



Integrated Country Strategy

Rwanda

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Since the 1994 genocide, Rwanda has risen from a state of complete political, economic, and social collapse to a model of how a results-driven and evidence-based approach to development, supported by international assistance, can foster marked economic and social gains. Rwanda's highly capable security forces maintain secure borders and internal security, which, along with political stability, has attracted strong international economic investment into the country.

Despite such progress, Rwanda remains among the world's poorest, least-developed, and most densely populated countries, with annual per capita GDP still below \$750 and 68 percent of the population reliant on farming as a primary or essential source of income. The basic education sector trails that of developed countries, and only 27 percent of students complete ninth grade by the age of 20. In 2017, President Paul Kagame won a third, seven-year term following a 2015 referendum that amended the constitution to extend his mandate, possibly up to 2034—a move that has further restricted opposition voices. Human rights concerns center on government harassment, arrest, and abuse of political opponents and human rights advocates; and restrictions on the media and civil liberties.

As Rwanda's largest bilateral donor, the United States has a close but complicated relationship with the Government of Rwanda (GOR). In developing our 2018-2022 Integrated Country Strategy, Embassy Kigali prioritized the following key foreign policy objectives: advancing regional peace and security; boosting economic development, trade, and investment; improving human development; and expanding democracy, human rights, media freedom, and access to justice. These goals incorporate USAID's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) and align with the Department of State and USAID Africa Bureau's Joint Regional Strategy (JRS) and the GOR's own economic development and poverty reduction strategy, which focuses on health, nutrition, agriculture, education, and human capital development. And Rwanda's ability to export security on the continent through its participation in UN peacekeeping aligns with U.S. Africa Command's (AFRICOM) Theater Campaigning Plan.

Mission Goal 1: Advancing regional peace and security

With its own internal security under tight control, Rwanda's security concerns revolve around instability in neighboring countries, including the ongoing political crisis in Burundi, which has resulted in more than 90,000 Burundians now living as refugees in Rwanda. Rwanda also carefully monitors the unstable situation in the neighboring Kivus region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and in particular, the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of

Rwanda (FDLR) armed militia group, which operates in eastern DRC. Approximately 75,000 DRC refugees live in Rwanda, some of whom have resided in camps for nearly 20 years, and nearly half of whom arrived within the last five years. Rwanda is committed to preventing atrocities by governments against their own civilian populations, especially within Africa. As part of this commitment, the GOR is the fourth largest contributor to UN peacekeeping operations (PKO) in the world and is a leader in advocating for sustainable peace operations within the African Union (AU).

The Embassy will focus on helping Rwanda to resolve and/or reduce regional security threats, continuing to professionalize and expand the capabilities of Rwandan troops and police deploying to peacekeeping missions, promoting respect for democratic values and human rights among all security services, and addressing refugee issues within the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) approach that Rwanda subscribed to in February 2018. We will support Rwanda's efforts to fight extremism and combat transnational crime, including trafficking-in-persons.

Mission Goal 2: Increase bilateral economic growth, trade, and investment

Nearly 70 percent of Rwanda's population is dependent on subsistence agriculture as a primary source of income. As agricultural production increases in Rwanda as a result of investments from Feed the Future, the need to improve storage, process products, and get them to market will increase. For this to happen in a sustainable manner, it is essential that the private sector play an expanded role. The GOR is focused on private sector-led development to achieve its aim of reaching lower middle-income status by 2035 and reducing the country's reliance on foreign aid. Over the past decade, the GOR has undertaken a series of pro-investment policy reforms intended to improve the investment climate, wean Rwanda's economy off foreign assistance, expand trade in products and services, and increase levels of foreign direct investment. Despite its business-friendly reputation, foreign direct investment inflows into Rwanda lag behind other countries in the region. Foreign investors in the country confront a number of hurdles and constraints, including an underdeveloped legal system with poor enforcement of laws, limited access to affordable financing, and arbitrary and sometimes capricious enforcement of tax, investment, and immigration rules. Landlocked Rwanda's electricity and transportation costs are among the highest in the world, and its strained and under-resourced education system does not yet deliver the skilled workforce that investors require. These problems will need to be quickly addressed if Rwanda is to achieve its vision of transforming the country into the intellectual hub of East Africa.

