

Special Initiative “Decent Work for a Just Transition”

Promoting Women’s Economic Empowerment

Context: Setting the course for women-led economic growth in Rwanda

Rwanda is known for promoting gender equality and has made considerable strides in empowering women. Nevertheless, **significant barriers remain for women in the private sector**. Women are less likely to participate in the labour force, with a participation rate of 52 per cent compared to 67 per cent for men. Those who pursue work outside the home are often expected to shoulder the brunt of domestic responsibilities as well.

Although women own 51 per cent of microenterprises in Rwanda, with daily revenues below 10,000 RWF (approximately 7 EUR), they make up only 34 per cent of registered domestic companies earning more than 10,000 RWF per day. Like their male-led counterparts, **women-led small and medium-sized businesses face challenges such as limited access to markets and difficulties in recruiting skilled staff**.

In addition, **traditional gender norms limit women entrepreneurs’ access to finance, networking opportunities, and mentorship**. Within the workplace, gender-based discrimination – particularly sexual harassment – along with implicit bias, can hinder women’s career advancement, affect their performance, impact their mental health, and limit their representation in leadership positions.

Objective: Promoting women employees and entrepreneurs

The “Promoting Women’s Economic Empowerment” (WEE) project is part of the Special Initiative “Decent Work for a Just Transition” of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), which is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH among others. Under the brand Invest for Jobs, the Special Initiative collaborates with the private sector to

create jobs, improve working conditions and social protection in Rwanda.

The WEE project aims to **promote quality employment and new job opportunities for women, as well as strengthen the competitiveness of women-led businesses in Rwanda**. The project aligns with Rwanda’s socio-economic development objectives as outlined in the National Strategy for Transformation (2017-2024), fostering job growth and gender equality as well as alleviating poverty.

Project name	Special Initiative “Decent Work for a Just Transition”: Promoting Women’s Economic Empowerment in Rwanda
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Political counterpart	Rwanda Ministry of Trade and Industry (MINICOM)
Project region	Countrywide
Implemented by	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Duration	01/2024 – 06/2026

Approach: Comprehensively and inclusively promoting women economic empowerment

The WEE project adopts a **gender-transformative approach to tackle the challenges faced by women employees and entrepreneurs in the private sector** by addressing specific gender-related barriers that limit women’s economic participation. The project collaborates directly with women-led businesses through open calls for innovative ideas that align with its objectives. It also works with businesses indirectly

through partnerships with government agencies, civil society, and business support organisations. It operates on a national scale and across sectors, ensuring a comprehensive and inclusive approach.

Key Area I: Assisting companies in improving their working conditions for women employees

The project collaborates with the private sector to enhance working conditions for women. It assists companies in implementing gender and diversity management practices, which include policies promoting work-life balance, increasing the proportion of women in decision-making positions, eliminating sexual harassment in the workplace, and addressing gender-based pay gaps.

Key Area II: Supporting women-led businesses in their economic and social environment

The project supports women-led businesses in strengthening their marketability and in promoting employment opportunities for women. It offers a variety of support packages, ranging from short-term training and coaching on specific technical topics to business development advice and long-term partnerships with individual women-led businesses. The project also provides financial and technical assistance to existing private sector, civil society, and government initiatives focused on reducing gender-specific barriers to female entrepreneurship.



Please get in touch!

invest-for-jobs.com

For general and multi-country requests:

info@invest-for-jobs.com

For project and country specific requests:

rwanda@invest-for-jobs.com

Published by:
Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit
(GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices
Bonn and Eschborn
Germany

GIZ Office Rwanda
KN 41 ST 17
Kigali
Rwanda

As at:
06/2024

Contact:
For general and multicountry
requests:
info@invest-for-jobs.com
invest-for-jobs.com

For project and country
specific requests:
rwanda@invest-for-jobs.com

Programme/project description:
Special Initiative "Decent Work for a Just
Transition" (Invest for Jobs) - Promoting
Women's Economic Empowerment in
Rwanda

On behalf of
German Federal Ministry for Economic
Cooperation and Development (BMZ)