

# The Trajectory of Public Administration in Rwanda: An Appraisal

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## Abstract

This paper reviews the course of public administration in Rwanda. The Government of Rwanda has embarked on an impressive array of public sector reforms. Reforms have been undertaken to increase the accountability, transparency and level of participation in government.

**Keywords:** Rwanda, Public administration, reforms

## Introduction

The paper reviews the trajectory of public administration and governance since the dawn of independence, particularly taking into account the interactive contexts of local dynamics.

## Conceptual Issues

While public administration as an academic field of study is of recent origin, public administration as an aspect of governmental activity existed as far back as ancient times (Peters & Pierre, 2003; Heady, 1991; Nigro & Nigro, 1984). In fact, it can arguably be traced as far back as the origin of mankind. Normative precepts of loyalty, competence, valor, kindness, commitment and moral rectitude premised the conduct of public affairs in the biblical Roman empire, the ancient Egypt, Plato's Republic of 375 B.C) and pre-colonial kingdoms Africa and China (Rodney, 1980, Lungu, 1993, 5; Roddee and Greene, 1963). Historical literature point to the existence of ancient and pre-colonial kingdoms such as the Kautilya's Artastra in ancient India, the kingdom of Mwenemutapa in Zimbabwe, Dahomey, Buganda and Nupe in Nigeria that had highly developed bureaucracies in which normatives of commitment and allegiance informed recruitment to public office. The cabinet ministers deliberated on pressing matters of the state.

Public administration is the cornerstone of national development. It is the central administrative instrument through which national ideals are translated into action.

Worldwide, state administrative systems serve as the machinery through which governments execute the agendas of the political leadership. Decisions of the ruling political party invariably inform the conduct of government and its administrative machinery. The functions of public administration go beyond mere policy implementation. In post-colonial Africa, public administration systems have emerged as central avenues through which troublesome matters of conflict management, resolution and national building are accomplished (WB, 2012). It can thus be concluded that whether one views public administration either in the narrow or broad sense, it is indisputable that public administration is "that sector of administration found in a political setting" (Heady, 1991, 2). This definition not only designates government as the source and domain of public administration, it also reveals the political dimension of public administration. It is this public domain which lends an inherent 'goldfish bowl' context to public administration. This chapter conceptualizes public administration within this broad sense.

## Geographical and Political Context

Rwanda is a landlocked country in the Great Lakes region of central Africa covering roughly 25,000 square kilometres of land and 1,400 square kilometres of water. The political, social and economic context of Rwanda is profoundly affected by the civil war of the early 1990s and genocide of 1994 and the country continues to deal with the consequences.

Whether considering demographic trends, issues of land ownership or penal-code reform, the background of devastation and horror impinges on the consciousness of all concerned. Even 20 years after the genocide, there is an unspoken assumption often underlying discussions of the nation's future to the effect that Rwanda cannot be considered an ordinary country.

## Reforms of Public Administration

It is generally asserted that the Government of Rwanda has embarked on an impressive array of public sector reforms, with little criticism of their commitment or political willingness to support change. The Government's commitment to reform is reflected in the number of policy documents which can be found on the subject, of which the two most relevant are cited below. Public sector reform is discussed in the following policy contexts: human resource development; good governance and institutional strengthening; decentralisation to district- and

sub-district-level bodies; and public financial management.

A review of the literature suggests that there have been a number of successes in the public sector reform process. Key achievements are:

- Rapid downsizing and retrenchment implemented early on;
- Comprehensive pay restructuring; and
- Better qualified and more competent public sector servants through capacity building. This is attributed in part to the implementation of the large-scale World Bank Multi Sector Capacity Building Project (MSCBP) from 2005 to address capacity issues. This also involved the establishment of a human resources development agency (HIDA).

Despite these achievements, the reform process still faces significant challenges in the following areas:

- Staff capacity is crucially lacking in the following areas: information and communication technologies (ICT), accounting, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E);
- There is a lack of sensitisation of staff about the reform process and what capacity building entails, which can result in resistance to the process. Retrenchment has left the public sector workforce depleted and lacking in institutional memory;
- Reform has been difficult to manage in the context of decentralisation and the adoption of a 'one size fits all' organisational structure has been problematic;
- There has been insufficient coordination between Ministries, Department and agencies, and insufficient clarification of a number of boundaries between different parts of government and their roles and responsibilities in reform ; and
- There is lack of clarity about human resources and whether a Human Resource Policy exists.