Embassy Kigali will support efforts to increase agricultural productivity and private sector competitiveness to foster increased and sustained economic opportunities for Rwandans.

Further, we will work to increase efficiencies in the agri-business sector, enhance private sector competitiveness, harness and link energy resources, and take advantage of opportunities provided by regional integration to expand market-driven growth and support Rwanda's economic advancement. We will continue to expand our use of public-private partnerships as a model for sustainable development and champion the competitive advantage of U.S. firms in providing private-sector led development and local skills training.

Mission Goal 3: Promote Inclusive Country-led human Development

Improving health and education resources and expanding access to these sectors for Rwandans are two of the Embassy's key objectives. By focusing our programming on improving foundational literacy and numeracy skills for children in early primary school, we hope to help Rwanda build a literate workforce capable of lifelong-learning necessary to support the national development vision of a modern service-based economy. Targeted investments in youth and workforce development, with a focus on gender perspectives to ensure equal access to female and male students, will help address the need for Rwanda's "youth bulge" to be transformed into an educated and highly skilled labor force. We will join other donor parties in supporting the GOR's efforts to include a focus on inclusion of disabled persons in development as well.

The Embassy will build on its previous successes strengthening the capacity of Rwanda's health infrastructure to continue to decrease preventable child and maternal deaths, reduce malnutrition (stunting), support long-term sustainability and success for family planning and national HIV/AIDS and malaria programs, and improve water and sanitation.

Mission Goal 4: Expanding democracy, human rights, media freedom, and access to justice

Rwanda receives high scores for its public service governance, but opportunities for even peaceful, constructive dissent on GOR policy and direction are severely limited. Amendments to the constitution in 2015 cemented the ruling party and the sitting President's ability to continue governing the country as a de facto single party state. It is critical that Rwanda work as hard on democratic development as it has on security and economic growth since democratic systems and institutions are the bedrock foundation that will sustain and accelerate Rwanda's development success. Restrictions on freedom of speech and assembly limit responsible dissent and stifle creative thinking. Reinvigorating the media environment, easing registration of political parties and NGOs, and encouraging citizens to openly voice their points of view—including concerns and critiques of government policy—will help prepare Rwandans for a transition to the give and take of peaceful multi-party democracy, as well as foster an innovative economy.

The Embassy will urge the GOR to respect human rights, political freedoms, and media independence. We will pursue programming that increases civic participation objectives, ensuring consideration of gender and LGBTI issues and social inclusion of disabled persons. Further, we will advocate for judicial transparency and rule of law, and promote democracy through responsible civic engagement, policy dialogue, and public debate.

Cohesive Response

Rwanda has the opportunity to continue to serve as an international leader in peacekeeping, in supporting regional stability and expanding economic opportunity through its development gains. Sustaining these successes is contingent on its ability to meet the needs of a poor, low-skilled, underemployed and rapidly growing population in a country with few natural resources while enabling its citizens to provide meaningful input into its future in spite of a history of genocide and distrust. Rwanda's ability to increase trade, attract investment, and boost economic growth to the benefit of the Rwandan people (Goal 2) will depend in large part on creating an environment that encourages critical thinking, innovative entrepreneurship (Goals 2 and 3), and opens the space for productive dissent (Goal 4). Nowhere will this be more critical than in the development of Rwanda's burgeoning youth population. With two-thirds of Rwanda's population under the age of 30 and a total fertility rate of 4.2, one of the country's biggest challenges will be expanding the educational and economic opportunities of the next generation to ensure long-term stability. Embassy Kigali has identified goals and objectives that capitalize on Rwanda's strengths, namely internal security, capable government institutions, and infrastructure (Goal 1), and target areas that will promote human development (Goal 3), increase economic opportunity (Goal 2), and expand democracy and good governance (Goal 4) to lay the foundation for a secure and prosperous future for Rwanda and its citizens.

