



## Foreword



A very warm welcome to this first edition of the UNDP in Rwanda Insights. This quarterly publication provides a brief overview of the work of the United Nations Development Program in Rwanda and tells extraordinary stories of our partners as well as ordinary people who are putting in a good shift to build a better, inclusive and greener Rwanda.

Over the past year, Covid-19 has enveloped the entire globe and changed it dramatically. It has resulted in horrific human deaths and transformed our way of life.

Covid-19 has also altered among other things how we enjoy our democracy.

Remarkably, we are asking people to give up some civil liberties in order to enjoy liberty and freedom. There are many today who regard Covid-19 measures, including vaccination, social distancing and quarantine as assaults on personal freedom. Yet, it is only because of vaccination, social distancing and quarantine that we even have our freedom!

Explaining that paradox, and fostering firm but just interactions in society is a challenge confronting governments and development professionals alike.

At UNDP we have doubled down our efforts to support the people and government of Rwanda to overcome this and other challenges.

Every year is different. We remain optimistic that 2021 will be better. We have started witnessing green shoots of hope through science and technology breakthroughs for fighting Covid-19 in Rwanda and across the globe.

Recently, we deployed three UV-C light disinfection robots through the Ministry of Health, in partnership

with the Ministry of ICT and Innovation and the Government of Japan. These represent yet another example of our resolve to defeat Covid-19.

We are also maintaining focus on the many issues that need to be resolved to make our society more perfect. These include reducing poverty and inequality, creating jobs and developing wealth opportunities.

My vote of thanks to the UNDP-Rwanda team, UNDP regional and headquarters offices, the Government of Rwanda, our Development Partners, Private Sector and Civil Society.

Together we have achieved much and together we will achieve more and better!

*Maxwell Gomera*

Resident Representative  
UNDP Rwanda

# The Government of Rwanda and UNDP launch disinfecting Robots to fight the spread of Covid-19 and Reduce Hospital Acquired Infections.



Rwanda is among the first Sub-Saharan African countries to deploy this kind of cutting-edge technology to fight against COVID-19 pandemic

As the coronavirus pandemic continues to ravage Africa and the world in general, the Government of Rwanda through The Ministry of ICT and Innovation and The Ministry of Health in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Rwanda and the Government of Japan, have deployed three additional state-of-the-art robots to reinforce its efforts against the virus.

The new robots that have been deployed at Nyarugenge District Hospital, are cutting-edge Ultra Violet (UV-C) light robots which will help in cleaning and disinfecting treatment centres, hospitals and places of mass gathering such as markets, offices as means to limit the spread of the COVID-19.

The acquired UV-C Robots have unique features which include the UV-C lamps that emit ultraviolet lights destroying deadly microorganisms, hence helping to reduce infection rates for patients and healthcare workers.

Honorable Paula INGABIRE, the Minister of ICT and Innovation says:

*“I would like to extend our gratitude to the UNDP and the Government of Japan for their continued support towards our efforts and desire to leverage cutting-edge technologies in the fight against Covid-19. These Robots offer a faster, more effective and less labour-intensive disinfection alternative to manual cleaning.”*

*“The Government of Rwanda has placed ICT at the centre of its transformation and the health sector is a priority sector where technology is being used to provide better health outcomes through improved service delivery, patient experience, health and safety”;* adds Minister INGABIRE.

“The introduction of robots in our COVID19 case management has contributed to limiting human interaction between healthcare providers and patients,” said Dr. Sabin NSANZIMANA; Director General of Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC).

*“As we introduce the use of robots in the Infection Prevention Control activities we intend to even minimize risks of infection of our IPC staffs as they conduct decontamination procedures,”* he added.

Mr. Maxwell Gomera, Resident Representative of UNDP Rwanda, notes *“At UNDP Rwanda, we are pleased to partner once again with the Ministry of ICT and Innovation to deploy three UV-C disinfection robots that will be used to disinfect treatment centers and public places to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus. In addition to vaccines, these Robots represent yet another great triumph of modern science, and one that will protect frontline workers and prevent spread of diseases.”*

*“Congratulations to the Government of Rwanda for once again moving forcefully to confront the COVID-19 pandemic.”* Adds Mr. Maxwell Gomera

Speaking at the deployment of the three robots, Deputy Chief of Mission in the Embassy of Japan, Ms. Hotta Yuko, appreciated the Rwandan Government’s effort in responding to the global pandemic. *“We hope that these robots will help to strengthen health workers effort and reduction in controlling COVID-19,”* she adds.