According to the literature consulted the main goal of public sector reform in Rwanda is to make the public sector more responsive to Rwandan citizens and other users' needs. Rwanda's Vision 2020 aims to transform the country into a knowledge economy with a skilled workforce and a strong public administration which promotes ethics, values, transparency, equity and results.

The reform process currently consists of a) Restructuring public institutions in accordance with territorial reforms; b) Reviewing the legal framework (in particular the General Statute for Public Services, performance appraisal system and disciplinary process). Furnishing these reforms are the following activities:

- A management procedures manual;
- Formulation of a Civil Service Commission;
- Integrated human resources management and payroll system;
- A sustainable multi-sector capacity building programme;
- Long-term salary policy for government institutions;
- A Human Resource development policy;
- Impact assessment;
- Improving retention and motivation; and
- Promoting a culture of organisational change (Karega, 2006)

The country faces a number of challenges in its public sector reform initiatives, however:

- Abject poverty (60% below the poverty line);
- Issues surrounding unity, reconciliation, the role of women and the need to rebuild confidence;
- Management of the shift from a highly centralised, bureaucratised state to a decentralised one using ICT;
- Limited skills and a high turnover of staff: retention and motivation as huge problems;
- Formulation of a sustainable capacity building system and approaches; and
- A degree of resistance to change and fear of the unknown.

Republic of Rwanda (2007) '*Capacity Development and Building a Capable State*', *Rwanda Country Report* was based on national consultations leading up to the seventh session of the African Governance Forum (AGF) in October 2007. The consultation process was led by the Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA), the Human Resources and Institutional Capacity Development Agency (HIDA) and included the Ministry of Local Government, Good Governance, Community Development and Social Affairs (MINALOC) and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN). The scope of the report was on all capacity building initiatives, but has a particular focus on the public sector. In general, the findings of the report indicate that despite the huge efforts the Government of Rwanda has made to invest in and improve human resource capacity within the public sector, many challenges remain in terms of adequate resourcing and gaps in capacity.

Rwanda's national development plan – Vision 2020 – foresees the need for competent human resources in order to fulfil the demands of a knowledge-based economy. Reforms have been taken in a number of sectors: public service, judicial, territorial administration and public financial management. These occurred

alongside the decentralisation process.

### **Public Sector Governance Reforms**

Reforms have been undertaken to increase the accountability, transparency and level of participation in government. This consisted of decentralising government and improving accountability at all levels, enhancing the capacity of the public sector, strengthening public financial management and increasing the transparency and predictability of policy-making. Accountability and transparency initiatives include the setting up of the Auditor General Office, Office of the Ombudsman, National Tender Board (NTB) and Rwandan National Examinations Council (RNEC). Decentralisation in Rwanda has focused upon creating a dynamic local economy, with the challenge being to build capacity at central government level to coordinate activities in the decentralised bodies. Public financial management reforms have included specific budget policy reforms which modernise accounting systems and internal audits. The bodies responsible for ensuring enhanced transparency and accountability have a large role to play in public financial management.

In terms of civil service reform and public sector capacity development a number of challenges were identified:

- Entrenching democracy and the rule of law in a post-genocide context;
- Utilising and retaining capacity in the public sector. The key challenge here is how to retain the most qualified people despite attractive employment in both the private sector and international NGOs;
- Resource constraints, such as poor communications and transport links, lack of data and inadequate financial resources; and
- Conceptual challenges in regard to what capacity building entail. In response to this, a ‘total systems’ approach which addresses the capacity-related issues of individuals, organisations and systems needs was undertaken. This required a more demand-driven approach in which decentralised bodies have a role to play.

