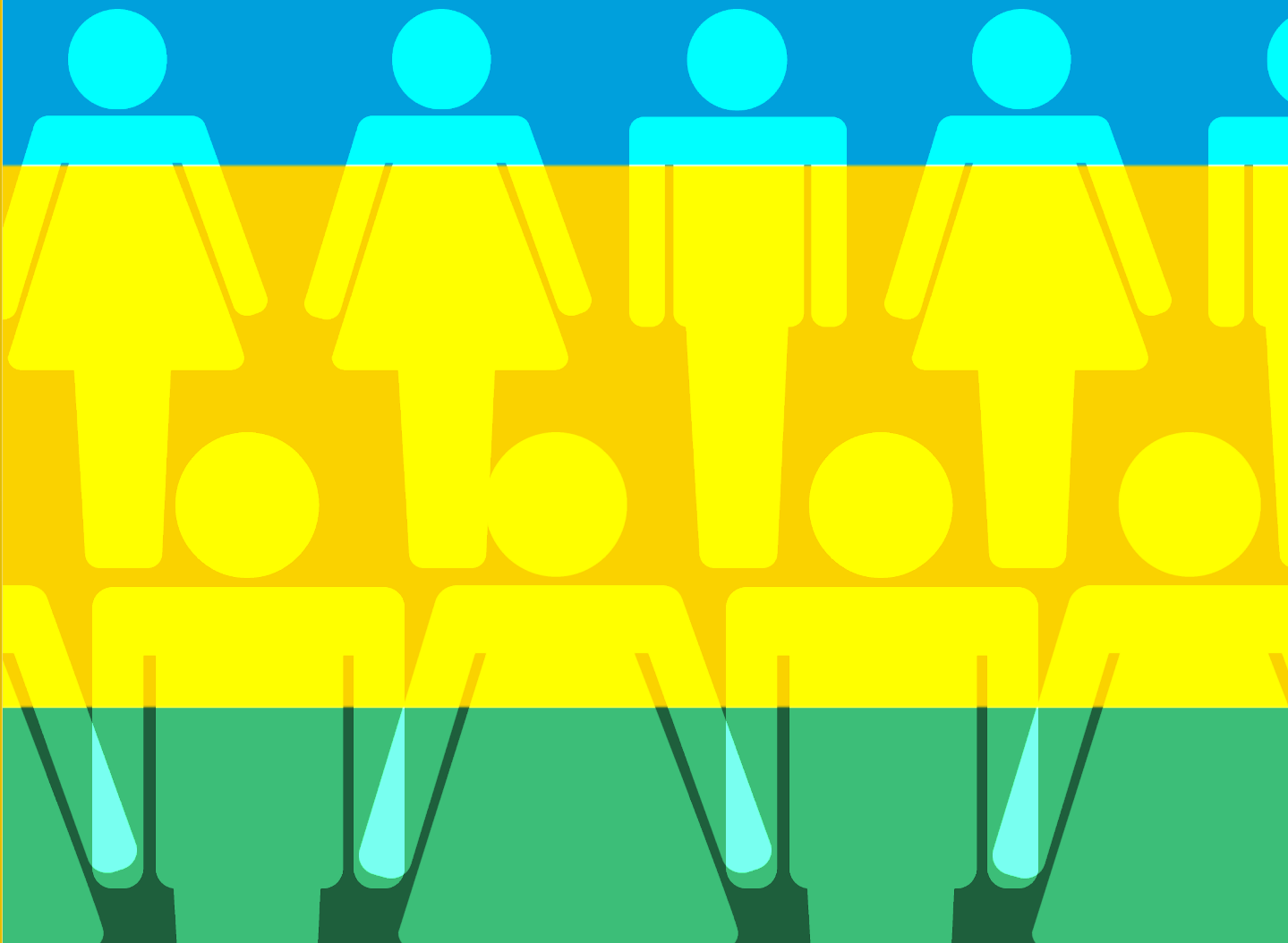




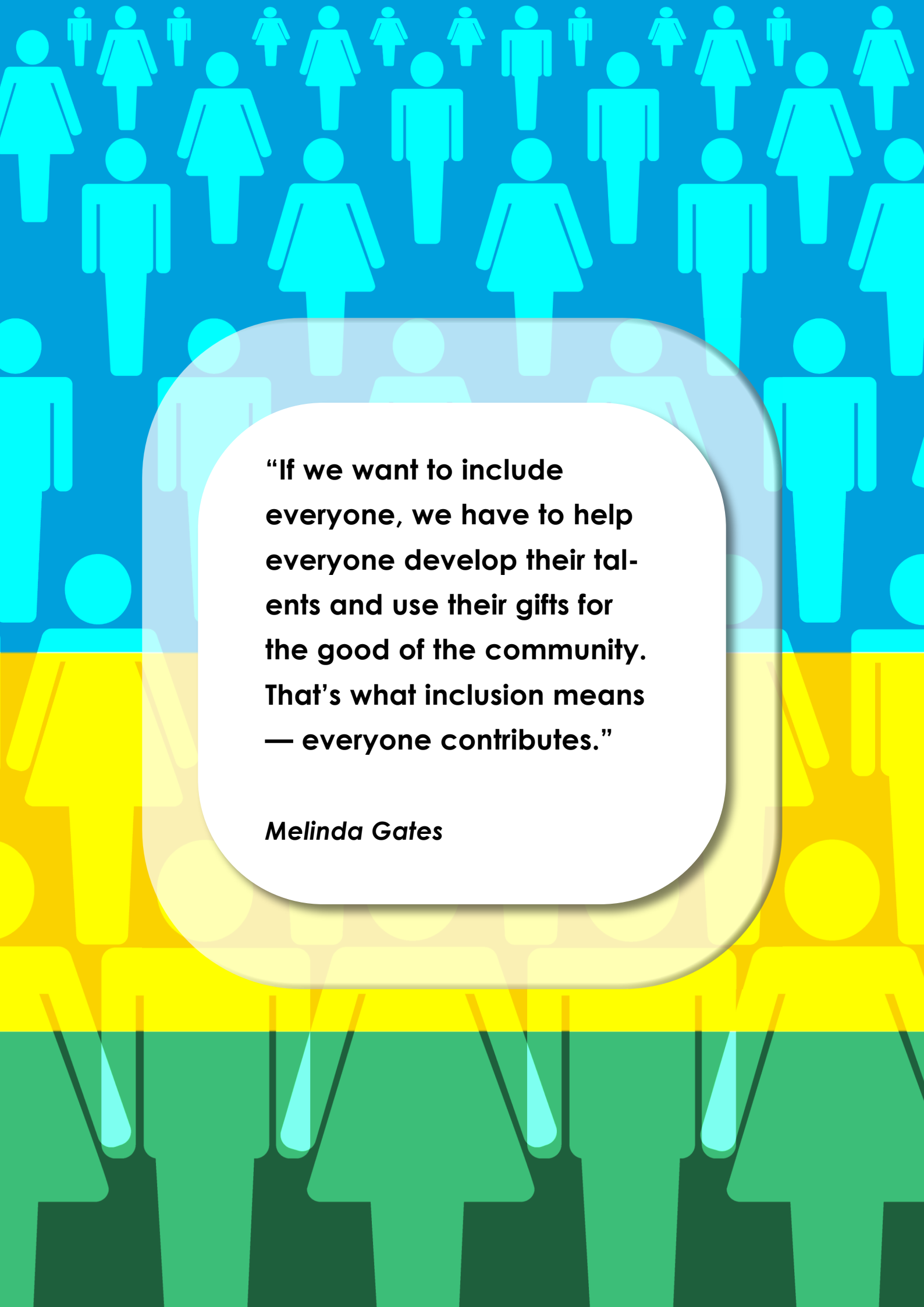
Republic of Rwanda
**Ministry of Public
Service and Labour**

Strategy for Mainstreaming *Gender and Inclusion* in Rwanda's NSDEPS



**SKILLS
RWANDA**



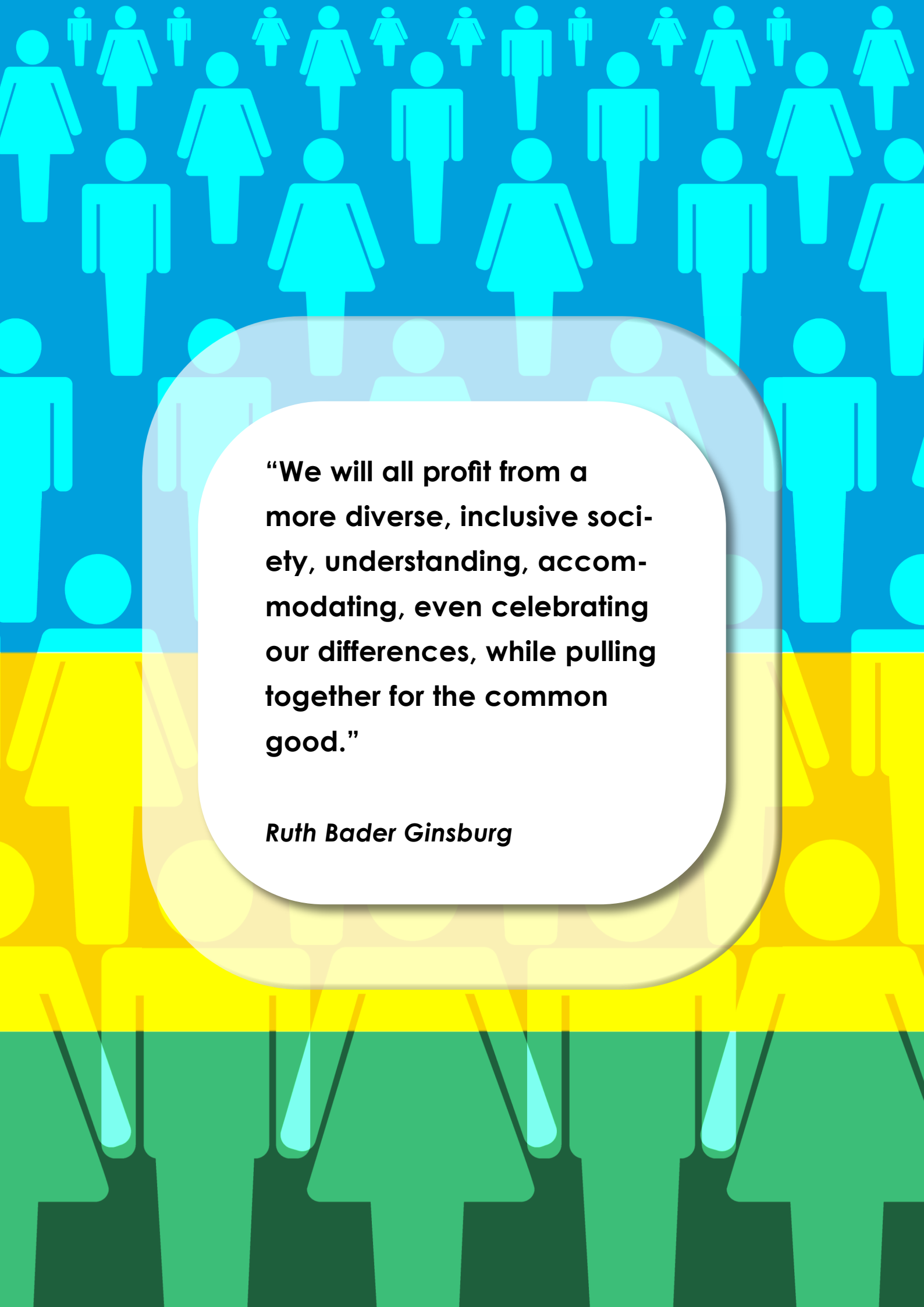


“If we want to include everyone, we have to help everyone develop their talents and use their gifts for the good of the community. That’s what inclusion means — everyone contributes.”

Melinda Gates

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“We will all profit from a more diverse, inclusive society, understanding, accommodating, even celebrating our differences, while pulling together for the common good.”

Ruth Bader Ginsburg

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Acronyms

BAS	— Business Advisory Services
BDA	— Business Development Advisor
BDF	— Business Development Fund
CEI	— The Centre for Employment Initiatives Ltd
CoE	— TVET Centre of Excellence
CSO	— Chief Skills Office
GMO	— Gender Monitoring Office
GTS	— Graduate Tracking System
HEC	— Higher Education Council
HEI	— Higher Education Institution
IBT	— Industry–Based Training
KESC	— Kigali Employment Service Centre
KSEZ	— Kigali Special Economic Zone
LFS	— Labour Force Survey
LMIS	— Labour Market Information System
MCF	— Mastercard Foundation
M&E	— Monitoring and Evaluation
MIFOTRA	— Ministry of Public Service and Labour
MIGEPROF	— Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MINEDUC	— Ministry of Education
MINICOM	— Ministry of Trade and Industry
MSME	— Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
MVT	— Massive Vocational Training
NEET	— Not in Employment, Education and Training
NEP	— National Employment Programme
NESA	— National Examination and School Inspection Authority
NSDEPS	— National Skills Development and Employment Promotion Strategy
PESC	— Public Employment Service Centre
PSF	— Private Sector Federation
PSG	— Priority Skills for Growth Programme
PWD	— People with Disabilities
RDB	— Rwanda Development Board
RICEM	— Rwanda Institute of Cooperatives, Entrepreneurship and Micro–finance

Acronyms

RP	—	Rwanda Polytechnic
RTB	—	Rwanda TVET Board
RTTI	—	Rwanda TVET Trainer Institute
RWAMREC	—	Rwanda Men’s Resource Centre
SACCO	—	Saving and Credit Cooperative Society
SDF	—	Skills Development Fund
SEZ	—	Special Economic Zones
SSC	—	Sector Skills Council
TVET	—	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	—	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WB	—	World Bank
WDA	—	Workforce Development Authority

Acknowledgements

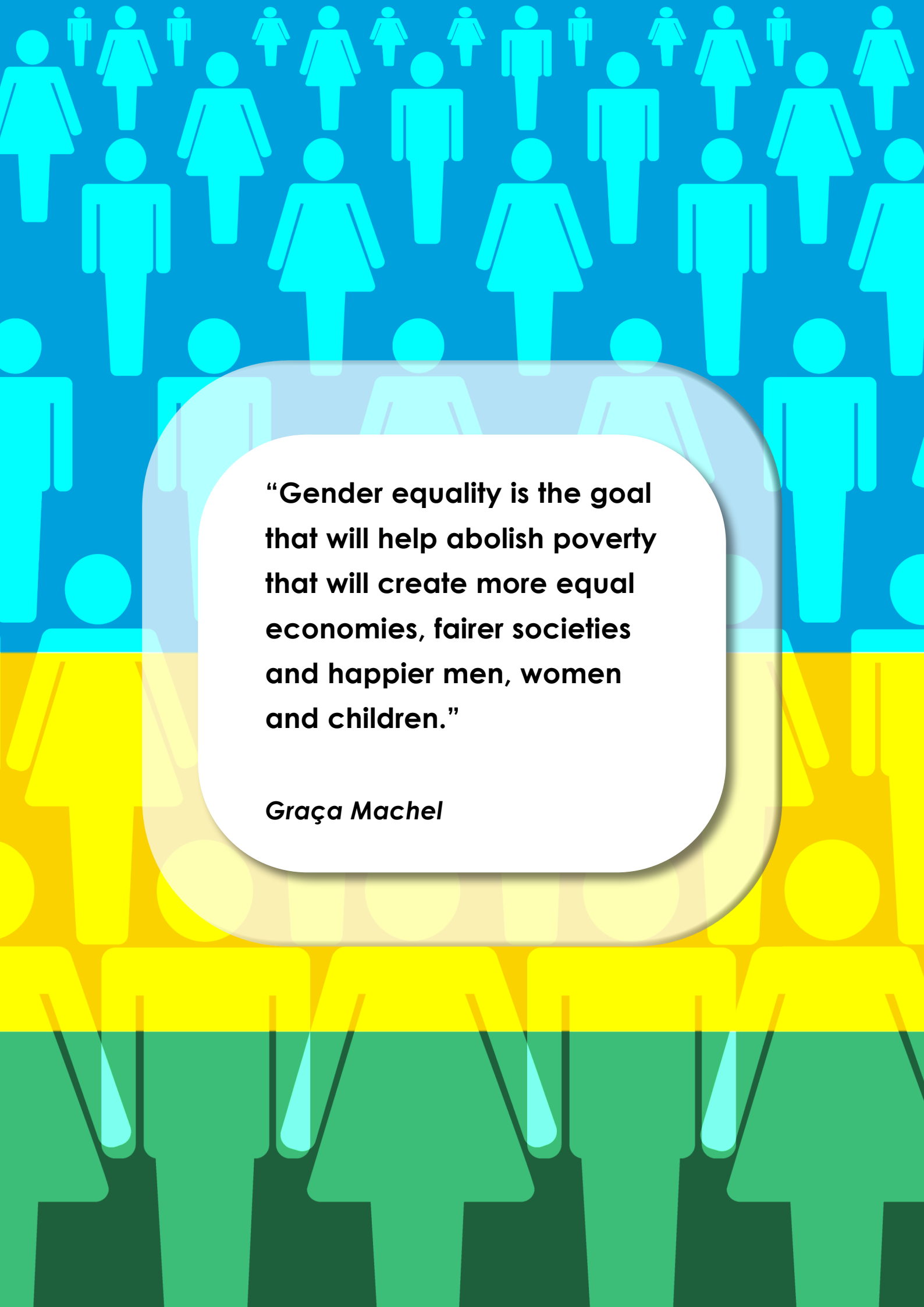
This report has been prepared by an International Gender Expert (Dr. Gita Subrahmanyam) commissioned by The Centre for Employment Initiatives Ltd (CEI) to support the Rwanda Development Board’s Chief Skills Office (RDB CSO) in mainstreaming gender and inclusion into Rwanda’s Revised National Skills Development and Employment Promotion Strategy (NSDEPS).

This gender mainstreaming strategy and its associated outputs (gender baseline audit, capacity building toolkits, national gender mainstreaming workshop, and one-on-one capacity building consultations on implementing the strategy) are part of the technical assistance that CEI is providing to RDB CSO under the framework of the Mastercard Foundation–funded Phase II “Deepening Systemic Reform for Skills Development, Employment, Matching and Inclusive Growth” project.

CSO and CEI technical teams have supported this study by supplying relevant data and information and/or by setting up meetings with key stakeholders and visits to selected institutions involved in the operational delivery of the NSDEPS.

A diverse range of stakeholders participated in in-person or online consultations with the Gender Expert, and in many cases also shared relevant data and resources that have formed part of the evidence for this report. A list of persons and institutions consulted is included in Table 1 titled “List of stakeholders consulted for NSDEPS gender audit”. Sincere thanks and gratitude to them all.

CEI would like to thank the Chief Skills Officer (Francois Ngoboka) and RDB Heads of Department for their strong leadership and support, without which this gender mainstreaming strategy would not have been possible.



“Gender equality is the goal that will help abolish poverty that will create more equal economies, fairer societies and happier men, women and children.”

Graça Machel

Executive Summary

The gender audit of programs and interventions within the NSDEPS framework reveals important insights necessary for enhancing gender equality and social inclusion. Key findings underscore the following aspects:

Conflation of "Sex" with "Gender": The gender audit reveals a prevailing trend within NSDEPS programs where the terms “sex” and “gender” are used interchangeably, leading to a limited understanding of gender dynamics. This oversight results in interventions primarily targeting broad categories of “males” and “females” without acknowledging the diverse experiences and needs within these groups resulting in a lack of nuanced understanding of specific disadvantaged groups. This limits the understanding hindering efforts to achieve gender equality and social inclusion.

It is recommended to provide comprehensive training sessions for NSDEPS stakeholders, including policymakers, program designers, and implementers, on the distinction between “sex” and “gender” and the importance of considering gender as a social construct influenced by various factors. This training should emphasise the diverse experiences and needs within different gender identities, encouraging stakeholders to adopt a more nuanced understanding of gender dynamics.

Lack of Intersectional Approach: While policies and programs often target “males” and “females” as generic categories, they overlook intersectional factors such as age, rural/urban location, and socioeconomic status. Consequently, interventions fail to achieve gender parity and inadvertently contribute to social inequalities. The absence of an intersectional approach further aggravates this issue, as NSDEPS stakeholders remain unaware of its potential benefits.

It is recommended to adopt intersectional approaches to program design and implementation. This involves considering factors beyond gender, such as age, location, and socioeconomic status, to better target disadvantaged groups and promote inclusive outcomes.

Unutilised Intersectional Data: Despite the availability of data that could facilitate intersectional analysis, NSDEPS stakeholders are unable to avail its benefits. The underutilisation of intersectional data represents a significant missed opportunity to enhance program effectiveness and maximise resources.

Stakeholders are recommended to be trained on the importance of intersectional data and encouraged to utilise it in program planning and evaluation. This can enhance the success rate and effectiveness of interventions while maximising the utilisation of resources.

Inclusivity Challenges for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and Youth: While some interventions offer priority status to PWDs, many lack specific mechanisms for inclusion, and program evaluations often overlook PWD beneficiaries. Similarly, NSDEPS interventions targeting youth tend to favour those with higher education and socioeconomic status, neglecting marginalised youth populations.

It is suggested that NSDEPS interventions should incorporate specific mechanisms to ensure the inclusion of PWDs and marginalised youth populations. This may include targeted outreach, accessibility accommodations, and tailored support services, etc.

Programme evaluations should systematically assess the inclusion of PWDs and marginalised youth, ensuring that their needs are adequately addressed. This involves systematically collecting disaggregated data, conducting intersectional analyses, and using findings to inform programmatic adjustments and policy recommendations.

Addressing these findings is imperative for NSDEPS to achieve its goals effectively. By implementing these recommendations, NSDEPS can enhance its capacity to promote gender equality and social inclusion, ultimately contributing to a more equitable society.

Objective

The purpose of this strategy is to provide an evidence-based framework and tools to support mainstreaming of gender and inclusion within the parameters of Rwanda's Revised National Skills Development and Employment Promotion Strategy (NSDEPS). It aims to ensure that NSDEPS programming is inclusive and that gender is mainstreamed in all NSDEPS interventions.

This section provides an overview of the NSDEPS, outlines the impacts of gender norms and practices on Rwanda's skills development and employment landscape, and summarises the policy context in which gender mainstreaming of the NSDEPS is taking place. It also sets out the methodology used to gather data for the strategy, key gender-related concepts to be applied, and the structure of the analysis to follow.

NSDEPS Overview

The goal of the NSDEPS is to provide Rwanda's workforce with market-relevant skills and access to quality employment. The strategy consists of three pillars, as well as a comprehensive learning, monitoring and evaluation performance framework to assess progress and provide the basis for an informed and responsive national strategy.

The three NSDEPS pillars are as follows:

- **Pillar 1: Skills Development:** This pillar aims to enhance Rwanda's productive capacity by improving the quality and relevance of training provided by Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Actions to be taken to achieve these aims include: developing performance-based incentives to deliver quality education; improving systemic capacity to monitor training quality; actively engaging the private sector throughout the skills development cycle; and expanding the funding available for capacity development initiatives.
- **Pillar 2: Employment Promotion:** This pillar seeks to increase the supply of jobs available in Rwanda by supporting business growth and entrepreneurship. An enabling environment for business growth will be fostered through four programmes aimed at increasing access to national and international markets, access to finance, and access to business advice and know-how. Pillar 2 will also promote NEET¹ youth transitions to wage or self-employment through skills training and accompaniment services.
- **Pillar 3: Matching:** This pillar aims to develop a well-functioning job ecosystem in Rwanda and to strengthen linkages between employers and graduates/jobseekers through the development of an evidence-based workforce planning and matching system, improvements in career guidance, and training to build national capacities to produce and utilise labour market research and analysis. Pillar 3 interventions will also facilitate labour migration from and to Rwanda.

¹ NEET is an acronym for "not in employment, education or training".

The main groups to be targeted by NSDEPS skills development interventions are formal TVET learners (Pillar 1) and NEET youth requiring non-formal training to (re-)enter the labour market (Pillar 2), while the main beneficiaries of NSDEPS capacity development and employment promotion initiatives (including matching services) will be individuals who are active in the labour market — e.g., public sector officials, private sector employers or workers, TVET or Higher Education staff, TVET or general education graduates, and jobseekers.

Gender in Rwanda's Skills Development and Labour Market Landscape

Women make up the majority (51.5%) of Rwanda's total population,² yet are under-represented among NSDEPS target groups — that is, apart from the NEET youth category. As Exhibit 1 shows, Rwandan women are less likely than Rwandan men to be enrolled in formal skills training programmes.³ They are also less likely to be active in the country's labour market, a trend that is observed across every age group of working-age men and women (see Exhibit 2).⁴ Because young Rwandan women are less likely than young Rwandan men to join the labour force after completing their studies, they account for the bulk (58.6%) of Rwanda's NEET youth population and have a higher NEET rate (41.0%) than their male counterparts (29.9%).⁵

Women's lower-than-average participation in Rwanda's skills development and employment landscape stems largely from harmful gender norms and attitudes, which prevent many women from gaining work-relevant skills, particularly in high-earning sectors, and/or from securing decent employment⁶ or enjoying lucrative self-employment on an equal basis to men. Given that women account for over one-half (52.9%) of Rwanda's working-age population aged 16 and over,⁷ the country is unlikely to achieve its Vision 2050 aims of becoming an upper-middle income country by 2035 and a high-income country by 2050⁸ unless women's contribution to Rwanda's economic development increases. Consequently, strategies such as the NSDEPS should identify and address gender issues preventing women's full and equal participation in their country's economic life in order to increase their positive impacts on Rwanda's long-term development goals.

