An overview of recent contribution of CSOs to Rwanda’s transformation
DISCLAIMER
This report is funded, produced and published by the Network of International NGOs in Rwanda (NINGO) with support from the Rwanda Civil Society Platform (RCSP). The content of this report is the sole responsibility of the producers.

WRITTEN BY
Yassin TUSINGWIRE

DESIGN & LAYOUT:
Jean Pierre Bucyensenge

COPYRIGHT
NINGO, 2020
FOREWORD

Sean Kerrigan
Chairperson, NINGO

Dr. Nkurunziza J. Ryarasa
Chairperson- Rwanda Civil Society Platform (RCSP)

Over the last 26 years, Rwanda has undergone a remarkable transformation, from the aftermath of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, that devastated the nation, to one of the fastest growing economies in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The Civil Society in Rwanda along with the private and public sector are able to thrive and contribute to the nation fundamentally due to the adaptable work environment rendered by the policies the government of Rwanda has put in place that enables individuals and organizations to achieve their mandates with limited bureaucracies.

Under the Rwanda Governance Board, the Civil Society Organizations in Rwanda are able to come together through partnerships and networking forums designed and positioned towards the development journey of the people of Rwanda.

This synopsis highlights the economic, social and transformative interventions of the Civil Society Organizations in Rwanda aligned to the Rwanda’s National Strategy for Transformation and SDGs. Remarkably the largest area of intervention has been in achieving the universal health care system to all citizens, Agriculture and livelihood, with a major focus on inclusivity and gender that has also ensured preparedness that is better reflected now in the success achieved in responding to the outbreak of Covid-19 global pandemic.

We highly commend the dedicated men and women who have invested their time and resources in partnership with the government of Rwanda under which we are all privileged to serve.
1. INTRODUCTION

The World Bank defines civil society as the wide array of non-governmental and not-for-profit organizations that have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and values of their members or others, based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations. It defines civil society organizations as a wide array of organizations: community groups, NGOs, labour unions, indigenous groups, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, and foundations.”

The main objective of this report is to highlight the contribution of both national and international Non-Governmental Organizations to the development of Rwanda post the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. It focuses on the key sectors of “agriculture”, “education”, “WASH”, “governance”, “women empowerment”, and “justice and peace building” and how CSOs have impacted communities in these sectors. It was commissioned through a partnership framework between the Network of International None Governmental Organizations (NINGO) and the Rwanda Civil Society Platform (RCSP).

2. CSOs IN RWANDA BEFORE THE 1994 GENOCIDE AGAINST THE TUTSI

The evolution of CSOs in Rwanda dates back to colonial epoch. Civil society organizations emerged within the framework of Christian churches (particularly the Catholic Church, which from 1956 established organizations such as Caritas and started to be a recipient of international catholic organizations aid, as that of CRS–Catholic Relief Service). Rwanda’s increasing demand for independence from the Belgians opened up space for multi-party politics in anticipation for elections. In light of this political discourse, “civil society associations became highly politicized and provided a broad organizational base for ethnically based political parties.”

---

2 NINGO is a network of more than 80 individual international NGOs. It was created in 2005 with the dual aim of providing an exchange platform for its members and the opportunity for them to speak with one voice for greater impact including, collective advocacy and sharing of best practices. NINGO’s vision envisions effective partnership for sustainable development in Rwanda.
3 RCSP was established in 2004 as a non-profit coordinating framework of civil society umbrella organizations. It was set up as a platform for information sharing and consultation between CSOs and their partners. The Platform is composed of 9 national umbrellas of NGOs and it has a total number of almost 1445 member organizations.
4 CONSTANTINI G. et al., (December 2013). Mapping of the Civil Society and project identification of a support program to the Civil Society in Rwanda-Final Report mapping.
Prior to 1994, associations, cooperatives and church based groups were labeled Civil Society Organizations. These CSOs existed under the auspices of an authoritarian one-party state. However, some progress was observed between 1980 and 1994 where the number of registered CSOs grew to 170. It was during this period that the first human rights associations were created.

Despite this progress, there was no clearly defined legal and regulatory framework and CSOs were tightly controlled by the state. Moreover, CSOs were heavily dependent on international financial support primarily from World Bank. Therefore, CSOs contribution to democratic governance and human rights promotion in the country was almost non-existent. This partly explains why there was no CSOs’ action during the genocide.

### 3. CSOs IN RWANDA POST THE 1994 GENOCIDE AGAINST THE TUTSI

In the perspective of addressing the consequences of the Genocide against the Tutsi, the post genocide period was characterized by an influx of CSOs, dominated mainly by international NGOs (...). Notably, there was an emergence of dynamic women’s groups and associations in all sectors of civil society, particularly at the national and community levels such as AVEGA-AGAHOTO, AVEGA-AGAHZO, ASRG-Mpore, among others. The most recent data from the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) reveal that in 2018, there was 1,508 CSOs in Rwanda of which 1,335 are national NGOs and 173 are International NGOs.

To date, CSOs operate under a clearly defined legal and regulatory framework. The constitution of the Republic of Rwanda guarantees the right to freedoms of association (Article 39) and the right to freedom of assembly (Article 40). The Constitution further guarantees the right to form trade unions and employers’ associations (Art. 31), Rwanda adopted several laws relating to civil society organizations such as the law governing local Non-Governmental Organizations, The law governing International Non-Governmental Organizations, and

---


7 Examples of Human Rights Associations (CSO) are: the Ligue Rwandaise pour la Promotion et la Défense des Droits de l’Homme (LIPRODHOR), women’s groups, such as, Béatrice des Femmes pour le Développement Rural and Haguruka; and labour unions, such as, the Conseil National des Organisations Syndicales Libres au Rwanda (COSYLU), the Association Rwandaise pour la Défense des Droits de l’homme (ARDHO), the Association pour la Défense des Droits des Personnes et Libertés Publiques (ADL) and the Collectif des Ligues et Associations de Défense des Droits de l’Homme (CLADHO).

8 Supra note 3.

9 Supra note 2.


11 Supra note 3.

12 Law N° 04/2012 OF 17/02/2012 Governing the organisation and the functioning of national non-governmental organizations, Official Gazette n° 15 OF 09/04/2012.

