

# Rwanda



## Key Facts

<b>POPULATION</b>	(2012 Census) <sup>1</sup> : 10,515,973
<b>AREA<sup>2</sup></b>	26,338 sq km
<b>CAPITAL</b>	Kigali
<b>CURRENCY</b>	Rwandan franc (RWF)
<b>HEAD OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT</b>	President Paul Kagame
<b>FORM OF GOVERNMENT</b>	democratic republic
<b>PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM</b>	bicameral
<b>STATE STRUCTURE</b>	unitary
<b>LANGUAGES</b>	English, French, Kinyarwanda, Kiswahili (official)
<b>NATIONAL ELECTIONS: presidential</b>	last: 2010 turnout: 7.6% next: 2017
<b>Chamber of Deputies</b>	last: 2013 turnout: 98.8% next: 2018
<b>Women Councillors</b>	43.9% (2015)
<b>Local government expenditure as proportion of total government expenditure 2013/14<sup>3</sup></b>	21.3%

## SUMMARY

Rwanda is a democratic republic with two spheres of government, national and local. Local government is enshrined in Chapter 1 of the constitution and the main governing legislation is the Organic Law of 2005. The Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC) oversees the local authorities, which are structured in four tiers: 30 districts (akarere), 416 sectors (imerenge), 2,148 cells (utugari) and 14,837 villages (imudungu). Local government can raise revenue through user fees and property taxes, and receives a core funding grant from central government as well as grants for specific services and one-off development projects. Many locally provided services are implemented in partnership with other government and non-governmental agencies, including rural electrification, environmental management, primary health, water and sanitation services, local economic development and tourism, municipal planning and transport, and social protection.

## 1. CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Rwanda is a democratic republic with a bicameral parliament. The head of state and government is the president who is directly elected for seven years by universal adult suffrage. The parliament consists of two houses, the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. The Chamber of Deputies has a total of 80 members who serve five-year terms; 51 (64%) of current members are female.<sup>4</sup> Of the 80 members, 53 are elected by the general population according to proportional representation. Two members are selected to represent the interests of young people, one member represents disability groups and 24 seats are reserved for women, who are indirectly elected by local governments.

The Senate has 26 members, who serve for eight-year terms. A minimum of eight seats must be filled by women, while 12 seats are indirectly elected by the provincial councils, eight are appointed by the president, four are designated by the Forum of Political Organisations and one each is elected from amongst public and private university academics. There are also four governors appointed by the president, who head and coordinate administration in the four provinces (intara) and the capital city, and act as an intermediary between central government and the highest tier of local government. The governors chair the Provincial Coordination Committee (PCC), which is made up of the chairpersons of the district councils within each province, the coordinators of provincial departments, and the heads of decentralised provincial services.

## 2. LEGAL BASIS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### 2.1 Constitutional provisions

Local government is enshrined in Chapter 1, article 167 of the constitution<sup>5a</sup> (Amendment No. 2 of 2005).

### 2.2 Main legislative texts and policies

Organic Law No. 29 of 2005 determines the administrative entities for local government and establishes their number, boundaries and structure.

Other recent laws relating to local government:

- Law N° 87/2013 of 30/09/2013 determining the organisation and functioning of decentralised administrative entities;
- Law N° 62/2013 of 27/08/2013 establishing the Local Administrative Entities Development Agency's mandate;
- Law N° 12/2013 of 12/09/2013 on state finances and property as amended to date;
- Presidential order N° 25/01 of 9 July 2012 on fees charged by decentralised entities.

The National Decentralization Policy<sup>5b</sup> was approved by parliament in May 2001 and revised in 2012. The current Decentralization Implementation Plan (DIP) covers 2011-2015.

### 2.3 Proposed legislative changes

No current legislative changes proposed.

## 3. STRUCTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### 3.1 Local government within the state

There are two spheres of government in Rwanda, central and local. The central government includes the provincial administrative regions. The local government consists of four tiers: districts, sectors, cells and villages.