However, gender is not only a “women's issue”, and not all women (or men) are the same in terms of their vulnerability to gender-based exclusion from market-relevant skills development and quality employment opportunities. Men, like women, operate within the boundaries of social power structures and socially-constructed norms that define the roles they should play and determine their rights, responsibilities, opportunities and capabilities.⁹ The work and life trajectories

² National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Fifth Rwanda Population and Housing Census, Main Indicators Report, February 2023.

³ Ministry of Education, 2021/22 Education Statistical Yearbook: School year ended in July 2022, May 2023.

⁴ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey, Thematic Report on Gender, June 2023.

⁵ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey, Annual Report 2022, March 2023.

⁶ The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines decent employment as “work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for all, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men”. See <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/lang-en/index.htm>

⁷ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey, Annual Report 2022, March 2023.

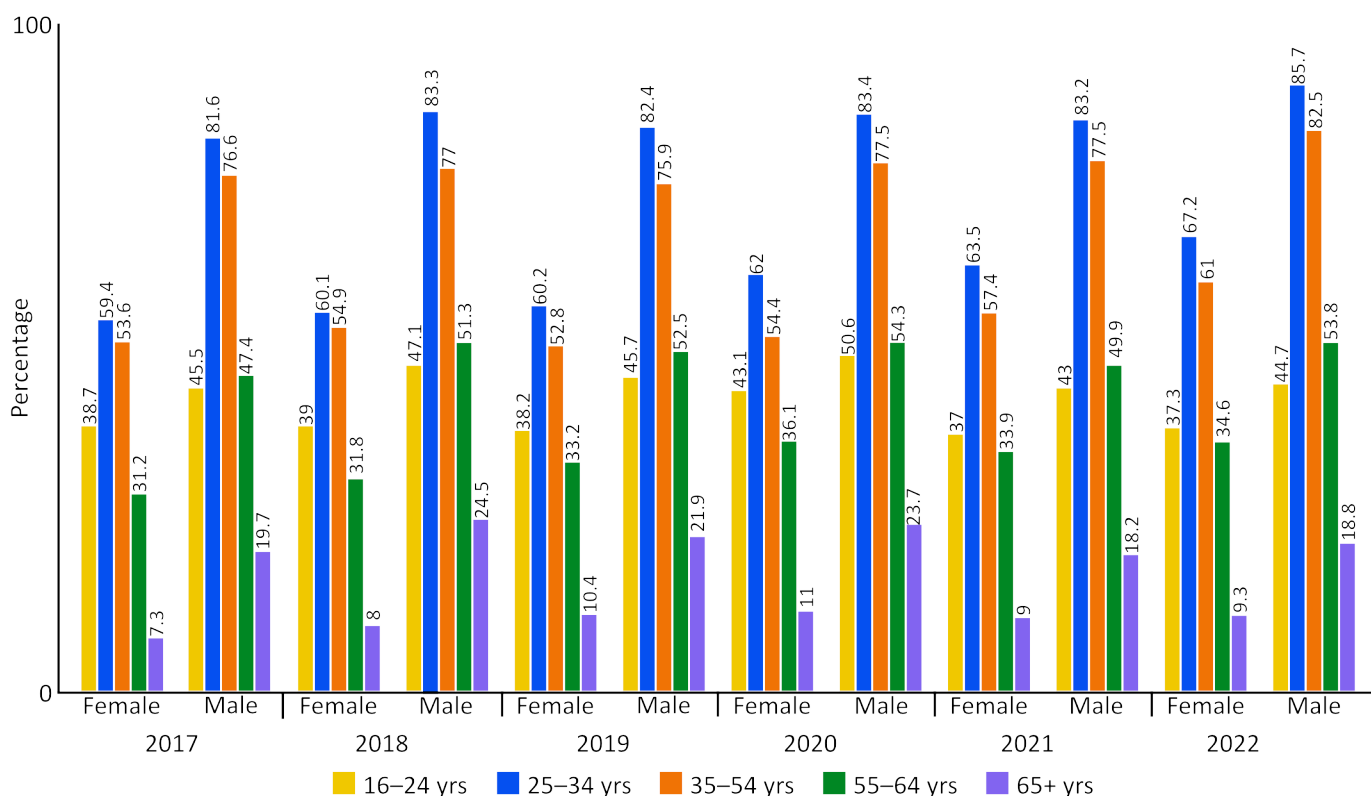
⁸ Republic of Rwanda, Vision 2050, December 2020.

⁹ However, women tend to be disproportionately more restricted by harmful gender norms and practices, and the main gendered barriers that girls/women and boys/men face often differ from one another.

Exhibit 1 — Total number of TVET trainees in Rwanda by sex

Levels	2017	2018	2019	2020/21	2021/22
Total trainees	107,501	102,485	107,176	110,954	132,727
Male	65,327	57,643	63,138	63,008	75,496
Female	42,174	44,842	44,029	47,946	57,231
% of male	60.8%	56.2%	58.9%	56.8%	56.9%
% of female	39.2%	43.8%	41.1%	43.2%	43.1%
Trainees in TVET short courses	17,486	9,650	9,932	8,561	35,876
Male	13,946	4,397	6,430	5,908	16,912
Female	3,540	5,253	3,502	2,653	18,964
Trainees in TVET level 1 to 2	13,351	9,412	15,788	16,535	13,296
Male	6,958	4,980	9,412	7,269	6,236
Female	6,393	4,432	6,376	9,266	7,060
Trainees in TVET level 3 to 5	66,244	69,976	67,369	72,686	70,162
Male	36,542	38,605	37,161	40,249	42,387
Female	29,702	31,371	30,208	32,437	27,775
Trainees in polytechnics	10,420	13,447	14,078	13,172	13,393
Male	7,881	9,661	10,135	9,582	9,961
Female	2,539	3,786	3,943	3,590	3,432

Exhibit 2 — Distribution of the labour force participation rate by age groups and sex (in %)



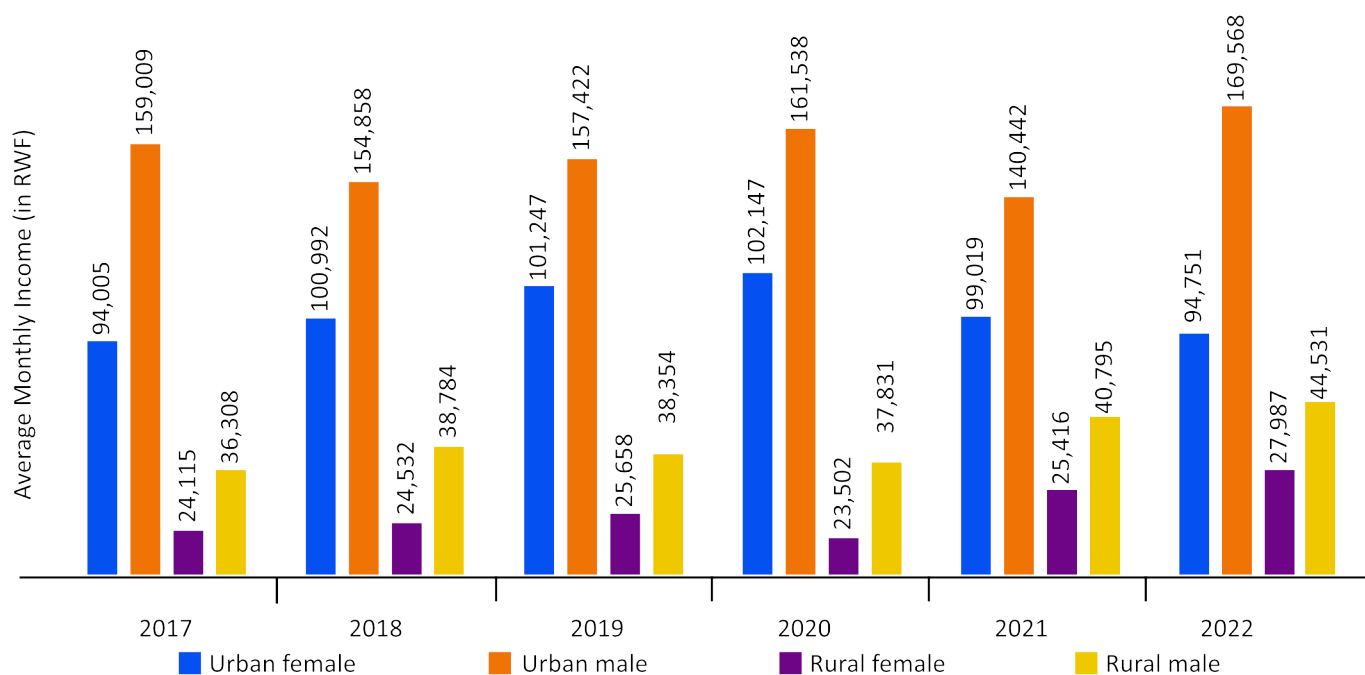
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2017–2022

of both men and women are influenced by the “intersectionality” between their sex (M/F) and other demographic characteristics (e.g., socioeconomic status, rural/urban residence, age, disability status, etc.) in collectively determining where they are perceived to fit within social hierarchies and thus what rights, responsibilities, opportunities and capabilities they have.

Exhibits 3 and 4 illustrate the impacts of intersectionality on labour market outcomes in Rwanda and thus why it is important to factor in the concept to any analyses of gender impacts. Exhibit 3 shows that, while on average Rwandan male workers earn more than Rwandan female workers within their respective settings (urban or rural), urban female workers tend to earn a higher average monthly wage than rural male workers. This may explain why the labour force participation rate among urban working-age women is not much lower than that among rural working-age men (see Exhibit 4).¹⁰

Strategies such as the NSDEPS should take into account intersectionality, rather than focusing on single demographic variables such as sex (M/F), to target the most disadvantaged groups based on gender and cultivate their productive potential as a means of promoting more rapid and sustainable economic growth and inclusive development in Rwanda. Paying attention to the different circumstances of females and males across a country has been found to enhance the success rate, effectiveness, and maximum utilization of staff and funds of strategic interventions.¹¹

Exhibit 3 — Average monthly income (RWF) from main employment by area of residence and sex

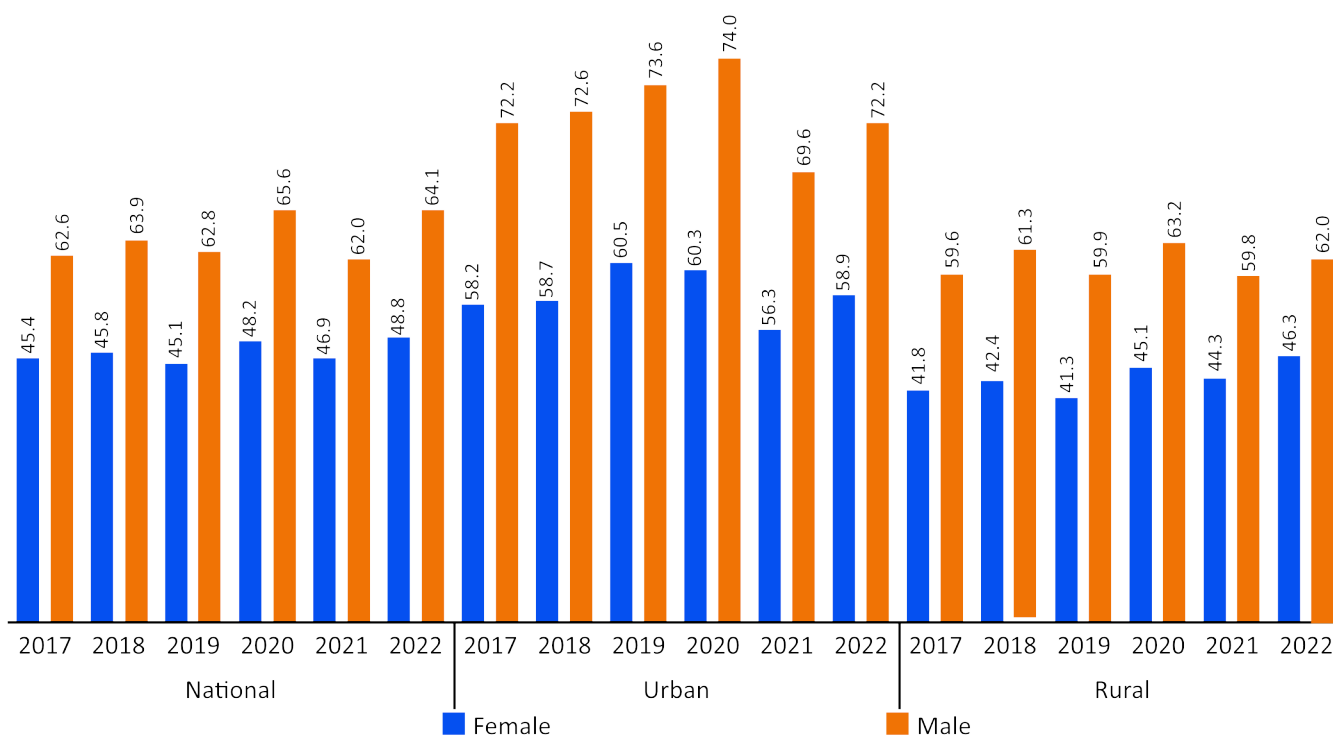


Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2017–2022

¹⁰ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey, Thematic Report on Gender, June 2023.

¹¹ For analysis on targeting benefits see <https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/087/2023/004/article%2%80%93A004%E2%80%93en.xml>

Exhibit 4 — Distribution of the labour force participation rate by area of residence and sex (in %)



Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2017–2022

Gender Mainstreaming Policy Context

The Rwanda Development Board (RDB), which is responsible for coordinating implementation of the NSDEPS as part of Rwanda’s National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) for implementing Vision 2050, has acknowledged that “[w]omen, rural populations, youth and the mature middle-aged are more likely to be out of the labour force”¹² than other groups and has requested that a gender mainstreaming strategy be developed to address this and other related issues preventing Rwanda from realising its full economic potential. Vision 2050, which is Rwanda’s long-term national development strategy for promoting economic growth and prosperity as well as improving standards of life for all Rwandans, is premised on “essential investments in human capital development and economic reforms” being made to build “a healthy, well educated, and highly skilled labour force that is gainfully employed”, and views gender equality and women’s empowerment as necessary preconditions for achieving these aims.¹³ NST1 likewise asks that gender equality and equal opportunities for all Rwandans be mainstreamed across all sectors, district strategies and investments.¹⁴

Gender mainstreaming is a globally recognised strategy for promoting gender equality, as well as an integral component of policy and strategy development in Rwanda. Rwanda’s 2021 Revised National Gender Policy defines gender mainstreaming as “a strategy for making girls’ and women’s, as well as boys’ and men’s, concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes so that girls and boys and women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated”.¹⁵ It calls for gender mainstream-

¹² RDB, Revised National Skills Development and Employment Promotion Strategy 2019–2026, September 2023.

¹³ Republic of Rwanda, Vision 2050, December 2020.

¹⁴ Republic of Rwanda, 7 Years Government Program: National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) 2017–2024

¹⁵ Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), Revised National Gender Policy: Accelerating the Effectiveness of Gender Mainstreaming and Accountability for National Transformation, February 2021

ing and accountability to be strengthened across all national planning frameworks, sector policies and strategies, as well as all programs and initiatives in the public and private sectors, and asks that specific related priorities and indicators be developed to measure their impacts on gender outcomes as well as to ensure effective implementation.

The gender mainstreaming strategy presented in this report forms part of the technical assistance that The Centre for Employment Initiatives Ltd (CEI) is providing to the Rwanda Development Board's Chief Skills Office (RDB CSO) under the framework of the Mastercard Foundation-funded Phase II "Deepening Systemic Reform for Skills Development, Employment, Matching and Inclusive Growth" project.

Methodology

To ensure that the gender mainstreaming strategy presented in this report is tailored to Rwanda's specific context and that it is based on current data and information pertaining to the main focus areas of the NSDEPS, a gender audit was conducted in November and December 2023 to identify key gaps in NSDEPS programmes and strategic interventions and to assess how far gender equality and inclusivity are central to the activities undertaken by RDB CSO and other stakeholders involved in the design, implementation and/or monitoring of the NSDEPS. Evidence from the gender audit has been used as the basis for developing this gender mainstreaming strategy and will act as a baseline for assessing the impacts of gender mainstreaming interventions implemented within the parameters of the NSDEPS.

Several methods were used to gather evidence for the gender baseline audit, including:

- Consultations and interviews held with RDB CSO senior management, the expert group supporting RDB CSO on behalf of The Centre for Employment Initiatives (CEI), and the wider stakeholder community identified with assistance from CSO and CEI focal persons. In-person consultations took place during a mission to Rwanda from 14–27 November 2023, while virtual consultations using online platforms were conducted both before and following the mission. Appendix Table 1 provides a full list of stakeholders consulted, with details of the modality used to interview them.
- Visits to a small selection of public and private TVET institutions to better understand the context in which the operational delivery of skills development takes place in Rwanda, as well as to interview staff and students to assess the extent to which all Rwandans (including women, rural populations, persons with disabilities, etc.) have equal access to high-quality market-relevant skills development opportunities.
- Desktop review of data and documentation shared by CSO focal points, CEI pillar leads and stakeholders taking part in the interviews and consultations, or sourced independently by the Gender Expert.
- Analysis of products/indicators developed under the framework of the NSDEPS, such as the Rwanda Labour Market Information System (<https://lmis.rdb.rw/>), Sector Skills Councils, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) performance indicators linked to the NSDEPS Implementation Plan.

The strategy will be subject to validation in two stages:

- Stage 1: Internal review by RDB CSO senior management and the CEI technical assistance team.
- Stage 2: NSDEPS national gender mainstreaming validation workshop held on 14 February 2024.

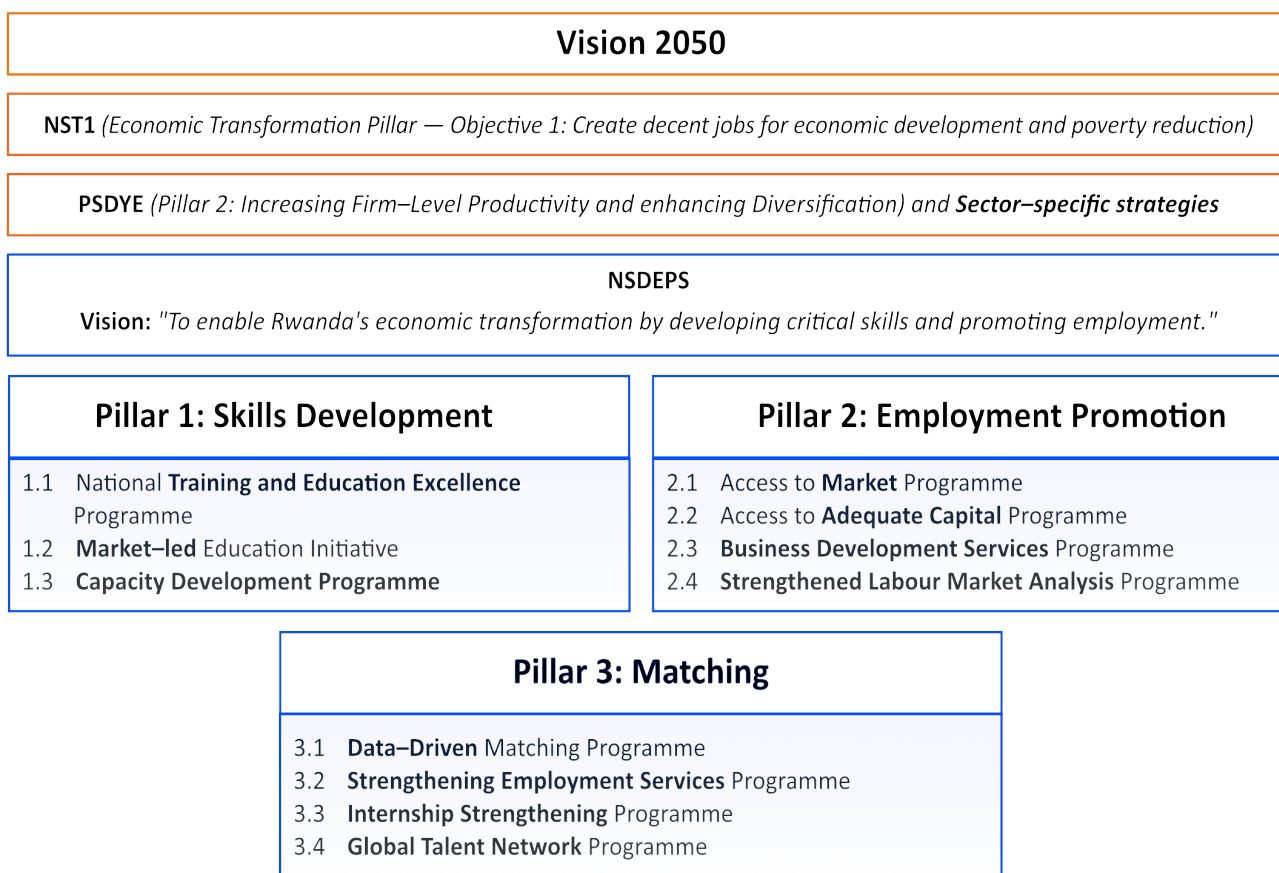
Two key challenges posed limitations to the gender audit, and thus also the gender mainstreaming strategy:

- Lack of data or information concerning some NSDEPS programmes or interventions, because they are so new that little (or no) data exists.
- Lack of time/budget to review all relevant documentation or consult with all key stakeholders involved in the design, implementation and/or monitoring of the NSDEPS – in particular, those located outside Kigali or in areas with poor connectivity. Only 38 days were allocated to the development of the NSDEPS gender mainstreaming strategy and its associated outputs (kick-off, inception report, gender audit, development of toolkits to facilitate implementation of the strategy, national gender mainstreaming validation workshop, and one-on-one capacity building consultations on how to use the toolkits to implement the strategy).

Two approaches have been adopted for conducting the gender audit:

- **Minimalist approach:** Assessing how far the current actionable programmes under the NSDEPS (see Exhibit 5) take into account issues concerning gender and inclusion; and
- **More comprehensive approach:** Considering what gender-related gaps exist in the current NSDEPS framework, which reduce the strategy’s positive impacts on Rwanda’s long-term development goals.

Exhibit 5 — NSDEPS strategic pillars and actionable programmes



Key Concepts

The following gender-related concepts are applied throughout this report. Most of the definitions have been drawn/adapted from the 2021 Revised National Gender Policy and a UNESCO discussion paper on guidelines to promote gender equality in and through TVET and skills development.¹⁶

Affirmative action: A set of procedures designed to increase the representation of members of a disadvantaged group by redressing discrimination or bias through active measures aimed at compensating historical and social disadvantages that have limited members of that group from operating on a level playing field.

Empowerment: Increasing the personal, political, social and/or economic strength of individuals or social groups to give them greater power and control. Empowerment involves awareness-raising, confidence building, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources, and actions focused on transforming structures and institutions that reinforce or perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality.

Financial inclusion: In the context of gender and inclusion, financial inclusion refers to physical access to financial resources, institutions, eligibility, update and usage of financial products and services including the informal means needed to accelerate and meet women's and men's aspirations.

Gender: A social construction, generally based on culture or tradition, concerning the roles and capabilities of "males" and "females", with corresponding implications for their rights, responsibilities and opportunities. "**Gender**" should not be confused or conflated with "sex", as the terms are distinct. "Sex" refers to biological differences between women and men, which are genetically derived and fixed unless medical procedures are involved. "Gender" is socially-derived construct and thus subject to change. Shifts in gender perceptions are required to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment.

Gender analysis: Critical examination of how differences in gender roles, activities, needs opportunities and rights/entitlements affect men, women, girls and boys in certain situations or contexts. Gender analysis examines the relationships between females and males and their access to and control of resources and the constraints they face relative to each other.

Gender balance: equal participation and/or representation of women and men.

Gender-based violence (GBV): Violence directed at a person on the basis of their sex or gender. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering on individuals, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. GBV involves the abuse of power.

¹⁶ Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), *Revised National Gender Policy: Accelerating the Effectiveness of Gender Mainstreaming and Accountability for National Transformation*, February 2021; and Kärkkäinen, O. (2023) "Gender and TVET & Skills Development Guidelines", Discussion paper for UNESCO Strategy for TVET 2022–2029.

Gender bias: A generalised view or preconception about the attributes, behaviours, roles and responsibilities that ought to be possessed by or performed by women/girls versus men/boys.

Gender-blind: Ignoring gender differences and gender power dynamics between women/girls and men/boys, and therefore by default tending to do harm to women and girls.

Gender discrimination: Denying opportunities and rights to individuals on the basis of their sex.

Gender equality: Equal allocation of rights, resources, opportunities and benefits between men and women without discrimination. Gender equality implies that girls/women and boys/men have equal conditions, treatment and opportunities for realising their full potential, human rights and dignity, as well as for contributing to (and benefiting from) economic, social, cultural and political development.

Gender equity: Fairness and justice in the distribution of rights, resources, opportunities and benefits between women and men. Because women have historically been placed at a disadvantage, being fair can involve taking temporary measures to level the playing field for all genders. Gender equity is thus one means to achieve gender equality, recognising that women and men have different needs and levels of power, and that these differences should be addressed in a manner that rectifies the imbalance between the sexes.

Gender gap: The disproportionate access to or allocation of resources and/or levels of participation between men/boys and women/girls, particularly as reflected in the attainment of development goals. A gender gap indicates gender inequality.