### **Policy Framework Reforms**

Rwanda is a signatory to numerous international commitments promoting national development. Rwanda is party to a number of international treaties and protocols that promote all sectors of the economy inter alia agricultural development and trade of agricultural products. It is one of the 191 United Nations (UN) member states that has committed to achieving the MDGs now succeeded by Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and has developed its domestic policies with the goal of meeting all MDGs and their targets by 2015. For example, its agricultural strategies recognise the importance of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger (MDG 1), promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women (MDG3), and ensuring environmental sustainability (MDG 7), among other things. Rwanda is also a party to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and has adopted the principle of gender equality into its Constitution, which sets quotas requiring the inclusion of women in decision-making positions as well as empowering GoR to promote gender equality.

Within Africa, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), in which Rwanda is a member, has called for the transformation of agriculture through its Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). CAADP aims to boost sustainable agricultural growth throughout the continent, and calls for a minimum commitment of 10percent of national budgets to agricultural investment (CAADP, 2009). The NEPAD has further formed a working group on gender that is tasked with ensuring all poverty reduction strategies take the specific needs of poor women into account. NEPAD prioritises gender empowerment as one of several crosscutting issues central to its work to enhance women's rights in Africa. Its focus is on mainstreaming gender throughout its programs. Rwanda adopted the framework of the CAADP into its own National Agricultural Transformation Strategy (PSTA) (Twesigye-Bakwatsa, 2010). The NEPAD and the African Union Commission have also joined forces with the World Economic Forum to support the goals of CAADP and promote private investment in African agriculture. The new program, Grow Africa, works with member countries to help build private investor interest in agriculture, address important issues, including resource management and climate change, and create a sense of shared commitment through the exchange of best practices. Rwanda is one of the first member countries to complete an investment blueprint with Grow Africa, and offer investors a package of policy proposals (MINAGRI, 2013). Rwanda is also a member of the Common Markets for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community (EAC), both of which are designed to facilitate regional integration to promote economic development. EAC member states have adopted the Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy for the East African Community, and committed to the establishment of a common market (MINAGRI, 2013; Alinda and Abbott, 2012). Trade linkages within the region offer new opportunities for growth which Rwanda’s agricultural strategies are designed to promote.

## Developmental Measures

Vision 2020 Umurenge is a highly decentralised integrated rural development programme designed to accelerate extreme poverty reduction in Rwanda. The major objective of Vision 2020 is to fundamentally transform Rwanda into a middle-income country by the year 2020. This requires achieving annual per capita income of US\$ 900 (US\$ 290 today), a poverty rate of 30% (64% today) and an average life expectancy of 55 years (49 years today). The Vision 2020 has pillars that cross-cut areas of the Vision2020. These are:

- Good governance and a capable state;
- Human resource development and a knowledgebased economy;
- A private sector-led economy;
- Infrastructure development;
- Productive and Market Oriented Agriculture; and
- Regional and International Economic integration.

The Vision 2020 represents an ambitious plan to raise the people of Rwanda out of poverty and transform the country into a middle-income economy. Some observers have described the Vision 2020 as too ambitious and that the Government of Rwanda was not realistic when setting this goal. Others argue that it is a dream. This paper observed that the Government of Rwanda did a great job to set a bar high. It shows how committed it is regarding improving the welfare of Rwandan people. To remain in the current situation is simply unacceptable for the Rwandan people. Underscored here is that there is need to devise and implement policies as well as mobilise resources to bring about the necessary transformation to achieve the Vision. This is realistic based on the fact that countries with similar unfavourable initial conditions have succeeded. The development experience of the East Asian ‘Tigers’ proves that this dream could be a reality.

Taking into account Rwanda’s extremely scarce resources, prioritisation and sequencing will be crucial. This section shows prioritisation in the short, medium and long run. It acknowledges the interdependencies and complementarities between different policies and developments. For example, industry and service sector development cannot be realised without a competitive stock of skills, infrastructure and financial services.

Rwanda’s Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) provides a medium term framework for achieving the country’s long term development aspirations as embodied in Rwanda Vision 2020, the seven year Government of Rwanda (GoR) programme, and the Millennium Development Goals.

The strategy builds on strong achievements in human capital development and promotes three flagship programmes. These flagships serve as a means to prioritise actions by the GoR, mobilise resources for development and improve policy implementation through more co-ordinated interventions across sectors.