**Table 1. Distribution of councils and population**

Province	Districts Akarere	Sectors Imerenge	Cells Utugari	Villages Imudungu	Population 2012 Census <sup>1</sup>	% rural
Northern Province	5	89	414	2,744	1,726,370	90.7
Eastern Province	7	95	503	3,792	2,595,703	92.8
Western Province	7	96	538	3,624	2,471,239	87.8
Southern Province	8	101	532	3,501	2,589,975	91.1
Kigali City	3	35	161	1,176	1,132,686	24.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>2,148</b>	<b>14,837</b>	<b>10,515,973</b>	<b>83.5</b>

Source: MINALOC, communication with CLGF 2015 and 2012 Census



### 3.2 Ministerial oversight

The Ministry of Local Government<sup>6</sup> (MINALOC) oversees local governance in Rwanda. The main mission of MINALOC is to 'promote the wellbeing of the population by ensuring good governance, community development and social affairs'. MINALOC is responsible for establishing democratic, decentralised administrative structures and for ensuring synergy, collaboration and coordination between all government institutions in their support for local government. It also works to:

- build the human, material and financial capacities of local government, so that councils can fulfil their roles and responsibilities
- establish help and self-help mechanisms for vulnerable groups such as genocide survivors, people with disabilities and older citizens
- strengthen planning, coordination and mobilisation mechanisms to deliver the resources necessary for good governance, community development and social protection.

### 3.3 Council types

Local government in Rwanda has four tiers. There are 30 districts (uturere) which constitute the primary local authorities, as well as sectors (imerenge), cells (utugari) and villages (imudungu).

**3.3.1 The district (uturere) council** is the policy-making and legislative body at district level. It is the authority through which the people, via their representatives, can exercise their decision-making and planning powers to determine the development of the district. For transparency and inclusivity the district council chairperson must be a different person from the district mayor.

The size of each council is determined by the number of sectors (imerenge) within its boundaries. Each sector provides a representative to the council. In addition, four seats are reserved for the representation of marginalised groups, three for the National Youth Council and one for the district coordinator of the National Council of Women. The district executive committee (DEC) manages the day-to-day affairs of the district and is the contact point between district residents and their elected council members on matters of service delivery and development.

**3.3.2 The sector (imerenge) council** is a political organ for policy-making decisions; it is elected by all sector residents over the age of 18. The number of council members is determined by the number of cells (utugari) within its boundaries. The council's functions include approval of sector plans and action programmes and ensuring their implementation. There is a sector executive committee, which is composed of 12 members drawn from the council and is responsible for day-to-day administration and the implementation of the decisions and plans of the council. Technical support to the council is provided by two sub-committees, namely the sector political and administrative committee (SPAC) and the sector community development committee (SCDC).

**3.3.3 Cell (utugari) councils** are elected for a five-year term to identify, discuss and prioritise issues, and take decisions on behalf of their electorate. The cell executive committee is composed of the executive secretary and a secretary in charge of coordinating social developments. Staff are responsible for administration and community development, including the day-to-day administration of the cell and the implementation of decisions taken by the cell council. The cell executive works through its technical committee, the cell community development committee (CCDC), to identify and prioritise needs, draw up development plans and mobilise development resources.

**3.3.4 Village (imudungu) authorities:** These are committees elected for a five-year term to identify, discuss and prioritise issues, and take decisions on behalf of their electorate. The village is the lowest administrative entity in Rwanda and village authority members are elected by all adult residents of the village. The village authority consists of a five-member committee which includes the village chief, a member for development and social affairs, a member in charge of security, a member in charge of youth and a member for gender. Village authority staff are responsible for administration and community development, including the day-to-day administration of the village and the implementation of decisions taken by the village council on behalf of all residents.

## 4. ELECTIONS

### 4.1 Recent local elections<sup>7</sup>

The last local elections were held in February 2011 with an overall turnout of 98.9%. The turnout for each local government level was as follows:

- districts: 93.6%
- sectors: 91.2%
- cells: 90.35%
- villages: 87.1%.

The next elections will be held in 2016.

### 4.2 Voting system

At the village level, local government law stipulates all village residents are members of the village council. Cell council members are directly elected by universal adult suffrage of the cell residents. Representatives are then indirectly elected from the cell council members to the sector council, which then in turn indirectly elects a representative to the district council.

### 4.3 Elected representatives

At its inaugural meeting, the district council elects a chairperson from among the elected councillors and the three members of the executive committee elected by all council members from cell level to district.

### 4.4 Women's representation

In accordance with local election legislation and the constitution, the percentage of women elected in local government cannot drop below 30% of total representation in any level of local decision-making including full council and executive committees.

The proportion of women councillors at each local government level is as follows:

- Districts: 43.2%
- Sectors: 45.1%
- Cells: 43.9%

There is no disaggregated data on number of women involved with village councils as all village residents are members. At district level, 10% of mayors and 50% of deputy mayors are female. Data on the number of female chairpersons and deputy chairpersons at sector, cell and village level is not available at present.