Gender mainstreaming: A strategy for making girls' and women's, as well as boys' and men's, concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes so that girls and boys and women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. Gender mainstreaming involves systematically integrating a gender equality perspective in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of interventions to ensure that all individuals benefit equally and that gender equality is being promoted.

Gender norms: Entrenched ideas about how men and women should behave, reflecting social expectations and standards. Gender norms are internalised from an early age.

Gender parity: A numerical concept referring to equal representation of girls/women and boys/men relative to their respective population proportion. While gender parity is a step towards gender equality, it is not sufficient in itself, because it does not address more complex forms of gender inequality, the conditions and practices that underpin them, and the ways in which they intersect with other forms of inequality/injustice.

Gender-responsive: Identifying and acknowledging differences and inequalities between men/boys and women/girls, and articulating policies and initiatives to address the different needs, aspirations, capacities and contributions of women/girls and men/boys.

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB): Planning, programming and budgeting that contributes to the advancement of gender equality and the fulfilment of girls' and women's rights. GRB entails reflecting on how public resources are collected and spent, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process, and instituting procedures to involve women and men

equally in decision making, so that interventions to address gender gaps and promote gender equality can be implemented.

Gender-responsive pedagogy (GRP): Techniques applied in teaching and learning that take into account the needs of both males and females. GRP aims to build the capacity of teachers to adopt practices that promote equal treatment and participation of girls and boys within a school learning environment. It includes teacher education curriculum, teaching and learning material, lesson planning (activities, feedback), classroom setup and interaction, and use of language in the classroom.

Gender segregation: Dominance of one sex in a particular discipline or occupation. Gender segregation arises from traditional beliefs or gender stereotypes of appropriate functions for men and women based on the core reproductive roles of women and men. Women are traditionally associated with the domestic domain of the family and community, and men with the public domain as primary “bread-winners”. Likewise, women are assigned secondary roles while men are placed in leadership positions.

Gender-sensitive: Showing awareness of and acknowledging the different needs and inequalities between women/girls and men/boys.

Gender stereotypes: Preconceived ideas whereby males and females are arbitrarily assigned characteristics and roles determined and limited by their sex.

Gender transformative: Addressing the root causes of gender inequalities by challenging harmful gender norms, practices, stereotypes, etc., and putting in place measures to rebalance power relations.

Intersectionality: The way in which different forms of discrimination and disadvantage combine and overlap. Characteristics such as sex, age, disability, language, geography and socioeconomic status often intersect and can result in multiple levels of disadvantage and marginalisation.

Unpaid care work: all unpaid services provided by individuals within a household for its members, including care of persons, housework and voluntary community work. These activities are considered work, because individuals could (and sometimes do) pay a third person to perform them.

Report Structure

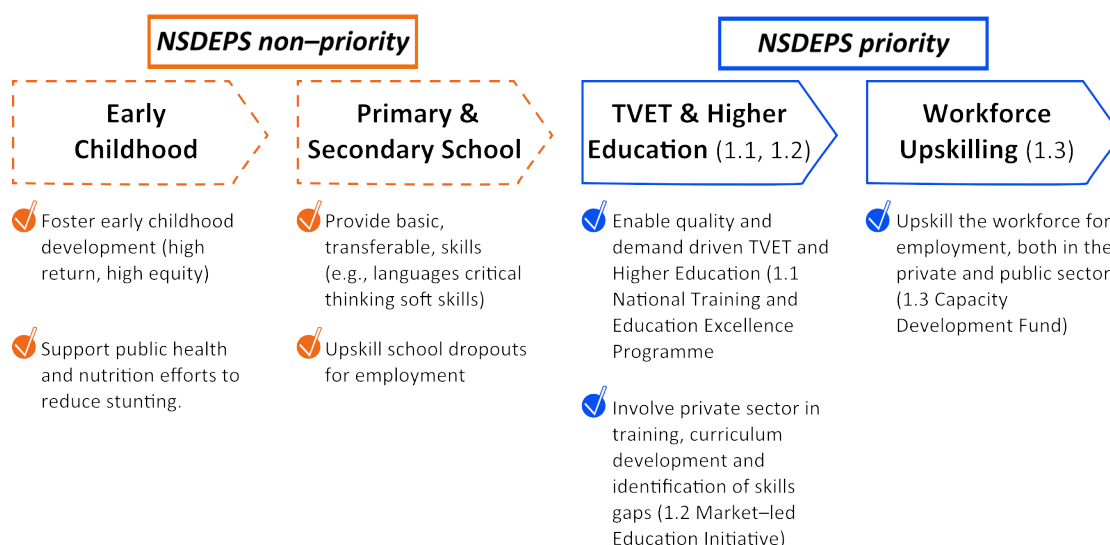
The next section (*Gender Audit of the NSDEPS*) presents the findings of the NSDEPS gender audit. It is organised by NSDEPS pillars, with results reported for each actionable programme under each pillar. The section *Key Findings and Proposed Mainstreaming Strategy* summarises the findings of the gender audit and, based on those results, outlines the proposed strategy for mainstreaming gender and inclusion in the NSDEPS.

Gender Audit of the NSDEPS

Pillar 1: Skills Development

Pillar 1 of the NSDEPS is concerned with skills development and seeks to implement three key programmes (see Exhibit 6) to provide Rwanda's workforce with market-relevant skills and access to quality employment. Each of these programmes are analysed from a gender perspective below.

Exhibit 6 — Strategic Framework for Pillar 1 on Skills Development



National Training and Education Excellence Programme

The first programme under Pillar 1 (National Training and Education Excellence Program) has two key aims:

1. To increase knowledge and information concerning the effectiveness of skills development interventions in Rwanda. This will be achieved through the development and institutionalisation of a centralized Graduate Tracking System (GTS), which is an online data collection and tracking tool that can be used by educational institutions to monitor the post-graduation outcomes (e.g., employment status, further education pursuits and career trajectories) of their alumni as a means of continually assessing the quality and labour market relevance of their programmes.
2. To sustainably improve the quality of skills development interventions being provided in Rwanda. This will be achieved through developing a TVET accreditation system, wherein all Training Providers (private as well as public) in Rwanda would need to be certified as meeting specified quality standards to be able to offer training in approved TVET modules/qualifications.

Graduate Tracking System (GTS)

The Rwanda National Graduate Tracking System has already been developed and launched, and may be found at this url: <https://gts.rdb.rw/>. The GTS provides real-time data, sends reminders,

tracks data and responses, and shares data analysis charts. In addition to tracking graduates, institutions can use the GTS to gather data on trainees and students per their specific requirements. Two pieces of evidence relating to the GTS were considered by the Gender Expert for the gender audit:

- Tracer Survey Questionnaire for Graduates (dated 11/08/2023) developed by RDB and uploaded onto the GTS.
- Rwanda Priority Skills for Growth (PSG) Programme Graduate Tracer Survey Report (dated November 2023), which reported the findings of a tracer conducted in late 2023 using the GTS to assess the employment outcomes of graduates from programmes supported by the World Bank's Priority Skills for Growth (PSG) Programme at the University of Rwanda (UR), Rwanda Polytechnic (RP), and Rwanda TVET Board (RTB).

For comparison purposes, the Gender Expert also examined evidence relating to a separate graduate tracer survey conducted by the Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA) and Ministry of Education (MINEDUC),¹⁷ which used non-GTS platforms to track the school-to-work transitions of university and polytechnic graduates as a means of monitoring the quality and labour market relevance of Universities' and Higher Learning Institutions' education programmes:

- Survey Outcomes Report (dated 17 March 2022) relating to the first Universities and Polytechnics Graduates' Labour Market Absorption Assessment Study.
- Final Draft Questionnaire developed in late 2023 for use in conducting the second Universities and Polytechnics Graduates' Labour Market Absorption Assessment Study.

Gender analysis of these inputs produced the following insights:

- **GTS indicators allow for identification of the impacts that sex differences have on graduates' labour market outcomes, but should be strengthened to take into account gender.** The only demographic data on graduates collected by the GTS Tracer Survey Questionnaire relates to their sex, age and highest education level. Thus, outside of disaggregating data by sex to assess the impacts of being male or female on graduates' post-graduation outcomes, results from the survey questionnaire can only be used to gauge complex intersectional impacts in relation to age categories (which are not so dispersed, given the homogeneity of the respondent pool) and respondents' qualifications level (ditto).

By contrast, the Final Draft Questionnaire developed for the Universities and Polytechnics Graduates' Labour Market Absorption Assessment Study collects data on respondents' sex as well as residence (rural/urban), allowing for an assessment of intersectional impacts relating to sex as well as location on graduates' employment outcomes (access to employment, type of employment, income range, etc.). Thus, it should be possible to identify variations in the labour market experiences of different groups of female and male graduates. The survey did not ask for respondents' age or education level, presumably (correctly) judging these indicators to be not so relevant given the respondent pool.

- **Neither the GTS nor the Labour Market Absorption questionnaire take into account inclusion** by asking respondents about their disability status and other special needs (e.g., pertaining to

¹⁷ In cooperation with RDB, NISR, Higher Education Council (HEC), MTN Rwanda and CHANCEN International

preferred language of instruction), in line with MINEDUC’s 2018 Revised Special Needs and Inclusive Education Policy.

- **Analysis of data generated using the GTS survey questionnaire did not comprehensively assess the impacts of sex differences on graduates’ labour market outcomes.** The PSG Programme Graduate Tracer Survey Report reported sex–disaggregated results for only six indicators, four of which do not relate to post–graduation outcomes. These indicators were: age, education level, response rate, TVET programme, employment/unemployment rate, and methods used to seek employment. All other data were not sex–disaggregated, including for indicators that could provide insights into the differences between female and male graduates in terms of access to decent work — e.g., monthly salary, type of employment (wage/self), type of contract, time taken to get employed, etc.
- **The Labour Market Absorption Study also did not utilise the intersectional data generated from its questionnaire to assess the impacts of sex and location on respondents’ labour market outcomes.** While the 2022 Labour Market Absorption Assessment Survey collected data on respondents’ sex and rural/urban location, these two characteristics were rarely combined to assess intersectional impacts on graduates’ employment outcomes. Only one indicator (discouragement) reported in the Survey Outcomes Report was disaggregated by sex as well as by rural/urban location to allow for comparisons across four groups of graduates (urban females, urban males, rural females and rural males). All other indicators were either not disaggregated or were disaggregated by sex or by rural/urban location, but not both.

Failure to capture and report intersectional impacts where the data exists represents a significant missed opportunity for enhancing the success rate, effectiveness, and maximum utilization of staff and funds of strategic interventions.

- **Where the GTS Tracer Survey Report reported sex–disaggregated data, its findings provided valuable insights.** For example, sex–disaggregated data on the methods used by PSG–funded graduates to seek employment suggests that female graduates obtain higher returns to employment from participating in internships and industrial attachments than male graduates. This finding is valuable, since it indicates that interventions such as NSDEPS’ workplace learning (WPL) policy could be instrumental in overcoming barriers to women’s employment by giving women an opportunity to prove their worth to employers, thereby combatting entrenched gender biases about women’s role and capabilities.

Likewise, the GTS Tracer Survey finding that response rates among female graduates were lower than among male graduates, together with its corresponding analysis of how this issue may be linked to women’s lower enrolment in TVET programmes (in particular, STEM–related¹⁸ programmes) and lower access to the ICT resources¹⁹ needed to participate in the GTS tracer survey, highlights a key issue that must be addressed to enable Rwanda to achieve its long–term development goals. Measures must be put in place — including under the framework of the NSDEPS — to combat the gendered perception that science and technology are more suit-

¹⁸ STEM is an acronym for “Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics”

¹⁹ The “Gender Profile in Information and Communication Technology (ICT)” produced by the Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) corroborates these findings, showing that Rwandan women are less likely to be computer literate and to own or have access to a mobile phone or computer compared to Rwandan men. (For further information, see https://gmo.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/profiles/new/Gender_Profile_in_ICT_Sector.pdf)

able for boys/men than for girls/women, which is the root cause of women's lower access to STEM-related programmes and ICT assets.²⁰

- **Both tracer studies use the term “gender” when “sex” would have been the correct term.** Both survey questionnaires ask respondents for their “gender” when collecting demographic information. In both survey reports, labels such as “by gender” appear on tables containing sex-disaggregated data. Yet respected agencies, such as the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), correctly use “sex” or “by sex” when reporting data differentiating between males and females. The importance of using the correct terminology cannot be overstated, if only as a constant reminder that “gender” can be changed more easily than “sex” (see Key Concepts), and that such change is needed to secure gender equality.

Based on the above findings, mainstreaming gender and inclusion in the GTS would entail:

- Expanding the list of indicators included in the survey questionnaire, so that more complex intersectional impacts may be assessed, and so that inclusion as well as gender is targeted.
- Ensuring that all data generated is reported on a sex-disaggregated basis (at minimum) and/or an intersectional basis (wherever possible and relevant).
- Taking care to distinguish between and accurately use gender-related concepts.

TVET Accreditation System

The TVET Accreditation initiative is new and in early stages of conceptualisation. However, the National Examination and School Inspection Authority (NESA) together with the Higher Education Council (HEC) are in the process of coordinating efforts to develop training provider accreditation guidelines.

In the context of a “blank slate”, it is not possible to assess how far the planned accreditation guidelines will be designed to take into account issues concerning gender and inclusion. Thus, a suggestion is instead made of a good resource to consult to ensure that gender and inclusion are mainstreamed into the new guidelines.

One way of ensuring that a comprehensive approach is taken to mainstreaming gender and inclusion in Rwanda's planned TVET accreditation system is to review UNESCO's Institution guidelines: guidelines for inclusive and gender responsive training delivery in technical and vocational training colleges (published in 2018)²¹ and then to decide whether to adopt some or all of the recommendations. The guidelines, which were developed for Malawi's TVET system but are easily tailored to other countries' contexts, are intended for TVET administrators and instructors and cover the following areas: Governance and Management; Career Guidance; Student and Staff Induction; Teaching and Learning; Hostel Accommodation; Bursaries and Scholarships; Infrastructure Improvements; Security, Safety and Health; Gender-Based Violence and Students' Well-being; and Transition to Work or Self-Employment. A number of identified actions are suggested to assist training institutions in their planning and decision-making processes, as well as their use of finances and human resources.

²⁰ Sida, “Gender and ICT, *Gender Tool Box Brief*, March 2015.

²¹ The guidelines may be accessed via this link: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000266141>

Market–Led Education Initiative

The second programme under Pillar 1 (Market–led Education Initiative) seeks to ensure that formal TVET and Higher Education institutions in Rwanda provide market–relevant skills. It will achieve this aim by actively engaging the private sector throughout the skills development cycle through actions focused on:

- Revamping **Sector Skills Councils (SSCs)** as mechanisms to engage the private sector in: the production of labour market intelligence; the development of competency frameworks and curricula; the training and assessment of teaching staff and learners; and the accreditation of private training providers.
- Implementing the 2015 **Workplace Learning (WPL)** policy to increase exposure by TVET/Higher Education students and teaching staff to on–the–job training and the world of work.
- Establishing state–of–the–art **TVET Centres of Excellence (CoEs)**²² focusing on priority economic sectors to develop medium– and high–level skills meeting the current and future needs of firms in those sectors.

Sector Skills Councils (SSCs)

SSCs have already been established for the Manufacturing, Infrastructure, Financial Services, and Mining, Gas and Petroleum sectors, with plans to revamp SSCs in other priority sectors, including Agriculture, Health, and Hospitality and Tourism.

Actions to be taken in relation to SSCs under the framework of the NSDEPS are to 1) revise their membership structure, 2) improve their legal framework and governance structure, 3) provide incentives for private sector firms to participate in the councils, and 4) involve the SSCs in curriculum design and implementation.

The Gender Expert examined the following evidence in relation to SSCs:

- Sector Skills Council Operational Framework document (dated 01/26/2021).
- Table outlining the SSC Integration Process in terms of Competence–Based Curriculum Development.
- List of members of the four established SSCs, with details of their sex (M/F), the institution/company that they represent, and their position within the SSC.

Gender audit of these inputs produced the following insights:

- **Current policies and frameworks relating to SSC membership structures do not specify a target gender ratio and thus do not meet statutory requirements.** The 2003 Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, amended in 2015, mandates that at least 30% of positions in all decision–making organs be conferred to women. Yet, looking at the list of members of the four established SSCs (see Table 2 in the Appendix), it is apparent that women are grossly under–represented. Two of the SSCs (for Manufacturing and for Mining, Gas and Petroleum) have no female members, while women make up less than 30% of members in the Financial Services SSC (14% of members) and Infrastructure SSC (25% of members).

²² Also referred to in some documents as Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs).

It is vital to ensure that women are assigned equal rights and status in all policies, frameworks and strategies relating to SSCs, in line with the provisions of the 2021 Revised National Gender Policy. The SSC Operational Framework states that “[a]ttempts should be made to strike a balance between the various stakeholders in order to ensure that the Council can act as a neutral representative of a sector”. However, male-dominated SSCs cannot act as neutral representatives of women’s interests. Measures ensuring women’s fair representation on all SSCs should thus be enshrined in all SSC documentation, including the SSC Integration Process for Competence-Based Curriculum Development.

- **All but one of the current SSC Executive Committee Board Members are male**, and the only female SSC Board Member (for Finance) serves as Secretary, rather than as Chair or Vice Chair. Only one female SSC member serves as a Chairperson — but of a subsector within an SSC (for Infrastructure), rather than of the overall SSC.

Consideration should be given as to why there are so few female SSC Executive Committee Members, and measures should be put in place to address these issues. For example, are women blocked from these positions because they do not meet the minimum eligibility criteria outlined in the Operational Framework owing to gender discrimination in the workplace? To be eligible, candidates should:

- Be active members of a business association or professional body relevant to the SSC.
- Be a voice that is heard and respected in the sector as well as an influencer or decision maker.
- Have a good understanding of the sector and skill development needs at different levels.
- Have not incurred disciplinary action during the last five years.
- Have the required skills and competencies for the function, such as assiduity, dedication, availability in carrying out the activities assigned by the SSC.
- Have never been dismissed for incompetence or indiscipline.

If the answer is “yes”, then these criteria need to be relaxed/adjusted, or quotas for Board Members should be set, to give women equal access to these roles — in particular, those of Chair and Vice Chair — well as training and support to ensure that they can serve in these leadership positions in an effective and efficient manner.

- **Current policies and frameworks relating to SSC membership structures are opaque on inclusion issues.** There are no membership quotas or other provisions for people with disabilities (PWDs), who are not mentioned in the documents. Likewise, data is not maintained on SSC members’ disability status or other inclusion-related attributes (see Table 2 of the Appendix).
- **It is not clear from the inputs received whether SSC members will receive training in gender-responsive and inclusive curriculum design and assessment.** The “SSC Integration Process for Competence-Based Curriculum Development” document outlines activities to be undertaken and outputs to be produced by SSCs, along with a desired mix of participants to ensure effective tripartite cooperation. However, it does not mention whether training will be provided to SSC industry experts, as well as the wider section of employers, who will be engaged in developing and validating curricula and assessment guidelines.

Yet it is vital that SSC members — in particular, industry representatives, who may not have undergone formal teacher training — receive training on how to design gender-responsive and inclusive curricula, teaching and learning materials, and training and assessment processes.

One suggestion for organising this training in a cost-effective manner would be to ask the Rwanda TVET Trainer Institute (RTTI) to develop and deliver a short training course, based on the Inclusive Training module (TTINC108) that RTTI already offer in their TVET Trainer Certificate Program, to support busy private sector SSC members in effectively and efficiently mainstreaming gender and inclusion into their competence-based curriculum development phases.

Based on the above findings, mainstreaming gender and inclusion in the SSC framework would entail:

- Assigning women and other disadvantaged groups equal rights and status in all policies, frameworks and strategies relating to SSCs, including by setting target quotas or ratios on SSC membership structures.
- Reviewing the criteria for Executive Committee roles from a gender and inclusion lens to provide women and other disadvantaged groups with equal access to those roles, especially those of Chair and Vice Chair, and providing them with the training and support they need to be able to serve in these leadership positions effectively and efficiently.
- Ensuring that SSC members and other stakeholders participating in curriculum design and assessment are provided with training and support to be able to effectively and efficiently mainstream gender and inclusion in all competence-based curriculum development phases.

Workplace Learning (WPL)

Evidence on WPL considered by the Gender Expert included:

- National Policy on Workplace Learning to Prepare Rwandan Youth for Employment (dated July 2015).
- Guidelines on the Implementation of Workplace Learning Policy in Rwanda (dated August 2021).
- Operational Guidelines for the National Professional Internship Program (dated October 2020).

Gender analysis of these inputs produced the following insights:

- **The 2015 WPL Policy contains measures to ensure that it is “systematically gender-mainstreamed”.** These measures include: mandating that at least 50% of beneficiaries of apprenticeships and WPL programmes are female; requiring that all indicators in its monitoring framework are “disaggregated by gender” (sic); ensuring that WPL priority is given to occupational groups “that are attractive to female youth”; and putting in place mechanisms to address the “special needs and concerns of young women who may be subject to discrimination, sexual harassment and other forms of unfair and intolerable practices”.
- **The 2015 WPL Policy also makes a firm commitment to inclusive education.** It promises that WPL arrangements will take into account the special requirements needed to fully integrate young people with disabilities, and that special incentives will be offered to employers who offer WPL places to PWDs.
- **The 2021 WPL Implementation Guidelines likewise aim to mainstream gender in WPL arrangements.** The Guidelines take a broader view of gender than the 2015 Policy by acknowledging that harmful gender norms and practices can affect “both girls and boys”. They also list the types of behaviours that constitute “unacceptable conduct” in the workplace, with specific reference to gender-based violence (GBV), and contain strong procedures for both reporting and dealing with incidents of GBV to ensure the “safety and wellbeing of trainees at workplaces”. Furthermore, to

ensure mainstreaming of gender in WPL arrangements, the Guidelines name the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) as an implementing partner of the policy, whereas MIGPROF had not been assigned such a role in the 2015 Policy.

- **However, the Guidelines do not promote gender equality or inclusiveness as strongly as the 2015 WPL Policy.** For example, whereas the 2015 Policy had set a minimum quota for female trainees/apprentices at “at least 50%”, the 2021 Guidelines have reduced the percentage to 30%. The Guidelines are also less emphatic in terms of inclusion of PWDs in WPL. Although the Guidelines’ guiding principles state that the “inclusion of People with Disabilities” will be “consider[ed]”, no special mechanisms (such as employer incentives) are stipulated.
- **Furthermore, the 2020 Operational Guidelines for the National Professional Internship Programme suggest that women experience access and equity issues:**
 - ***Women have more restricted access to National Professional Internships than men for two reasons.*** First, as the Operational Guidelines note, “the internship application process is done online in order to help applicants save time and money as well as promote transparency and quality service and management”. However, as mentioned earlier in this report, women have lower access to ICT resources than men. Second, only graduates with A1 diplomas or higher–level qualifications are eligible to apply for the internships, and women account for a progressively lower proportion of TVET trainees at higher qualifications levels (see Exhibit 1).
 - ***Women participating in the National Professional Internship Programme may earn lower fees than men participating in the Programme,*** resulting in a gender pay gap. After all, a special facilitation fee package of RWF 150,000 is offered to Engineering graduates, most of whom are men (see Exhibit 7), while all non–Engineering graduates participating in the programme are paid fees of only RWF 50,000.