The first flagship, Sustainable Growth for Jobs and Exports, is being driven by an ambitious, high quality public investment programme aimed at systematically reducing the operational costs of business, increasing the capacity to innovate, and widening and strengthening the financial sector. This means heavy investment in “hard infrastructure” by the GoR to create strong incentives for the Private Sector to increase its investment rate in subsequent years. The second flagship, Vision 2020 Umurenge, will accelerate the rate of poverty reduction by promoting pro-poor components of the national growth agenda. This will be achieved by releasing the productive capacity of the poor in rural areas through a combination of public works, promotion of cooperatives, credit packages and direct support. Finally, the third flagship, governance provides an anchor for pro-poor growth by building on Rwanda’s reputation as a country with a low incidence of corruption and a regional comparative advantage in “soft infrastructure”.

In order to implement the EDPRS strategy, the Vision 2020 has been converted into action by a series of medium-term strategic plans. The first was the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP) finalised in 2001, which covered the period 2002-6. This was the Government of Rwanda (GoR)’s first systematic assessment of the actions needed to reduce poverty and generate pro-poor economic growth. It was followed by the first Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) covering the period 2008-12.

The PRSP 2002-6 was elaborated in a post-conflict environment where the main emphasis was on managing a transition from emergency relief to rehabilitation and reconstruction. Six broad areas were identified as priorities for action: rural development and agricultural transformation: human development, economic infrastructure; governance, private sector development and institutional capacity-building.

Despite strong economic growth, poverty fell during the PRSP period by only 2.2 percentage points. More than half the population continued to live below the national poverty line. In terms of non-income poverty, the PRSP was much more successful. Infant, under-five and maternal mortalities all decreased by 20-30%. Progress has continued under EDPRS so that by 2012 the associated health MDG targets for 2015 had already been achieved or were on track. Access to education has improved with the implementation of the nine year basic education program while completion rates have also increased significantly fell by 4.2 percentage points between 2001 and 2005, but still afflicted more than one third of the population. Income inequality as measured by the Gini coefficient rose from 0.47 to 0.51.

EDPRS 1 (2008-12) marked a distinct change in the approach to development. A key conclusion of the

PRSP experience was that the social sectors (particularly health and education) had been well addressed, but the real economy i.e. the sectors dealing with the production of goods and services, had not. Priority was, therefore, given to accelerating growth, creating employment and generating exports. These were catalysed through public investment in infrastructure, and through regulatory reform. They were intended to reduce the costs and risks of doing business and to create an attractive environment for private sector investment and activity.

These priorities were reflected in three flagship programmes: the Programme for Sustainable Growth for Jobs and Exports, the Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP), and the Governance Programme. The VUP was aimed at providing a decentralised, integrated programme designed to impact on rural poverty reduction.

### What Were The Achievements EDPRS 1?

As mentioned earlier, remarkable socio-economic progress has been made during EDPRS 1. The economy grew strongly, and significant poverty reduction was achieved. Economic activity was driven by a large increase in agricultural output, robust exports, and strong domestic demand. Fortunately, Rwanda has remained relatively insulated from the slowdown in the advanced economies. Though inflation rose sharply in 2011, it has still remained in single digits and has been the lowest in the region. In 2012, high growth was sustained and inflation remained relatively modest, although risks from instability in commodity prices and aid flows remain.

Furthermore, there was steady growth across all sectors. Economic growth for the EDPRS 1 period 2008–2012 exceeded ambitious expectations. Real GDP growth averaged 8.2% annually, which translated into GDP per capita growth of 5.1% per year.

**Table 1: Outputs (Gross Domestic Product)2008 to 2012**

		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
GDP	Rwf billions, constant 2010 prices	2,879	3,059	3,280	3,551	3,833
	USD millions, constant 2010 prices	4,938	5,246	5,625	6,089	6,573
GDP per Capita	Rwf '000s, constant 2010 prices	293	302	315	331	348
	USD, constant 2010 prices	502	519	540	568	644

Source: MINECOFIN

**Table 2: Annual Growth Rates**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Average Annual Growth rate
<b>Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP)</b>	11.2%	6.2%	7.2%	8.3%	8.0%	8.2%
<b>Real GDP per capita</b>	8.1%	3.2%	4.2%	5.2%	4.9%	5.1%

Source: MINECOFIN

The economy experienced a short period of difficulty following the global financial crisis in 2008-9, when GDP growth fell to 6.2% in 2009. However, growth well in excess of population growth returned during 2010-2012, permitting significant real increases in per capita incomes.