13 Law No 05/2012 OF 17/02/2012 Governing the organisation and functioning of international non-governmental organizations.
the Law Governing Faith Based Organizations.\textsuperscript{14} Specifically, the laws codify the rights and obligations of CSOs. Furthermore, the Government mandates the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) as an institutional framework responsible for regulating CSOs. RGB is created by Law N°56/2016 of 16/12/2016. Additionally, the role of CSOs in Rwanda is emphasized under the three pillars of the NST1 and particularly under Transformational Governance in many areas including i) accountability, ii) citizen empowerment and participation iii) monitoring and ensuring effective service delivery. The importance of the involvement of CSOs in accountable governance and development processes is equally put forward in Rwanda’s Vision 2050.

According to the above legal and regulatory framework, CSOs in Rwanda are broadly understood to encompass INGOs, LNGOs, FBOs and the media. The relationship between the four is commonly established by their focus on interventions of public interest and their direct link to public sphere. However, the Rwandan laws create a distinction based on the definitions within the specific laws for each of the four categories.

According to INGO law, an international non-governmental organisation is established in accordance with foreign laws and the objective of which is related to public interests (article 2).\textsuperscript{15} The LNGO are comprised of natural persons or of autonomous collective voluntary organizations whose aim is to improve economic, social and cultural development and to advocate for public interests of a certain group, natural persons, organizations or with the view of promoting common interest of their members.\textsuperscript{16} LNGOs are established in accordance with Rwandan Laws. FBOs are affiliated to religious doctrines, the law determining the organisation and functioning of Faith-Based Organizations does not define Faith Based Organizations in specific Terms.\textsuperscript{17} Finally, the media law\textsuperscript{18} defines media organs as print media publications, internet, radio and television stations as well as news agencies that circulate, at continued or regular intervals, general or specialized pieces of information meant for being disseminated.

Generally, CSOs play multiple roles in society. They are an important source of information for both citizens and government. They deliver services, especially to the poor and disadvantaged. They monitor government policies and actions and play a watchdog role to hold government accountable. They engage in advocacy and offer alternative policies for government, the private sector, and other institutions. They defend citizen rights and work to change and uphold social norms and behaviors.

\textsuperscript{14}Law N°72/2018 du 31/08/201 determining the organisation and functioning of faith-based organizations, Official Gazette no.37 bis of 10/09/2018.
\textsuperscript{15}Law N° 05/2012 of 17/02/2012 governing the organization and functioning of international non-governmental organization.
\textsuperscript{16}Law n° 04/2012 of 17/02/2012 governing the organization and functioning of National NGOs.
\textsuperscript{17}Law no 06/2012 of 17/02/2012 determining the organization and functioning of Religious-based organization.
\textsuperscript{18}LAW N°02/2013 OF 08/02/2013 REGULATING MEDIA, Official Gazette no 10 of 11 March 2013.
4. APPROACH/METHODOLOGY

The report is based on desk review and meta analysis of secondary data. Analysed data was provided by a few sampled International Non-Governmental Organizations and national Civil Society Organizations with interventions in the following areas: 1) Citizens participation, 2) women empowerment and financial inclusion, 3) Justice and Peace Building 4) inclusive Education and 5) Agriculture. Other relevant data was also collected online.

Whereas CSOs (Local NGOs and INGOs) submit their financial and activity plans and reports to RGB, submitted plans and reports are not consolidated and analysed in one piece to accurately demonstrate CSOs contributions to the country’s development. For lack of systematic and consistent data from CSOs over the years, this report documents the contribution of CSOs from two sampled fiscal years; 2009/2010 and 2018/2019.

5. CONTRIBUTION OF CSOs TO RWANDA’S TRANSFORMATION SINCE THE GENOCIDE AGAINST THE TUTSI

The end of the Genocide against the Tutsi in 1994 and its horrific consequences including; the need to restore survivors of genocide and resettle returning refugees, providing basic social infrastructure, among others led to a massive influx of NGOs as donors had to rely on CSOs mainly international NGOs to carry out emergency relief, rehabilitation, and resettlement programmes. CSO’s focus evolved to addressing the HIV and environmental protection and now to development work including economic, social and transformational governance; which are the key pillars of Rwanda’s National Strategy for Transformation.

Analysed data and feedback from key CSOs stakeholders reveal the immense contribution of CSOs to the overall Rwanda’s success story since the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

In the FY 2009-2010, CSOs injected RwF 254,833,597,195 (or US$428,291,760) into the Rwandan economy.

The majority of the funds expended by CSOs were concentrated (88.99%) in the four sectors, which are health (29.74%), social protection (22.83%), education (21.08%), and agriculture (15.34%). The same FY 2009/2010, the government of Rwanda (GoR) would have spent 898,962,483,481RwF on the sectoral development areas (14 areas). Cumulatively, 1,153,796,080,676RwF was spent as demonstrated in the chart below:

---

19 Rwanda Civil Society Platform, (2011), Civil society mapping (UNDP/Rwanda). (rfp-58951-2010-017) pg. 3.

20 The 14 EDPRS priority areas were: (1) General Public Service; (2) Defense; (3) Public Order & Safety; (4) Environmental Protection; (5) Agriculture; (6) Industry and Commerce; (7) Fuel and energy; (8) Transport & Communication; (9) Land, Housing & community amenities; (10) Water & Sanitation; (11) Youth, Culture and Sports; (12) Health; (13) Education; and (14) Social Protection.
Holistically, the cumulative estimates show that in 2009/2010 fiscal year, CSOs contributed around 22% of the total Rwandan development budget.21

In 2018/2019 FY, CSOs (all development partners) contribution to the national economy was about US$ 196,000,000. Of this total budget, the Network of International NGOs expended US$ 134,004,235. This budget was on key sectors of agriculture, education, Health and WASH.

CSOs’ contributions have to a larger extent been consolidated through existing government structures such as JADF, JRLOS, and through direct implementation with beneficiaries. For example the JADF assessment (RGB 2019) highlighted a number of services that cover a wide range of areas, including, but not limited to; the construction of schools and other support such as school fees & school materials, construction of water supply infrastructure, construction of and continuous support to Early Childhood Development Centers, contribution to Girinka (one cow per poor

21 Ibid. Page 26-27.
The contribution of CSO to the overall development of Rwanda is huge. CSOs made a very significant contribution to Rwanda’s achievement of MDGs; poverty reduction from 58.9% in 2000 to 38.2% in 2017; increase of literacy rates for youth aged 15-24yrs from 48% in 2000 to 86.5% (EICV5) in 2017; malnutrition (stunting) from 42% in 2000 to 35% in 2018; improvement in life expectancy from 48.65% in 2000 to 67.8% in 2020 to mention but a few. CSOs have also contributed immensely to inclusive governance and gender promotion including but not limited to, promoting citizen participation and fighting Gender Based Violence respectively.

