

RWANDESE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES



RALGA STRATEGIC PLAN 2006-2009

Kigali, May 2006

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1. INTRODUCTION

RALGA presents its revised strategic plan 2006 – 2009 in this document. The revision of the original plan was decided upon following the administrative reform in Rwanda (2005) that dissolved the association's membership and the recommendations of the institutional analysis that was carried out in October 2005. The plan differs from the previous version in the sense that it is more closely formulated against the core functions of a national local government association, notably: 1) representation of local governments, 2) lobby and advocacy on their behalf and 3) capacity building for the membership. This framework enables consequent monitoring of the implementation. Strategic choices have been made and priorities set. It has delineated RALGA's role in capacity building. It has reduced the number of occasions where RALGA is project implementer on behalf of external parties.

The above does not mean that RALGA has reduced its ambitions, on the contrary! The plan is ambitious but realistic. It is a framework for the coming 4 years. It leaves enough breathing space for the association, meaning that it should be able to respond to immediate priorities when they present. Ultimately the plan will need to be adjusted and updated at regular intervals, which will normally be done in annual working plans. The RALGA annual plan for 2006 has been integrated in this strategic plan. The annual plan for 2007 will be endorsed by the RALGA board in December 2006.

The strategic plan is all inclusive in the sense that it incorporates all support provided by donors and development agencies. It provides for the benchmarks that are part of the framework contract for basket funding of the Association that has been signed with SIDA on March 15, 2006 and is likely to be followed by Canada and the Netherlands. Support by US Aid through the Twubakane program and by DED have been incorporated in the plan.

The plan has anticipated funding decisions of the above mentioned partners. It also assumes that all members will pay in their membership fees. If so, the strategic plan can be implemented as it is presented. Budget cuts are necessary when anticipated support is not provided. The attached budget throws light on the financing of the strategic plan.

The plan is divided into 3 main chapters, following the logic of the strategic planning process.

1. Chapter 2 will highlight on RALGA 's mission statement;
2. Chapter 3 will present RALGA 's mandate and expected results;
3. Chapter 4 presents a detailed activity plan an outputs in time.

The strategic plan has been prepared in March 2006. Consultations have been made with RALGA 's governing board, RALGA 's staff, RALGA 's membership, RALGA 's donors and some external parties. A draft version of the plan has been commented upon by RALGA 's staff. The overall process has been guided by RALGA's secretary general Mugaga Johnson. The plan will be submitted for approval to the RALGA General Assembly in April 2006.

The strategic plan includes a logical framework and a budget.

2. RALGA MISSION STATEMENT

RALGA's mission is to strive for an efficient, effective, transparent and accountable local government in Rwanda.

The vision of RALGA is realizing democratic decentralisation in Rwanda, whereby local governments, while becoming increasingly more important, respond to the demands of the people, are righteous, democratic and participatory, and are citizen, investor and donor friendly. This demands that local authorities in the country will become places free from injustice, corruption, nepotism, segregation, sectarianism and any other malpractice that may hamper good governance and deter the decentralisation process that the country has adopted as a vehicle for a smooth and quick service delivery and a tool to alleviate poverty.

RALGA is a membership organisation. Local Governments are its members. They are represented by elected councillors, mayors and vice-mayors but also by technicians like the executive secretaries. As a membership organisation it will represent their interests. In that sense it is a political organisation. Not to be confused with party politics! RALGA is non-partisan.

RALGA believes in building bridges. Bridges with central government, civil society organisations, private sector organisations, development agencies but most of all with the Rwandese population. It strives to mainstream gender to promote equality between men and women.

RALGA however also realises that decentralisation does not always come forth out of love for local government only. Governance is to some extent a power issue. That is why RALGA will advocate that when tasks and responsibilities are transferred to local governments there will be concomitant funding. That is also why RALGA will seek to be involved when legislation effecting local governments is drafted.

RALGA, like most local government associations worldwide, is an association and it is non-governmental, however its members are all local governments. This unique figure provides RALGA with an independence that it needs to fulfil its task. It can and will be held accountable by its board and its general assembly only! Having said this RALGA is obviously grateful for the recognition that it enjoys from the government of Rwanda and the international community.

By 2009 RALGA is a consolidated and respected professional membership organisation with a board that shows political leadership and a staff that has a high professional working ethos.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

From RALGA's mission statement its mandate in terms of the core functions can be derived, notably: 1) representation of local governments, 2) lobby and advocacy on their behalf and 3) capacity building for the membership. Combined with the objective to manage these three core functions the four objectives of the association are presented in this chapter.

1. RALGA mandate is to represent Rwanda's local government authorities in and outside the country

The expected output is:

RALGA is a well established membership organisation and has represented Rwanda's local government authorities in relevant forums and is recognized as the mouthpiece of local government

The assumption is:

The newly created Districts will adhere to RALGA in a similar way as the old Districts did.

Success indicators are:

- Evidence of strong membership involvement through well attended general assemblies, board meetings and a lively commission structure;
- Regular and secure communication between RALGA and its membership through meetings, visits to Districts and other forms of communication as reflected in RALGA's communication strategy;
- RALGA participation in relevant forums that deal with Local Government in Rwanda and a clear evidence that this participation has resulted in decision making in the interest of Local Government in Rwanda;
- Evidence that RALGA is perceived as the mouthpiece of Local Government in Rwanda by increasing requests from central government, NGO's and international (donor) organisations for RALGA's opinions
- Evidence that RALGA has managed to purchase in bulk goods and services for its membership that are offered to them at lower costs;
- RALGA represents successfully Local Government in Rwanda in international forums such as the East African Association of Local Authorities and the world organisation United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG).