Strong and balanced economic performance has been derived from sustained growth across all sectors of the economy. Services have been the main driver of growth. The sector grew at an average of 10.0% per year and produced around 52% of national output during the EDPRS 1 period. The main expansion areas were telecommunications with increased mobile phone and internet use, wholesale and retail trade and transport. Expansion of services accounted for just over half of total GDP growth (53%) during the EDPRS 1 period.

The industrial sector grew at an average rate of 9.8% per year during EDPRS 1, driven by a rapid expansion of construction, which grew at 15.0% annually. The industrial sector produced 15.4% of national output between 2008 and 2012. Investment flows for construction from the Diaspora, have been an important contributor. The rapid growth was achieved despite the sector, in particular construction, being hit hard by the global downturn in 2009. Industrial growth contributed 20% of total growth during EDPRS 1.

According to the World Bank's Doing Business Report for 2012, Rwanda progressed from 58th to 45th position in the ease of doing business rankings worldwide. This performance makes Rwanda the second most reformed economy in the world over the last five years and the third easiest for doing business in Africa, as well as being the first in the East African Community (EAC).



Rwanda's first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) covered the period 2002-2005. It was elaborated in a post-conflict environment where the primary emphasis was on managing a transitional period of rehabilitation and reconstruction.

### **Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2 (EDPRS 2)**

Rwanda's Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2 (EDPRS 2) was both a document and a process. As a document, the EDPRS sets out the country's objectives, priorities and major policies for the next five years (2008-2012). It provides a road map for government, development partners, the Private Sector and civil society and indicates where Rwanda wants to go, what it needs to do to get there, how it is going to do it, what the journey is going to cost and how it will be financed. The strategy provides a medium term framework for achieving the country's long term development goals and aspirations as embodied in Rwanda Vision 2020 (Republic of Rwanda, 2000), the seven year Government of Rwanda programme, and the Millennium Development Goals.

The priorities of the strategy are embodied in three flagship programmes: sustainable Growth for Jobs and Exports, Vision 2020 Umurenge and governance. The EDPRS assigns the highest priority to accelerating growth to create employment and generate exports. It will achieve this through an ambitious, high quality public investment programme aimed at reducing the operational costs of business. This big push will create strong incentives for the Private Sector to increase its investment rate in subsequent years. With two thirds of the population aged less than twenty-five years, particular emphasis will be placed on creating jobs for young people.

Viewed as a process, the EDPRS has involved extensive consultation over a period of 18 months with a wide range of stakeholders at both central and local government levels. A national coordination structure was put in place to oversee the elaboration process (Figure 1.1). The process was led by the National Steering Committee (NSC), comprised of Ministers and Governors, which provided high-level guidance such as on how to prioritise between sectors. The NSC was supported by a Technical Steering Committee (TSC), made up of Secretaries General, Executive Secretaries from Provinces, and representatives of donors, civil society and the Private Sector. The TSC played the principal coordinating role for the EDPRS, pulling together the work of the different Sector Working Groups and making high level recommendations to the National Steering Committee as appropriate.

The above presentation of Rwanda's achievements, opportunities and challenges, together with the lessons about the need for improved cross-sector co-ordination from EDPRS 1, have resulted in the organisation of EDPRS 2 around four thematic areas, which reflected the priorities for EDPRS 2:

- Economic transformation for accelerated economic restructuring and growth striving for middle income country status. Economic Transformation is the process of sustained high economic growth during which the fundamentals of an economy change, shifting from a traditional and low productivity agricultural base and a rural labour-force, to a more industrial, diversified and high productivity urban economy. It is a multi-decade process, spanning one or two generations in the case of fast growing East Asian economies, during which a country grows from lower income status to a modern high-income economy, through changes in infrastructure, industries, technologies and institutions (GoR, 2007);
- Rural development to address the needs of the vast majority of the population and ensure sustainable poverty reduction and rural livelihoods;
- Productivity and Youth Employment to ensure that growth and rural development are underpinned by appropriate skills and productive employment, especially for the growing cohort of youth; and
- Accountable Governance, to underpin improved service delivery and citizen participation in the development process