- Kalisa Edward, Secretary General, Rwanda Governance Board.

The same view was echoed by UNDP Resident Representative in the following terms:

Since the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, civil society has been growing substantially, not only in numbers but also in the quality and significance of their contributions. From our experience working with CSOs, we have noted their substantial contributions to service delivery across Rwanda in different thematic areas. We have seen CSOs provide clean water to communities, generating self-employment for thousands through skills development, bring maternal death rates down by building maternity wings, provide legal aid to numerous convicts, make incredible contributions to reconciliation in Rwanda, among others. One of the main added values of the work of CSOs is that they are so closely connected to their local communities and have a clear understanding of what the challenges are and what is needed to overcome these. Their projects, often small in nature, generate a range of immediate life-saving changes for their communities. Stephen Rodrigues, UNDP Resident Representative.

Generally, CSOs have been key partners in achieving Rwanda’s development goals in the areas of social transformation, economic transformation and transformation governance as summarized below:
A. ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

There are several CSOs working on economic empowerment of the citizens—particularly in the agriculture sector. They include, CCOIB, ADENYA, DUTERIMBERE, ARDI, ACCORD-Rwanda, Imbaraga NGO; Agro-Action Allemande, INADES-Formation Rwanda, Actionaid Rwanda, ICCO Rwanda, SNV Rwanda, World Vision Rwanda, CRS, etc. only one or two have been sampled for showcasing achievements.

The table below highlights CSOs’ contribution to Rwanda’s Economic Transformation priorities during the FY2018/19.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access to market for agricultural products</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>★ Established 8 agro community selling points in the districts of Gisagara, Nyanza, Karongi, Nyaruguru and Musanze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Linked and connected 68,823 SHFs (46,873 females &amp; 21,950 males) to potential agro markets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rural household agricultural production</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>★ 46 youth cooperatives are involved in modern agribusiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ 15320 smallholder farming households trained and supported to become more food secure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ 7350 women smallholder farmers with improved seeds and establishes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial services (access to finance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>★ 6000 farmers accessed agricultural loans with 50% of women targeted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ 64 agricultural cooperatives linked and signed MOU with financial Institutions,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ 4812 Farmers Promoters received DEMO Training on usage of financial and agri-information and mobile service platform service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ 2712 opened digital Bank accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ 7350 women smallholder farmers actively engage in saving groups (VSL) that enable women smallholder farmers to access finance/SACCO and they timely and regularly pay health insurance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food security and advocacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>★ 1865 farmers were trained in conservation agriculture and good agricultural practices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### Improve livestock farming

- 3715 households received small animals (goat, pig) while 1,392 household benefited with livestock through community rotation.
- 12000 smallholder farmers trained and supported in improved animal management and breeding through use of AI services.
- Trained and equipped 10 private veterinarians to treat sick animals for farmers.
- Supported 12 agriculture cooperatives with storage modern post-harvest technologies.

### Sustainable agriculture and agro forestry

- 15,800 smallholder farmers trained in sustainable agriculture practices, and supported with agricultural inputs including agro-forestry beds establishment and management.
- Legume plants (Leucaena Calliandra) distributed to 200 smallholder farming households.

### Advisory services on financing models/solutions

- 40,575 SHFs accessed formal financial services.
- 14,445 rural youth supported in savings groups.

#### i. Agriculture

**Example 1:**

At the end of 2019, ICCO (a multi-vocational supporting organisation), through Strengthening African Rural Smallholders (STARS) project, supported 44,182 out of 49,500 targeted smallholder farmers. STARS worked with 18 producer cooperatives and supported 8 microfinance and banking institutions and then linked them to cooperating producers. This support is well aligned with MDGs, EDPRS, the NST1 and the SDGs targets. The intervention has impacted on the lives of targeted beneficiaries as testified by one of the beneficiaries:

> My savings group set up a joint savings account with the MFI from which we can get a loan. As a group, we determine a fixed amount for a given period that each member should bring to the savings meeting, following a plan agreed by the members. Thanks to STARS, I am not only able to save; I can also access a loan. I used this loan to buy quality inputs which increased my yield from 500kg to one ton.

- (Clementine UKWITEGETSE, KOIIKA savings group member).

---

26 MDG goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
27 EDPRS priority areas: (4) Environmental protection and (5) Agriculture.
28 NST1/Economic Transformation pillar-Priority Area 1: Create 1,500,000 (over 214,000 annually) decent and productive jobs for Economic development. Strategic interventions: [1] [2]. Priority Area 4: Promote industrialization and attain a structural shift in the export base to High-value goods and services with the aim of growing exports by 17% annually. Strategic interventions: [19] [27]. Priority Area 6: Modernize and increase productivity of Agriculture and livestock. Strategic interventions: [33] [34] [35] [36] [37] [38] [39] [40] [41] [42] [43] [44].
29 SDGs (1) No poverty; (2) Zero hunger; (5) Gender Equality; (8) Decent Work & economic growth; (10) Reduced inequalities; (12) Responsible consumption & production; and (13) Climate action.
Example 2:

CCOAIB is an umbrella organization that was established in 1987 with a current membership of 38 local non-governmental organizations with interventions in all the 30 districts of Rwanda. 70% of CCOAIB member organizations are actively involved in livelihoods, with a special focus on supporting grass roots farmers and Community Based Organizations (CBOs). CCOAIB has conducted several researches and advocacy in the agriculture sector and has contributed to sector policy reforms and improvements. Similarly, CCOAIB has produced at least 20,000 copies of Information, education and communication materials (IECM) on agriculture policies, strategies and programs in form of simplified guides. The guides have enabled citizens; local leaders and relevant stakeholders to understand agriculture related policies and services such as access to farm inputs like fertilizers and improved seeds. The guides have been largely useful tools for sensitizing citizens, especially farmers to effectively implement and benefit from agriculture related policies by accessing services that transform their agriculture, increase nutrition and food security, generate incomes and reduce poverty.

B. SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

CSOs such as RNGOF, HDI, NUDOR, Tubibe Amahoro, ADI Terimbere, Avega, Strive Foundation Rwanda, FVA, Pro-femmes Twese Hamwe, RRP+, CEJP, World Vision, Action Aid, ACORD Rwanda, ADRA, Water Aid, Women for Women International, Concern World Wide, SOS Children’s village, Survivors Fund (surf), among others are contributing to the sectors of health/reproductive health, social protection, education, HIV and infectious diseases, nutrition and water and sanitation. The table below summarizes some of the key achievements realized by CSOs in the fiscal year 2018/2019.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maternal and Newborn health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>★ 63 fistulas were repaired for maternal emergencies within 12 hospitals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Conducted PD/ health session and rehabilitated more than 800 children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Mentored senior GPs in 11 hospitals of Kabutare, Mibilizi, Gisenyi, Kirehe, Nyamata, Nyanza, Gahini, Kibilizi, Kigeme, Masaka and Gakoma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>★ Distributed equipment: 12 CPAP (1/hospital), 178ambu-bag(1/facility) and 178 blood pressure machines (1/facility).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31 Supra note 22
### Adolescent health

- 16,000 disabled adolescents and vulnerable youth accessed SRH information and services.
- 150 Adolescent mothers trained on sexual and reproductive health, business entrepreneurship, tailoring and received start-ups kits.
- Increased awareness of SRH issues, uptake of modern contraceptives which reduced incidence of teen pregnancies.
- Supported ASRH district mentors in 10 districts.
- Increased family planning & SRH awareness with over 150,000 adolescents and young people reached.
- Reached 60,000 girls in their community and engagement in club activities during the 4 countrywide Ni Nyampinga magazine distributions.
- 144 radio shows aired on 9 community radio stations that have a nationwide reach.

### HIV, TB and infectious diseases

- Over HIV tests to 300,000 persons, 3,300,000 condoms distributed for free, 38,000 people living with HIV supported in care and treatment, voluntary 29,000 circumcisions completed.
- Scaled up adolescent campaign that aims to prevent new HIV infections among adolescents and young people, over 100,000 reached, 54,000 tested for HIV.

### Access to clinical community services

- Community Health Workers (CHW) have the required tools for capturing and documenting services.
- Improved capacity of Community and environmental health officers to supervise CHW.
- Contributed financial support to health insurance to more than 1000 households.

### Nutrition

- Monitored nutrition status of 56,602 children, 9,988 lactating mothers and 5,183 pregnant women attending village nutrition schools (VNS).
- Trained 1,625 “Parents Lumières” and 57 nutrition staff at health centers on food processing.
- Rehabilitated 1,775 registered malnutrition cases.
### Mental Health
- 750 persons trained in mental health and counseling.

### Access to basic quality education
- 1 million children accessing basic quality education.
- 5,000 teachers were trained in business planning, ECD, play based learning, CBC approach, school leadership, mentorship and positive learning approaches.
- 3,000 textbooks in official languages (English and Kinyarwanda) were distributed in 28 schools.
- 30,000 pupils supported with scholastic materials and consistently attend school.
- Provided access to higher education and support services to over 500 students.

### Construction of classrooms
- 10 inclusive school latrines with appropriate MHM rooms were constructed and being used by 3,600 school children (1,880 girls and 1,720 boys) and teachers.
- 26 classrooms constructed in seven schools and each furnished with 30 desks. 6 latrines and a hand washing facility constructed.

### Curriculum development
- Support provided to Rwanda Education Board for TTC pre-service teacher training curriculum development.
- Redesigned on-line foundational skills for secondary students, US bachelor’s degree program as well as project management for local accreditation.

### Early childhood development centers
- 6 ECD centers established.
- Trained on national ECD Master Trainers for Rwanda, which benefited 63 trainers, these included INGO partners and national ECD facilitators.

### Construction of water infrastructure
- Over 125 water points constructed and 63 km of water pipeline built.
- Increased access to clean water and drinking water to more 60,000 in Mahama refugee camp and host communities.

### Sanitation
- Over 1,000,000 water treatment sachets distributed in poor households.

### Hygiene
- Over 9,500 community volunteers and households trained in optimal WASH practices.
### Example 2:

In 2019, World Vision International created 244 reading clubs, leading to a total of 659 reading clubs throughout the country; benefiting 51,422 children in different communities. The reading clubs motivated children to adopt a reading culture and this consequently improved the school grades of many pupils. World Vision also provided 944 youths, 55.3% female and 44.7% male, with vocational training skills and graduated in the fields of culinary arts, hair dressing, tailoring, carpentry and construction among others. \(^{32}\)

### Example 3

In 2018, ActionAid International Rwanda constructed and equipped 31 girls’ safe rooms with sanitary materials. Over 6,200 girls in 31 schools in five districts of Musanze; Karongi; Nyanza; Gisagara and Nyaruguru have access to girls’ room. This contributed to reduced girls absenteeism from schools.

### Example 4:

Reach the Children-Rwanda (RCR) is a local national NGO supporting vulnerable communities to access education. Between 2016 and 2019, RCR sponsored vulnerable children to access universal education and university studies. Overall, 229,965,800 RwF was spent in 2018/19 of which 85.9% went on running ECDs in Nyabihu district and (44.4%) sponsored children at schools.

---

#### Contribution of RCR to education - FY2018/2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursery &amp; ECD Schools</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary / 9&amp;12 YBE</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher institutions</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: RCR Annual report 2018/19)

---

\(^{32}\) [https://www.wvi.org/rwanda](https://www.wvi.org/rwanda)

---

AN OVERVIEW OF RECENT CONTRIBUTION OF CSOS TO RWANDA’S TRANSFORMATION
Example 5:
Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) has been building healthy communities and strengthening inclusive education systems across the country (all 30 districts) in Rwanda since 1998. In 2019, VSO through the Building Learning Foundations programme supported 2,600 primary schools to improve their pupils’ primary education; the programme focuses on training and coaching teachers and school leaders to improve learner-centered basic education. VSOs has also supported children aged 3-5 years old who are ready for school by working closely with parents and leaders to identify children with disabilities and ensure they have everything they need to learn with their peers. In 2019, 2,150 young people in Nyagatare district (especially those with disability) were empowered to access information about SRHR.33

Generally, CSOs’ interventions in the education sector have contributed to achieving EDPRS targets (universal education), MDGs (goal 2: achieve universal education). These ongoing interventions also fully align with NST1 (2017-2024)34 and SDGs (2018-2035) (SDGs: 3, 4, 5, and 10).35

Example 6
World Vision has supported Rwanda’s efforts to achieving universal access to clean water and sanitation. While operating across 24 districts in Rwanda, as of 2019, World Vision supported 159,028 people, including 73,738 children to access clean water through the construction of 20 water supply systems in rural communities. World Vision initiated community hygiene behaviour change programs reaching out to 202,283 people across its operational districts. As a result, 33,178 households installed hand-washing facilities at their homes. Moreover, World Vision constructed over 120 piped water systems in 53 schools which were able to serve at least 32,510 children. During the same FY (2019), 31,815 household latrines were constructed which enabled 128,728 people to access improved sanitation and hygiene. 4,453 vulnerable households were supported with treatment products for safe water handling.36

Example 7:
Agro Action Rwanda (AAR) is one of the CSOs providing Safe Drinking Water in Rwanda. Between November 2017 & June 2018, AAR has installed 4 boreholes in the sectors of Karangazi, Gakirage, and Kibuye, in Nyagatare district. In addition to solving the problem of access to safe drinking water, citizens have improved sanitation, effectively reducing the risks related to waterborne diseases.37 Moreover, easy access to potable water allows particularly women & young girls to get enough time for schooling like boys.

