creation of RCI: The institution was created to strengthen South–South cooperation. In this regard, the Government of Rwanda established and operationalised a private company, the RCI in September 2018 with mission to serve as a hub for learning that promotes innovative initiatives through national and international cooperation¹⁹. Its mandate is to promote HGSs and coordinate peer learning related to country experiences and progress in areas such as business reforms, public finance management, unity and reconciliation, and strengthening governance systems²⁰. The information was confirmed by senior staff of RCI via a structured interview. In addition to the vision and mission, they indicated that so far, many countries are interested in learning from Rwanda HGS and some have made further steps and came for study tours. For instance, RCI has received around 160 delegations, including 30 mayors from Senegal, only in 2020 as stated by Ms Rosine Urujeni, the Chief Operating Officer of RCI Rwanda. During tours, delegations are facilitated to go to field and meet population, as well as formal trainings delivered by different institutions in collaboration with RCI.

When interviewed on what are the most visited HGS, Gasana Desire and colleagues indicated that Public Financial Management Systems (PFM) in Rwanda and Financial Management Systems (FMIS), Health Systems, including CHWs and PBF and “Mutuelle the Sante”.

We are very grateful to the Rwanda Cooperation team for the effort and level of organization that was put into making our study visit what it was. It was a privilege to have such an opportunity to benefit from Rwanda's experience in advancing PFM reforms. The quality of the presentations and discussions was exceptional. We indeed achieved the objectives of the mission, and we truly look forward to a continued collaboration as we strive to strengthen the PFM systems of our countries.

Robert Ojala,

*PFM Reforms Expert in the Office of the Accountant General,
Federal Government of Somalia*

When interviewed also on impact the HGS are making, RCI responded that these visits have enhanced country visibility in the international arena and has attracted even investment because of the conducive environment of “doing business” in Rwanda. It is also understood that business community benefits from these visits through paid services, including hospitality and transport.

Rwanda peace keeping missions: Rwanda Defence Forces peacekeepers wherever they are deployed, introduce and practise Umuganda by cleaning areas surrounding their

¹⁹<https://cooperation.rw/about/#vision-mission-values-section>

²⁰Republic of Rwanda, 2019 Rwanda Voluntary National Review (VNR), June 2019, page 64.

military camps and beyond. They, in fact, engage local communities to take part in community works; enabling a clean neighbourhood and protected environment. Umuganda also enables to spread the good image of the country. On her visit to Rwanda, Malawi's Minister of Industry and Trade commended Umuganda and recommended this practice in other countries. In an article published by the Nyasa Times, she notes that

This is something all African countries need to do because wherever we go in Africa now, there is environmental degradation and the only way to resolve the issue is to have every person involved in curbing it²¹.

Mobilisation of Diaspora through Rwanda Day:

In an interview with Ndwanise Desire and Celestin Mugenzi, both senior staff from National Bank of Rwanda, Department of Statistics, they emphasised the role played by Diaspora in country development through remittances. Since 2011–2020, there has been an increase of remittances received from US\$166 million to US\$274 million by the Diaspora. Asked what is the factor behind this exponential increase, they both confirmed that mobilisation of Rwandan living abroad through **Rwanda Day** has been very instrumental. Most of the amount received are contributing to socio-economic transformation through education, health, housing and other investment at both family and community level.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The Outreach Strategy elaborated by MINECOFIN stresses that, if appropriately supported by an enabling regulatory environment, philanthropy can become the government's reliable partner in alternative development financing; self-reliant economic structural transformation; universal social protection for the populace; raising household savings, income and purchasing power; enhancing LED; building local or micro infrastructure as well as developing micro-enterprises linked to the broader national economy. In the long run, the investments by philanthropy can contribute immensely towards political stability, well-being, social cohesion and resilience. However, in order to optimise this potential philanthropy dividend, Rwandan authorities need perceive its full potential as both a social impact investment and charitable tool. There are many options to consider the ones such as community foundations, diaspora philanthropy, CSR; venture philanthropy, impact investing; and humanitarian assistance among others. But most importantly, it is the need to place philanthropy in a national, regional and global perspective

as a potential source of supporting government to deliver its national agenda²².

The views collected from Focus Group Discussion insisted on the transmission of the culture to the future generation by involving youth through volunteerism as well as integrating HGSs into education curriculum. Documentation and recording are another aspect to consider with focus on those local and community initiatives.

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²¹Nyasa Times, 1 November 2010.

²²Rwanda Philanthropy Partnerships and Outreach Strategy Report, MINECOFIN.

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