The key elements of accountable governance for Rwanda involve public accountability; accountable governance; citizen empowerment and participation in decision making; and ensuring effective service delivery. In other words, public accountability for Rwanda means ensuring that citizens and communities and stakeholders (CSOs, donors), monitor and track government actions and question their impact on development. Public accountability also means participatory monitoring and evaluation of EDPRS 2 and of other national development programmes from the community level.

Citizen empowerment and participation in decision making at the grass roots level entails more frequent and interactive engagement between local level leadership and citizens at all levels supported by key players (NGOs, CSOs, CBOs, development partners and communities). This requires the development of appropriate mechanisms to build community capacity, to allow them to identify, assess and assert their priorities in local development planning, and to hold their leaders to account.

Ensuring effective service delivery is also critical for Rwanda and part of the public accountability delivered to the citizens. Indeed, service delivery is emphasised in all domains including for the private sector. Decentralisation policy for the public sector has been accelerated. EDPRS 2 and its four thematic areas have been built from five principles derived from the lessons and experience of EDPRS 1 and the overarching

ambitions set for EDPRS 2. These principles are:

- Innovation: emphasising new ways of thinking, working and delivering because the status quo will not be adequate to achieve Rwanda's ambitious targets.
- Emerging priorities: identifying thematic strategies which encompass new priorities, including new ways of doing business, to drive the achievement of Vision 2020 targets.
- Inclusiveness and Engagement: creating ownership of development at all levels and providing learning and feedback mechanisms to improve solutions.
- District-led Development: creating strong, mutually supporting linkages between district and sectoral strategies, and supporting administrative standardisation and efficiency.
- Sustainability: ensuring that programmes and targets achieved from EDPRS 2 are sustained over the long term in their economic, social and environmental dimensions.

Technology and ICT are at the centre of development in Rwanda. The ICT sector has a key cross-cutting role to play in supporting businesses, skills, and public service delivery. Development of ICT capacity will be essential for reaching the Vision 2020 goal of transforming Rwanda into a knowledge-based economy.

For the private sector, mobile phones have been shown to increase market efficiency by providing quick easy access to market prices in different locations, so producers can ensure that they are getting the best price for their product without travelling long distances. In addition all businesses can benefit from cheaper communications and mobile money transfers. Technology such as electronic cash registers, accounting software, and e-payments can increase business efficiency, and mobile money also eases access to financial services. Finally, the developing ICT industry has proved to be a source of good quality jobs directly servicing business and consumers, in sales, hardware repair, and software development. The use of automation in the manufacturing sector of Rwanda has got the potential to increase efficiency and productivity.

Rwanda has a shortage both in terms of the quality and quantity of skilled personnel to drive ICT development as well as achieve VISION 2020 targets to develop required skills for a knowledge-based society. Skills development is a national priority and also a foundation for the achievement of NICI III as well as VISION 2020. Rwanda is frantically collaborating with the East African Community (EAC) on regional ICT infrastructure and regulatory requirements. These are commendable efforts by the Government of Rwanda to improve Rwanda's broadband networks and reduce connectivity costs through the Regional Connectivity Infrastructure Programme (RCIP), and harmonising cyber laws through the EAC Legal Framework on Cyber Laws.

The Government of Rwanda has also instituted noble reforms in the agricultural sector which is the mainstay of the economy. For instance, the National Agriculture Policy and Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture. The strategic interventions in the agricultural sector called for by the EDPRS are regulated by Rwanda's NAP, adopted in 2004. NAP is oriented primarily toward ensuring food security by modernising and professionalising agriculture. It envisions a major role for extension services, especially those supporting market-oriented production and innovations. The National Agriculture Policy and Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture (PSTA) guides the implementation of NAP. The focus of PSTA has been on programs and activities that shift the agricultural sector from subsistence to commercial production through production intensification, farm mechanization, development of agro-processing facilities, technology enhancements, and infrastructure development (MINAGRI 2013).