33 https://www.vsointernational.org/our-work/where-we-work/rwanda
34 CR interventions in education are aligned with NST1 pillar of Social Transformation/Priority Area 4: Enhancing the demographic dividend through improved access to quality Education. Strategic interventions [61], [62], [63], [64], [65], [66], [67], [68].
36 https://www.wvi.org/rwanda
37 Agro Action Rwanda [September 2018], Activity Report on WASH project implementation in Nyagatare District.
CSOs efforts in WASH have contributed to realizing EDPRS\textsuperscript{38} and MDGs’ objectives\textsuperscript{39} and address the NST1\textsuperscript{40} and SDGs (3, 6) targets.\textsuperscript{41}

iii. Humanitarian response

Example 8:

INGOs such as Trocaire, VSO, Care International, World Vision, among others have also contributed in humanitarian response and emergency situations. For example, from 2018 to date, Trocaire has supported 18,431 (12,013 female & 6,418 Male) people in humanitarian crisis. Non-Food Items and livelihood support was given to Burundian refugees in Mahama camp, support in the form of roof materials and NFIs was a given to people affected by floods and landslides with roof materials and NFIs through MINEMA and further support was given to people affected by floods and landslides with roof materials and Non Food Items in a consortium with OXFAM, DUHAMIC ADRI and Caritas Rwanda.

C. TRANSFORMATIONAL GOVERNANCE AND ADVOCACY

There are a number of CSOs with interventions in the governance sector ranging from civic engagement, transparency, accountability, justice and human rights including legal aid and access to justice.

Local CSOs such as Imbaraga, Never Again Rwanda, COPORWA, RWN, AJPRODHO, Pro-femmes Twese Hamwe, Transparency International, Pax Press and INGOs such as Norwegian People’s Aid, Trocaire, RCN Justice and Democracy, GIZ, VSO, Care International, among others have either directly implemented governance projects or integrated governance programming in their interventions.

CSOs have supported citizens’ efforts to meaningfully participate in public policy matters and engage directly with duty bearers including local leaders and other services providers. Increased role of CSOs and citizens participation has effectively improved services delivery. These efforts have benefited women, children, historically marginalized groups, and people living with disabilities in articulating their issues in policies and improved implementation of inclusive government policies and programs. Below is an overview of CSOs achievements (FY 2018/19) in Governance.\textsuperscript{42}

\begin{itemize}
\item EDPRS I &II priority area: (10) Water and Sanitation;
\item MDGs goals: (3) Promote gender equality & empower women.
\item NST1, Social Transformation pillar/ Priority Area 5: Moving towards a Modern Rwandan household. Strategic interventions: [70], [71].
\item SDGs: (3) Good Health &well being; (6) Clean Water & Sanitation.
\item Supra note 22.
\end{itemize}
Strengthening accountability of public institutions

- 6,586 issues were raised by citizens through the PPIMA Community Scorecard in government created spaces, with support from civil society. Due to follow up and advocacy on these issues, 65% of the issues were resolved or were under review by the end of the year 2019.

- Contributed 1,427 civil society advocacy initiatives at district and national level that received government feedback or contributed to positive policy and service delivery changes.

Increase citizen participation, engagement and partnerships in development

- Norwegian Peoples Aid in partnership with 14 national level SCOs under the PPIMA project engaged 1,337,712 people in the community scorecard process. CSOs supported local communities and councilors at different local government structures to engage with service providers and local authorities to address citizens’ concerns.

- Never Again Rwanda implemented a youth project Inzira Nziza in five districts where more than 5324 youth were empowered with knowledge and skills about human rights in general and civic and political rights in particular.

Strengthen Justice, Law and Order

- 4,812 legal aid cases were received and responded to by civil society in Access to Justice centres operated by Rwandan civil society in collaboration with local authorities and stakeholders.

- 1,342,486 citizens sensitized about their rights by the LAF.

- 76,537 people received legal aid services through the LAF.

Example 9

In their efforts to influence citizens’ participation in local planning and public policy processes, CSOs supported citizens through awareness raising about their rights and entitlements, and facilitated them with tools such as the Community Score Card and dialogues platforms through which they held their leaders accountable. For example, as a result of citizens and leaders engagement, a health center was constructed (FY 2013/2014) in Muyongwe sector in Gakenke District. The absence of a health center had been a critical challenge especially for pregnant women who had to travel several kilometers in the hilly Gakenke District for antenatal care. The health facility has positively impacted infant mortality and maternal health as well as improved general access to medical services.
Example 10

In FY 2018/2019, Trocaire and its partners — RDO, CEJP, and CCOIB — under the “food security and advocacy programme”, translated the National Seed policy, the Sector Strategy on Agriculture (PSTA4), and the National Agriculture policy into Kinyarwanda. The translated document was endorsed by the Ministry Of Agriculture and distributed widely. Overall, Trocaire and her partners reached out to around 6,814 community members in raising awareness and increasing citizens’ knowledge specifically women and youth about agricultural policies, programs and their related budgets. The graph below highlights the awareness raising outreach per gender and programme partner organizations.

![Graph showing reached out citizens during awareness raising activities by Trocaire partners for FY 2018/19](image)

The programme focused also on increasing the capacity of civil society organizations in policy and budget analysis in general, and those related to agriculture in particular. The programme supported local authorities in the five districts of Nyamagabe, Nyaruguru, Nyanza, Rulindo and Gakenke to increase their will and capacity to better engage with citizens and civil society organizations and act on citizens and CSOs priority needs; especially women and youth.

Example 11

CSOs such as Transparency International, PAX PRESS, CCOIB, NAR, NUDOR, HDI, among others have conducted several policy engagement and advocacy initiatives. For more than ten years, the RCSP has been conducting yearly national dialogue on selected real time policy issues.