Ms. Hotta reiterated the Japanese Government’s commitment to continue working with different partners like UNDP to support the Government and people of Rwanda in the fight against the pandemic and to recover back better.

This marks another milestone that Rwanda has achieved towards harnessing emerging technologies to curb the spread of COVID-19 pandemic.

In May 2020, Rwanda, in partnership with UNDP, deployed, five smart anti-epidemic robots to minimize contact between patients and health workers and therefore reducing the risk of contamination of health professionals.

Named in Kinyarwanda, Akazuba, Ikirezi, Mwiza, Ngabo, and Urumuri, the robots are currently supporting doctors and nurses at the designated treatment centres and other screening sites including the Kigali International Airport where Akazuba and Urumuri are deployed to screen 50 to 150 people per minute and report abnormalities to officers on duty.

# Strengthening Covid-19 epidemiological surveillance

At UNDP Rwanda, we are seeing our lives and our work in a new light: our work has continued but inevitably changed in terms of how we deliver it and how we respond to the priorities and the needs of our partners.

Immediately after the covid-19 crisis was confirmed, through our Partnership with the Rwandan Ministry of Health (MoH), we worked closely with the Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC), a leading institution in infectious diseases, to identify response to the virus.

Our partnership has evolved and now focuses on the key areas:

**Understanding and monitoring disease epidemiology is key to combating Covid-19, and other diseases:** Recognising this, we partnered with RBC to strengthen epidemiological surveillance.

We organised training workshops for district hospitals and health centres staff on Covid-19 response. These featured 6 essential modules, including introduction to Covid-19, how to Recognize Covid-19 case, IPC and use of PPE, triage, community guidance and engagement, as well as how to maintain essential services during Covid-19.

**Contact tracing and response team investigations, evacuation and data**

**collection:** we have supported contact tracing and investigation teams' transportation in different districts including Bugesera, Rwamagana, Nyamasheke, Rusizi, Huye, Rubavu, Kirehe, as well as Gasabo, Nyarugenge, Kicukiro districts in city of Kigali

**Increase the capacity of Covid-19 laboratory testing:** to scale up and reinforce testing capacity of the national Laboratory, more than 100 laboratory technicians

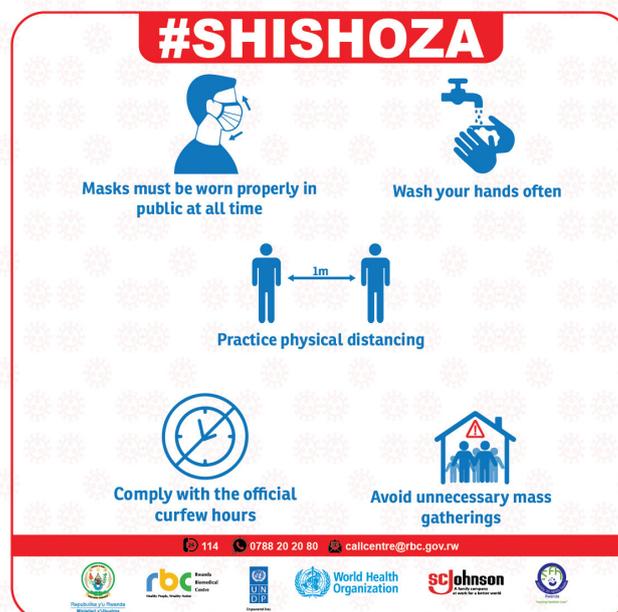
and analysts were hired and deployed to 11 new testing sites such as NRL, RMH, KPH, CHUB, Musanze, Rusizi, Rubavu, Nyagatare, Kirehe, Kabgayi, Kibagabaga and laboratory equipment were procured. Covid-19 tests and other consumables were also purchased.