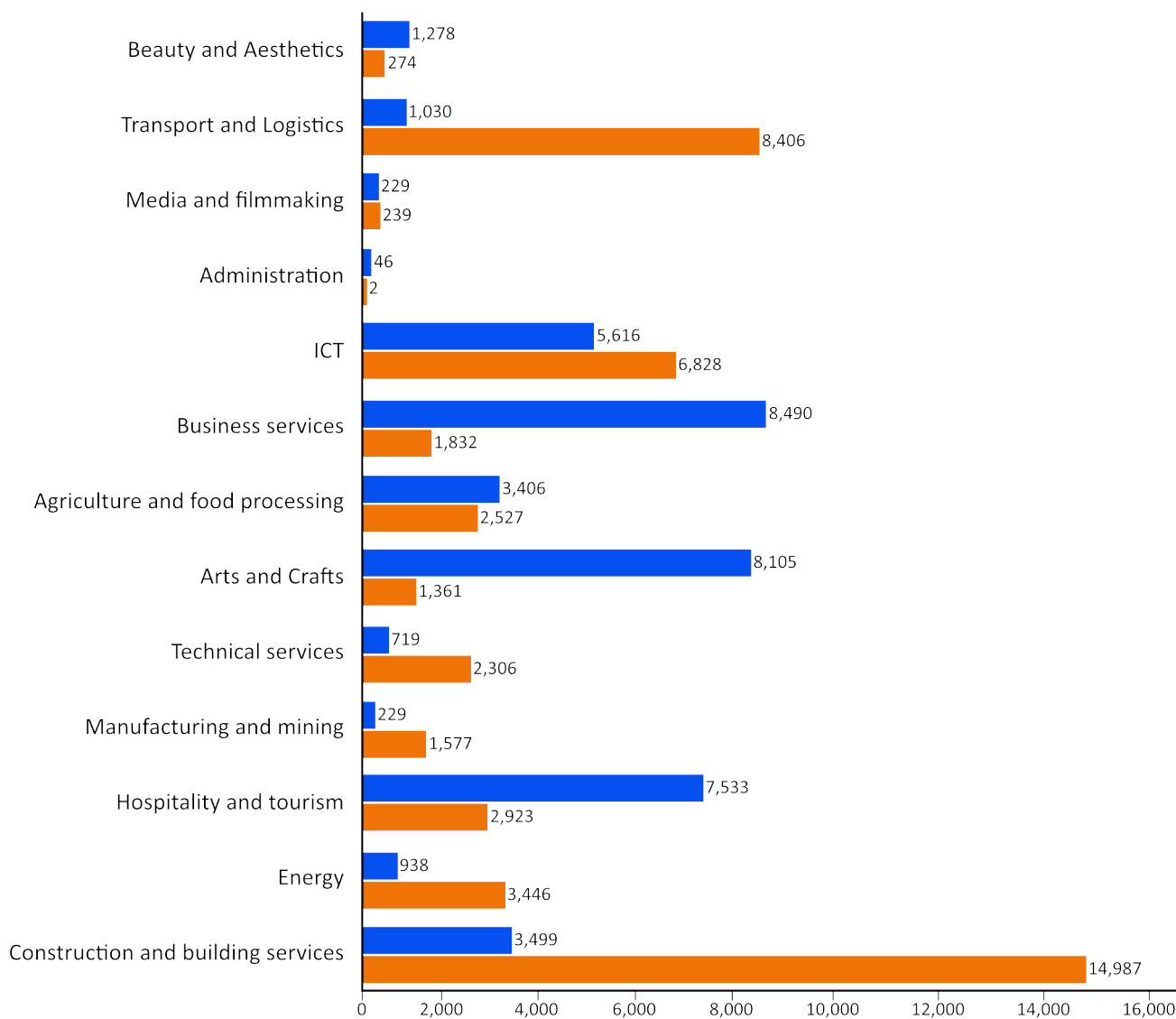
The 2021 WPL Implementation Guidelines are not clear on whether they, like the 2015 WPL Policy, will give priority to occupational groups “that are attractive to female youth”. If so, then it should be noted that this practice could exacerbate existing tendencies towards gender segregation in TVET, whereby female students channel themselves (or are channelled) into programmes relating to traditional “soft trades” (e.g., tailoring, hairdressing, secretarial, nursing, food and nutrition), which are considered suitable for women but pay less than traditional “male” occupations (e.g., construction, auto mechanics, carpentry, welding and engineering).²³ There is also higher labour market demand for those occupations deemed most suitable for men than for those considered most suitable for women (see Exhibit 8).

The above findings suggest that, to strengthen mainstreaming of gender and inclusion in the WPL policy, the following actions may be required:

- Raising the quota of female trainees/apprentices to 50%, as before. The findings of the most recent graduate tracer survey suggest that women’s returns to employment from participating in WPL are higher than those of men, so increasing their participation in WPL could produce positive labour market impacts.

²³ See, for example Nshimirimana, P. and Kitula, M. (2020) “Socio–Economic Barriers Young Females Face in Accessing Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Rwanda”, in *International Journal of Management and Humanities (IJMH)*, vol. 4, no. 12; and Imdorf, C., Hegna, K. and Reisel, L. (2015) “Gender Segregation in Vocational Education”, *Comparative Social Research*, vol 31, pp. 1–22.

Exhibit 7 — TVET enrolments by sector and sex (2020–2021)



Source: Rwanda TVET Board

Female Male

- Considering alternative application methods and/or relaxing eligibility requirements for WPL to ensure that the higher quote for female trainees/apprentices can be met.
- Developing strategies (e.g., incentive systems) to encourage employers to provide WPL places to women and PWDs – in other words, reinstating gender and inclusion provisions contained in the 2015 Policy.
- Considering introducing a special facilitation fee package for female trainees/apprentices, which is on par with that offered to Engineering graduates, to incentivise women to participate in WPL.
- Training employers on positive behaviours to adopt (such as gender-responsive and inclusive training methods), rather than only highlighting negative behaviours to avoid. The Rwanda TVET Trainer Institute (RTTI) has developed a training module (TTINC108) to equip TVET trainers “with skills and knowledge to provide inclusive training in the workplace”, which could be

used/adapted for this purpose. Another useful resource is the gender-responsive and inclusive training course (STEP Manual Series No. 2: Gender Responsive and Inclusive TVET Training Course – Instructors’ Handbook) that UNESCO has developed, which aims to equip TVET instructors with practical skills to create gender responsive and inclusive learning environments that promote zero tolerance for gender-based violence and sexual harassment.²⁴

Exhibit 8 — Some key occupations in demand by sector



Source: RDB CSO, *Rwanda: Annual State of Skills Supply and Demand Report 2022*

TVET Centres of Excellence (CoEs)

Two pieces of evidence relating to the CoEs were considered by the Gender Expert for the gender audit:

- A concept note proposing the establishment of a CoE for the mining sector.
- An announcement on RTB’s website²⁵ outlining its plans to establish CoEs in all 30 districts of the country.

²⁴ UNESCO, *STEP Manual Series No. 2: Gender Responsive and Inclusive TVET Training Course – Instructors’ Handbook*, 2019. The training course may be accessed via this link: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000369087>

²⁵ The announcement stated that “TVET Centres of Excellence will serve as role models for the rest of the schools in Districts in different aspects that include but not limited to modern Training Facilities and Quality TVET delivery” – see <https://www.rtb.gov.rw/>

In the absence of further information, it is not possible to assess how far CoEs will be designed and rolled out to take account of gender and inclusion issues. Thus, suggestions are instead made of issues to consider to ensure that gender and inclusion are mainstreamed into the new CoEs.

According to the concept note, CoEs “will be expected to... develop methodological and didactic materials for the other institutions within the sector; coordinate and manage their own activities; retrain managers and teaching staff from other VET institutions, etc.”. In other words, CoEs in their function as role models and recognised centres of innovation can play a powerful role in disseminating good practices across Rwanda’s TVET system, including by encouraging widespread adoption of gender-responsive and inclusive methods of running institutions and delivering training.

Thus, the recommendation here (as in the earlier subsection on TVET Accreditation Systems) is to adopt a comprehensive approach to mainstreaming gender and inclusion in the planned CoEs – for example, by reviewing UNESCO’s 2018 Institutional Guidelines for inclusive and gender-responsive training delivery in technical and vocational training colleges, and deciding whether to adopt some/all of its suggested actions. These principles can then be incorporated into the “exhaustive Quality Assurance Framework” that the CoE concept note promises will be developed for all CoEs in Rwanda.

The concept note also states that CoEs “will provide high-quality qualifications which can be later connected to tertiary education routes”, meaning that so long as CoEs can attract women and other disadvantaged groups (e.g., PWD) to their programmes, they could play a role in improving those groups’ educational attainment levels and access to decent employment in a priority economic sector.

Thus, it is recommended that performance targets relating to women’s and other disadvantaged groups’ engagement in CoE programmes be set, with corresponding action plans developed for meeting those targets. Determining which specific groups to target, in order to achieve the greatest social and economic impacts, would most effectively and efficiently be done by collecting and analysing intersectional data.

To provide equal opportunities as well as role models for women and other disadvantaged groups, quotas for CoE leadership and teaching/training positions should be set, with training and support provided to allow the selected individuals to excel in their new positions. As the 2019 State of Gender Equality in Rwanda report produced by the Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) has noted, women account for a low proportion of TVET teaching staff at all levels in Rwanda (see Exhibit 9).²⁶ A 2022 news article reported the same findings in relation to school leadership positions: “Survey findings on ‘Gender Differences in Academic Leadership positions’ in 14 districts have revealed that less than 30 percent of leadership positions at school are occupied by female teachers... The positions are head teachers, heads of departments, dean of studies, among others.”²⁷ Thus, affirmative action is needed.

Capacity Development Programme

The third programme under Pillar 1 (Capacity Development Programme) seeks to address capacity gaps both within the private sector in targeted priority areas and within the public sec-

²⁶ Gender Monitoring Office, *The State of Gender Equality in Rwanda: From Transition to Transformation*, 2019



²⁷ *Rwanda Inspirer* news article available at this link: <https://www.rtb.gov.rw/>

tor through strengthening the management and monitoring capabilities of TVET and Higher Education staff.

The programme has four key components:

1. **Resource Mobilisation Strategy** to increase the funding available for skills development initiatives.
2. **Skills Partnerships** with the private sector, universities, donors and development partners to increase the financial and technical assistance and resources available for addressing capacity gaps.
3. **Institutional Assessments** to determine the capacity building needs of TVET and Higher Education staff.
4. **Employability Skills Development Interventions** aimed at minimising private sector skills gaps while easing the entry of new entrants to the labour market by providing them with market-relevant skills.

Exhibit 9 — TVET teacher distribution, by sex, at all levels of education

Year	2011	2013	2015	2017	2018
 Male Teachers	76.4% 1,055	79.9% 2,413	79.1% 3,734	78.2% 3,760	79.1% 3,773
 Female Teachers	23.6% 326	20.1% 607	20.9% 987	21.8% 1,047	20.9% 994
Total	1,381	3,020	4,721	4,807	4,767

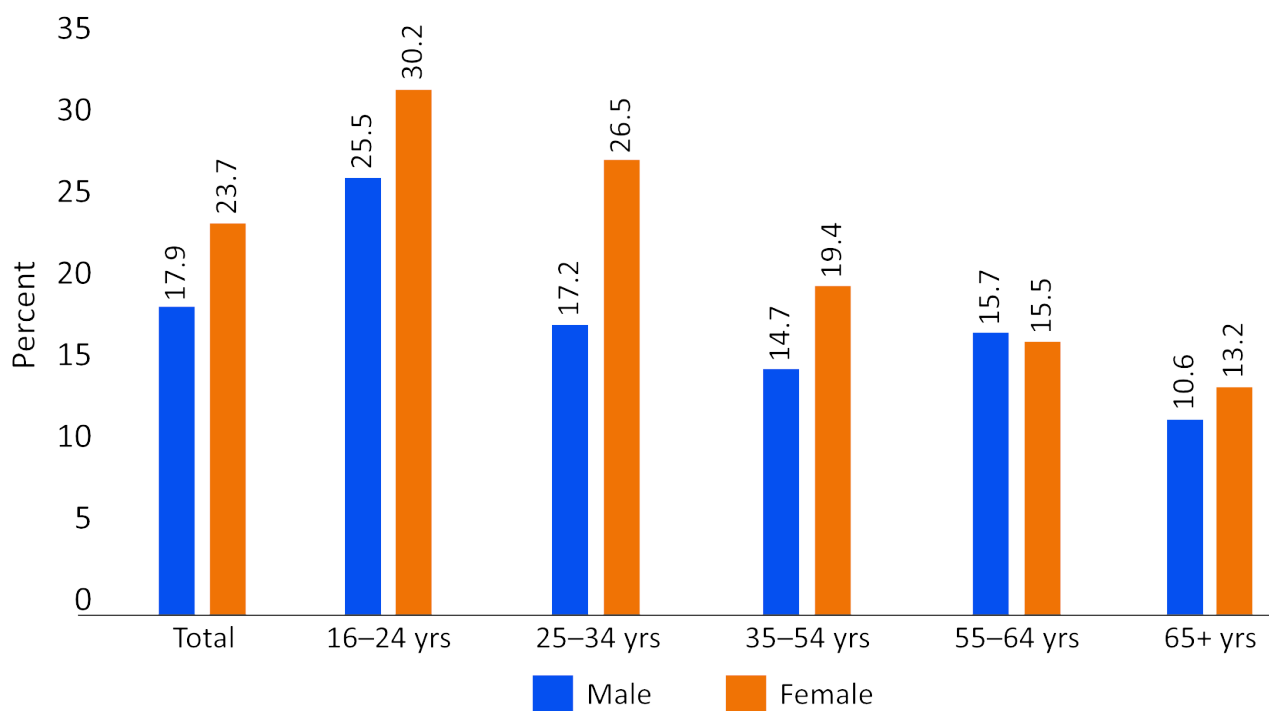
Source: Education Statistical Yearbooks 2011–2018

This gender audit will focus on the fourth component concerning employability skills development, since that is the area for which information is available. The capacity building interventions being delivered under this component are funded by the Skills Development Fund (SDF), which is one component of the World Bank’s Priority Skills for Growth (PSG) Programme.

Skills Development Fund (SDF) Programme

The SDF Programme was launched in 2017 with the aim of providing Rwandans — in particular, Rwandan youth — with quality, market-relevant skills leading to sustained employment (including self-employment) in selected economic sectors deemed to have high potential for growth, value addition and improved productivity (e.g., Energy, Transport and Logistics, ICT, Hospitality, Agriculture/ Agro-Processing and Construction). The programme seeks to create employment for at least 70% of its graduates as a means of tackling youth unemployment, which is much higher than adult unemployment in Rwanda, particularly among some groups such as young women (see Exhibit 10). The SDF Programme is organised in three windows, pertaining to the grants given to training institutions or investors for specific training targeting one or more of the beneficiary groups shown in Exhibit 11.

Exhibit 10 — Unemployment rate by sex and age group in 2022



Source: NISR, Labour Force Survey, Thematic Report on Gender, June 2023

Exhibit 11 — Current SDF windows, training activities and target groups

SDF Window	Training Activities	Target Groups
Window 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rapid Response Training (RRT) to address skills gaps experienced by formal sector firms, who share the costs of providing the training Skills upgrading for the formal sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unemployed individuals/perspective employees Employees of investor companies, who receive in-service training to fill company skills gaps
Window 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term Massive Vocational Training (MVT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Out-of-School Youth
Window 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internships Apprenticeships/Industry-based Training (IBT) Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unemployed TVET/Higher Education graduates Unemployed university and secondary school graduates Informal sector workers Individuals who would like certification of competencies acquired informally/non-formally

The following evidence on the SDF Programme was considered by the Gender Expert:

- Brief Note on the Progress of the Skills Development Fund prepared by RTB (dated 18 July 2023).
- Two tracer studies (one conducted in April 2020, the other in December 2021) assessing the impacts of the Skills Development Fund (SDF) on graduate employment and enterprise performance.
- Tracer Study of Graduates from Rapid Response Training (RRT) report published by RDB CSO in 2022.

- Report prepared by Irona Consultants in March 2022 to propose an SDF Programme sustainability plan.
- Concept Note on Skills Development Interventions for Unemployed, Semi-Skilled and Unskilled Rwandan Youth prepared by RTB (dated December 2022).
- Report on the Assessment of SDF Interventions prepared by RDB (dated July 2021).
- Brief Note on tentative windows for SDF 3 (undated and without the source of the note listed).

Gender audit of this evidence produced the following insights:

- **The SDF Programme has tried to achieve gender balance, but has tended to focus more on sex than on gender.** Efforts have been made to attract women to the programme. Yet, although female graduates' share of programme beneficiaries has increased over time, they nevertheless have constituted less than 50% of all beneficiaries across the two phases of the programme from 2017–2023.

The main issue, according to Irona Consultants in their March 2022 analysis of the SDF Programme, is lack of interest from female graduates, which is in contrast to another issue that the consultants identified — that is, high demand for places relative to the number of trainees able to be supported by the programme. Their findings suggest that there are sex differences in demand for the SDF Programme, but their proposed solution (minimum admission quotas targeting girls/women) is unlikely to fix the problem, since it targets the supply side of available places, rather than the demand side of women's low propensity to take up those places. Furthermore, their proposed solution targets sex — being male or female — rather than gender, which means addressing the root causes of identified sex differences.

Students and teaching staff at TSS IPRC Kigali and Don Bosco Gatenga TVET School, who took part in the focus group consultations conducted by the Gender Expert in November 2023, un-animously agreed that women's low engagement in TVET, particularly in “traditionally male” and STEM-related subjects, stems from gender-related barriers, including:

- **Cultural norms** that TVET, especially in some trades, is “only for boys and not girls” and is “unusual to girls”, since “girls don't need to know masonry”. One interviewee pointed out that gender norms affect male as well as female students, captured by ideas such as “boys should study construction”, since “it is more masculine than digital” trades or occupations.
- **Belief that women lack the attributes to perform well in some TVET subjects** — e.g., “strength for lifting” in road construction or “for climbing towers and antennas” in telecoms. TVET students told the Gender Expert that there is little information to counter such views, such as knowledge that some occupations within road construction and telecoms require no lifting or climbing.
- **Lack of parental support** for girls enrolling in TVET programmes due to “fear [of] accidents or dropouts” or of “sexual harassment”, especially in TVET fields dominated by men; perceptions that “TVET is for undisciplined students” and encompasses “dirty jobs”, so girls would be “better off studying to be a doctor or lawyer” (e.g., white collar jobs); and/or cultural norms that “girls should study ICT or culinary arts” (subjects suitable for girls/women). Parents also “worry about employment [prospects] for girls” following TVET, since “only boys get hired in these fields”.

- **Girls' own mindsets.** TVET students told the Gender Expert that some girls in Rwanda “lack self-confidence to join TVET subjects” due to “worry about heavy lifting and health” or their capabilities to perform as well as boys (“boys will perform better, so why try?”). They also said that “some girls are too shy to ask questions in class”, because they worry about how they will be perceived.
- **Lack of gender-sensitive facilities on campus.** Staff at Don Bosco told the Gender Expert that 50% more girls had joined their TVET programmes after a girls' dormitory was constructed on campus. Previously, female students were forced to live at home, where they were expected to carry out unpaid care work, which took up their study time and affected their performance. This in turn cemented ideas that “boys perform better than girls”. Don Bosco also provides loans to female students to buy sanitary pads, since this was noted as a barrier to girls' good performance.
- **Gender-based violence in TVET.** Don Bosco staff emphasised that “private sector institutions need a gender officer to prevent sexual harassment during internships”. The school has recently appointed a Gender Officer.

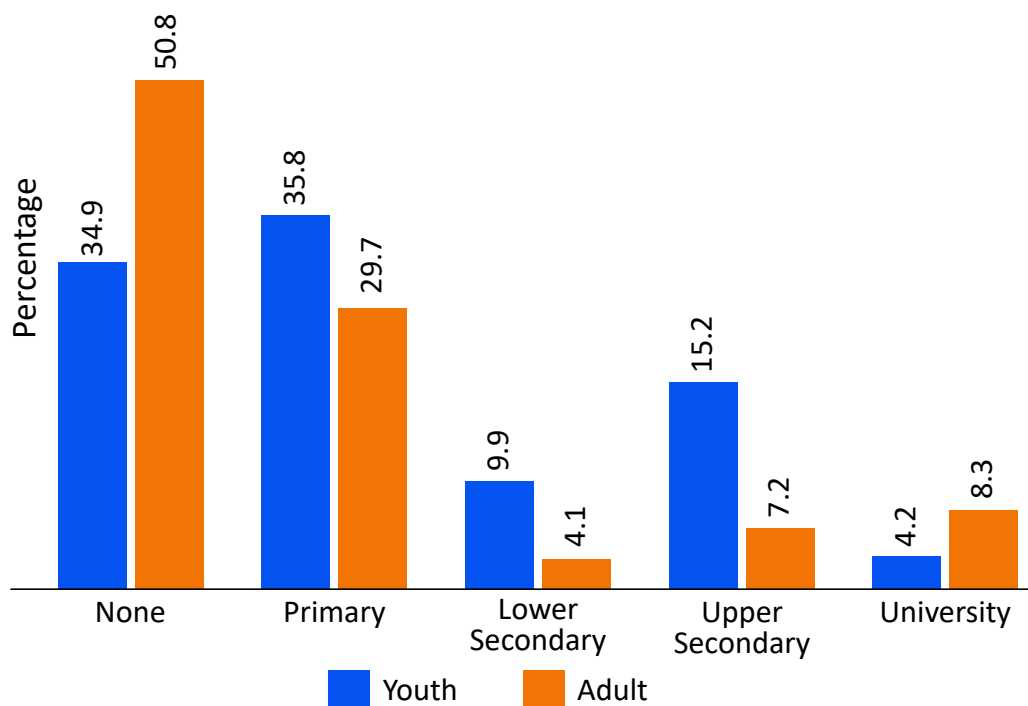
Minimum admissions quotas would not tackle the above barriers; a different solution, one that targets gender, is needed. In any case, the minimum quota proposed in the Concept Note on Skills Development Interventions for Unemployed, Semi-Skilled and Unskilled Rwandan Youth — that “at least 30% of the beneficiaries will be female” — is too low to achieve gender parity, let alone gender equity or equality, given that women's share of Rwanda's unemployed, NEET youth, etc., is greater than 50%.

- **In addition, the SDF Programme has not targeted social inclusion.** The Gender Expert could find no evidence that the SDF Programme has enrolled any PWD. RDB's Report on the Assessment of SDF Interventions makes no reference to PWD. The April 2020 tracer study asked respondents about their disability status and type of disabilities (if any), but did not report data on this indicator in its report. The only reference to PWD in the 2020 tracer survey report was a statement taken from WDA's 2019 Project Operational Manual for the implementation of Skills Development Fund II (SDF II) that: “Priority will be given to formal and non-formal trainings to support women and persons with disability”. The 2021 tracer study report specified that “no respondents with special needs or disabilities was identified among those who participated in the survey”.

Moreover, evidence supplied in both tracer survey reports suggest that the majority of SDF Programme beneficiaries are advantaged relative to the general population. Results across both tracer surveys show that most SDF beneficiaries have secondary or higher education, live in urban or peri-rural areas, and are able to fund their self-employment initiatives through their own savings or with help from parents or relatives — which in turn suggests that many of these trainees could have paid for their training without recourse to public funds.

Exhibit 12 displays the distribution of Rwanda's labour force by educational attainment and shows that fewer than 20% of Rwanda's youth or adult population have completed secondary or higher education. This is in stark contrast to the more than two-thirds of SDF Programme beneficiaries across any window in the first or second calls for proposals, who were found to have secondary or higher education qualifications. Clearly, the SDF Programme has not tightly targeted the most disadvantaged groups as a means of promoting gender equality and social inclusion.

Exhibit 12 — Distribution of labour force by education attainment among young and adult population



Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey, 2022

- Greater availability of intersectional data on SDF programme beneficiaries and their post-graduation outcomes could boost the programme’s effectiveness, gender-responsiveness and inclusivity.** Across both tracer surveys, less than one-half of all indicators are disaggregated by sex, and less than a handful are broken down to highlight intersectionality. What sex-disaggregated data was reported shows that female SDF graduates are less likely to be employed, more likely to be self-employed, more likely to earn a lower wage, and less likely to have capital for self-employment ventures compared to male SDF graduates. However, because intersectional data combining, for example, sex and rural/urban location, is lacking for indicators such as “reasons why not employed”, it is difficult to gauge which specific groups of female or male graduates are most vulnerable to unemployment post-training and thus need special support transitioning to employment.

Conversely, having intersectional data, for example, on the sex of grantees operating in those sectors (e.g., manufacturing) where female SDF graduates have had more difficulty getting employed compared to male SDF graduates, could provide an indication as to whether gender discrimination may be an issue. Having this data would not provide certainty that gender and/or inclusions issues are at play, but would at least flag up areas where further research is required or remedial actions must be taken to improve SDF beneficiary outcomes.

Determining which variables should be combined to assess intersectional impacts requires adopting a gender and inclusion lens, which means focusing on and exploring the root causes of identified trends.

Based on the above findings, mainstreaming gender and inclusion in the SDF Programme would entail:

- Maintaining policy focus on gender, rather than sex, by developing policies, strategies and programmes that address the root causes of identified sex differences.
- Ensuring that SDF interventions support persons with disabilities (PWD), as envisaged in the 2019 SDF II Project Operational Manual.
- Increasing the SDF Programme’s contribution to gender equality and social inclusion by taking steps to identify and engage the most disadvantaged women and men, and then providing them with the training and support they need to obtain decent and productive employment or self-employment.
- Applying a gender and inclusion lens when conducting SDF Programme evaluations, so that the root causes of identified trends can be researched and remedied to increase the SDF Programme’s positive impacts on the post-graduation outcomes of all beneficiaries.

Gender-Related Gaps in Pillar 1 Programmes

Viewing Pillar 1 programmes from a gender and inclusion lens highlights an important issue that is not being targeted by any of the programmes, yet is affecting their success rate: low uptake by girls/women of both formal TVET (covered by Programme 1.1) and non-formal TVET (covered by Programme 1.3). In both forms of TVET, female enrolments have been increasing in recent years, but not in line with girls’/women’s population proportion and not at higher TVET levels or in “traditionally male” and STEM-related areas.

Unless gender-sensitive and gender-responsive policies and programmes are put in place to address the root causes of girls’/women’s low engagement in TVET, it is likely that the number of girls/women joining TVET will eventually taper off and/or that girls/women will continue to enrol in TVET programmes relating to “traditionally female” occupations, which the 2022 Annual State of Skills report suggests are experiencing “declining employment numbers...possibly leading to an oversupply”.²⁸ Getting more girls/women (as well as boys/men) to join high-demand, high-growth, value-added occupations, where the pay tends to be higher and where their contribution to economic growth and dynamism would be optimised, is the key to achieving Rwanda’s 2050 ambitions.

Evidence from the Gender Expert’s school visits suggests that persuading girls/women to enrol in TVET is the key ‘sticky’ issue, since girls/women receive ample support to succeed in their programmes once they join. According to students and teaching staff at TSS IPRC Kigali and Don Bosco Gatenga TVET School, teachers in both institutions employ gender-responsive and inclusive methodologies, despite fewer than half of the teachers interviewed having undergone RTTI’s teacher training. For example, teachers place girls/women in leadership roles during class activities and give them special assistance to perform tasks. Allowances are also made during practical assessments, whereby if a student cannot carry heavy materials, they can get help and still be considered successful on the basis of their ability to construct the final product. The male students interviewed said they don’t mind teachers giving female students extra help, and that they themselves assist female classmates to perform tasks “to try to motivate girls to overcome weakness”. Male students studying male-dominated trades (e.g., road construction) referred to their female peers as the “cleverest in the class”.