In 2019, RCSP in partnership with its members held consultations to inform the SDGs Country Report by reviewing the status of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and a CSOs’ position paper with CSOs recommendations was submitted to the GoR. The same year, CSOs, PSF and Government institutions adopted a resolution to strengthen the role of CSOs in regional integration agenda. Similarly, CLADHO has for more than ten years analysed the national budget and provided citizens alternative

---

43 Data shared by Trocaire Rwanda
The Legal Aid Forum is a membership based network encompassing over 30 national and international NGOs, international organizations, professional bodies, universities and faith based initiatives that provide legal aid services to the indigent Rwandan population or vulnerable groups (or that provide support to legal aid service providers in Rwanda).

Example 12

CSOs have equally made contributions by using their voice for evidence-based advocacy. For example, UNDP supported civil society’s contribution to Rwanda’s Voluntary National Review (VNR) Process to measure progress against the SDGs, as well as civil society’s position paper for Rwanda’s Universal Periodic Review (UPR). Through the work of the National Union of Disability Organizations in Rwanda (NUDOR), civil society submitted a parallel report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Geneva reviewing the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UN CRPD) in Rwanda. UNDP also supported NUDOR to conduct a review of the disability categorization carried out by government.

i. Justice sector

Concerning CSOs contribution in the justice sector, there are several CSOs contributing to justice, human Rights and the rule of law. Most of these CSOs are members of the Legal Aid Forum. CSOs have contributed to improved performance of the justice sector institutions such as Gacaca courts (now phased out), Abunzi, MAJ and have contributed to legal reforms in different justice and human rights related laws, policies and programs. Most importantly, most CSOs in the justice sector have provided legal aid services to indigents and vulnerable communities across the country.

Example 13

The Legal Aid Forum (LAF) is one of the most active civil society organizations in the sector of justice in Rwanda. Since 2006, the LAF has been providing direct legal aid services, providing capacity building education, raising awareness on laws and conducting research and advocacy to ensure that indigent and vulnerable individuals in Rwanda are able to access justice. LAF lawyers provided legal aid services and representation in courts of law to individuals throughout Rwanda, including refugees and asylum seekers.

In 2019, the LAF continued to sensitize citizens about their rights. 1,342,486 people were reached through awareness raising activities. Up to 76,537 people were provided with various individual legal aid services, including legal advice and orientation, mediation and conciliation, and facilitation of civil registration. Equally, 1,025 people benefited from legal representation services at different levels of courts i.e. from Primary Courts to Supreme Court. LAF also continued to build capacities of legal services providers and access to justice actors. In this regard, LAF reached a total number of 1,289 people including paralegals, lawyers and legal officers, local leaders, refugee leaders, etc.

---

44 The Legal Aid Forum is a membership based network encompassing over 30 national and international NGOs, international organizations, professional bodies, universities and faith based initiatives that provide legal aid services to the indigent Rwandan population or vulnerable groups (or that provide support to legal aid service providers in Rwanda).
Example 14

Haguruka is a national NGO that works with 416 volunteer paralegals - one per each administrative sector.\(^{45}\) The paralegals help resolve problems often concerning GBV and land conflict in collaboration with its lawyers from each of the 4 regional centers (Musanze, Nyanza, Kayonza & Kigali).\(^{46}\) In partnership with RCN Justice and Democracy, Haguruka provided multifaceted support to its beneficiaries ranging from Legal aid and psychological counseling, awareness raising and mobilization as summarized in the graph below.

![HAGURUKA-Legal aid services, psychological support...as per FY 2018-2019](image)

(Source: Haguruka Annual Reports FY 2018 & 2019).

Awareness raising and mobilization embeds mainly debate sessions for providing key information on policies, rights and laws to the community members. Respectively, Haguruka organised 92 and 370 community debates in 2018 and 2019. Between 8,000 and 30,000 people were mobilized and sensitized about their rights and entitlements including where to demand or access these rights and this has impacted on the livelihoods and security of individuals due to reduction of intra-personal conflicts, social injustice, corruption, etc. The table below shows the key topics that Haguruka focused on:

---

\(^{45}\) Rwanda counts 416 administrative sectors distributed within 30 districts.

\(^{46}\) Haguruka NGO, Annual report 2018.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness area 2019</th>
<th>Total number of events / Sessions</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roles of Abunzi committees; Abunzi law, GBV law…</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>28,431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land law &amp; women’s land rights</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9,189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s rights &amp; GBV</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women &amp; girls free spaces</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability rights for women</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>370</strong></td>
<td><strong>38,890</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Haguruka Annual Reports 2019)

Generally, 70% of Haguruka’s beneficiaries are female and 30% Male of whom around 30% are children.

**D. WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT**

There are several INGOs and CSOs supporting women and girls economic empowerment such as Profemmes Twese Hamwe, Haguruka, Rwanda Women Network, Faith Victory Association, Barakabaho, Avega Agahozo, ActionAid Rwanda, YWCA, Trocaire, Care International, Rwanda, Women for Women International, Plan International, among others. In addition to mobilizing and supporting women at grassroots level, CSOs have implemented women economic empowerment projects and advocated for women’s right to equality at national, regional and international level. The table below summarizes some of the key contributions of CSOs to women empowerment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention description</th>
<th>Focus or policy (or issue)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributed to or advocated for</td>
<td>1. Ratification of CEDAW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Ratification of UNSC Resolution 1325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Ratification of Beijing Platform For Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Elaboration of National gender policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Gender responsive planning, budgeting and advocacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Elaboration of Girls’ Education Policy;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Elaboration of Decentralization policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Elaboration GBV law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Elaboration of law on succession and matrimonial regimes and law governing land in Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Amendment of law No 27/2016 of 08/07/2016 governing matrimonial regime, donations and succession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. Amendment of law No 32/2016 of 28/08/2016 governing persons and family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. Amendment of Law No 003/2016 of 30/03/2016 governing maternity leave benefits scheme; for restoration of 12 weeks of maternity leave;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CSOs’ work has greatly contributed to Rwanda’s women empowerment success story. They have contributed to the reduction of gender disparities in various aspects of the country’s life, enhanced economic and family welfare, reduced GBV, etc. Laws and policies are today more gender sensitive and CSOs such as Pro-femmes and other women’s rights organizations have played a great role in their elaboration, amendment and implementation.