2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: Advance regional peace and security.

Mission Objective 1.1: Rwanda contributes to regional stability and collaborates with its partners to combat transnational threats, including terrorism and crime.

Mission Objective 1.2: Rwanda's military, security, and judicial institutions equipped to respond to global peacekeeping needs and internal and external threats while respecting the rule of law and human rights.

Mission Goal 2: Increase bilateral economic growth, trade, and investment.

Mission Objective 2.1: Economic opportunities increased and sustained (CDCS DO 1).

Mission Objective 2.2: Mutually beneficial trade and investment flows increased nationally, regionally, and internationally by engaging with the private sector and Government of Rwanda.

Mission Goal 3: Promote inclusive country-led development.

Mission Objective 3.1: Health and nutritional status of Rwandans improved (CDCS DO 3).

Mission Objective 3.2: Increased Opportunities for Rwandan children and youth to succeed in schooling and the modern workplace (CDCS DO 4).

Mission Goal 4: Expand democracy, human rights, media freedom, and access to justice.

Mission Objective 4.1: Improve conditions for durable peace and development through strengthened democratic processes (CDCS DO 2).

Mission Objective 4.2: Increase for peaceful pluralistic political participation and inclusive engagement in civic life by fostering respect for human rights, rule of law, and freedom of the press.

Management Objective 1: Invest in human capital development to suitably equip and engage mission personnel for attaining ICS goals and objectives.

Management Objective 2: Leverage technologies to optimize resources, strengthen internal controls, improve security, and enhance quality of ICASS service delivery.

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1: Advance regional peace and security

Description and Linkages: This goal reflects Pillars 1 and 3 of the 2017 U.S. National Security Strategy, the National Military Strategy, the U.S. Defense Strategic Guidance, and 2019 U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) Campaign Plan Line of Effort (LOE) 2 to Enhance Partner Capacity. It also supports the State-USAID 2018-2022 Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) Goals 1 and 3, and Africa Joint Regional Strategy Goal 1.3. Consistent with these guiding strategies, the U.S. Embassy will work to support efforts to increase Rwanda’s ability to respond to and prevent evolving regional security threats by strengthening institutional capacity across the security sector, including the government’s ability to respond to Gender Based Violence.

Mission Objective 1.1.: Rwanda Contributes to Regional Stability and Collaborates with its Partners to Combat Transnational Threats, Including Terrorism and Crime.

Justification: Members of the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) and Rwanda National Police (RNP) are deployed across the globe in Sudan (Darfur), South Sudan, Haiti, and Central African Republic—totaling more than 6,000 peacekeepers. Bilateral military-to-military cooperation and assistance to the RNP will support Rwanda’s growing peacekeeping operations (PKO). Rwanda’s strained relationships with some of its neighbors risk compromising regional partnerships on certain security matters. Rwandan security services are highly capable of responding to threats from outside its borders, ranging from groups of Rwandan-origin, including the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), to extremist groups, such as the Somalia-based al-Shabaab and the Islamic State in the Levant. Nevertheless, strengthened partnerships between Rwandan security institutions and relevant U.S. authorities is needed to help Rwanda respond to evolving threats while respecting the rule of law. Embassy Kigali will continue to engage Rwanda to improve its internal capacity to combat terrorism, crime, and trafficking-in-persons, and to do so in a regional context. The Mission will engage Rwanda to help reach durable solutions to conflicts with its neighbors, especially Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, by providing support for Rwanda within the context of regional initiatives. The Mission will also encourage implementation of commitments made by Rwanda in regional peace agreements and international summits, including the joint pledge with the United States on building rapid-response capacity for the United Nations and for issues involving the integration of refugees within and returnees to Rwanda.

Mission Objective 1.2: Rwanda’s Military, Security and Judicial Institutions are Capable of Dealing with Internal and External Threats while Respecting the Rule of Law.