²⁸ RDB CSO, *Rwanda: Annual State of Skills Supply and Demand Report 2022*

Methods currently being used to attract girls/women to TVET seem to vary by institution rather than being centrally coordinated, according to the evidence gathered by the Gender Expert during consultations with TVET stakeholders in November–December 2023. A representative from Rwanda TVET Board (RTB) told the Gender Expert that RTB promotes TVET to girls/women (as well as boys/men) in schools — for example, by inviting industry experts to talk to students about potential job opportunities or new skills requirements, or by enlisting past alumni to encourage students to pursue higher-level studies. From a gender perspective, RTB’s approach would likely address barriers relating to lack of information on TVET programmes and occupations, and perhaps also those relating to girls’ mindsets or lack of confidence. However, it may not have an appreciable impact on other gendered barriers, such as lack of parental support, cultural norms, etc., which originate in homes and communities rather than in schools. Research shows that gender norms and standards tend to be more entrenched in rural areas, among poorer families, and in households where parents have low educational attainment levels and therefore less regard for education.²⁹ The RTB representative told the Gender Expert that RTB is planning a TVET awareness campaign to promote TVET to parents, but it may need to adjust its approach by context to ensure that girls/women joining TVET are not predominantly from higher income strata and urban or peri-rural areas.

The Dean of Studies at Don Bosco told the Gender Expert that his TVET centre obtains students in two main ways. First, some students come to the school via NESAs placements. Second, Don Bosco engages in active recruitment using multiple approaches: in churches (often), through advertising its courses in newspapers (once a year), and through public announcements on the radio (sometimes). It is also involved in a “Gender Matters” project, which aims to encourage girls/women to study technical subjects; thus, it engages in community outreach in Kigali (Kucikiru District) focused on shifting gender norms and attracting more female students. It has also organised cultural events in three schools with dance, music and sports activities targeting youth, to which it has invited representatives from sector and district level local government, and during which it has spoken to parents and prospective students to publicise its courses. However, the Dean of Studies has admitted that these events “have not [yet] had their full desired effects of recruiting girls”.

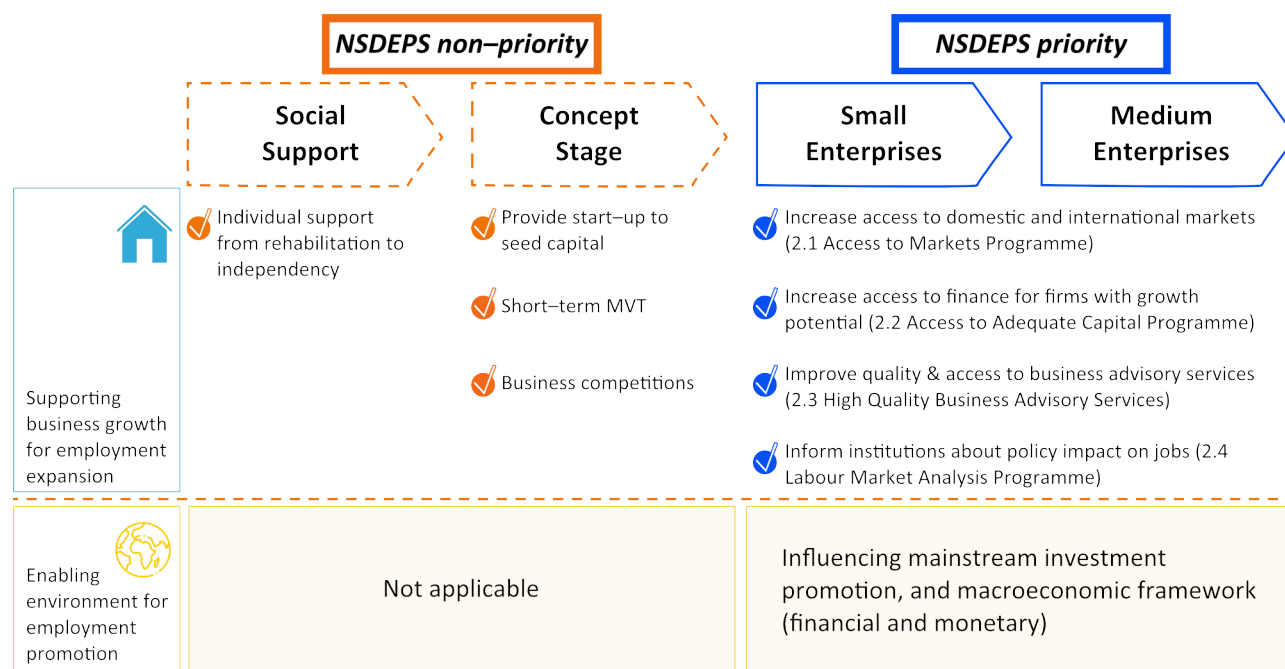
A coordinated national policy and strategy, with different instruments and approaches aimed at addressing the diverse gendered causes of girls’/women’s low engagement in TVET, would likely be more effective than fragmented efforts by individual institutions — so the suggestion here is to add this as a focus under Pillar 1 of the NSDEPS. Objective 7 (“Improving the attractiveness of TVET”) of Rwanda’s 2015 Revised TVET Policy provides the basis for such a policy and strategy, while the 2021 Revised National Gender Policy outlines important issues to consider when devising the policy and strategy, including the importance of engaging boys and men as key partners in promoting gender equality and equity. The policy and strategy would need to focus not only on getting girls/women into TVET, but also developing pathways to employment following TVET to address parents’ realistic concerns that girls/women may lack decent employment opportunities at the end of their studies, resulting in a negative return on investment in time and money spent on education and training. An intersectional lens would also need to be adopted to ensure tight targeting of the most disadvantaged learners — e.g., those in rural areas, from poorer families and/or with disabilities.

²⁹ Subrahmanyam, G., “Gender and Educational Attainment”, *Sida Gender Tool Box Brief*, August 2017.

Pillar 2: Employment Promotion

Pillar 2 of the NSDEPS is concerned with employment promotion. It seeks to increase the supply of jobs available in Rwanda by supporting business growth and entrepreneurship through programmes focused on facilitating access to domestic and international markets, easing access to finance, and increasing access to quality business advice and know-how (see Exhibit 13). Pillar 2 will also promote NEET youth transitions to wage employment or self-employment through skills training and accompaniment services.

Exhibit 13 — Strategic Framework for Pillar 2 on Employment Promotion



Access to Markets Programme

The first programme under Pillar 2 (Access to Markets Programme) has two key aims:

1. To support medium and large enterprises in accessing global markets through setting up Special Economic Zones (SEZ) and providing access to e-commerce platforms.
2. To support micro and small enterprises (MSEs) to increase their productivity, competitiveness and market share by promoting the formation and growth of sectoral clusters and cooperatives.

This gender audit will focus on only two of these components (Special Economic Zones and cooperatives), since these are the areas for which substantial information for a gender analysis exists.

Special Economic Zones (SEZ)

The Gender Expert considered the following documents on the Rwanda Special Economic Zones (SEZ):

- Ministry of Trade and Industry (MINICOM) 2018 Revised SEZ Policy: Addressing the infrastructure constraint to industrialisation in Rwanda.
- Law regulating Special Economic Zones in Rwanda (Law 5 of 2011).
- 2020 catalogue on the Kigali Special Economic Zone (KSEZ) produced by RDB.
- MINICOM 2017 Made in Rwanda Policy.
- MINICOM’s Entrepreneurship Development Policy (dated April 2020).

Gender audit of this evidence produced the following insights:

- **Neither the 2011 SEZ Law nor the 2018 Revised SEZ Policy take into account issues concerning gender or inclusion.** No quotas are set or SEZ spaces reserved for female-owned enterprises or those owned by disadvantaged groups, such as youth or PWDs, despite MINICOM’s Entrepreneurship Development Policy noting the special barriers faced by these groups. Furthermore, neither the law nor the policy mentions women, youth or PWDs, perhaps because these groups account for a small share of sole proprietors of medium or large enterprises in Rwanda. According to the 2020 Establishment Census, 91.4% of all enterprises in Rwanda are sole proprietorships.³⁰ Women own 20% of medium and large sole proprietorship enterprises, while youth aged 16–30 own just 8% (see Exhibits 14 and 15).

Exhibit 14 — Distribution of sole proprietor enterprises by sex of owner and size

Size	Sex of Owner		
	Total	Male	Female
Micro (1–3)	196,147	121,905	74,242
Small (4–30)	7,374	4,970	2,404
Medium (31–100)	221	175	46
Large (100+)	45	38	7
Total	203,787	127,088	76,699

Source: NISR, Rwanda Establishment Census 2020

Exhibit 15 — Distribution of sole proprietor enterprises by age of owner and size

Age of Owner	Size Based on Number of Workers				
	Total	Micro (1–3)	Small (4–30)	Medium (31–100)	Large (100+)
15 and below	60	58	2	—	—
16–30	74,399	72,685	1,692	21	1
31+	129,328	123,404	5,680	200	44
Total	203,787	196,147	7,374	221	45

Source: NISR, Rwanda Establishment Census 2020

³⁰ The 2022 Integrated Business Enterprise Survey estimates that 90.9% of all enterprises in Rwanda are sole proprietorships. However, it does not provide sex-disaggregated data on their owners.

- **SEZs could contribute to social and gender inequalities in several ways.** First, at a firm level, industries located in a SEZ likely have competitive advantages over those located outside. SEZs were set up in Rwanda to address constraints to domestic private sector growth and industrialization (e.g., low availability of industrial and commercial land and lack of access to quality infrastructure), as well as to provide medium and large firms with access to international markets and supply chains. Firms that are able to afford to lease space in a SEZ are offered special incentives, such more flexible and streamlined regulatory requirements, lower fixed costs due to economies of scale, and preferential corporate tax and VAT rates, as well as exemption from import and export duties. However, the costs of acquiring land in a SEZ are high: the price of land in the Kigali SEZ, according to the 2020 catalogue, is USD \$50 per square meter, with the minimum size of land that can be acquired being one hectare (i.e., 10,000 square meters) This equates to a USD \$500,000 minimum investment, which could be onerous for female enterprise owners, given occupational gender segregation and lower earnings of female workers (including employers) compared to male.

Furthermore, nowhere in the information on SEZs is it stated that one of the incentives offered on the sites includes childcare facilities, which would likely benefit female enterprise owners/workers more than male owners/workers due to the burden of unpaid care responsibilities that women tend to disproportionately bear.

Second, SEZ benefits targeting enterprise owners could come at a cost to SEZ workers, given that the 2018 Revised SEZ Policy states that “[t]he SEZ Law allows for a Ministerial Order by the Minister of Labour to set out a more flexible labour regime in SEZs”, while Article 37 of the 2011 Law infers that any such Orders would take into “consideration...the purposes for which a Zone was created, [and] an Order of the Minister in charge of labour shall determine labour conditions in that Zone”. A 2020 UNCTAD publication, titled *Handbook on Special Economic Zones in Africa*, mentions that in many countries labour standards have been lowered within SEZs — for example, through a suspension of the national minimum wage, prohibition of workers’ unions and/or generally poor working conditions.³¹ Women make up 41% of SEZ employees in Rwanda — a higher percentage than the average across Africa (see Exhibit 16). Thus far in Rwanda, labour laws have not been waived to attract or retain investment. However, the fact that this is an administrative possibility is an issue that needs to be flagged up in a gender and inclusion audit.

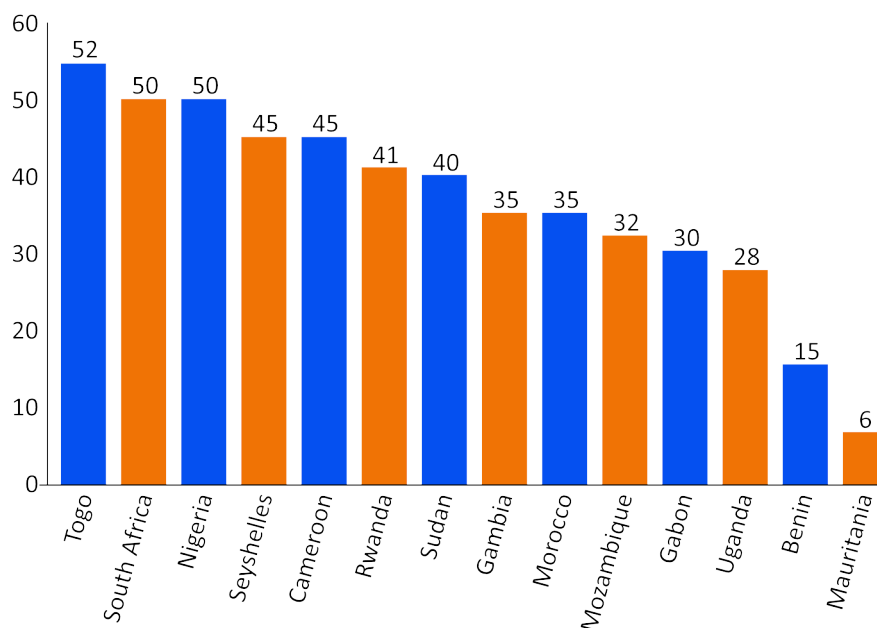
- **However, these issues could be mitigated if Rwanda’s SEZs adopt and implement inclusive policies.** According to the 2018 Revised SEZ Policy, plans are in place to set up sector-specific SMI³² Parks in each SEZ. These SMI Parks would provide SMEs that have huge growth potential, but lack the capacity to access SEZ land on commercial terms, to enjoy SEZ benefits through the creation of industrial clusters and the promotion of backward linkages with larger firms. The Made in Rwanda import substitution policy offers an additional benefit to SMEs, sheltering them from competition and giving them protected spaces to grow.

UNCTAD’s *Handbook on Special Economic Zones in Africa* argues that enhanced environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards on SEZs could make them more environmentally friendly, gender-inclusive and equitable, without reducing SEZ users’ competitiveness or SEZs’ attractiveness to investors. This is because environmentally-sustainable and socially-just policies and practices are no longer considered a deterrent to businesses, and are often con-

³¹ UNCTAD, *Handbook on Special Economic Zones in Africa*, 2020

³² SMI is an acronym for small and medium-sized industries

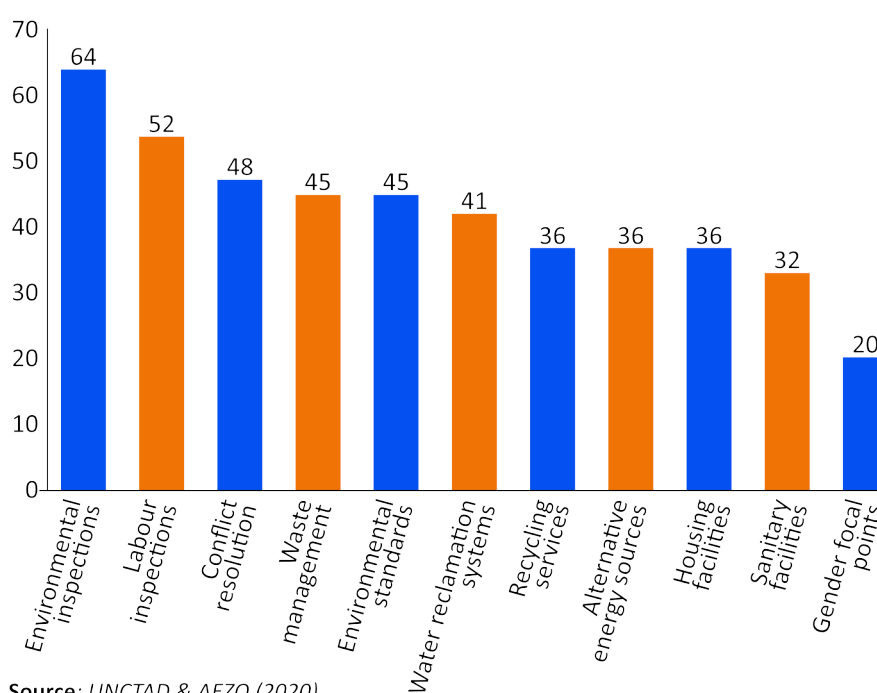
Exhibit 16 — Share of women in SEZ labour force, selected African countries (%)



Source: UNCTAD & AEZO (2020)

sidered a necessary and welcome addition in the modern socially-aware global marketplace, where industries face increased pressured to comply with ESG standards. By implementing as well as requiring socially-just and environmentally-friendly practices on SEZs, SEZ operators may be assisting SEZ users to meet their regulatory requirements as well as customer expectations. Exhibit 17 shows some of the more common ESG policies and practices being implemented in SEZs across Africa.

Exhibit 17 — Share of SEZs in Africa that implement specific social and environmental policies (%)



Source: UNCTAD & AEZO (2020)

Based on the above findings, mainstreaming gender and inclusion in Rwanda’s SEZ policies would entail:

- Specifically targeting women and other disadvantaged groups (youth, PWDs, etc.), including through introducing quotas if appropriate.
- Providing inclusive spaces or preferential rates on SEZs targeting these groups.
- Introducing enhanced environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards on SEZs.

Cooperatives

The Gender Expert considered the following evidence on cooperatives:

- MINICOM 2018 National Policy on Cooperatives in Rwanda: “Toward Private Cooperative Enterprises and Business Entities for Socio–Economic Transformation”.
- Statistics of cooperatives in Rwanda — Quarter three report (FY 2022–2023), produced by Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA) in March 2023.
- UNDESA 2021 publication titled Promoting Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (MSME) Formalization through the Cooperative Enterprise Model, which mainly covers Kenya but provides information and analysis points on good practices in cooperative development focused on increasing MSME formalisation, which is one focus of NSDEPS Pillar 2.

Gender audit of these inputs suggests the following:

- **The 2018 National Policy on Cooperatives seems to take into account issues concerning gender and inclusion.** For example, Policy Intervention Area 5 (PIA–5: Empowerment of special categories) aims to “[p]romote cooperative membership for special groups of people such as youth, people with disabilities, women, and Rwandans living in the diaspora” and promises that “[t]his will be done in consideration of specific challenges faced by each of the special groups”. The policy seems to target gender rather than sex differences, since the policy document explains that women “are more likely to be economically inactive than their male counterparts due to challenges such as illiteracy, lack of business management skills, limited access to finance, mobility constraints, and limited resilience capacity in doing business among others” — although it is unclear from this statement alone whether the policy plans to address the symptoms of women’s (and other special groups’) disadvantage or instead the causes, which are linked to harmful gender norms and practices.
- **However, data reported in RCA’s quarterly report suggests that implementation of the 2018 Policy is weak on gender as well as inclusion.** No data is reported on numbers or proportions of all of the specified “special groups” (apart from women) taking part in cooperatives. Furthermore, while data on women’s cooperative membership is reported, it is displayed but not explained, so gives no information as to the possible underlying reasons for any observed trends.
- **It is unclear whether the observed trends in women’s cooperative membership are linked to NSDEPS interventions.** For example, the data displayed in Exhibit 18 shows that, between 2017 and 2022, women’s membership proportion in primary/non–financial cooperatives grew much faster than their membership proportion in Saving and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOs). However, the RCA does not offer possible reasons for this trend in its third quarter report.

While it is true that the NSDEPS began to be implemented between 2017 and 2022, there is no specific evidence linking women’s growing membership in cooperatives to NSDEPS intervention.

One way that the RCA can demonstrate the NSDEPS’s impacts on cooperatives in Rwanda would be to provide data relating to the three categories of cooperatives (ordinary, growth and graduated) defined in the 2018 policy, since the 2018 policy specifies the type of support that each category of cooperatives will receive from the government. Currently such data is not reported, so no inferences can be drawn.

Exhibit 18 — Estimated number of cooperatives and membership by sex, 2017 and 2022

Item/variable	September 2017		December 2022	
	Estimate	Percentage	Estimate	Percentage
Primary Cooperatives	7,958	94.7%	9,952	95.7%
SACCOS	448	5.3%	444	4.3%
Total cooperatives	8,406	100.0%	10,396	100.0%
Membership (Primary Cooperatives)	543,439	15.6%	1,894,455	39.2%
Male	321,222	59.1%	1,015,696	53.6%
Female	222,217	40.9%	878,759	46.4%
Membership (SACCO)	2,944,086	84.4%	2,940,166	60.8%
Male	1,665,844	56.6%	1,641,056	55.8%
Female	1,278,242	43.5%	1,299,110	44.2%
Total membership	3,487,525	100.0%	4,834,621	100.0%

Source: MINICOM 2018 National Policy on Cooperatives in Rwanda; and RCA Statistics of Cooperatives in Rwanda – Quarter 3

- **Global evidence suggests that cooperatives are powerful tools for promoting gender equality and social inclusion.** Considering the ways in which this occurs can allow NSDEPS interventions to support cooperatives’ role in this regard. UNDESA’s 2021 publication titled Promoting Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (MSME) Formalization through the Cooperative Enterprise Model provides examples of how cooperatives across the world have assisted disadvantaged groups to claim their rights to decent work. For example, some women’s cooperatives (e.g., Self-Employed Women’s Association, or SEWA) have supported their members to negotiate with employers for better working conditions, including safeguards against GBV. At a regional level, the 2019 Pan-African model law on cooperatives provides a framework for ensuring that cooperatives play a meaningful role in meeting members’ aspirations while contributing to national, regional and global development goals.

The above findings suggest that, to strengthen mainstreaming of gender and inclusion in Rwanda’s cooperatives policy, the following actions may be required:

- Data collected, analysed and reported should be aligned with policy aims relating to gender and inclusion, so that progress can be tracked.

- Consideration should be given to recording and reporting the possible underlying causes of observed data trends.
- NSDEPS interventions relating to cooperatives should aim to amplify cooperatives' role in advancing gender equality and social inclusion — e.g., by strengthening workers' capacity to demand their rights to decent work. UNESCO's 2021 publication and the Pan–African model law could provide inspiration in this regard.

Access to Finance Programme

The second programme under Pillar 2 (Access to Finance Programme) has two key aims:

1. To facilitate access to working or start–up capital for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
2. To support micro leasing for SMEs and cooperatives.

Access to Capital

Evidence relating to MSMEs' access to credit which was considered by the Gender Expert included:

- Business Development Fund (BDF), BDF 2020 Annual Report.
- RDB, SME Guarantee Assessment Report (dated 1 June 2019).
- National Bank of Rwanda (BNR), Guidelines to Women's Financial Inclusion: Actions for Financial Institutions (published in 2022).
- Access to Finance Rwanda (AFR), MSME Owners and Financial Inclusion in Rwanda: FinScope Rwanda 2020 Thematic Report.
- Access to Finance Rwanda (AFR), Gendered Social Norms Diagnostic and their Impact on Women's Financial Inclusion in Rwanda, 2023.
- Private Sector Federation (PSF), Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the Private Sector 2020–2024.
- MINECOFIN, Additional Financing for Access to Finance for Recovery and Resilience Project (P179999) Updated Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP): Final Report (dated March 2023).
- MINICOM's Entrepreneurship Development Policy (dated April 2020).

Gender audit of this evidence produced the following insights:

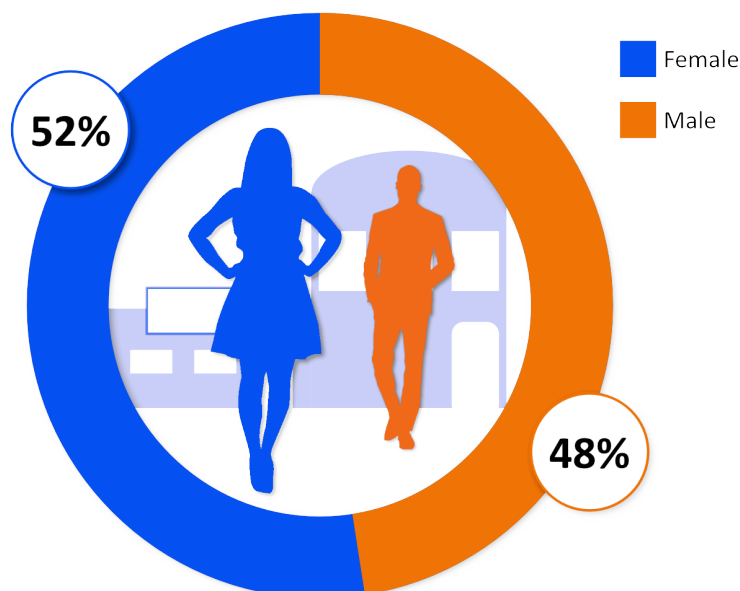
- **Affirmative action measures have been put in place in Rwanda to increase MSMEs' access to capital.** For example, the Business Development Fund (BDF) — which was established by the Government of Rwanda and the Development Bank of Rwanda (BRD) with the aim of encouraging banks, microfinance institutions, and Savings and Credit Cooperatives Societies (SACCOs) to lend to MSMEs by offering credit guarantees — covers 75% of lenders' required collateral for eligible female, youth and PWD borrowers, but only 50% of collateral for all other borrowers.
- **However, policies and strategies to improve MSMEs' access to finance have tended to overlook the impacts of gendered social norms on women's financial inclusion.** For example, BDF's main strategy for increasing women's utilisation ratio has been to invest in marketing campaigns to raise women's awareness of BDF products, rather than taking steps to understand and address women's issues. Findings from Access to Finance Rwanda's new report, "Gendered Social Norms Diagnostic and their Impact on Women's Financial Inclu-

sion in Rwanda”, suggest that BDF’s approach will have limited long-term success, since it does not take into account the impact of harmful social norms on women entrepreneurs’ access to finance and ability to grow their businesses. According to AFR, these norms are upheld at multiple levels in society, and vary by women’s age and marital status as well as location (rural/urban).