Example 15

CARE International in partnership with national level CSOs such as Pro-femmes Twese Hamwe are supporting Women and girls Economic Empowerment and raising awareness about Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (ASRHR). As of 2019, at least 56,000 adolescent girls were sensitized about SRHR. Similarly, CARE implements Village Agents Network (VAN), which expanded to 14,837 village agents.47 Other important projects are “Promoting Financial Inclusion for Small Holder Farmers” (120,000 beneficiaries whose 80% women) and “Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GWEP)” (130,000 beneficiaries).48 These initiatives have economically empowered women and girls and reduced gender economic disparities especially in rural areas.

The table below summarizes Care’s key areas of interventions and the number of beneficiaries as of 2019.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARE/RWANDA-Carried out projects &amp; Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>272,837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Agents Network (VAN)</td>
<td>14,837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting financial inclusion for small holder farmers</td>
<td>120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWEP)</td>
<td>138,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: CARE RWANDA Fact sheet, 2019).

Before the intervention, young girls in the Maranyundo cell in Nyamata sector were seen as less privileged - many of them had nothing, many of them didn’t have opportunity to engage in meaningful activities, were school drops outs, and many were teen mothers from poor families.

47 These village agents facilitate the community saving associations called VSLAs (Village Savings & Loans Associations) at village level.

As experienced by most entities, COVID-19 came as a shock which most CSOs and INGOs were not prepared for and its impact continues to be felt on the ways of working, staffing, and programmes following the GoR’s response to the COVID pandemic through a nationwide lockdown and a relief assistance programme. It has also slowed progress in national development and derailing key strategic activities and the effect is also felt in the communities that CSOs and INGO serve, which called for relief interventions to complement government efforts drawn to contain the spread of the infection as well as limit its fatality. An Economic Recovery Plan has since been developed by the government drawing on efforts both from the government and development partners including CSOs and INGOs.

In response to the COVID pandemic, various interventions from CSOs were drawn to support several local government authorities to quickly acquire and install hygiene and sanitation facilities in congested places and mobilise communities on measures to prevent and combat COVID-19. Similarly, several CSOs also distributed facemasks to vulnerable people, bolstering adherence to preventive measures instituted by the health Ministry.

In addition, CSOs have supported groups with special needs by providing relief food and non-food items. These included people with physical disabilities in over nine districts, people living with HIV, as well as widows and orphans to ensure sustained access to basic needs to counter the effects of COVID-19.

To address associated challenges like increased domestic violence and SGBV, civil society advocated for increased community

---

**Example 16**

Rwanda Women’s Network (RWN) is a national humanitarian non-governmental organization (NGO) dedicated to promotion and improvement of the socio-economic welfare of women in Rwanda since 1997. To date, RWN has supported over 52 grassroots associations and cooperatives that cater for over 4,000 people in thirteen districts in Rwanda. Among others, RWN has created and supported Women Space Facilitators and Girls champions and empowered them to discuss about different topics such as; reproductive health, VSLA, gender, GBV, power and Girls in loud voice. As a result, girls in these spaces have created small income generating businesses. By 30th April 2020, these Women Space Facilitators & Girl Champions had made their own savings worth 22,959,410 RwF.

Overall, CSOs’ support to women empowerment has contributed to the achievement of EDPRS and MDGs targets and will continue to forward-looking NST1 and SDGs targets.

**E. CSOs AND INGOs CONTRIBUTION TO COVID-19 RESPONSE**

As experienced by most entities, COVID-19 came as a shock which most CSOs and INGOs were not prepared for and its impact continues to be felt on the ways of working, staffing, and programmes following the GoR’s response to the COVID pandemic through a nationwide lockdown and a relief assistance programme. It has also slowed progress in national development and derailing key strategic activities and the effect is also felt in the communities that CSOs and INGO serve, which called for relief interventions to complement government efforts drawn to contain the spread of the infection as well as limit its fatality. An Economic Recovery Plan has since been developed by the government drawing on efforts both from the government and development partners including CSOs and INGOs.

In response to the COVID pandemic, various interventions from CSOs were drawn to support several local government authorities to quickly acquire and install hygiene and sanitation facilities in congested places and mobilise communities on measures to prevent and combat COVID-19. Similarly, several CSOs also distributed facemasks to vulnerable people, bolstering adherence to preventive measures instituted by the health Ministry.

In addition, CSOs have supported groups with special needs by providing relief food and non-food items. These included people with physical disabilities in over nine districts, people living with HIV, as well as widows and orphans to ensure sustained access to basic needs to counter the effects of COVID-19.

To address associated challenges like increased domestic violence and SGBV, civil society advocated for increased community

---

**EDRPS** priority areas such as (5) Agriculture; (9) Land, Housing & community amenities; (10) Water & Sanitation; (11) Youth, Culture and Sports; (12) Health; (13) Education; (14) Social Protection.

**MDGs:** (1) Eradicate extreme poverty & Hunger; (3) Promote gender equality & empower women.

**NST1-Transformational Governance pillar/Priority area 1: Reinforce Rwandan culture and values as a foundation for peace and Unity. Strategic interventions:** [81].

**SDGs:** (3) Good health and Well-being; (4) Quality Education; (5) Gender Equality; (8) Decent Work & Economic Growth; (10) Reduced inequalities; (11) Sustainable Cities and communities; (12) Responsible consumption and Production; (16) Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions.
awareness and made a call to action for access to education, support to communities affected by climate emergencies of floods and mudslides, encouraging farmers to plant on time to sustain productivity.

To ensure business continuity and to mitigate risks around funding, International INGOs advocated for measured that included diversified funding streams/mechanisms for response like re-allocation, seeking new donor funding and soliciting for staff contributions). To respond to the crises also required adaptive programming with a focus on post covid-19 preparedness as a new priority.

Data on INGO contribution was collected through a rapid member survey to gather insights and this was completed by 50 out of out 75 members. As earlier indicated, the overall NINGO contribution (to the time of the survey) is estimated to $9m with $2m direct support to the Ministry of Health. This contribution was provided in a variety of ways –in-kind, repurposing of existing budgets and additional COVID-19 funds, staff contribution among others.

From the survey, data indicated that all districts were supported with Nyarugenge ($4m) receiving the highest and Kicukiro ($800) the lowest support.