Justification: Rwandan security and judicial institutions are respected, both domestically and internationally, as among Africa's most capable and least corrupt government institutions. Rwandan police, military, and security services are highly effective in addressing both internal and external threats. International confidence in Rwanda's judicial system is growing, as evidenced by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda's (ICTR) transfer of the remainder of its genocide-related cases to Rwanda. Mission engagement is needed to help the GOR build strong, independent institutions that respect human rights and the rule of law. The GOR also faces challenges in its efforts to address specific issues, such as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) prevention. Critical gaps remain in victims' access to information, assistance, protection, and justice. Embassy Kigali will reinforce efforts to expand comprehensive, quality SGBV services and to improve the capabilities of the government to support survivors.

Mission Goal 2: Increase Bilateral Economic Growth, Trade, and Investment

Description and Linkages: This goal reflects Pillars 2 and 3 of the 2017 U.S. National Security Strategy. It supports the State-USAID 2018-2022 Joint Strategic Plan Goal 2, the Africa Joint Regional Strategy Goal 2, the Global Food Security Strategy, and USAID's CDCS Objective 1. The Mission will support efforts to increase agricultural productivity and private sector competitiveness to foster increased and sustained economic opportunities for Rwandans and reduce hunger, malnutrition and poverty. In doing so, the Mission will work to develop institutional capacities, increase efficiencies in the agri-business sector, create employment for youth, harness energy resources, and take advantage of opportunities provided by regional integration to expand market-driven growth and support Rwanda's economic advancement. Post will continue to expand its use of public-private partnerships as a model for sustainable development and champion the competitive advantage of U.S. firms in providing private-sector led development and local skills training.

Mission Objective 2.1: Economic opportunities increased and sustained (CDCS DO 1)

Justification: Expanded agricultural productivity in conjunction with enhanced private sector competitiveness will result in increased and sustained economic opportunities for Rwandans. The agricultural sector, which is the source of livelihoods for approximately 70 percent of the population, is key to the expansion of economic opportunities. Increased efficiencies and quality in value-added production could have a substantial impact on the economic status of rural households. Enhanced private sector competitiveness through an increased ability to access affordable and reliable energy sources, enhanced trade and access to markets greater, and favorable business climate will enable private sector investments and support Rwanda's economic advancement. Increasing household-level incomes, empowering women and promoting joint-decision making in the household, increasing the production of nutritious foods

and increasing rural households' awareness on good nutrition practices will help reduce the malnutrition rate. Increasing access to and adoption of key nutrition-sensitive agricultural technologies among farmers, especially women and the disabled, as well as strengthening the food system through climate-smart approaches will result in increased agricultural productivity and reduced vulnerability to changes in rain patterns. Reducing the cost of capital for firms and households will increase business growth and foster rural economic development. Post will continue to support new economic opportunities by partnering with the GOR and Power Africa partners to help the country meet its ambitious electricity generation and access goals while developing the regional and national grid network, accelerating access to on- and off-grid electricity sources, and strengthening energy sector institutions and regulatory frameworks. Post will also provide advocacy for qualified U.S. firms pursuing projects under the regional Central and Northern Corridor Initiatives and the upcoming Bugesera Airport, which will substantially reduce the cost of transporting goods throughout the region. Post will also seek to facilitate the travel of individuals to the United States to attend educational or training programs to better equip them to shape the future development of Rwanda's economy.

Mission Objective 2.2: Mutually beneficial trade and investment flows increased bilaterally, regionally and internationally

Justification: Embassy Kigali recognizes the importance of an open and predictable environment for bilateral, regional, and global trade and of investment flows to increase. Post will employ existing agreements, such as our Trade and Investment Framework Agreement and Bilateral Investment Treaty, to engage the GOR on trade and investment problems and advance our bilateral and regional economic and commercial agenda. Embassy Kigali will work with the government and private sector under the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act Action Plan to boost trade capacity. Post will also work with the GOR, civic organizations, and the private sector on incentives and policies to increase growth of entrepreneurship and small businesses that lead to growing off-farm employment, particularly for women. Embassy Kigali will continue to engage the GOR on behalf of U.S. companies seeking to invest in Rwanda and the region, capitalizing on existing U.S. investment in sectors ranging from tourism and hospitality to energy, water and other key sectors. The Mission also will work with the GOR to strengthen the country's minerals traceability system in order to increase legitimate regional trade in minerals and to deny funding opportunities for transnational criminal organizations.