## Infection prevention and control

In order to facilitate coordination of covid-19 response and Activities control, UNDP supported the provision of food, beverages and hygienic items to more than 534 people in quarantine sites established in rural areas. These

radio stations and tv channels across the country. Car park and market radio stations were used to maximize audience reach.

- More than 260,000 banners and 350 stickers were distributed in Eastern Province and Kigali city while 1500 flyers in English, French, Kinyarwanda and Kiswahili have been distributed to arriving Passengers at the Kigali International Airport and to truck drivers at the borders.
- LED advertising screens have been used in Kigali to relay different key messages on Covid-19 awareness and prevention measures.



people include Covid-19 response teams of health workers and technicians as well as patients admitted in quarantine.

- Equipment such as ventilators, patient monitor, etc. were procured to strengthen the capacity of Intensive Care Unit (ICU).
- Isolation units were operationalized after a need assessment was Completed.

## Risk communication and community engagement

- Television and radio shows and public service announcements have been aired on different public, private and community

Mobile outdoor truck equipped with sound system have been used to convey Covid-19 related messages for public awareness in Bugesera, Rusizi, Huye, Rubavu, Kirehe and Kigali city.

- Television and radio spots on Covid-19 prevention measures and Hygiene were produced and aired on different TV and radio stations. They were also posted on MoH and RBC Twitter and Facebook accounts, youtube channels and shared through various whatsapp groups.

- Community health workers were trained on the use of digital Technologies in order to build their capacity in emergency response to epidemics, including Covid-19. Prior to the training workshops, a training manual was developed by a team of 25 health experts, professional trainers and University lectures.

## A Rwf 500 million Resilience Fund launched to support youth-led businesses hard hit by COVID-19 pandemic

On October 29, 2020, the Ministry of Youth and Culture (MYCULTURE), the United Nations Development Programme in Rwanda, the Korea International Cooperation Agency and other partners launched the Young Entrepreneurs Resilience Fund to support young entrepreneurs whose businesses have been negatively affected by COVID-19 or who have developed an innovation in response to the pandemic.

The Rwf 500 million fund aims to help young entrepreneurs recover from COVID-19 and to play a role in its prevention. This intervention was initiated based on results from a rapid survey conducted by MYCULTURE to assess the effects of COVID-19 on youth-led businesses.

Marie Ange Mukagahima is the CEO and founder of Zima

Enterprise, a company that produce cookies, oil and flour out of pumpkins. It also sells roasted pumpkin seeds and pumpkin seeds flour. It was created in 2017.

Before Covid-19 pandemic, Zima Enterprise was a small and young flourishing business headed by a young woman with extraordinary entrepreneurship skills. The Covid crisis has hit it hard, forcing it to shrink extensively.

*“This year’s plan was to expand our market towards neighboring countries starting with Goma, in the Republic Democratic of Congo and Nairobi, Kenya. We wanted also to improve the quality of our products through packaging. But the whole plan was blocked by this pandemic,”* deploras Mukagahima adding that *“Zima has lost nearly 70% of its market and made redundant three of its employees.”*



*Ange Mukagahima says they have suspended the production of pumpkins cooking oil due to the impact of Covid-19*

Mukagahima doesn’t envisage to take a bank loan as capital for recovery due to the uncertainty of her business’s future and the protracted nature of Covid-19 crisis. *“It is difficult to take a loan to use for working capital because I don’t know how long the crisis will last, how much worse my business will get, and how I will be able to pay back that loan. It is not even an option I can think of.”* she explained.

Mukagahima’s story is not isolated. The Covid-19 crisis has caused significant disruptions and hardships on youth-led businesses across Africa and the rest of the world. In Rwanda, some of these businesses were simply shut down and others have been struggling for their recovery and continuity. Most of them don’t have cash reserves that they can tap into, and neither do they have lines of credit with banks that they can fall back on.

The Ministry of Youth and Culture with the support from UNDP and KOICA, conducted a nation-wide rapid impact assessment among 972 youth entrepreneurs to understand the scale of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth. The results show that 95% of the young entrepreneurs from

all sectors reported severe impacts on their businesses, ranging from reduced revenues linked to reduced demand, limited access to markets, as well as transport challenges, among others.