PSF’s Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the Private Sector 2020–2024 report outlines some of the special challenges that women entrepreneurs face, in addition to the more general challenges that all entrepreneurs face. These include: limited control of resources at household level, which leads to poor control over collateral assets; financial services targeting women entrepreneurs that are not tailored to their needs; and gender stereotyping by bank managers and/or credit officers regarding women’s capacity to repay loans.

Such issues could explain why, while women’s utilisation ratio of BDF products has risen over time — according to BDF’s 2020 Annual Report, from 38% in 2019 to 45% in 2020 — their utilisation ratio is still lower than women’s proportion of MSME owners in Rwanda (see Exhibit 19).

Exhibit 19 — Distribution of MSME owners in Rwanda by sex



Source: FinScope Rwanda Consumer Survey Report 2020

- **A gender-transformative and inclusive strategy is needed to boost financial inclusion in Rwanda.** According to the National Bank of Rwanda (BNR), Rwanda’s financial system needs to move from a gender-aware system to a gender-transformative system, which means addressing the root causes of women’s financial exclusion.³³ BNR has adopted a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy (2022–2027) and developed guidelines for lending institutions aimed at increasing the availability and uptake of financial products and services by female customers, with robust M&E frameworks using sex-disaggregated data for tracking women’s financial inclusion and guidance on how to mainstream gender in financial products based on product type.

AFR told the Gender Expert during their meeting in December 2023 that it is working with financial institutions to improve access to finance using a gender and inclusion lens.

³³ See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKqTmBO8jtU>

In March 2023 the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN) mandated that BRD and BDF “adopt, maintain and implement [a] Gender Action Plan (GAP) to provide appropriate measures of protection and assistance to address gender gaps in access to different credit lines”.³⁴ Based on the evidence presented, this will require adopting a gender and inclusion lens to ensure that the Action Plan is gender–transformative and inclusive.

Micro Leasing Support

The Gender Expert examined the following documents relating to micro leasing support:

- MIFOTRA’s 2020 Guidelines on Project to Support Micro Leasing for Micro and Small Enterprises for TVET Graduates.
- MINICOM’s Entrepreneurship Development Policy (dated April 2020).

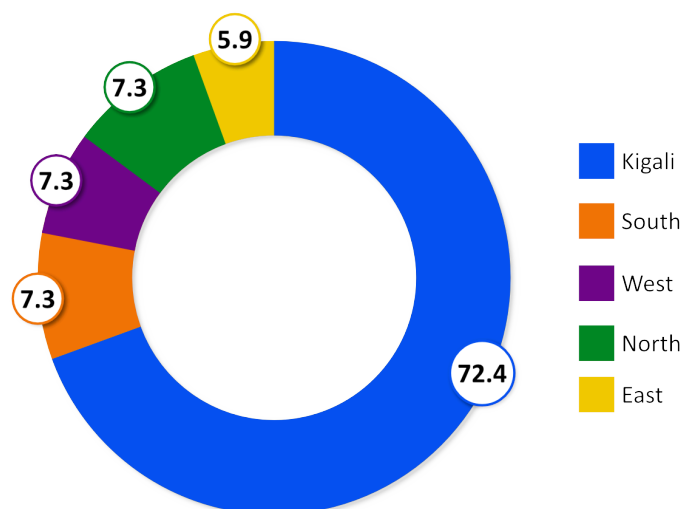
Analysis of this evidence produced the following insights:

- Micro leasing arrangements under the NSDEPS seem to take into account issues concerning social inclusion by placing a “major focus” on disadvantaged groups — that is, “youth, women and people with disabilities with already existing products on the market and with a potential to grow and employ others” — in their targeting.
- **However, they do not take into account issues concerning gender.** Evidence for this can be found in different sections of MIFOTRA’s 2020 Guidelines. For example:
 - Even before applying for the scheme, an individual “is responsible for identifying the equipment she/he needs, develop equipment specifications... and identify who will supply from the list of suppliers provided by the competent authority”. She/he must also prepare and submit a business plan with her/his application. Although the Guidelines state that individuals “can be supported with expertise if requested”, such requirements may put off female applicants since, as the Private Sector Foundation (PSF) notes in its Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the Private Sector 2020–2024 “Hefty procedures associated with applying for loans in commercial banks also discourage women and detriment their chances of accessing loans”. The same is likely true in relation to micro leasing.
 - Along with their application form, individuals are asked to submit the “certificate, diploma or Degree [that they have] acquired after completing Vocational and technical studies/training awarded by a recognised school/university... or any other special group approved by NEP/ NSDEPS competent organs” as well as “a business registration certificate (either company registration certificate or RCA certificate for the case of cooperatives)”. Yet Rwandan women are less likely than Rwandan men to have obtained a formal or non–formal TVET qualification (see section on Pillar 1), and are around half as likely to own a formally registered business.³⁵ Likewise, women (as well as men) in rural areas of Rwanda are less likely than those in urban areas to have a formally registered business (see Exhibit 20), so are less likely to qualify for the micro leasing scheme.

³⁴ MINECOFIN, *Additional Financing for Access to Finance for Recovery and Resilience Project (P179999) Updated Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) – Final Report*, March 2023

³⁵ According to the 2022 LFS, female own–account workers and employers make up just 37.2% of all formal sector own–account workers and employers, compared to 67.8% for their male counterparts. See National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), *Labour Force Survey, Annual Report 2022*, March 2023, Table C.25.

Exhibit 20 — Distribution of Formal Business Enterprises per provinces



Source: NISR, 2022 Rwanda Integrated Business Enterprise Survey, December 2023

- The Guidelines state: “For the approved applications, the contract will be negotiated between the Lessee (Lease applicant) and the Lessor (BDF)”. However, as PFS notes in its Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the Private Sector 2020–2024, “women [often] lack negotiation skills to negotiate better financial deals due to limited understanding of the financial landscape in the country and available financial products” — an issue that stems from gender norms.
- Owners of cooperatives wishing to access the facility must fulfil the above education criteria, but “can [instead] have 50% of members who are non–graduates of vocational and technical studies/ trainings”. Notwithstanding this relaxed condition, it may be difficult for 100% female owned and run cooperatives to meet this threshold.
- The high costs of taking up the micro leasing facility — which include a 5% upfront down payment of the equipment cost and a 1% (excluding VAT) administration fee, in addition to the 12% interest rate charged on the facility — may be too onerous for some groups of women, especially poor rural women (see Exhibit 3).

Based on the above findings, mainstreaming gender and inclusion into the Access to Finance Programme would entail:

- Adopting a gender and inclusion lens to ensure that disadvantaged groups (women, youth, PWDs, etc.) have access to finance on an equitable basis to non–disadvantaged groups. This could entail: lowering collateral requirements; adjusting eligibility criteria; not supplying credit officers with information on applicants’ sex, age, disability status and/or marital status; setting quotas and/or performance targets for lending to these groups; etc.
- Maintaining policy focus on gender and inclusion when developing financial products — e.g., by applying and/or adapting BNR’s guidelines or by requesting AFR’s assistance.
- Adjusting applications procedures and awarding processes to take into account the specific constraints faced by different groups of women, youth and PWDs.
- Evaluating and continuously perfecting strategies for increasing access to capital and equipment by disadvantaged entrepreneurs, including by collecting and analysing intersectional data combining sex, age, marital status and rural/urban location.

- Developing gender–transformative and inclusive Action Plans to address gaps in access to finance and equipment by different groups of female and male entrepreneurs based on the findings of the data analysis.

Access to Business Development Advisory (BDA) Services Programme

The third programme under Pillar 2 (Access to High Quality Business Advisory Services) has two key aims:

1. To increase access to Business Advisory Services (BAS) by both start–up enterprises and growing MSMEs.
2. To improve the quality of BAS being delivered by instituting a certified Business Development Advisors (BDA) Training Programme.

Business Advisory Services (BAS) Scheme

The Gender Expert examined the following documents in relation to the BAS Scheme:

- MIFOTRA’s Guidelines on Business Advisory Services (dated 09/02/2020).
- RDB Assessment Report of the Business Development Advisory Scheme (dated 30 September 2022).
- MINICOM’s Entrepreneurship Development Policy (dated April 2020).

Analysis of this evidence produced the following insights:

- **Gender equality and social inclusion are not built into the Guidelines on the BAS Scheme.** No quotas have been set for women, youth or PWDs, and the BAS Guidelines do not state that “priority will be given” to these groups for accessing the scheme, despite MINICOM’s 2020 Entrepreneurship Development Policy noting the special barriers faced by these groups.
- **The BAS Scheme could contribute to a widening of social inequalities.** The BAS Guidelines state that selected high–growth businesses will receive subsidies covering 50% of the costs of the service, while no similar provision is available for disadvantaged groups, who may find the scheme fees of Rwf 12,000 untenable. To put the costs in perspective Rwf 12,000 is nearly one–half of the average monthly income of rural female workers (see Exhibit 3). This issue was picked up in RDB’s 2022 assessment report, which noted that “beneficiaries of the Scheme claim that the 60% own contribution is too high”, but it is not clear whether RDB’s recommendation “that the own contribution amount be reduced for the category of loan applicants of 1m and below” has been accepted or not.
- **The Scheme could open up opportunities for gender–based corruption unless appropriate safeguards are put in place.** According to the Scheme guidelines, the decision of which businesses are deemed to be high–growth, and thus deserving of the 50% subsidy, is determined by the BAS operator. Such a process could open up opportunities for gender–based corruption (e.g., sexual harassment, exploitation and/or use of sex as a form of payment) unless strong and vigorously monitored safeguards are in place.³⁶

³⁶ It should be noted that the gender audit did not find evidence that there were or were not such safeguards in place. The existence or non–existence of safeguards was not stated in the evidence surveyed. The message here is that, in principle, such safeguards should be in place and vigorously monitored.

RDB's 2022 assessment of the BAS Scheme found evidence of corruption in the form of non-compliance with scheme guidelines, which clearly stipulate that MSMEs accessing the scheme must pay own contributions of 60% (Rwf 12,000). RDB found that a large proportion (46%) of beneficiary MSMEs had paid below the mandated amount through "direct negotiation with the BDA". Wherever evidence of monetary corruption is found, there is a possibility that in some cases gender-based corruption was also involved, with women participating in the scheme being exploited in exchange for more affordable fees. In the absence of intersectional data showing how much scheme beneficiaries paid disaggregated by sex, it is not possible to identify gender-related trends to establish whether this hypothesis holds weight.

Nevertheless, the point here is to highlight the importance of putting in place appropriate measures and safeguards to counter tendencies towards corruption (gender-based or otherwise) and of collecting, analysing and reporting intersectional data to gain insights into potential gender (and inclusion) issues.

Business Development Advisors (BDA) Training Programme

The Gender Expert examined the following documents in relation to the BDA Training Programme:

- Business Development Advisors (BDAs) Training Programme Consolidated Report (November 2020–November 2021) prepared by German Sparkassenstiftung Eastern Africa (DSIK) and Rwanda Institute of Cooperatives, Entrepreneurship and Microfinance (RICEM).
- MINICOM's Entrepreneurship Development Policy (dated April 2020).

Analysis of this evidence produced the following insights:

- **The BDA Training Programme has benefited men more than women.** Only 39% of trained BDAs were women while 61% were males, which the Consolidated Report notes "indicat[es] a gender imbalance in the selection/recruitment process". Lack of quotas or special incentives to attract women may explain this imbalance.

Another possible explanation is that the training required 10 days' intensive commitment, which may be more difficult for women given gender norms assigning childcare and other domestic responsibilities to women, while such gender-based arrangements would free up men to attend the training. Also, as PSF has noted in its Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the Private Sector 2020–2024 report: "due to social norms... women entrepreneurs cannot attend certain business meetings without their husband's permission, with the risk of being attributed to some negative connotations".

Finally, as PSF has also noted, women "tend to receive less information on training, education and networking activities" due to "limited access to information-sharing platforms where ideas regarding business management are shared and new opportunities are advertised". This is linked to Rwandan women's lower access to ICT assets and lower computer literacy, compared to Rwandan men, as documented in the "Gender Profile in Information and Communication Technology (ICT)" produced by the Gender Monitoring Office (GMO).³⁷

³⁷ See https://gmo.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/profiles/new/Gender_Profile_in_ICT_Sector.pdf

- **The BDA Training Programme has taken some steps to boost participation and social inclusion.** For example, all trainings are conducted in Kinyarwanda. Likewise, the Consolidated Report ensured a gender balance in its reporting of participants' comments and photo impressions of the training.

Based on the above findings, mainstreaming gender and inclusion into the Pillar 2 Business Development Advisory Services Programme would entail:

- Adopting a gender and inclusion lens to ensure that disadvantaged groups (women, youth, PWDs, etc.) have access to BAS and BDA training on an equitable basis to non-disadvantaged groups, including through introducing quotas if appropriate.
- Ensuring that special incentives that are offered to non-disadvantaged users/participants are 'matched' in relation to disadvantaged groups — either by establishing equivalent incentive schemes or by designing gender-responsive and inclusive interventions that afford disadvantaged groups equal access.
- Putting in place safeguarding measures to protect women and other disadvantaged groups from corruption or other unfair practices during the course of policy/programme implementation.
- Using a range of different (offline as well as online) methods of publicising policies and programmes to ensure that women and other disadvantaged groups have equal access to information on new schemes and their benefits.

Access to Employment Opportunities for Youth NEET

The fourth programme under Pillar 2 (Youth NEET Employment Promotion) has two key components:

1. **Identification and categorisation of NEET youth** to inform the design of suitable interventions.
2. **Training and support for NEET youth** to build their skills and employment preparedness, with a view to improving their employability and/or potential for job creation.

The Gender Expert considered two pieces of evidence for the gender audit:

- A Labour Market Analysis of NEET Opportunities in Rwanda, produced by RDB and the Education Development Centre (EDC) in 2023.
- NST-1 Social Protection Sector Strategic Plan (SP-SSP) 2018/19 – 2023/24, produced by the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC) in December 2018.

The programme is a fairly new addition to the NSDEPS and is not yet fully developed, so suggestions are provided below of actions to be taken to mainstream gender and inclusion in the programme:

- **Social inclusion issues should be taken into account when determining which NEET youth to target.** While a programme focused on improving NEET youths' access to decent employment or self-employment in the green and blue economy is by definition inclusive — since it aims to reduce the gap between unemployed and employed youth, as well as between humans and other species — attention should be paid to the Labour Market Analysis' findings that "18% of NEET youth have completed upper secondary or university education" and that "the two fastest growing categories of NEET youth" are "youth with no education and youth with a university education".

While NEET rates among both groups are growing, one set of NEETs (upper secondary and university graduates) is growing from a low base (just 16.2% of all NEET youth aged 16–30), while the other (uneducated youth) is expanding from a much larger base (36.6%).³⁸ Furthermore, programmes across the NSDEPS (in Pillars 1 and 3) target unemployed secondary and university graduates; yet the Pillar 2 Access to Employment Opportunities for Youth NEET programme is the only NSDEPS programme that specifically targets NEET youth with no education.

On this basis, it may be argued that, in the interest of social inclusion, this programme should make NEET youth with no education its main focus. Furthermore, in line with Pillar 4 of the NST–1 Social Protection Sector Strategic Plan 2018/19–2023/24, livelihood and employment support should be targeted to “the lowest income households as well as specific vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities”.

- **Close attention must also be paid to gender.** In addition to the challenges faced by all NEET youth with no education, young NEET women with no education face additional challenges relating to gender norms and practices. Women account for the bulk (62.8%) of Rwanda’s NEET youth population aged 16–30 and have a higher NEET rate (38.4%) than their male peers (24.1%).³⁹ The bulk (74%) of Rwandan NEET youth aged 16–30 live in rural areas.⁴⁰ 36.6% have no education, while an additional 36.6% has completed only primary education. Women account for 62.4% of NEET youth with no education or primary education.

Research into the underlying reasons why NEET youth in Rwanda become discouraged and do not seek work shows that “lack of jobs in the area” is a major factor for both male and female NEETs (see Exhibit 21). However, young NEET women face additional challenges if they are pregnant or have small children, on top of the existing social norms that they should bear the greatest share of childcare and domestic work (see Exhibit 22), since low access to childcare and early childhood development (ECD) services makes it difficult for them to go to work. According to UNICEF, just 1% of Rwandan children aged 3 and below has access to ECD services, while only 18% of those aged between 3 and 6 have opportunities to attend pre-school programmes, day care, or other early learning facilities.⁴¹

Thus, a gender lens should be adopted when targeting programme beneficiaries, so that in line with Outcome 5 of the NST–1 Social Protection Sector Strategic Plan 2018/19 – 2023/24: “Extremely poor households have increased access to livelihood support services for economic empowerment”. Likewise, the design of the programme in terms of curricula, teaching methods, assessment methods, whether it will be provided during a fixed or flexible timeframe, using online or offline methods, etc., should take into account the barriers experienced by the most vulnerable groups of female NEET youth.

- **Intersectional data should be collected and analysed to ensure that the most disadvantaged groups of NEET youth are targeted.** Targeting of the programme should not be arbitrary but instead based on data and evidence that allows for gender and inclusion issues to be taken into account.

³⁸ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), *Labour Force Survey, November 2023 (Q4) report*, January 2024.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

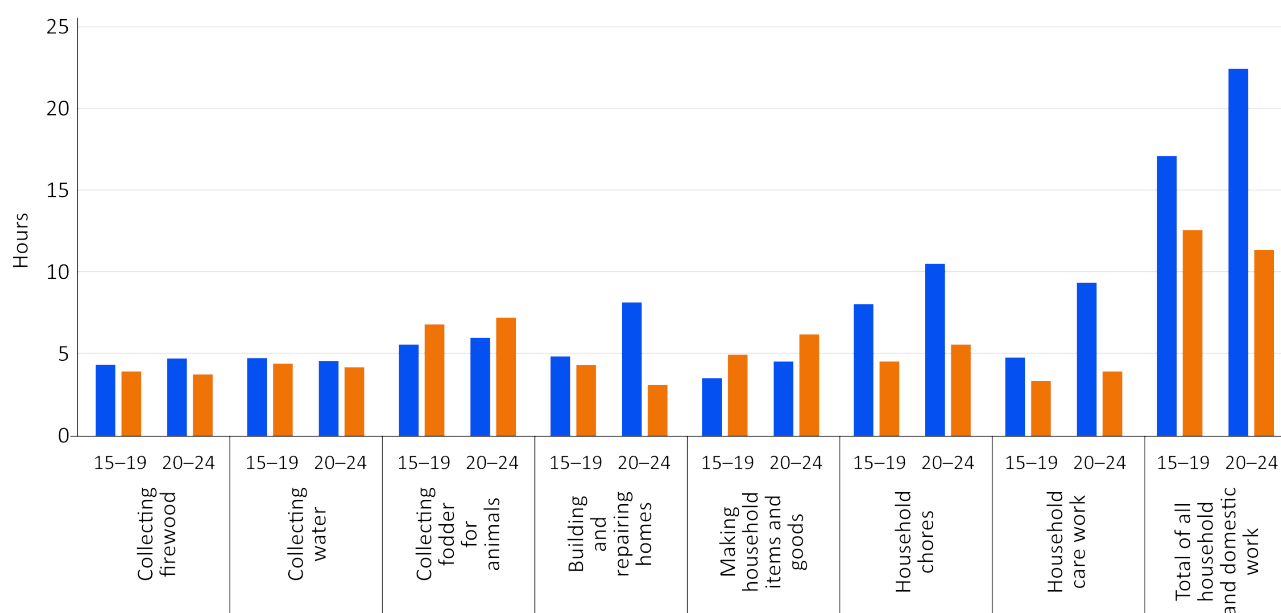
⁴¹ See <https://www.unicef.org/rwanda/>

Exhibit 21 — Reasons for youth (15 to 24) wanting work but not seeking, by sex

	Women (per cent)	Men (per cent)
Did look for work	0	1
Considered too young or too old by prospective employers	2	6
Disability	0	0
Estrangement	0	0
Lack of experience, qualification or jobs matching skills	6	8
Lack of infrastructure (assets, roads, transportation, employment services)	1	2
Lack of jobs in the area	60	65
Other sources of income (pension, rent)	1	1
Own illness	4	4
Past failure to find suitable job	8	8
Pregnancy	4	0
Presence of small children	12	2
Refusal by family	2	3

Source: UN Women (2022) *The Status of NEET in Rwanda: A Quantitative Analysis of Youth Not in Employment, Education Training*

Exhibit 22 — Average time spent on household tasks in hours per week by sex and age group (15–24)



Note: Average hours are calculated as the weighted average of those respondents who engaged in the task.

Source: UN Women (2022) *The Status of NEET in Rwanda: A Quantitative Analysis of Youth Not in Employment, Education or Training*

The Gender Expert has learned that a NEET concept note and project model have been developed and discussed with NSDEPS Heads at Institutional committee level, with plans to reach 120,000 youth (10% of the Rwandan NEET youth population) over five years. It was tentatively agreed that the project will aim to enrol 60% young women and 4% youth with disabilities.

Targeting in this case would be done on the basis of single demographic characteristics – that is, being a NEET female or NEET youth with disabilities — without acknowledging that not all NEET females or youth with disabilities are equally disadvantaged or vulnerable. For example, data from the latest quarterly LFS shows that 18.1% of NEET females have an upper secondary or university qualification, as compared with 69.8% who have no education or only primary education.⁴² Such issues need to be considered to ensure that “[e]xtremely poor and vulnerable households receive technical and vocational training” as well as employment support, in line with Outcome 5 of the NST–1 SP–SSP.

Based on the above findings, mainstreaming gender and inclusion into the Youth NEET Employment Promotion Programme would entail:

- Collecting and analysing intersectional data to ensure that the most disadvantaged groups of NEET youth — especially those who lack access to other NSDEPS programmes — are targeted.
- Adopting a gender and inclusion lens to design programmes that are tailored to the specific needs of the targeted populations, based on available evidence regarding the barriers they encounter in accessing training and support.
- Ensuring that the programme is designed with employment outcomes at the end of training in mind. Entrepreneurship training and support should be emphasised in contexts where there is a “lack of jobs”.

The Gender Expert acknowledges that plans may already be in place to collect and analyse intersectional data, and then use the results to design NEET–focused skills development and employability programmes, as part of the first component (identification and categorisation of NEET youth) of the Youth NEET programme.

Gender–Related Gaps in Pillar 2 Programmes

One cross–cutting issue, which the NSDEPS should consider targeting to increase its effectiveness and success rate, concerns the environment for maintaining and growing businesses in Rwanda. Despite the low costs and ease of setting up a business in Rwanda relative to most other countries,⁴³ the costs associated with maintaining and/or growing a business (after the first two years’ fee–free period for MSMEs) may add to the layers of disadvantage faced by women, youth and PWD business owners, who tend to have lower business survival rates compared to other groups.⁴⁴

During the November 2023 consultations, one young entrepreneur told the Gender Expert that, despite having an established business with a stable customer base, she was unable to grow her business and was thinking about shutting down entirely due to some of the new requirements she was being asked to comply with as she tried to move her business from a micro to a small enterprise. For example, obtaining certification of compliance with environmental regulations (which is needed by manufacturing firms with their own premises) involves several complex procedures and costs several thousands of US dollars, which is difficult for a young entrepreneur — in particular, a young female entrepreneur with limited assets — to meet.

⁴² National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), *Labour Force Survey, November 2023 (Q4) report*, January 2024.

⁴³ See 2020 World Bank Doing Business Report for Rwanda at this link: <https://www.doingbusiness.org/content/dam/doingBusiness/country/r/rwanda/RWA.pdf>

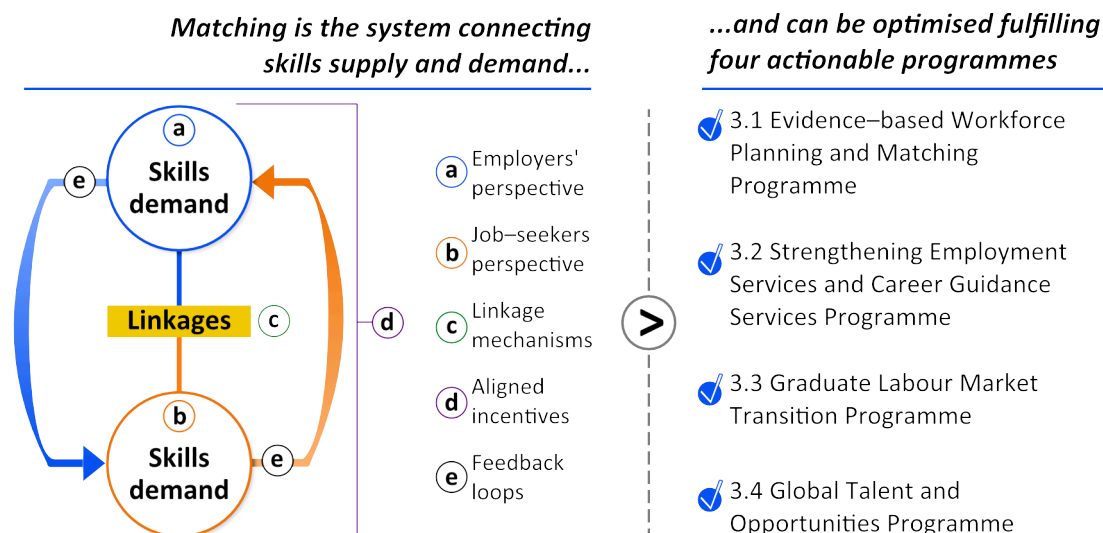
⁴⁴ For example, see: https://www.eprnrwanda.org/IMG/pdf/daniel_edited.pdf; <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/XJM-07-2021-0193/full/html>; and <https://www.abacademies.org/journals.html>

Considering further improvements to the business environment (for example, by implementing more flexible payment schedules for certain fees) — or alternatively, providing more extensive information on future costs, as well as training and support to improve entrepreneurs’ skills in market analysis and forward planning, particularly to those groups known to have low business survival rates — may be needed to level the playing field, as well as to enable the growth of innovative new businesses that cannot (yet) afford spaces on SEZs.