## 5. SYSTEMS FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

### 5.1 Legal requirement and 5.2 implementation

There are various official channels to encourage community participation in decision-making, including but not limited to:

- community assemblies (inteko z'abatwariage): these convene monthly to discuss government policies and programmes and resolve domestic disputes in a given community. There are also local mediators (abunzi) who convene to resolve disputes in the cells
- community work (umuganda): on the last Saturday of each month, citizens participate in community work known as umuganda to develop their communities. The Vision 2020 Umerenge Programme (VUP) is part of Rwanda's poverty reduction strategy and a mechanism through which communities in targeted sectors participate in public service.

Existing channels for local participation include:

- a joint action development forum at both district and sector levels
- public accountability days to strengthen accountability at both national and local level
- community assemblies (commonly known as inteko z'abatwariage)
- citizen participation in budgeting and expenditure processes, to ensure fiscal accountability
- representation of people with disabilities on every local decision-making body
- several projects and programmes established to help citizens living below the poverty line, including 'Ubudehe' and 'VUP'
- a specific policy on social protection that targets the vulnerable and elderly.

### 5.3 E-government

E-government is used in service delivery and communication.

## 6. ORGANISED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) is a non-governmental voluntary membership organisation that brings together local governments in Rwanda. RALGA's mission is 'to strive for efficient, effective, transparent and accountable local government in Rwanda through representation, advocacy and capacity-building' with a vision 'to have local governments that respond to the demands of people, that are just, democratic and participatory, and which are citizen, investor, and donor friendly'. RALGA's threefold mandate is to represent members in and outside the country, to lobby and advocate for members and to build the capacity of members. More information can be found on the RALGA website.<sup>8</sup>

## 7. INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Intergovernmental interaction occurs through:

- 'national dialogue meetings' which annually bring together the president and local government councillors
- a central/local government quarterly meeting for the prime minister, ministers, provincial governors and local government leaders. This forum discusses the implementation of national policies, focusing on challenges, strategies and recommendations
- annual planning and reporting performance contract meetings between national and local leaders, where district mayors on behalf of their local citizens sign contracts with the president. Local leaders commit themselves to achieve a certain set of targets, and central government commits to provide funding as budgeted
- annual budgeting and planning meetings bringing together chief budget managers from all levels to harmonise their budgets and plans
- annual district budget days organised to involve all stakeholders in policy development and the decision-making process.

## 8. MONITORING SYSTEMS

Performance contracts (imihigo) monitor local governments' performance against their responsibilities. These contracts are evaluated annually, drawing on expertise from the president's office, prime minister's office and RALGA, along with MINALOC and the Ministry of Economic Planning. Other monitoring systems for local government include:

- MINALOC's oversight of district budgets and implementation of national programmes, including technical support and guidance if implementation is behind schedule
- the auditor general audits local governments to ensure effective use of public resources
- the ombudsman addresses any issues of corruption and investigates citizens' complaints about local government
- A parliamentary committee on local government fulfils an oversight role on behalf of the legislature

## 9. FINANCE, STAFFING AND RESOURCES

All districts approach their budgets from the bottom up, by first considering local development priorities and then matching them with central grants and locally raised revenue.

### 9.1 Locally raised revenue

Local government raises funds directly from several sources, including civil status registrations, property taxes and community healthcare schemes. In 2013/14 the total aggregated locally raised revenue was RWF71.629bn.

### 9.2 Transfers

Total central government transfers stood at RWF31.889bn for the block grant and RWF206.798bn for ring-fenced transfers for the fiscal year 2013/14. There was also a further RWF16.604bn transferred from other government agencies and RWF31.055bn from external agencies.

### 9.3 Local authority staff

Local governments have the autonomy to hire staff. The head of the administration in a district is called the executive secretary. S/he heads the management and technical units of the district and is the overall supervisor for the staff employed.

## 10. DISTRIBUTION OF SERVICE DELIVERY RESPONSIBILITY

The constitution assigns executive powers to local government over the following areas of activity, often implemented in partnership with other government and non-government agencies:

- rural electrification
- environmental management
- local economic development and tourism
- municipal planning, building regulations, public works and transport
- social protection
- primary health services, water, sewage and sanitation services
- involvement of community organisations in matters of local government.

Local governments also have the discretion to deliver the following services:

- community policing
- civil status register
- kindergarten, nursery and adult education
- primary healthcare
- housing construction permits
- town planning, rural road construction and transport
- hygiene and sanitation
- cemeteries, crematoria and religious facilities
- environmental protection
- local economic promotion.