As far as the employed youth is concerned, the survey showed that more than 40% of employed youth have been experiencing temporary suspended jobs, decreased salary (20%) or possible termination of contract (12%).

Based on the rapid assessment results, the Ministry of Youth and Culture developed a youth resilience plan with a focus on addressing challenges, particularly job sustainability and business continuity.

The specific objectives of this comprehensive plan are to sustain existing youth-led enterprises, to support youth innovations developed as a response to COVID-19 as well and to mitigate post COVID-19 challenges. Part of the plan was also to put in place a specific programme which might offer provide affected businesses with financial support. It was later launched as a **“Youth Resilience Fund.”**

At the official launch of the fund, which took place on Rwanda Broadcast Agency's television channel due to COVID-19 prevention measures, the Minister of Youth and Culture, Honorable Rosemary Mbabazi expressed her gratitude to UNDP and KOICA for their continued support national recovery plan and particularly to youth resilience amidst the pandemic.

Mr. Maxwell Gomera, the Resident Representative of UNDP in Rwanda challenged the youth who will benefit from the fund to keep innovation as a priority number one as to achieve the true resilience they are striving for.

*"Today innovation is needed more than ever before as we fight COVID-19 and the ramifications of it. Innovation from you as entrepreneurs and innovation from development*

*partners who are taking a chance on youth,"* said Maxwell. UNDP recognized that partners can help facilitate partnerships and joint ventures that can help boost the viability and sustainability of youth-led businesses and enable them to acquire expertise and reach new markets.

Despite the havoc that Covid-19 has caused, there is still an optimism based on the resilience that many companies have shown adapting to the situation through developing new products and market, and the new innovations that have emerged to tackle the pandemic.

Supporting Africa's youth is not a luxury. It is imperative. Africa's young entrepreneurs play a driving role in creating job opportunities.

## Supporting youth economic empowerment through environment-related businesses

On Friday, December 4th, 2020, the Ministry of Youth and Culture in partnership with UNDP Rwanda, KOICA and other partners provided seed capital to 20 youth cooperatives working under the Ecobrigade program implemented in 10 sectors of Muhanga, Karongi and Ngororero districts. Each youth cooperative received five million Rwandan Francs to boost its businesses.

The 5-year initiative (2019-2024) was designed with four interventions, including building radical terraces on 512 ha and progressive terraces on 400 ha, creating a buffer zone protection by planting 332 ha of bamboo on the banks of river Nyabarongo and training youth in financial literacy, saving and environmental protection.

It aims at improving the livelihoods of youth in rural areas who are often among the most vulnerable population, and who have very limited opportunities. It has done so, not just through the provision of jobs but through capacity building

and training on financial literacy, savings and cooperative management.

Over 3500 young people involved in this project were grouped into 55 youth cooperatives to increase their saving culture and encourage them to work together.

In its first year of implementation (2019-2020), 209 ha of radical terraces and 162 ha of progressive terraces were constructed and 116 ha of bamboo were planted on Nyabarongo river banks.

In terms of training and job creation, this project has provided over 4,900 young people from rural communities with trainings and created more than 3,520 jobs. Through the project, these youth have been able to generate savings. Many of them have now started their own businesses and are becoming more economically independent.



*The Resident Representative of UNDP in Rwanda, Maxwell Gomera(right) handing over a cheque to the best performing cooperative*

A youth cooperative member Jeannette Niyonsaba stated that as a single mother the project has been life changing for her. "I was able to buy five chickens with my first salary and saved my other salaries from the following months. I used the savings, together with money I got from selling my chickens to buy a cow. This is helping in supporting my family," said Niyonsaba.

Mitsindo Jean Damasce was able to start a chicken farming business and expand his hair saloon, which he says was about to go bankrupt. "I am very confident that Ecobrigade is helping me to build a better future. I am certain that at the end of the project I will have built a strong foundation for my life, Mitsindo stated.