Pillar 3: Labour Market Analysis and Matching

Pillar 3 of the NSDEPS aims to develop a well-functioning job ecosystem in Rwanda and to strengthen linkages between employers and graduates/jobseekers through programmes focused on the development of an evidence-based workforce planning and matching system, improvements in career guidance and employment services, and training to build national capacities to produce and utilise labour market research and analysis. Pillar 3 interventions will also facilitate labour migration from and to Rwanda.

Exhibit 23 — Strategic Framework for Pillar 3 on Labour Market Analysis and Matching



Evidence-Based Workforce Planning and Matching Programme

The first programme under Pillar 3 (Evidence-based Workforce Planning and Matching) has two key aims:

1. Development of a centralised **Rwanda Labour Market Information System (LMIS)** to provide policymakers, employers, educators, job seekers and researchers with data and information on labour market trends, skills gaps and emerging opportunities.
2. Undertaking **labour market analyses** to provide a firm evidence base to inform workforce planning and the national skills development agenda.

Rwanda Labour Market Information System (LMIS)

The Rwanda Labour Market Information System (LMIS) is being implemented but has not yet launched, and may be found at this url: <https://lmis.rdb.rw/>. The LMIS collects, analyses, and disseminates information relating to the labour market (including employment trends, job vacan-

cies, skills requirements and wages) to provide employers, educators, and policymakers with insights on labour market trends, skills gaps and emerging opportunities, which are needed to design high-quality, demand-driven education and training programs that build the skills needed to support economic growth and competitiveness. It also integrates education and training data to improve institutions' monitoring and evaluation capacity, and provides information on different occupations to help individuals make informed decisions about their education and training and career pathways.

The LMIS leverages existing datasets (e.g., from NSIR's Establishments Census and MINEDUC's Education Management Information System), as well as the products of other Pillar 3 interventions (e.g., the Kora Job Portal, National Skills Database, TVET graduates' record, etc.) and brings them together in one place, allowing users to capitalise on the LMIS's analytical capabilities to generate custom reports that meet their specific needs.

It is difficult to analyse a system that is not yet fully developed. Nevertheless, gender audit of the LMIS portal, a 'factsheet' on the LMIS produced by RDB and Skills Rwanda⁴⁵, and consultations with the LMIS developer provides the following insights:

- **The LMIS contains sex-disaggregated data** on employees and managerial staff by sector, workers' status (formal/informal), and educational enrolments and graduates. However, data on the LMIS is not reported on an intersectional basis incorporating, for example, sex and rural/urban dimensions.
- **Data relating to social inclusion is also not reported in the LMIS.** Neither employment nor educational data is reported in such a way as to offer insights into the inclusion (or exclusion) of PWDs or other frequently marginalised groups.
- **The LMIS has functionality to enable intersectional analyses.** The LMIS developer has told the Gender Expert that the LMIS can be upgraded to include other data or analyses based on user feedback. LMIS managers can also approach government agencies to ask that data be elaborated to meet user requests. For example, the LMIS developer has already worked with MINEDUC to request data elaboration in relation to categorisation of learning institutions (by level of education as well as general education or TVET).
- **The LMIS often uses the term "gender" instead of "sex" when reporting sex-disaggregated data.** This seems to be the case even when the source dataset correctly uses the phrases "sex" or "by sex".

Based on the above findings, mainstreaming gender and inclusion in the LMIS would entail:

- Expanding the list of indicators included on the system to target inclusion as well as gender.
- Ensuring that all survey data are analysed to assess gender impacts on a sex-disaggregated basis (at minimum) and on an intersectional basis (wherever possible and relevant).
- Taking care to distinguish between and accurately use gender-related concepts.

⁴⁵ Skills Rwanda is managed by RDB CSO

Labour Market Analyses

Several labour market analyses were conducted under the framework of NSDEPS Pillar 3 to provide data and information on the skills and employment landscape in Rwanda:

- 2022 Rwanda Annual State of Skills Supply and Demand Report.⁴⁶
- 2023 Rwanda NEET Report.
- Skills snapshots/briefs covering the ICT, transport and logistics/storage, tourism and construction sectors.

All of these reports and snapshots rely on existing datasets, with their value-added being the analytical lens applied to the data to make findings relevant for policymakers and others (e.g., employers, educators, researchers, etc.). They also share common features when viewed from a gender perspective:

- **The reports and snapshots contain sex-disaggregated data** in cases where they take into account sex differences, which is not often. Of the 22 exhibits included in the 2023 NEET Report, only 5 (or 22%) contain breakdowns by sex. Of the 38 exhibits relating to the labour market and skills supply profiles included in the 2022 Annual State of Skills Supply and Demand Report, only 7 (or 18%) contain sex-disaggregated data.
- **None of the reports or snapshots contain intersectional data**, which could provide indications as to the underlying reasons for the observed sex differences. Of course, the reason for this is that the source data often also does not report intersectional effects, preferring instead to report data disaggregated by sex and by rural/urban location separately, albeit side-by-side (in the case of the Labour Force Surveys). Yet even where intersectional data is reported – as in the case of “Employed population”, which was reported on an intersectional basis in the 2022 Labour Force Survey⁴⁷ — this was not picked up and reported in either the NEET Report or the Annual State of Skills Supply and Demand Report.
- **Data relating to social inclusion is not reported in any of the reports or snapshots**, although the term “workers with disabilities” appears in the snapshot of the construction sector (but only to report what data is reported in the Labour Force Survey)
- **All of the reports and snapshots use the term “gender” rather than “sex” when reporting sex-disaggregated data.** This is the case even when the source data correctly uses the phrases “sex” or “by sex”. For example, the term “gender” appears on only five pages of the 2022 Labour Force Survey (e.g., to refer to “gender differentials in managerial positions”), while the term “sex” appears on 66 pages of the final survey report.

Based on these findings, mainstreaming gender and inclusion into the labour market analyses would entail:

- Ensuring that, to the extent possible, all indicators are reported and analysed on a sex-disaggregated basis (at minimum) and an intersectional basis (where possible and relevant) to assess gender impacts.

⁴⁶ This has been conducted only once, despite the title, and will be conducted once every two years in future

⁴⁷ Table C. 23 on p. 107 of the report

- Ensuring that, to the extent possible, indicators relating to disability status are reported and analysed.
- Considering providing feedback and/or requests for more complex intersectional data – including data on disability status, as well as age and location (rural/urban) – from the agencies producing the source data.
- Taking care to distinguish between and accurately use gender-related concepts.

Strengthening Employment Services and Career Guidance Programme

The second programme under Pillar 3 (Strengthening Employment Services and Career Guidance) has three key components:

1. **Development of the Kora Job Portal** matching platform to link jobseekers with potential employers.
2. **Strengthening employment services** to improve access and quality
3. **Development of a National Career Guidance Policy** and strategy to strengthen career guidance capacity.

Kora Job Portal

The Kora Job Portal is a matching platform established by RDB with the aim of linking jobseekers to potential employers. The portal, which can be accessed on <https://jobportal.kora.rw/>, provides information on jobs, internships and training opportunities, as well as career guidance and the National Employment Programme. The idea is that employers will post job openings, which jobseekers can see and apply for by uploading their CVs. The portal will also function as a client management tool for the Public Employment Service Centres.

The portal has been set up but not yet launched, so the number of job listings are limited (17 at the time of writing) compared to the number of jobseekers on RDB’s internal database (over 9,600 male jobseekers and 8,300 female jobseekers).

Given that the portal is at an early stage of development, a gender and inclusion audit is not possible, so suggestions are instead provided for considerations to mainstream gender and inclusion in the portal — for example:

- Putting in place mechanisms to ensure that job descriptions do not contain gendered language in role profiles (e.g., “maid” instead of “cleaner”).
- Introducing safeguards against gendered hiring (e.g., not stipulating that candidates must be male or female) unless this is a genuine requirement of the job (e.g., carer for an elderly female paraplegic, who needs help washing and dressing). This could be achieved, for example, by omitting candidates’ first name, sex and age on information conveyed to employers.
- Considering how the portal can be accessed by groups (such as women, jobseekers in rural areas, etc.) who may have low digital access and/or skills. One possible method is by having facilitated access in, for example, public or private employment centres or educational institutions.
- Undertaking research into mechanisms for enabling a wide range of PWDs to access and utilise the portal.
- Promoting the hiring of PWDs and other disadvantaged groups via the portal — e.g., by using the portal to publicise positive news regarding their skills or achievements in the world of work.

Strengthening Employment Services

Gender analysis of three Kigali Employment Service Centre (KESC) tracer study reports relating to the periods from January–June 2020, July–December 2020, and January 2021–June 2022 produced the following insights:

- **Most jobseekers in Rwanda obtain information about job positions or self-employment opportunities from their family, friends, relatives and social networks, rather than from employment service centres or RDB** (see Exhibit 24). From a gender lens, this situation likely contributes to occupational gender segregation, since there are no independent voices to assist women in challenging entrenched norms regarding what jobs and careers are suitable for women. The KESC tracer study reports showed that, in most cases, jobs obtained by jobseekers were entirely or somewhat related to their qualifications or field of study. Since gender segregation is evident in fields of study (see Exhibit 7), it stands to reason that occupational gender segregation also occurs in Rwanda — which may in turn explain female jobseekers’ lower employment rates compared to male jobseekers (see Exhibit 25), given that some “traditionally female” occupations are experiencing declining employment numbers amid an oversupply of workers.⁴⁸

Exhibit 24 — Source of information for jobseekers about job positions/internships applied for

Type of Position	Friends, family, relatives, social network			Employment Service Centre or RDB		
	Jan 2021–Jun 2022	Jul–Dec 2020	Jan–Jun 2020	Jan 2021–Jun 2022	Jul–Dec 2020	Jan–Jun 2020
Job positions/self-employment	74%	14%	26%	1%	3%	4%
Internships	41%		7%	18%		18%

Source: Compilation of data from various Kigali Employment Service Centre (KESC) Tracer Study Reports

Exhibit 25 — Employment/Self-Employment rate of jobseekers responding to KESC tracer survey

Sex of jobseeker	Jan 2021–Jun 2022	Jul–Dec 2020	Jan–Jun 2020
Male	41%	49%	19%
Female	29%	22%	11%

Source: Compilation of data from various KESC Tracer Study Reports

- **Women are less likely to access public employment service centres than men** (see Exhibit 26). This may be due to lack of demand and/or because there are too few employment centres — only three in Kigali, Musanze and Huye, which are understaffed.⁴⁹ In cases where there is a lack of nearby facilities, women tend to encounter greater challenges than men in accessing them due to having less available time or because of restrictions arising from safety concerns or gender norms relating to travelling far distances.

⁴⁸ See RDB CSO, *Rwanda: Annual State of Skills Supply and Demand Report 2022*

⁴⁹ RDB, NSDEPS 2019–2024 Strategy Document and a 2022 rapid review of Public Employment Services Centres

Exhibit 26 — Respondents to KESC tracer survey, disaggregated by sex

Sex of jobseeker	Jan 2021–Jun 2022	Jul–Dec 2020	Jan–Jun 2020
Male	331	116	109
Female	138	27	99

Source: Compilation of data from various KESC Tracer Study Reports

While online matching platforms exist, women — especially those from poorer and/or disconnected communities — likely have lower access to them due to limited access to digital resources and/or inadequate digital skills.

- **The KESC tracer studies are characterised by the same issues noted for other tracer studies reviewed earlier in this report.** These issues include:
 - Sex-disaggregated data being reported for very few indicators (e.g., respondent numbers by sex and current work status of jobseekers), while many other relevant indicators (e.g., satisfaction level with services received, unemployed respondents’ status, source of information about positions applied for) are not reported on a sex-disaggregated basis.
 - Intersectional data — for example, combining sex and age range or residence — not being reported, even where this data has been collected via the tracer survey questionnaire, as was the case for the January 2021–June 2022 KESC tracer study.
 - Not reporting data relating to PWDs, even where this data has been collected in the tracer survey questionnaire, as was the case for the January 2021–June 2022 KESC tracer study, which included a question to assess the presence of different types of disabilities.
 - Confusing “sex” with “gender” when reporting results.

Taking into account the above points, planned NSDEPS interventions aimed at scaling-up public employment centres and forming strategic partnerships with private recruitment agencies would likely be positive developments from a gender and inclusion perspective. Women with limited digital access and/or skills would benefit from greater access to facilitated job search support in public or private employment centres. PWDs as well as women would benefit from shorter distances to travel to access these services in person, should they wish or need to.

However, quality issues would need to be addressed at the same time. Training and capacity building of employment service centre staff, which has already begun to take place in relation to use of the Kora job portal, is a welcome development. Likewise, NSDEPS plans to introduce quality standards as the basis for licencing staff in private as well as public employment centres could be used as a basis for ensuring that gender and inclusion issues are mainstreamed. Suggestions of policies that could be adopted are listed above, in the subsection relating to the Kora job portal.

To target gender as well as inclusion, planned outreach events by employment services should target not only university students on IPRC and university campuses, but also basic education graduates or uneducated males and females in community locations, with a view to shifting gender norms and standards. These outreach events should focus on providing accurate information on the current and future labour market, as well as on raising awareness of the range of careers available to TVET students and graduates in different fields and occupations.

National Career Guidance Policy

A Career Guidance concept note has been developed and will form the basis of a new Career Guidance Policy and Strategy to be developed under the framework of the NSDEPS. The concept note does not specifically take into account gender and inclusion issues, although it acknowledges that “many people are experiencing barriers such as rural isolation or disabilities” and emphasises that meeting “diverse and complex” needs requires undertaking “further research before targeting support”. The stated aim of NSDEPS career guidance interventions, according to the Career Guidance concept note, is to “introduce a national approach to Career Guidance for use in Public Employment Service Centres (PESCs), Training Providers, and other channels”.

Given that deeply ingrained gender norms concerning which learning pathways and careers are suitable for girls/women versus boys/men are passed down to children by their families, teachers and wider society, the “other channels” aspect of the NSDEPS plan has particular significance in the context of mainstreaming gender and inclusion. Harmful gender norms need to be challenged, both within educational institutions and PESCs as well as outside — through outreach to parents, employers and wider communities. The same is also true in terms of forging pathways for PWDs and other disadvantaged/marginalised groups affected by social stereotypes and prejudice.

The new Career Guidance Policy and Strategy should encompass training and awareness to sensitise career guidance staff of their unconscious gender and inclusion biases. Such training would include, for example, learning to deconstruct gender stereotypes, such as false images of technology as “male” domains, and learning to identify and avoid use of gender stereotypes in images and as examples in promotional materials and other resources. It would also include learning to provide individualised career guidance and counselling for PWDs and other disadvantaged groups to help them explore their passions and strengths in an accessible and supportive environment. Different communication channels should be explored, including social media.

In-school career guidance programmes should aim to raise awareness not only among learners, but also among parents, who are the most influential socialisation agents and the main sources of career guidance for their children, even when they lack information on the labour market.⁵⁰ Engaging parents and increasing their access to real knowledge and information could cause them to question why they are more likely to expect their sons to work in STEM careers, even when their daughters perform as well (or better) in STEM subjects in school. It should be noted that RTTI offers a training module in its TVET trainer certificate programme, which includes content on mainstreaming gender and people with special needs in terms of implementing career guidance events – for example, by ensuring a gender balance in the use of role models and testimonies. This may be a useful tool when drafting the new Career Guidance Policy and Strategy.

Data and performance targets should form the basis of career guidance and counselling services offered by PESCs. The KESC tracer study reports referred to earlier reported that jobseekers who accessed the centre’s coaching and individual or group counselling services were least likely to rate the services as “very helpful” or to state that they were “very satisfied” with the service in comparison to other services received.⁵¹ Providing targeted training backed by staff access to up-to-date labour market information would serve to professionalise the services, but should include training in gender-responsive and inclusive methods to ensure that PESCs meet the “diverse and

⁵⁰ See <https://www.iop.org/sites/default/files/2023-02/Gender-inclusive-careers-guidance.pdf>

⁵¹ However, most jobseekers rated the services as “helpful” or “satisfactory”

complex” needs of clientele. There should also be standards and targets, with funding tied to performance, to provide incentives for quality service provision.

Shifting gender norms and attitudes will require engaging community/religious leaders and other influential socialisation agents (including men and boys), as well as ensuring that career guidance approaches are responsive to local needs — for example, by tailoring communications (including the language used) to the groups being targeted. For greater impact, messages should emphasise that gender is not “just a woman’s issue” and how gender norms and standards also affect boys and men. Stakeholders who attended the gender mainstreaming validation workshop in February 2024 highlighted the importance of establishing open communications between parents and children as a means of engendering positive parenting as well as enabling conversations about lived experiences of the impacts of harmful gender norms and practices.

A useful companion to the Career Guidance concept note is a pamphlet produced by the UK’s Institute of Physics as a complement to the Gatsby Foundation Good Career Guide, which provides tips on how to deliver gender-inclusive career guidance. While it has been written for use in schools, its findings and tips have wider relevance. The pamphlet may be accessed at this link: <https://www.iop.org/>)

Graduate Labour Market Transition Programme

The third programme under Pillar 3 (Graduate Labour Market Transition Programme) has two key aims: development of a National Internship Portal to connect employers and graduates participating in the National Professional Internship Programme; and improving graduate work readiness through training.

National Internship Portal

The National Internship Portal is in the process of being upgraded, so is still in the testing stage. It can be accessed via this link: <https://internship.rdb.rw/>

A gender audit is not possible on a system that has not yet begun to generate data, so instead suggestions are provided for considerations to mainstream gender and inclusion in the portal, including:

- Mechanisms to ensure that job descriptions do not contain gendered language in role profiles (e.g., “supervisor” instead of “foreman”).
- Safeguards against gendered hiring (e.g., not allowing stipulations that candidates be male or female), including by omitting candidates’ first name and sex on information conveyed to employers, etc.).
- Ensuring a safe and suitable environment for female interns or interns with disabilities (e.g., suitable access arrangements, suitable toilets, protection against GBV, etc.).
- Considering how the portal can be accessed by groups (such as jobseekers in rural areas, etc.) who may have low digital access and/or skills. One possible method is by having facilitated access in, for example, public or private employment centres or educational institutions.
- Undertaking research into mechanisms for enabling a wide range of PWDs to access and utilise the portal.
- Promoting the hiring of PWDs and other disadvantaged groups via the portal — e.g., by publicising positive news via the portal about their skills or achievements in the world of work.

NSDEPS Monitoring & Evaluation Framework

The current monitoring and evaluation framework pertaining to programmes under each pillar of the NSDEPS is shown below. While the indicators are performance-based and quantifiable, only three indicators collect sex-disaggregated data, and all three relate to the employment outcomes of TVET and Higher Learning graduates. Equivalent sex-disaggregated data is not gathered for graduates of non-formal training programmes (e.g., NEET youth).

None of the indicators aim to assess the NSDEPS' impacts on the employment outcomes of PWDs. Likewise, indicators do not gauge whether NSDEPS interventions have resulted in an increase in the availability of services (e.g., employment services centres) in rural or other previously under-served areas. Instead, progress is measured based on whether a larger number of individuals or firms (in the case of BAS) have access to these services. This of course makes sense in the context of a greater number of online tools on offer, where individuals with digital tools and skills can access services virtually instead of physically. However, attention should be paid to gathering as much disaggregated data as possible regarding the sources and locations of services being rendered/accessed, as well as the demographic characteristics of individuals accessing the services (where relevant and feasible).

While it is acknowledged that efforts have been made to reduce the number of performance targets to make it relatively easy to monitor the effectiveness of NSDEPS interventions, the indicators as they are currently formulated do not take into account gender or inclusion. However, they do allow for an assessment of the differences between female and male TVET and Higher Learning graduates in terms of employment rates.

PILLAR 1: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

National Training and Education Excellence Programme and Market-led Education Initiative

Outcome	Indicator	Target (2023–2024)
Enhanced labour market outcomes of graduates from TVET & HLIs	% of employers satisfied with TVET graduates	82%
	% of TVET graduates employed within 6 months of graduation (female/male)	75%
	% of employers satisfied with HLI graduates	70%
	% of HLI graduates employed within 6 months of graduation (female/male)	58%

Capacity Development Programme

Outcome	Indicator	Target (2023–2024)
Strengthened capacities of staff from both public and the private sector to improve service delivery and institutional performance	Increase in number of certified professionals in the identified institutions sponsored / supported through NSDEPS (ACCA, CPA, PHRI, CFA, PmP, Data science, Certification of Board Members)	100
	The increase in number of staff from private sector who benefit from generic courses and other on the job training programs supported through NSDEPS	850

PILLAR 2: EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION

Access to Markets Programme

Outcome	Indicator	Target (2023–2024)
Improved access to Markets for micro, small and large enterprises	Increase in the number of businesses accessing and using marketing platforms (including e-commerce)	17%
	Increase in the number of businesses complying with product and service quality standards	8%

Access to Finance Programme and Business Development Advisory Services (BDAS) Programme

Outcome	Indicator	Target (2023–2024)
Increased access to finance and business development services	Increase in the number of SMEs accessing business development services	6,615
	increase in the number of BDA Certified to support SMEs to access business advisory services	150
	Increase in the number of SMEs accessing finance	3,250

Access to Employment Opportunities for Youth NEET

Outcome	Indicator	Target (2023–2024)
Increased access to skills and entrepreneurship/employment opportunities for NEET	Percentage of trained youth (previously NEET) who join the workforce after completion of training within six months	30%
	Percentage of youth (previously NEET) who are employed through government flagship projects	30%
	% of youth NEET who are employed or self-employed through access to finance support	40%

PILLAR 3: MATCHING

Evidence-Based Workforce Planning and Matching Programme

Outcome	Indicator	Target (2023–2024)
Improved access to evidence-based information on skills demand and supply	Availability of functional LMIS	1
	Annual skills demand and supply report available	6

Strengthening Employment Services and Career Guidance Programme

Outcome	Indicator	Target (2023–2024)
Improved access to Career Guidance/Employment Services	Increase in number of graduates who access Employment Services/Career Guidance	16,000

Graduate Labour Market Transition Programme

Outcome	Indicator	Target (2023–2024)
Improved employability skills for university graduates and young professionals	% Of graduates from TVET and HLIs employed after 6 months of professional internship training (female/male)	72%
	% of young professionals employed after completion of YPP within six (6) months	75%
	% of beneficiaries of work readiness programme who are employed within 6 months after completion of the training	60%

Global Talent and Employment Opportunities Programme

Outcome	Indicator	Target (2023–2024)
Increased access to regional and global employment opportunities in high priority sectors	% Of TVET and HLIs accessing regional and global employment opportunities	4%

Key Findings and Proposed Mainstreaming Strategy

Key Findings from the Gender Audit

Adopting a gender lens to critically analyse the programmes and strategic interventions developed under the framework of the NSDEPS highlights some common themes across the different interventions (see Exhibit 27):

- **In cases where attempts have been made to address gender, there has been a tendency to conflate “sex” with “gender”.** This has resulted in evaluations of NSDEPS policies and programmes reporting only sex–disaggregated data (and referring to their results as “gender–disaggregated”). The practice allows for broad generalisations to be made regarding the differences between all males and all females on a given attribute or attributes, but does not allow for identification of which specific groups of males or females are especially disadvantaged, and thus require targeting to “balance the scales” towards gender equality and social inclusion. The latter would require collection, analysis and reporting of intersectional data – that is, data combining sex with other salient characteristics (such as age, rural/urban location and socioeconomic status) to gain a better understanding of which groups are most affected by harmful gender norms and practices that lead to their exclusion from education and training and decent work.
- **The tendency to focus on “sex” rather than “gender” has affected how NSDEPS skills development and employment promotion interventions have been designed, and thus their success rates.** Nearly every NSDEPS policy and programme targets “males” and “females” as generic categories – in some cases, also setting quotas stipulating the percentage of females to be targeted – without taking into account the barriers that specific groups of females and males encounter based on gender. The impacts of this oversight are twofold. First, most programmes do not achieve their target of gender parity, because there is a tapering off in the numbers of women they can attract, since gender–based exclusion prevents other women from joining. Second, a focus on “women” and “men” as homogenous categories means that interventions which aim to target disadvantaged groups (e.g., the SDF Programme) instead ‘leak’ their benefits to advantaged groups, who are likely easier to locate to make up the numbers needed to implement the programme, but on the other hand can probably afford to pay for their own training etc., without recourse to public funds. Viewed from this angle, it is possible that NSDEPS interventions have contributed to a widening of social inequalities, rather than their reduction.
- **The concept of “intersectionality”, which would allow for tighter targeting of disadvantaged groups and avoid leakages of benefits to advantaged groups, seems unknown among NS-DEPS stakeholders.** Thus, even when data has been collected (or already exists) that would allow for the assessment of intersectional impacts, it is rarely utilised — resulting in a significant missed opportunity for enhancing the success rate, effectiveness, and maximum utilization of staff and funds of NSDEPS interventions.