The contributions were expended in close collaboration with Ministries, GoR institutions such as Gender Monitoring Office and Districts including health care facilities. The table below shows the main areas where contributions were made and the amount of allocation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Intervention</th>
<th>Direct Support</th>
<th>Indirect Support</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture/livelihoods</td>
<td>$5,020,078</td>
<td>$5,020,078</td>
<td>$10,040,156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-sector</td>
<td>$818,840</td>
<td>$818,840</td>
<td>$1,637,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>$306,796</td>
<td>$306,796</td>
<td>$613,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Management</td>
<td>$285,149</td>
<td>$285,149</td>
<td>$570,298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender and Family promotion</td>
<td>$43,248</td>
<td>$43,248</td>
<td>$86,496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>$2,180,986</td>
<td>$2,180,986</td>
<td>$4,361,972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>$55,058</td>
<td>$55,058</td>
<td>$110,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand total</td>
<td>$2,180,986</td>
<td>$7,112,035</td>
<td>$9,293,021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In agriculture and livelihood, contributions worth $5,020,078 were made in the following areas:

- Cash transfers were made to urban wokaworkers, People living with disabilities, Women genocide survivors Ubudehe categories 1 and 2 in Nyarugenge and Gisagara.
- Food supplies in 20 districts for vulnerable families, in collaboration with districts; $26,000 earmarked for support to small vendors and farmers and Various support including advocacy for saving groups, research studies on the impact of COVID-19 on the financial sector, community health insurance etc.

- In health, contributions worth $2,763,853
were dedicated to capacity building, cash transfers, hygienic facilities (hand washing stations, soaps etc.), Lab supplies and commodities, Leadership and coordination, Medical commodities and equipment, Screening and Surveillance, Social behaviour change and communication, among others. For example, 10 organizations supported the Command Center with more than 20 staff and cars for the contract tracing, provided vision of hygiene and health care materials for health centers at district level, of PPEs, test kits and general medical equipment to MoH, provided pediatric care and support for children in isolation in refugee camps, among others.
F. KEY CHALLENGES

Whereas the contributions of CSOs to the development of Rwanda are immense, CSOs continue to face a number of challenges that limit their full potential. Below are some of the challenges affecting CSOs:

✔ Based on project experiences and echoed by many national studies and surveys such as the Rwanda CSOs Development Barometer, the Rwanda Civil Society Sustainability Index, Civil Society Mapping (UNDP), among others, the plurality of Rwandan CSOs demonstrate disparities in internal capacities, but generally, they face similar challenges regarding the external environment in which they operate as well as their own internal organizational capacities. These include among others donor dependence and declining donor funds, lack of competitiveness to retain quality staff, focus on short-term service delivery type activities and limited advocacy capacities, lack of consistent collaboration and inadequate coordination within the civil society landscape in Rwanda, and limited capacity in evidence-based programming and planning. The latest 2018 Civil Society Development Barometer also pointed to some persisting challenges. Among the indicators which had the lowest score were the level of citizen participation in CSOs (40.58%), private sector-CSO relationship (49.2%), human and financial resources (39.70%) and citizen perception regarding the ability of CSOs to hold state and private corporations accountable is only at 57.8%.

✔ Documentation remains one of the critical gaps that inhibit quantifying the impact of socio-economic contributions of CSOs in Rwanda. While there is a general lack of systematic documentation and consolidation of CSOs contribution and the success stories resulting from their efforts, most CSOs are unable to adequately capture data and measure effectiveness vis-à-vis inputs against outcomes and impact. In practice, CSOs spend a disproportionate amount of time collecting data for accountability requirements as opposed to strengthening the monitoring and documentation systems that facilitate learning and sharing lessons and best practices.

✔ Beneficiaries and local leaders have different and high expectations beyond the means available to CSOs. The unrealistic expectations sometimes create animosity when CSOs fail to comply with demands especially from the local leaders.

G. CONCLUSION

Generally, CSOs’ contributions are appreciated and relevant to the needs and priorities of their constituents and communities and have contributed to Rwanda’s overall post genocide success story. Going forward, there is no doubt that CSOs current plans have a shared direction towards achieving Rwanda’s development objectives outlined in key strategic development papers such as the NST1 & Vision 2050 and the SDGs (2018-2035).

However, challenges still persist and are manifold. One of the main areas of improvement is to reverse the heavy dependence on donor funding. According to the NGO law, CSOs are permitted to run income-generating activities but this only seems to be helping a few CSOs that have competitive capacities. For many CSOs this does not work because they are constrained by a lack of start-up capital to engage in businesses and lack of organizational capacities in terms of human resources. Partnerships with private sector are very limited. On top of that, civil society is compromised because members are not making their membership contributions. For CSO members there seems to be a tendency of
asking for support rather than of giving to help others.

CSOs will also need to strengthen their coordination and partnership frame to improve their delivery approaches including better planning, monitoring, evaluation and documentation. Coordination between CSOs as well as other relevant stakeholders would improve their relevance and the quality of their contribution. Increasing participation of their constituencies and strengthening collaboration with existing structures such as JADF, JRLOS, Sector Working Groups (SWGs), Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) among others are great opportunities for strengthening coordination, collaboration, transparency and accountability.

Another area of improvement is probably the need for a strengthened role of civil society in advocacy and public policy processes. While CSOs have received continuous capacity building support in strengthening their advocacy skills over time and by different development partners, these efforts are not commensurate with the advocacy outcomes. CSOs are strong in service delivery type of activities (often short-term) and are mainly focused on implementation of polices rather than agenda setting and policy formulation. This is often because they lack a broad understanding of policy formulation processes and do not know what their role in these processes should be, or whether they even have a role to play. In that regard, voice capacities of CSOs are still low, and this is also closely connected to compromised research capacities, because contributions to policy making processes require a highly informed approach through research and evidence-based advocacy. In most cases, when CSOs engage in a research activity, they follow the ‘consultant-approach’; they hire external consultants to conduct the research for them. CSOs will need to transition from overdependence on consultants to strengthening internal organizational capacities to conduct, own their research and be better positioned to engage with government.

Finally, all areas for improvement will not but the responsibility of CSOs alone to work on them. All stakeholders such as the relevant government institutions, development partners and communities have a role to play in enabling an effective and vibrant civil society in Rwanda.

---

CSOs’ contributions are appreciated and relevant to the needs and priorities of their constituents and communities and have contributed to Rwanda’s overall post genocide success story.
The largest area of intervention has been in achieving the universal health care system to all citizens, Agriculture and livelihood, with a major focus on inclusivity and gender that has also ensured preparedness that is better reflected now in the success achieved in responding to the outbreak of Covid-19 global pandemic."
AN OVERVIEW OF RECENT CONTRIBUTION OF CSOS TO RWANDA'S TRANSFORMATION