### About the program

In 2019, UNDP partnered with the Ministry of Youth and Culture, together with the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Defense through the Reserve Force, Ministry of Local Government through the Local Administrative Entities Development Agency (LODA), with support from KOICA to implement the Youth Ecobrigade program which is aimed at promoting environmental protection while creating green jobs for the youth.

This two-pronged approach falls in line with Rwanda's commitment to developing a Green Economy and building resilience to climate change as outlined in its National Strategy for Transformation and Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy. The initiative also fits perfectly within the framework of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and is a great example of economic, social and ecological sustainability.

The Minister of Youth and Culture, Rosemary Mbabazi recognizes that the outcomes of this programme are very impressive. "It has put youth who were redundant together and they now have environment at heart, which is our primary goal since environment conservation is a global need. In addition, they are saving for their future, which is a culture that has saved people in times of crisis like the Covid-19 pandemic we are going through. So, it is a big achievement," Hon. Mbabazi appreciates.

The programme is expected to expand its portfolio by initiating more youth-led environment projects. The second year's target is to expand to 3 additional sectors in each of the 3 districts, to construct 209 ha of radical terraces, 162 ha progressive terraces as well as plant 117 ha of bamboo to establish buffer zone protection along Nyabarongo riverbanks.

## Forest Landscape Restoration in Rwanda's Amayaga Region



*Children planting a tree at Green Amayaga launch in Nyanza District, Southern Province*

On 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020, Rwanda launched Green Amayaga or Forest Landscape Restoration in the Amayaga region, a six-year initiative aimed to promote biodiversity, foster ecosystem services, increase agricultural productivity and reduce the vulnerability of people and ecosystem to the adverse effects of climate change.

The US \$32.7m (RWF 31.9b) ambitious project was designed by UNDP in partnership with Rwanda Environment

Management Authority (REMA) and with financial support from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) with the aim of contributing to the implementation of the National Strategy for Transformation (NST-1) and the Nationally Determined contributions (NDC) to the Paris Agreement.

It is being implemented in four districts composing Amayaga region: Kamonyi, Ruhango, Nyanza and Gisagara districts, by the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) in partnership with the Rwanda Forestry Authority (RFA).

*“This ground-breaking project is part of Rwanda’s efforts to increase our resilience to climate change by investing in nature-based solutions. When it comes to adapting to the warming of our planet, Mother Nature is our best ally. Restoring forests and landscapes will not only benefit our environment, but also improve the health and livelihoods of Rwandans and create green jobs. We are looking forward to seeing the Amayaga region green once again,”* said Rwanda’s Minister of Environment, Jeanne d’Arc Mujawamariya.

Eight million of trees will be planted to restore degraded forests. Fruit trees will be planted on 25,000ha to increase agro-forestation, improve productivity and well-being of inhabitants of the four districts. The project propels and fast tracks the Government’s plan to maintain forest cover to 30.4% of the country’s total land area into the future.

*“By integrating a climate investment lens to our work, we can create a new type of farming – carbon farming – potentially more lucrative and sustainable than traditional crops,”* said Maxwell Gomera, UNDP Resident Representative in Rwanda.

In total, 263,000 hectares of agricultural land will be restored and rehabilitated. Small and large watersheds will also be rehabilitated and restored to provide water for human consumption as well as livestock and agriculture activities. The project will strengthen the resilience of communities and biodiversity and contribute to climate change stabilization.

Overall, 1.3 million persons from Gisagara, Nyanza, Kamonyi, and Ruhango districts will benefit from the project, including 362,000 direct beneficiaries. The project will create green jobs for people, over 90% of them being youth and women.

7,500 households will be provided with small livestock to increase livelihoods resilience of local communities in four districts. 60,000 households will be provided with improved and energy-efficient cooking stoves to decrease wood consumption by at least 25%.

*“The Green Amayaga project is yet another example of the Government and people of Rwanda’s remarkable levels of preparedness and creativity. Restoring biodiversity and landscapes is not just good sense in these extraordinary times, it is imperative. When biodiversity thrives, we all thrive,”* said Maxwell.

UNDP has been working with the Government of Rwanda and other partners to address development challenges by supporting various programmes and initiative aimed at increasing social and economic resilience and achieve sustainable development.