Mission Goal 3. Promote inclusive country-led development

Description and Linkages: This goal reflects Pillar 4 of the 2017 U.S. National Security Strategy and it supports State-USAID 2018-2022 Joint Strategic Plan Goals 2, 3, and 4. This goal also supports the AF/AFR Joint Regional Strategy Goal 4. Through interagency efforts, the USG will help to develop the capacity of Rwanda's health and education systems to improve the overall welfare of Rwandans and to support a more healthy and educated society that is better poised

to take advantage of and create emerging economic opportunities. The joint health and education efforts of USAID, CDC, PEPFAR, and State Department are aligned with the GOR's efforts to advance its own development in order to reduce Rwanda's dependency on foreign aid.

Mission Objective 3.1: Health and nutritional status of Rwandans improved (CDCS DO 3)

Justification: In order to improve Rwandans' health and nutritional status, the interaction between supply (quality health services) and demand (active utilization of quality services) must be simultaneously addressed. Increasing the health sector's capacity to deliver an appropriate package of health services down to the local level, with minimal reliance on external expertise and financing, is essential to minimizing service-delivery costs, supporting recent improvements, and ensuring long-term sustainability in Rwanda's health sector. But delivering these services is not enough; individuals, especially poor and vulnerable populations, must have the capacity to equally access and effectively utilize these services while taking more ownership over their own health. U.S. assistance will support the goals and principles of the Global Health Initiative to achieve major improvements in health outcomes through improving health service delivery, utilization, and increased country ownership. Post will continue to support programs for improved maternal and child health, family planning and reproductive health, nutrition, malaria prevention and treatment, water and sanitation, and HIV/AIDS.

Mission Objective 3.2: Increased opportunities for Rwandan children and youth to succeed in schooling and the modern workplace (CDCS DO 4)

Justification: The education system must be strengthened to ensure that all Rwandan primary school-age children regardless of circumstance have at least a minimum functional foundation in literacy to be able to effectively participate in a modern economy. Out-of-school youth must be provided with employable skills and employment opportunities that support their enthusiasm for productive participation in Rwanda's development process. Gender and disability perspectives must be integrated into these investments to ensure that female and male students have equal access and participation so that they can benefit from the interventions. Post will implement foreign assistance programs to improve education outcomes in literacy at the primary school level and build systemic capacity to manage and deliver quality education. The Mission will also increase the availability and use of teaching and learning materials. In addition, the Mission also will continue to support activities that promote positive youth development, such as life skills and establishment of an enabling environment for youth to reach their full potential.

Mission Goal 4 Expand democracy, human rights, media freedom, and access to justice

Description and Linkages: This goal reflects Pillars 3 and 4 of the 2017 U.S. National Security Strategy. It supports the State-USAID 2018-2022 Joint Strategic Plan Goal 3, the Africa Joint Regional Strategy Goals 3 and 4, and USAID's CDCD Objective 2. The Mission will support initiatives that advocate for increased respect for human rights principles and improved social opportunities for all Rwandans. Through these efforts, the Mission will work to develop the capacity of civil society, the justice sector, and the media to increase their ability to impact democratic development. Post will continue to deepen its relationships with U.S. government exchange alumni in order to amplify voices calling for democratic governance.