- **Current NSDEPS interventions are disability–blind and not as inclusive as they could be.** For example:
 - PWDs: Only one NSDEPS intervention (access to capital for MSMEs) offers priority status to PWDs (in addition to other disadvantaged groups) in the form of higher collateral coverage. While three other interventions make a stated commitment to the inclusion of PWDs, they do not contain any specific mechanisms for ensuring PWDs’ inclusion. Likewise, NSDEPS programme evaluations rarely report numbers or proportions of PWD beneficiaries, even when underlying questionnaires have collected data to gauge the presence or absence of PWDs.
 - Youth: Most NSDEPS programmes implicitly or explicitly target youth but, owing to a lack of focus on gender and inclusion issues, the youth who are served by NSDEPS interventions tend to be more highly educated, urbanised and of a higher socioeconomic status than the overall youth population.

The above issues highlight why a gender and inclusion focus must be adopted to increase the effectiveness, efficiency and success rate of NSDEPS interventions, as well as their contribution to Rwanda’s 2050 vision.

Proposed NSDEPS Mainstreaming Strategy

Given the large number and wide range of interventions falling under the revised NSDEPS framework, the gender and inclusion mainstreaming strategy proposed here focuses on operational procedures to follow to ensure that attention is paid to gender and inclusion in (1) the collection, analysis, reporting and use of data, (2) the design of policies and programmes, and (3) governance arrangements and structures.

Recommendations for mainstreaming gender and inclusion in the NSDEPS are organised according to these three headings, as follows:

Recommendation 1: Collection, analysis, reporting and use of data

To ensure that gender and inclusion are taken into account when gathering evidence to inform the design of policies and programmes or to evaluate measures:

- Collect data on targeted groups’ sex, age, location (rural/urban) and disability status, as well as other demographic characteristics that have emerged as relevant during previous data–gathering exercises.
- Analyse the data to assess intersectional impacts — that is, sex + other relevant characteristics, including disability status — on all indicators of interest.
- Adopt a gender and inclusion lens to develop hypotheses, based on existing (secondary as well as primary) evidence, as to the underlying causes of marginalised groups’ exclusion/ disadvantage.
- Undertake or commission further research to verify or nullify these hypotheses.
- Adjust policy/programme design as needed.

Recommendation 2: Design of policies and programmes

To ensure that gender and inclusion are mainstreamed in the design of NSDEPS policies and programmes:

- Use intersectional data whenever possible to tightly target beneficiaries. This will enhance the success rate, effectiveness, and maximum utilization of staff and funds (as well as prevent leakages).
- Assume a gender and inclusion lens in determining how best to attract beneficiary groups (e.g., quotas are not the best option in all cases, but in many cases they are).
- Take into account the barriers experienced by different groups when determining application processes and scheme costs to beneficiaries.
- Put in place accessibility measures to provide equal opportunities, as well as safeguards to ensure that participants can learn and earn in a safe environment.
- For skills training programmes, ensure that gender-responsive and inclusive methodologies are adopted in relation to curriculum design, teaching methods and assessments.

Recommendation 3: Governance arrangements and structures

To ensure gender equality and social inclusion in governance arrangements and structures:

- Assign women, youth and PWDs equal rights and status in all policies, frameworks and strategies.
- Ensure women are placed in top leadership roles in all decision making organs conforming to at least the statutory requirements, but preferably on a more equitable basis.
- Ensure there is no gendering of women's roles on structures and committees, and that women are given the training and support needed to serve in leadership positions effectively and efficiently.
- Ensure youth and PWDs are represented in top leadership and decision making committees relating to the policies and programmes that affect them, and ensure that they receive training and support to serve in their roles effectively and efficiently.
- Adjust governing frameworks and guidelines to ensure that participation of women, youth and PWDs is substantive and not simply symbolic.

Exhibit 27 — Consideration of gender & inclusion across NSDEPS pillars, programmes & interventions

	Gender Aspects			Inclusion Aspects	
	Sex differences (M/F)	Intersectional data (sex + others)	Root causes of sex differences	Targeting of PWDs	Targeting other excluded groups
NSDEPS pillars, programmes, and strategic interventions					
Pillar 1: Skills Development					
1.1 National Training and Excellence Programme					
• Graduate Tracking System (GTS)	(Only some indicators)				
1.2 Market-led Education Initiatives					
• Sector Skills Councils (SSCs)					
• Workplace learning (WPL)	(Quota)		(GBV safeguards + MIGEPROF)	(Stated commitment – no quota)	
• National Professional Internship Programme (covered w/WPL)					
1.3 Capacity Development Programme					
• Skills Development Fund (SDF) Programme	(Stated commitment – no quota)				
Pillar 2: Employment Promotion					
2.1 Access to Markets Programme					
• Special Economic Zones (SEZ)					
• Cooperatives	(Stated commitment – no quota)			(Stated commitment – no quota)	
2.2 access to Finance Programme					
• Access to capital for MSMEs	(Higher collateral coverage)			(Higher collateral coverage)	(Higher collateral coverage)
• Micro leasing support for MSMEs/cooperatives	(Stated commitment – no quota)			(Stated commitment – no quota)	(Stated commitment – no quota)
2.3 High Quality Business Advisory Services Programme					
• Business Advisory Services (BAS) Scheme					
• Business Development Advisors (BDA) Training Programme					(Training conducted in Kinyarwanda)
2.4 Access to Employment Opportunities for Youth NEET					
Pillar 3: Labour Market Analysis and Matching					
3.1 Evidence-based Workforce Planning and Matching Programme					
• Rwanda Labour Market Information System (LMIS)	(Only some indicators)				
• Labour market analysis	(Only some indicators)				
3.2 Strengthening Employment Services and Career Guidance					
• Kigali Employment Service Centre (KESC) tracer studies	(Only some indicators)				
• National Career Guidance Policy					
Monitoring and Evaluation Framework					

Appendix

Table 1 — List of stakeholders consulted for NSDEPS gender audit

Date	Institution	Individuals Consulted	Position/Title	Consultation Method
07/11/2023	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF)	Silas Ngayaboshya	DG Gender Promotion and Women Empowerment	Online/virtual
09/11/2023	Gender Monitoring Office (GMO)	Donatha Gihana	Gender Technical Expert	Online/virtual
16/11/2023	Rwanda Polytechnic	Joseph Mfinanga	Technical Advisor in Academic Quality Assurance & Program Development	In-person (at MCF Rwanda Partner Convening Event)
16/11/2023	Uwezo Youth Empowerment	Bahati Satir Omar	Founding Executive Director	In-person (at MCF Rwanda Partner Convening Event)
16/11/2023	Glow Force; iGiTree; and Greece Fav	Cheyenne Mivunyi; Deexon Muhizi; and Umubyeyi Grace	Youth entrepreneurs with successful MSMEs (Greece Fav is still at start-up phase)	In-person (post-MCF Partner Convening Event)
17/11/2023	Brews & Buzz Bistro; and Therapeutic Gardens	Darius Nyiringango; and Alida Kabasinga	Youth entrepreneurs with start-up MSMEs	In-person (at MCF Rwanda Partner Convening Event)
20/11/2023	Rwanda Polytechnic	Karen Odinga	GIZ Development Advisor at Rwanda Polytechnic	In-person/on-site
20/11/2023	IPRC Gishari	Gervais Mwitende	Deputy Principal in charge of Academics and Training	In-person/on-site at Rwanda Polytechnic
20/11/2023	Rwanda TVET Trainer Institute (RTTI)	Maria Bernadette M. Ramos YoungJoon Youn	KOICA/MINEDUC Project Leader and Senior TVET Specialist, TVET Quality Management Project KOICA/MINEDUC Project Results and Quality Management Specialist	In-person/on-site
20/11/2023	TSS IPRC Kigali	Francois Gahama Sibomana, plus TVET students and teachers/trainers	Director of Level 3,4,5; and 14 students (7F/7M) and 5 teacher/trainers (2F/3M) covering a range of disciplines	In-person/on-site

Date	Institution	Individuals Consulted	Position/Title	Consultation Method
21/11/2023	Rwanda Polytechnic	Karen Odinga (follow-up meeting)	GIZ Development Advisor at Rwanda Polytechnic	In-person/on-site
21/11/2023	Rwanda Polytechnic	Ephrem Musonera	Deputy Vice Chancellor – Academics, Research and Institutional Advancement	In-person/on-site
21/11/2023	Rwanda Polytechnic	Chris Marler	Multimedia Trainer	In-person/on-site
24/11/2023	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN)	Christine Mukankundiye Jean de Dieu Nturanyenabo	Gender Responsive Budget focal person, National Budget Department Private Sector and Youth Employment focal person, National Planning and Research Division	In-person/on-site
24/11/2023	Don Bosco Gantenga TVET School	Father Jean Pierre Turabanye; Fabien Kabeho; TVET students and teachers/trainers	Headmaster; Dean of Studies; 8 TVET students (4F/4M) and 4 teachers/ trainers (1F/3M) covering a range of disciplines	In-person/on-site
24/11/2023	Rwanda Men's Resource Centre (RWAMREC)	Jonathan Munyanziza	Projects Coordinator	In-person/on-site
27/11/2023	National Institute of Statistics Rwanda	Michel Ndakize Faustin Nilingiyimana	Demographic and Social Statistics Unit Director Vital statistics and cross-cutting social statistics team leader	In-person/on-site
27/11/2023	Ministry of Youth (MINIYOUTH)	Jean Pierre Habimana	Youth Employment Specialist	In-person/on-site
06/12/2023	Haguruka	Francine Mukandori	Gender Expert	Online/virtual
06/12/2023	Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA)	Jonathan Dusabe Comfort Mbabazi	Employment Policies, Strategies and Program Impact Specialist, Employment Ecosystem Department Program Coordinator, Capacity Development Policy and Strategy Analysis	Online/virtual

Date	Institution	Individuals Consulted	Position/Title	Consultation Method
06/12/2023	Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe	Emmanuel Ntagozera	Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist	Online/virtual
06/12/2023	Gender Monitoring Office (GMO)	Rebecca Asiimwe	Director for Monitoring Gender Mainstreaming	Online/virtual
11/12/2023	Rwanda TVET Board	Marie Jeanne Musabyimana	Curriculum Development Officer in charge of Competence Based Training & Quality Assurance Verification	Online/virtual
11/12/2023	Akazi Kanoze Access (AKA)	Emmanuel Ntagungira	Team Leader	Online/virtual
11/12/2023	Access to Finance Rwanda (AFR)	Agnes Uwanyiligira	Chief Programme Officer	Online/virtual
13/12/2023	United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)	Roselyne Uwamahoro	Country Lead and Programme Specialist, Inclusive Digital Economies	Online/virtual
13/12/2023	UN Women	Emma Carine Uwantege Janviere Mukantwali	Acting Country Representative Programme Specialist	Online/virtual
15/12/2023	Rwanda Women's Network	Emelyne Kaneza	Executive Secretary	Online/virtual
15/12/2023	National Women's Council (NWC)	Shakilah Bishumba	Women's Mobilisation Specialist	Online/virtual
15/12/2023	Private Sector Federation (PSF)	Clemence Murekatete Steven Karake	Employment and Labour Market Specialist, Advocacy Department Head of Quality Research Assurance	
27/12/2023	Ministry of Education (MINEDUC)	Bernard Munyaneza	Girls' Education Officer	Online/virtual

Table 2 — Sector Skills Council Governance (as of 7 February 2024)

	Name	Sex	Position	Institution/Company	Category
1	Manufacturing SSC				
	ANDREW KANYONYA	M	Chairperson	Private Sector	Business/Professional Association
	KAZAWADI PAPIAS DEDEKI	M	Vice Chairperson	Private Sector	Professional Bodies/Professional Trainers
	Alphonse Kwizera	M	Secretary	Private Sector	Private Sector Representatives
Sub-sector governance — Textiles, Leather Subgroup					
	ANDREW KANYONYA	M	Chairperson: Textiles, Leather Subgroup	Private Sector	Business/Professional Association
	John Mfuranzima	M	Vice Chairperson: Textiles, Leather Subgroup	Private Sector	Business/Professional Association
Sub-sector governance — Agro Processing					
	JUVENAL NDAVISENGA	M	Chairperson: Agro Processing	Private Sector	Business/Professional Association
2	Infrastructure SSC				
	Eng. Kangaho Gentil	M	Chairperson	Private Sector	Professional Bodies/Professional Trainers
	Richard Ngendahayo	M	1 st Vice Chairperson	Private Sector	Professional Bodies/Professional Trainers
	Kamiya Hakizimana	M	2 nd Vice Chairperson	Private Sector	Professional Bodies/Professional Trainers
	Eng. Nyirinkindi Emmanuel	M	Secretary	Private Sector	Professional Bodies/Professional Trainers
2.1 Architects and Built Environment					
	Flavia Gwiza	F	Chairperson	Private Sector	Business/Professional Association
	Lilianne Mupende	F	Coordinator	Private Sector	Business/Professional Association
	Davis Nduwamungu	M	Secretary	Private Sector	Business/Professional Association
2.2 Environment					
	Mugabo Charles	M	Chairperson	Private Sector	Professional Bodies/Professional Trainers
	Dr. Abias Maniragaba	M	Coordinator	Private Sector	Professional Bodies/Professional Trainers
	Bonny Epimaque Rutembesa	M	Secretary	Private Sector	Professional Bodies/Professional Trainers

Name	Sex	Position	Institution/Company	Category
2.3 Engineering				
Dng. Fred Rwhunda	M	Chairperson	Private Sector	Professional Bodies/Professional Trainers
Eng. Yvete Uwanje Munyaneza	F	Secretary	Private Sector	Professional Bodies/Professional Trainers
3 Mining				
Leonidas Simpenzwe	M	Chairperson	Rwanda Mining Association	Professional Bodies/Professional Trainers
Jean-Claude Ngaruye	M	Vice Chairperson	RMB	Government Representatives/Government Agencies
Dr. Digne Rwabuhungu	M	Vice Chairperson	School of Mines and Geology at UR	Education Providers/Representatives
Frank Butera	M	Coordinator	Rwanda Mining Association	Private Sector Representatives
Mining and Quarry Sub-Sector				
Luke Rogers	M	Member	Rutongo Mines Ltd	Business/Professional Association
Justin Uwiringiyimana	M	Member	Ngororero Mining Company Ltd	Business/Professional Association
Julian Nixon	M	Member	Rutongo mines Ltd	Business/Professional Association
Janvier Ndabananiye	M	Member	New Bugarama Mining Ltd	Business/Professional Association
Forongo Janvier	M	Member	Rwanda Quarry Association	Business/Professional Association
Oil and Gas Sub-Sector				
Dr. Ivan Twagirashema	M	COO	RMB	Government Representatives/Government Agencies
Augusta Umutoni	M	Coordinator	Oil and Gas sub-sector coordinator, independent consultant	Business/Professional Association
Donat Nsengumuremyi	M	DM		

Name	Sex	Position	Institution/Company	Category
Dr. Theophile Mugerwa	M	Member	School of Mining and Geology, UR	Education Providers/Representatives
George Munyaneza	M	Member	Ngali Mining Ltd (Oil and Gas exploration)	Business/Professional Association
Ireny Nizere, Sector Expert	M	Member	Gasmeth	Business/Professional Association
4 Finance				
Herbert Asiimwe	M	Board Member Nominee & Chair	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN)	Government Representatives/Relevant Sector Ministries
Dr. Edward Kadozi	M	Board Member Nominee & Vice Chair	Rwanda Development Board (RDB)	Government Representatives/Government Agencies
Hortense Mudenge	F	Board Member Nominee & Secretariat/KFL	Rwanda Finance Limited	Private sector Representatives/Private Coordinating Agency
Niky Barigye	M	Board Member Nominee	Rwanda Finance Limited	Private sector Representatives/Private Coordinating Agency
Tony Francis Ntore	M	Board Member Nominee	Rwanda Banker's Association (RBA)	Business/Professional Association
Denise Rwakayija	F	Board Member Nominee	Rwanda Insurers' Association (ASSAR)	Business/Professional Association
Amin Miramago	M	Board Member Nominee	Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Rwanda (ICPAR)	Professional Bodies/Professional Trainers
Joseph Nkurunziza	M	Board Member Nominee	University of Rwanda	Education Providers/Representatives
Celestin Rwabukumba	M	Board Member Nominee	Rwanda Stock Exchange (RSE)	Government Representatives/Government agencies
Eric Bundugu	M	Board Member Nominee	Capital Market Authority (CMA)	Government Representatives/Government agencies
KIMENYI Valens	M	Board Member Nominee	National Bank of Rwanda (BNR)	Government Representatives/Government Agencies

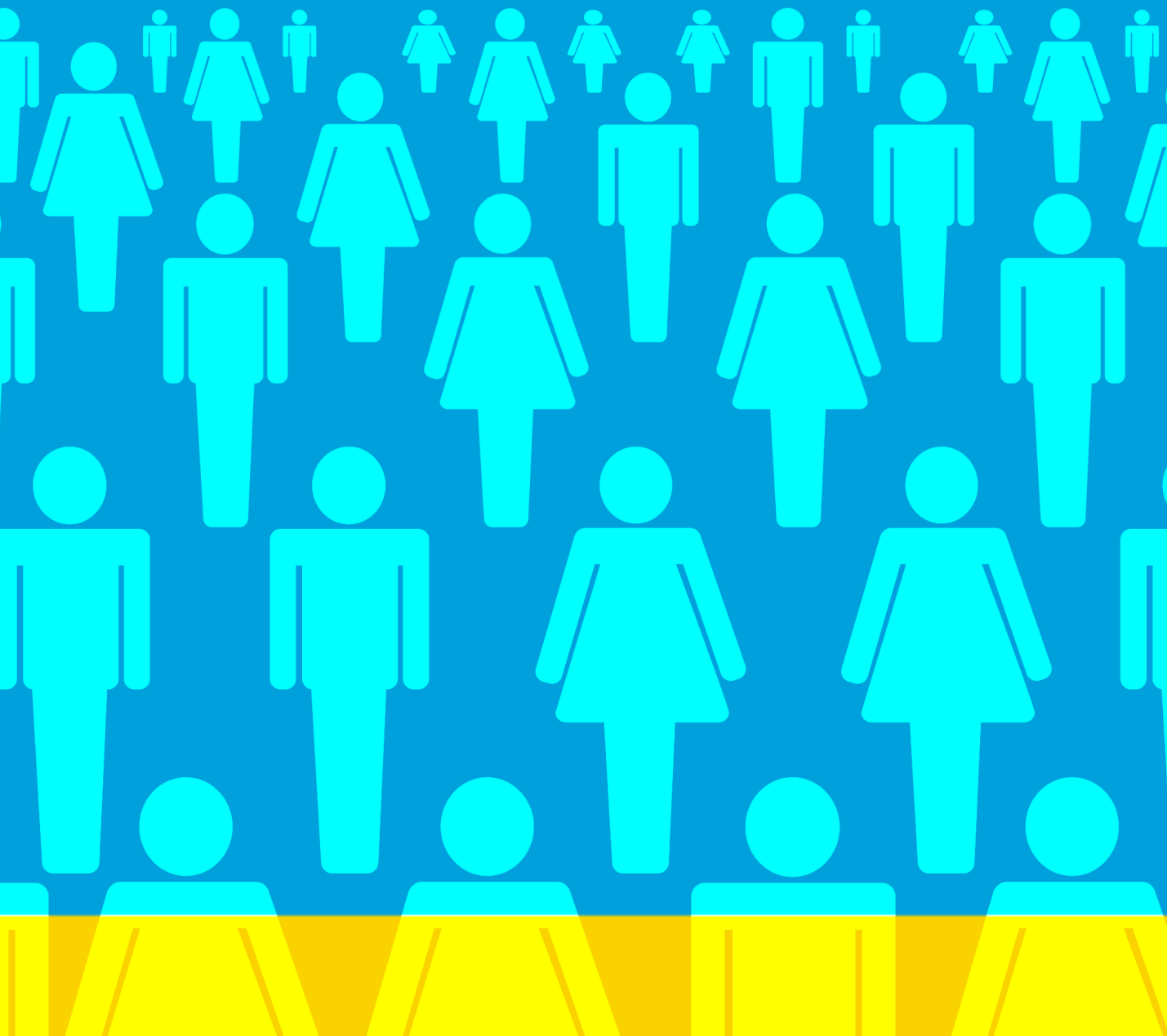
Name	Sex	Position	Institution/Company	Category
Moise NKUNDABARASHI	M	Board Member Nominee	Rwanda Bar Association (RBA)	Business/Professional Association
Stephen RUZIBIZA	M	Board Member Nominee	Private Sector Federation (PSF)	Private Sector Representatives
Jackson RWIKIRIZA	M	Board Member Nominee	Association of Microfinance Institutions in Rwanda (AMIR)	Business/Professional Association

Table 3 — Stakeholders who participated in the NSDEPS Gender Mainstreaming validation workshop

#	Institution Represented	Attendee	Position/Title	Sex
1	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF)	Bernadette Munyana	Senior Staff	F
2	Gender Monitoring Office (GMO)	Gihana Donatha	Gender Technical Expert	F
3	Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA)	Dusabe Jonathan	Senior Staff	M
4	Ministry of Education (MINEDUC)	Butera Emmanuel	HE Specialist	M
5	Rwanda Polytechnic (RP)	Ingabire Dominique	Principal RP/IPRC Karongi	M
6	Rwanda TVET Board (RTB)	Uwimana Eugene	PM–Skills Development	M
7	Gishari Integrated Polytechnic Regional College	Fabiola Batamuliza	Guidance and Counselling Officer	F
8	University of Rwanda (UR)	Katwaza Edward	Lecturer at the UR/Centre for Gender Studies	M
9	Don Bosco Gatenga TVET School	Nzaramba Emmanuel	Trainer	M
10	Don Bosco Gatenga TVET School	Mizero Jean Paul	Trainer	M
11	National Rehabilitation Service (NRS)	Ernest Munyeshema	Reintegration	M
12	National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR)	Tuyisenge Methode	Labour force Survey Specialist	M
13	National Child Development Agency (NCDA)	George Moses Kwihangana	Child Protection Technical Advisor	M
14	National Youth Council (NYC)	Kibogo Mbabazi Aline	Youth Mobilization	F
15	National Industrial Research and Development Agency (NIRDA)	Mukayiranga Annette	Industrialization development Analyst	F
16	Rwanda Standards Board (RSB)	Forence Uwatwembi	Gender Mainstreaming Specialist	F
17	Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA)	Dr. Mugenzi Patrice	DG	M
18	Ministry of Trade and Industry (MINICOM)	Berthe Rwagitare	Senior Staff/Private Sector Development Specialist	F
19	Access to Finance Rwanda (AFR)	Eric Musizana	Ag. Head of Finance for growth & Jobs	M
20	Pro–Femmes Twese Hamwe	Peter MUHWEZI	Project Coordinator	M

#	Institution Represented	Attendee	Position/Title	Sex
21	Akazi Kanoze Access (AKA)	Jacqueline Nyirahabimana	Director of Administration and Finance	F
22	Haguruka	Francine Mukandori	Senior Staff/Psychologist, Gender Focal Person	F
23	Rwanda Women Network (RWN)	Seconde Uwamahoro	Senior Staff/Field Coordinator	F
24	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)	Janviere Mukantwali	Country Representative	F
25	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	Batete Redempter	Senior Staff	F
26	SOS Children's Villages	James Byagatonda	Program Manager for Education & Youth Care Advisor	M
27	Mastercard Foundation Rwanda Office	Norette Turimuci	Lead Gender and Youth Engagement	F
28	Imbuto Foundation	Marie Claire UWAMAHORO	Division Manager of Human Resources and Administration	F
29	Glow Force	Cheyenne Muvunyi	Young Entrepreneur	F
30	iGiTREE	Deexon Muhizi	Young Entrepreneur	M
31	Brews & Buzz Bistro	Darius Nyiringango	Young Entrepreneur	M
32	Greece fav cycle (also student at Ines Ruhengeri Institute of Applied Science)	Grace Umubyeyi	Young Entrepreneur	F
33	Environmental Design student at UR	Alida Kabasinga	Young Entrepreneur	F
34	Rwanda Development Board (RDB)	Goreth Uwayo	Intern at RDB Chief Skills Office	F
35	Rwanda Development Board (RDB)	Abdou Musonera	Ag. Head of Targeted Labour Market Interventions Department	M
36	Rwanda Development Board (RDB)	Lydia Ingabire	Internship Team Leader	F
37	Centre for Employment Initiatives (CEI)	Rashmi Mehra	CEI expert/NSDPS Pillar 1 Leader	F
38	Centre for Employment Initiatives (CEI)	Amos Wanyiri	CEI expert/NSDPS Pillar 2 Leader	M
39	Centre for Employment Initiatives (CEI)	Umulisa Flora	CEI expert	F
40	Rwanda Development Board (RDB)	Bernard Harerimana	Sector Capacity Building Analyst	M

#	<i>Institution Represented</i>	<i>Attendee</i>	<i>Position/Title</i>	<i>Sex</i>
41	Rwanda Development Board (RDB)	Amerika Samuel Camarade	Capacity Building Research Specialist	M
42	Centre for Employment Initiatives (CEI)	Dr. Gita Subrahmanyam	Gender Expert / Speaker and Workshop Moderator	F



Republic of Rwanda
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