Reiterating UNDP’s support to green growth initiatives and solutions, Maxwell said “I would like to reaffirm UNDP’s commitment to strengthening our partnership for building back a better economy and society, one that will combat climate change and unsustainable management of the environment and improve the wealth and livelihoods of the people of Rwanda.”

## UN Rwanda and partners launched a joint Disability Inclusion Initiative

On 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020, the One UN Rwanda, the UNDP, the National Council of Persons with Disabilities (NCP) and other partners, in partnership with HVP Gatagara launched a disability inclusion initiative to promote innovative learning for children with disabilities. The initiative aims at empowering persons with disabilities in Rwanda for them to achieve their full potential.

The launch of this initiative took place at HVP Gatagara which is the main rehabilitation Center in the Country.

It is part of the celebration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities celebrated every December. The initiative echoes this year’s theme **“Building back better: toward a disability-inclusive, accessible and sustainable post COVID-19 world.”**

The Disability Inclusion Initiative is aligned with the UN’s principle of “Living no one behind” streamlined in Agenda 2030.

**Introduction of smart boards and internet in HVP Gatagara schools**

On the occasion, UNDP partnered with Liquid Telecom to provide 10 smart boards to HVP Gatagara schools as well as free internet as a way of scaling up the smart classroom\* promoted by the Government of Rwanda.

Frere Kizito commended the continued support of UN agencies, especially UNDP to promote disability inclusion and ensure that rights of persons with disability are respected and protected.

Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Maxwell Gomera, the UNDP Resident Representative in Rwanda echoed Frere Kizito’s statement on how these innovative tools are going to positively impact on education of children with disabilities.

*“Being connected can make a difference in the lives of Rwandans living with disabilities in the way they access broadband, they access the education materials. So, I am pleased that together with Liquid Telecom, we are committing to provide access to the benefits of the internet to children at HVP Gatagara,”* said Mr. Gomera.



Students with disabilities in a classroom at HVP Gatagara school

With the support of the Rwanda Education Board, the smart boards will enable easier access to national curricula online modules hence ensuring equitable access to education for all particularly students with disabilities.

Children with disabilities require not only adapted learning tools but also ensuring that these children basic needs are duly catered for. Therefore, through the disability inclusion initiative, UNFPA Rwanda handed over 3000 sanitary pads to HVP Gatagara to ensure adequate menstrual hygiene and improved access to sanitation for young girls with disabilities.

Overall, the disability inclusion initiative calls on different stakeholders mainly the public sector, the private sector, civil society organizations, development partners and the UN in Rwanda to contribute towards decent living conditions for persons with disabilities. It is also calling for innovative partnerships bringing together the comparative advantage of each actor to find sustainable solutions for the empowerment of persons with disabilities.

The UN Resident Coordinator Dr. Fode Ndiaye commended the Government of Rwanda and National Council for People with Disabilities for remarkable efforts in promoting inclusion. He reiterated UN's support to ensure that disability inclusion is promoted through all development sectors, national policies and strategies.

*"I strongly believe that this could build better citizen, making sure people have access to equal opportunities and contribute better to social and economic development of their country. We will continue to work with the government and support the required frameworks to ensure that the rights of people with disabilities are respected and promoted,"* said the UN Resident Coordinator, Mr. Fode Ndiaye.

Globally, persons with disabilities constitute around 15% of the population which should not be left behind to achieve the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development.

## Training of journalists in COVID-19 reporting

She is among the 31 journalists who have completed their first training on communicable disease reporting, with a special focus on COVID-19 pandemic. Marie Louise Mukanyandwi runs her own online newspaper *Ingenzinyayo.com*. She is happy to have attended the training for it helped her to overcome the challenges she had been facing in reporting on the COVID-19 pandemic.

*"The training was an opportunity to learn how to gather interviews and other relevant data from the population in emergency times like this without exposing myself or my interviewees to the virus."* Said Mukanyandwi who added that she now feels confident and capable to report on COVID-19 and other communicable diseases that may break out in the future.

The training was organised with the support of the UNDP Rwanda, coordinated by Rwanda Media High Council (MHC) and facilitated by World Health Organisation (WHO) and Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC), a national centre specialized in communicable diseases and other health issues.