Mission Objective 4.1: Improve conditions for durable peace and development through strengthened democratic processes (CDCS DO 2)

Justification: If citizens are able to freely participate in public policy decision-making at all levels, and social cohesion is improved through peaceful resolution of differences, then democratic processes will be strengthened and conditions for durable peace and development will be improved. In an environment in which self-censorship is dominant and fear of renewed insecurity is prevalent, more substantive dialogue and understanding among citizens, advocacy groups, and the government are necessary for developing an understanding of differences, reconciliation with the past, and a consensus on an inclusive path forward that encourages citizen input. Centralized planning, top-down political administration, and restricted political space have limited opportunities for Rwandan citizens to take initiative and fully participate in decision-making at all levels. The judiciary's improvements in the quality of law, professional capacity, and modernization of processes, including local mediation skills training, has the potential to provide an important check on executive overreach. However, there is still room for progress, especially in light of ongoing legal and judicial reforms. Since the GOR has repeatedly emphasized the importance of civic engagement in Rwanda's development process, the Mission will leverage the government's interest in civic engagement to place greater emphasis on promoting reforms and greater democratization of decision-making by building the capacity of key actors involved in the political process, ensuring more participatory planning with local populations, and encouraging improved community relationships and social cohesion, while also promoting equality, inclusion, and empowerment for marginalized groups.

Mission Objective 4.2: Increase peaceful pluralistic political participation and inclusive engagement in civic life by fostering respect for human rights, rule of law, Freedom of the Press, and Freedom of Assembly or Association.

Justification: The second cycle of the Universal Periodic Review provides an opportunity to encourage political reform that creates space for non-violent opposition parties, recognizes the value of an independent and active civil society and media, and promotes respect for constitutionally guaranteed civil and political rights, including freedoms of association, expression, and access to information. President Paul Kagame was elected to a third

consecutive seven-year term in 2017 with an official tally of nearly 99% of the vote and a reported 98% participation rate. He has been firm that he will not seek to stay in office beyond his current mandate, but neither he nor the government have yet elaborated a transition plan. He made a similar statement about not running beyond a second term during the 2010 elections. The Mission will seek to encourage the peaceful transfer of leadership and transition to a stable, democratic, multi-party system to consolidate Rwanda's economic progress and ensure its continued leadership in the region. We will urge the GOR to respect human rights, political freedoms, the rule of law, and media independence while recognizing that we can influence, but not determine, the outcomes of these objectives. We will also identify, support, and advocate for the protection of civil society actors dedicated to the promotion of democracy through responsible civic engagement, policy dialogue, and public debate. Additionally, post will continue to look for opportunities to advance internet freedom as a component of human rights.

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1: Make investments in human capital development to suitably equip and engage mission personnel for attaining ICS's goals and objectives.

Justification: Making critical investments in human capital is a key management priority because people are Embassy Kigali's greatest asset. The Embassy will adopt innovative strategies to recruit, retain, train, and energize the best available talent. The Embassy will adopt recruitment techniques to target a more diverse and inclusive candidate pool with the goal of a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

The Embassy will optimize our recruitment and training practices to develop high quality and stable human capital aligned with ICS goals. This approach will ensure that our workforce has the right tools and skills to meet ever-evolving demands and will enhance morale and productivity. Post's goals are to maximize individuals' potential and expand professional opportunities, increase workforce effectiveness, and help staff contribute positively to the communities they serve while focusing on U.S. Government priorities in Rwanda.

Management Objective 2: Leverage technologies to optimize resources, strengthen internal controls, improve security, and enhance quality of ICASS service delivery.

Justification: To improve the quality of ICASS services and reduce costs, the Embassy plans to actively leverage the use of technologies, best practices of other posts, and green initiatives. The use of transitional technologies will help manage costs, improve internal controls, lead to more responsive cyber security, enhance the quality of services, and reduce environmental impact.

The Embassy will invest in its information technology (IT), which is a mission-critical service directly impacting nearly every engagement and project. Post will prioritize upgrading systems and the use of interagency platforms to enhance information sharing and avoid redundancies, while minimizing system vulnerabilities. The Embassy will prioritize bandwidth enhancements and throughput from the local internet providers to prepare for mandatory system upgrades (such as Windows 10 and Office 365). Bandwidth improvements will enhance productivity and contribute to achieving ICS goals 2, 3 and 4.

In addition, Post will actively pursue Embassy compound and residence "greening" initiatives such as increased use of solar energy, mission-wide recycling initiatives, and reduced reliance on non-recyclable materials.