### References and useful websites

1. Population and Housing Census 2012, provisional results [www.statistics.gov.rw/publications/2012-population-and-housing-census-provisional-results](http://www.statistics.gov.rw/publications/2012-population-and-housing-census-provisional-results)
2. UN statistics surface area <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2006/Table03.pdf>
3. Based on figure provided in the profile by the Ministry of Local Government and the executive summary of the central government budget 2013/14 [www.minecofin.gov.rw/uploads/media/BUDGET\\_EXECUTION\\_REPORT\\_FOR\\_FISCAL\\_YEAR\\_2013-14.pdf](http://www.minecofin.gov.rw/uploads/media/BUDGET_EXECUTION_REPORT_FOR_FISCAL_YEAR_2013-14.pdf)
4. Inter-Parliamentary Union, 'Women in national parliaments' [www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm](http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm)
- 5a. Rwandan Constitution 2003 [www.parliament.gov.rw/fileadmin/Images2013/Rwandan\\_Constitution.pdf](http://www.parliament.gov.rw/fileadmin/Images2013/Rwandan_Constitution.pdf)
- b. National Decentralization Policy, May 2001; revised National Decentralization Policy, June 2012; and Decentralization Implementation Plan (DIP) 2011-2015 [www.minaloc.gov.rw/index.php?id=30](http://www.minaloc.gov.rw/index.php?id=30)
6. Ministry of Local Government [www.minaloc.gov.rw](http://www.minaloc.gov.rw)
7. National Election Commission, Rwanda [www.comelena.gov.rw](http://www.comelena.gov.rw)
8. Rwanda Local Government Association [www.ralgarwanda.org](http://www.ralgarwanda.org)
9. Rwanda national government: [www.gov.rw](http://www.gov.rw)
10. UNDP HDR Rwanda country profile <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/RWA>

**Table 2. Aggregate income and expenditure for local government 2013/14**

Income	RWF (bn)		Expenditure	RWF (bn)	
<b>Centre-local transfers</b>			<b>Recurrent</b>	(34%)	120.122
earmarked transfers	(58%)	206.798	<b>Development</b>	(66%)	237.853
block grants	(8%)	31.889			
govt. agency transfers	(5%)	16.604			
external grants	(9%)	31.055			
<b>Locally raised revenue</b>	(20%)	71.629			
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>357.975</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>357.975</b>

Source: MINALOC, communication with CLGF



## Annex A. Summary of service provision by different spheres of government in Rwanda

Services	Delivering authority			Remarks
	Central	Province	Districts	
<b>GENERAL ADMINISTRATION</b>				
Police	■	■	■	
Fire protection	■	■	■	
Civil protection	■	■	■	
Criminal justice	■	■	■	
Civil status register			■	
Statistical office	■		■	
Electoral register			■	
<b>EDUCATION</b>				
Pre-school (kindergarten & nursery)			■	
Primary			■	
Secondary			■	
Vocational & technical	■		■	
Higher education	■			
Adult education			■	
<b>SOCIAL WELFARE</b>				
Family welfare services			■	
Welfare homes			■	
Social security			■	
<b>PUBLIC HEALTH</b>				
Primary care			■	
Hospitals	■		■	
Health protection	■		■	
<b>HOUSING &amp; TOWN PLANNING</b>				
Housing			■	
Town planning			■	
Regional planning	■		■	
<b>TRANSPORT</b>				
Roads	■		■	
Transport	■		■	
Urban roads	■		■	
Urban rail	na			
Ports	na			
Airports	■			
<b>ENVIRONMENT &amp; PUBLIC SANITATION</b>				
Water & sanitation			■	
Refuse collection & disposal			■	
Cemeteries & crematoria			■	
Slaughterhouses			■	
Environmental protection			■	
Consumer protection			■	
<b>CULTURE, LEISURE &amp; SPORTS</b>				
Theatre & concerts			■	
Museums & libraries			■	
Parks & open spaces	■		■	
Sports & leisure	■		■	
Religious facilities	■		■	
<b>UTILITIES</b>				
Gas services	■			
District heating	■		■	
Water supply	■		■	
Electricity	■		■	
<b>ECONOMIC</b>				
Agriculture, forests & fisheries	■		■	
Local economic development/promotion	■		■	
Trade & industry	■			
Tourism	■		■	

**KEY**

- Sole responsibility service
- Joint responsibility service
- Discretionary service