All participants are local journalists who were selected from various media outlets, to include radio, TV, print and online.



**Louise Mukanyandwi interviewing a local resident of Bugesera District**

The course mixed theories and practices. The theoretical training was run online and lasted for two days. The RBC in close collaboration with WHO provided facilitators who delivered the training via video conference.

The practical phase of the training started on 5th and run until 11th June 2020, during which a team of 31 journalists made field visits across four districts: Musanze, Karongi, Muhanga and Bugesera districts gathering content for stories as a way of applying theories learned.

According to Julien Mahoro Niyigabira, Director of Media Relations Unit at RBC/Ministry of Health, the training was appropriate and timely since media plays a crucial role in creating awareness and educating the population during emergency times.

*“Media is a key tool in as far as risk communication and community engagement are concerned. Therefore, in situation of pandemic like the COVID-19, journalists have to be provided with a holistic understanding in order for them to inform and educate their respective audiences,”* said Mahoro.

The 31 participants will constitute a first network of journalists specialized in reporting on communicable diseases. This network is part of the national response to COVID-19.

## Financial grants to help mitigate the economic impact of Covid-19 on the media sector

On 29 September 2020, through partnership with Rwanda Governance Board (RGB), UNDP awarded financial grants to 13 media houses in line with a joint programme designed to help mitigate the economic impact of Covid-19 on the media sector.

The grants were awarded through a competitive process and they are part of a fund amounting to 100,000 USD established by UNDP Rwanda in collaboration with the Government of Rwanda through the Rwanda Governance Board.

In response to the call for proposals, 50 media houses applied, and a selection process was undertaken by a team composed of six members from Association Rwandaise des Journalistes (ARJ), Rwanda Media Commission (RMC), RGB and UNDP.

After a thorough assessment of all project proposals, 13 applicants successfully qualified to receive the grant. The Grant Awardees are from different categories of media houses, including radio, TV and online. Successful media houses are: Radio TV 10 Ltd, Umucyo

Community Radio Station Ltd, TV 1 RWANDA Ltd (Radio & TV), Fine Fm 93.1 Ltd (Radio), Isango stars Ltd (Radio & TV), Inyarwanda LTD (online), Kigali Today Ltd (Radio), Radio Isangano,, Rwanda Printing and Publishing Company/ Imvaho Nshya (online), Bwiza Media Ltd (online), Umuryango Media Group Ltd (online), Radio Flash Medinvest Ltd (Radio & TV) and Express News Rwanda Ltd(online).

Applying media houses were required to focus on generation and dissemination of content meant to help prevent and fight the pandemic.

The implementation of all projects will last for three months.

This programme was set up to support efforts of media outlets to deal with the effects of Covid-19 on their operations. It will also encourage the media to play a more active role in the ongoing efforts to contain Covid-19 pandemic.



**A representative of TV/Radio Isango, one of the grantees signing a contract while UNDP Deputy Representative and CEO of RGB witnessing**

The Chief Executive Officer of RGB, Dr. Usta Kayitesi thanked media houses for their continued efforts in the fight against Covid-19 pandemic and encouraged them to use the funds they got appropriately and effectively. She added that *“the grants will not only help media to recover from Covid-19 negative impact but will also help to strengthen it as it is necessary for the interest of citizens, good governance and accountability.”*

Speaking on the occasion, Ms Varsha Redkar Palepu, the Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP in Rwanda, commended the successful media houses for the innovative and quality work which was rewarded and encouraged them to thrive for excellence in all they do.

She challenged selected media houses to develop and

disseminate programs which are people focused. *“I would like to encourage you to ensure that what you produce is impacting positively on the “Rwanda we want” by empowering people to make informed decisions and opt for constructive actions,”* Varsha said.

She also called on media houses to embrace inclusiveness in all their reports saying, *“I encourage you to include the voices of remote communities, the elderly, People with Disabilities, women and youth to ensure no one is left behind.”*

Deputy Representative Varsha reiterated UNDP’s commitment to support the media sector particularly during the pandemic, as front-line essential services.