The Rwandan Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry (MINAGRI) credits successful land consolidation, expansion of areas receiving irrigation, increased soil conservation efforts and expansion of terracing for the gains in agricultural productivity between 2008 and 2012. MINAGRI also cites farmers' increased access to financing for agricultural improvements, wider use of fertilizers and improved seeds, and improvements in infrastructure and transport for market goods as reasons for increased production of maize, wheat and soybeans among others.

Agricultural development is one of the six pillars of Vision 2020, targeted as one of the most significant means of reducing poverty and improving food security. To meet the Vision's goals, the Government of Rwanda (GoR) has developed a series of policies and programs aimed at increasing agricultural production and improving living conditions for the rural population. They include the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI's) National Agricultural Policy (NAP), the National Land Policy, the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS), and the National Agricultural Extension Strategy, among a host of others. These interventions are credited with significantly decreasing poverty over the past two decades.

Progress was seen in terms of improved Public Financial Management (PFM). The Organic Budget Law (OBL) was gazetted in September 2006, but capacity building is required to ensure that the law is effectively implemented. In early 2007, the Government of Rwanda, with the assistance of the international auditing firm Price Waterhouse Coopers, produced the country's first set of consolidated accounts in line with constitutional requirements. The GoR is currently developing the capacity of the Accountant-General's office and the Finance Departments of different budget agencies, so that it is able to produce final accounts in

subsequent years. A quarterly cash flow plan system was adopted in January 2006 and this sets the spending limit of budget agencies. A Single Treasury Account has been established and all government agencies are subject to a system of zero balance drawing bank accounts. All dormant government accounts (including those of districts) have been closed, both in central and commercial banks. In order to build capacity for public accounting and internal audits, training began in 2006 and a first set of professional examinations took place, with 218 candidates on Accredited Certified Chartered Accountants (ACCA) Part 1.

The government of Rwanda considers education critical for achieving sustainable economic growth and development. In its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), the government puts quality basic education for all as its first priority. The Rwanda 2020 vision statement calls for universal adult literacy by 2020. It aims to ensure that all Rwandan citizens will acquire basic primary education by 2010 and that significant improvement will be shown in secondary and tertiary education.

To achieve the above objective, the government provides free mandatory primary education for all children and conducts awareness campaigns to encourage parents to send their children to school. This has resulted in a steady increase in primary school enrolment rates from 87 percent in 2003 to 95 percent in 2006. While the increase in numbers of primary schools and classrooms did not keep pace with this rapid growth in student population, the number of teachers

### Conclusion

The Rwanda Public Service is committed to ensuring quality and timely service delivery through strong organizational performance. Bringing services and decision-making powers close to the people has been an enabling factor in enhancing the delivery of services in Rwanda Public Service. All public service reforms carried out have been informed by the commitment of the Government of Rwanda to ensure that public services are delivered within reasonable time frames and with the highest level of professionalism and accountability.

In 2008, the Government of Rwanda (GoR) embarked on a functional review exercise aimed at verifying whether public services were being properly delivered at every level; for Central Institutions (Ministries and Agencies...) and Local Government entities (Districts, Sectors and Cells). A capacity needs assessment for Local Government entities was also carried out.

The percentage of Rwandans living in poverty has decreased from 60.4 percent in 2000-2001 to 56.9 percent in 2005-2006. As a result of the country's high population growth rate, this progress has been overshadowed by an increase in the absolute number of people living in poverty, increasing from 4.8 million to 5.4 million persons during the same period. Poverty in Rwanda is mainly a rural phenomenon: while the population is 83 percent rural, 92 percent of the poor live in rural areas.

The Public Finance Management Action Plan and Organic Budget Law, both adopted in 2006, as well as procurement reforms are significant landmarks in strengthening public financial management. The evaluation of the GBS in Rwanda notes that the Partnership GBS has played a significant role in improving public finance management systems. In particular, Partnership GBS technical assistance and policy dialogue have contributed greatly to public finance management system development.

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