## UNDP’s support to Rwanda’s COVID-19 preparedness and response



### 1. TRANSLATION OF COVID-19 RELATED INFORMATION INTO SIGN LANGUAGE FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING COMMUNITY

Immediately after the confirmation of COVID-19 outbreak, UNDP Rwanda saw it as a threat to this community and partnered with the Rwandan National Union of the Deaf (RNUD) and National Council for People with Disabilities (NCPD) to translate all COVID-19 information into sign language for the deaf people across the country.

More details: <http://bit.ly/369jpYo>



## 2. UNDP PROVIDED FOOD ASSISTANCE TO 11 CENTRES TAKING CARE OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In line with the Leaving no One Behind principle, in response to COVID-19, UNDP Rwanda in partnership with National Council for People with Disabilities (NCPD) has provided food assistance to 11 residential centres taking care of people with disabilities. Similarly, in partnership with National Union of Disability Organisations in Rwanda (NUDOR) provided 1945 people with disabilities with food assistance and hygienic items to help them cope with negative effects of COVID-19 pandemic.

More details: <https://bit.ly/3iLfbLk>



## 3. CONSTRUCTION OF HANDWASHING STATIONS IN YOUTH CENTERS TO CONTAIN THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

With an objective of curbing the spread of the pandemic and supporting the national response to the COVID-19 crisis, the UNDP in partnership with KOICA have supported the construction of handwashing stations in all youth centres located in all 30 districts covering all of Rwanda.

More details: <http://bit.ly/3a40u27>



## 4. EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES TO RECOVER FROM EFFECTS OF COVID-19

As part of recovery plan, through the partnership with Prison Fellowship Rwanda, UNDP Rwanda provided 1000 households from Bugesera, Ngoma, Rwamagana, Rubavu, and Musanze Districts with livestock such as goats, seeds and fertilisers to help them get back on their feet.

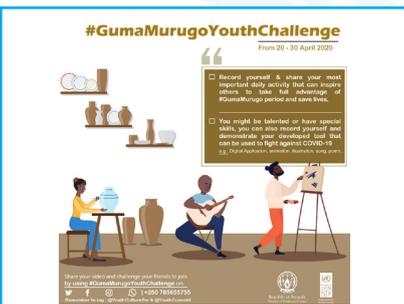
More details: <http://bit.ly/3qTvhFU>



## 5. PROVISION OF CAPITAL INJECTIONS TO 5 COOPERATIVES OF THE DEAF

Through partnership with the RNUD, UNDP provided five cooperatives of deaf and hard of hearing people with capital injections to help them get back on their feet. The Rwanda National Union of the Deaf (RNUD) estimates more than 300 individually owned businesses and cooperatives which have been affected by COVID-19 pandemic.

More details: <http://bit.ly/2NCYLcD>



## 6. #GUMAMURUGOYOUTHCHALLENGE CAMPAIGN TO RAISE AWARENESS AMONG THE YOUTH

The Ministry of Youth and Culture, with the support of UNDP, launched a social media campaign dubbed “#GumaMuRugoYouthChallenge” with the aim of raising awareness among the youth and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. This innovative communication campaign was also meant to encourage youth to stay productive during the lockdown period and ensure a maximum adherence and promotion of the coronavirus prevention measures.

More details: <http://bit.ly/2NB2tDD>

## Editorial Note

UNDP works in about 170 countries and territories, helping to eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities and exclusion, and build resilience so countries can sustain progress. As the UN's development agency, UNDP plays a critical role in helping countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Learn more at [www.rw.undp.org](http://www.rw.undp.org) / [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org) or follow at [@undp\\_rwanda](https://twitter.com/undp_rwanda) / [@undp](https://www.facebook.com/undp).

This publication aims to provide information on UNDP activities and programmes in Rwanda. Your remarks and recommendations concerning the publication will be appreciated. Please let us know if you wish to obtain any additional information about UNDP and its work. We welcome any feedback, suggestions and contributions.

If you wish to obtain any copy of the newsletter or any other information, please contact Ms. Gisele Nyampinga, Communications Analyst, at the UNDP office in Rwanda.

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