2. RALGA's mandate is to lobby and advocate for Rwanda's local government authorities

The expected output is:

- RALGA has influenced central government policies that affect local authorities and it has lobbied successfully for the interests of local authorities.
- RALGA has a well designed and elaborate lobbying strategy
- Information on key advocacy has been researched and documented
- Weekly 15 minutes radio broadcast messages on local government matters are collected and edited in advance
- Plan of activities on advocacy information, education and communication is prepared

- National events and fairwell ceremonies have been identified and planned for
- Website and intranet with members is regularly updated
- Plan and budgets for the organisation of yearly local government competition and award is in place
- RALGA is an active member of (restrictive number of) boards that deal with local governance
- Produce clear political statements within the RALGA commissions and in the board
- Meetings aimed at marketing RALGA among the stakeholders are conducted

The assumption is:

Central government and all stakeholders will remain with a positive and supportive attitude towards RALGA despite the fact that opinions on several Local Government matters might diverge.

Success indicators are:

- there is a clear evidence (e.g. in policy papers and legislation) that central government policies have adopted local government viewpoints as results of RALGA lobby;
- there is evidence of more fiscal transfers from central government to local governments with less strings attached;
- there is evidence of an increasing local taxation power for local governments in Rwanda;
- RALGA is permanently representing local governments in relevant boards such as CDF, NDSC¹, etcetera.
- Research results on advocacy have been used and have created impact on the targets
- One Advocacy and Lobbying Strategy is completed and used by the board of RALGA
- 30 Districts and the City of Kigali use intranet to communicate and share information on all matters relevant to the Association
- Local government competition and awards in and for 8 different areas/sectors are determined and implemented by all districts and the city of Kigali in one year.
- Produce 2 clear political statements once every convening of the board and the Annual General Assembly
- Participate in only national and international strategic meetings that can market RALGA

3. RALGA mandate is to build capacity of Local Governments in Rwanda

The expected output is:

RALGA has contributed significantly to the quality of Local Administration capacity building
RALGA train, advise and monitor gender approach in district planning and budgeting

Success indicators are:

- Evidence of mediating role of RALGA, meaning that RALGA would have successfully linked capacity building service providers to the needs of their members at local level;
- Evidence that RALGA is able to assess the quality of the service providers and inform the members accordingly;

¹ National Decentralisation Steering Committee

- Evidence of gender mainstreaming in Local Government in Rwanda;
 - Evidence for capacity building for elected women
 - RALGA has designed its capacity building strategy;
 - Evidence of elected District staff, handbooks, exchange visits, and technical forums where exchange is taking place etcetera
 - RALGA has put in place a monitoring system for its strategic plan that enables the association to timely report to the membership and the donors and to make its analysis on the progress in the implementation of its plan and the eventual changes thereto;
 - RALGA has procured technical assistance that will assist the association upon its demands.
4. In order to fulfil its mandate RALGA needs to be an effective and efficient membership organisation

The expected output is:

RALGA is a well established, effectively run membership organisation with a competent staff.

The assumption is:

RALGA manages to interest sufficient donors and is able to collect the membership fees according to its regulations to finance its plan.

Success indicators are:

- RALGA has a well functioning secretariat with a competent staff guided by a board that takes its responsibility when needed;
- RALGA disposes of its own office and library and is well equipped;
- RALGA produces annual audited financial and narrative reports;

4. ACTIVITY PLAN

4.1 Strategic objective 1: RALGA is a well established membership organisation and has represented Rwanda's local government authorities in relevant forums and is recognized as the mouthpiece of local government.

The activities under this strategic objective are:

1.1 Organisation of regular board meetings, two yearly General Assemblies and a board retreat every after two years.

This activity refers to the organisation of the political side of RALGA. In the first year of this strategic plan RALGA will need to secure its new membership base as a result of the re-districting process in Rwanda and the local elections. A new board will be elected by the general assembly in April 2006 and a new commission structure will be designed. The RALGA organisational documents will be reviewed. It is expected that in 2006 RALGA will need to make a grand effort to reach a common understanding with its membership on the roles and responsibilities of the Association.

Success indicators are:

- On an annual basis two general assemblies (July – December) are held with an attendance of over 80% of the 124 representatives of Rwandese Local Governments; General Assemblies take decisions that guide the Association;
- RALGA has ensured that by mid 2006 at least 24 out of 30 Districts and the City of Kigali have subscribed to the organisation; by January 1st 2007 all Local Governments have become RALGA members and pay their membership fees;
- RALGA has reviewed its organisational documents by March 2006 and has successfully managed the transition period;
- On an annual basis regular (4 to 6) board meetings are held with a general attendance of over 70% of the 10 board members; Board meetings guide the RALGA staff on their activities and might urge the staff to take up urgent projects when the situation so dictates;
- Board retreats will be organised every two years which will serve as an internal reflection mechanism on how the Board is functioning.

1.2 Revitalise the commission structure and assign staff members to the various committees

The RALGA commissions have an important role to play when it comes to specific matters that relate to Local Government in Rwanda. Since a listing of all these matters could easily result in over twenty (20) commissions RALGA has opted for a policy by which only 4 permanent commissions will exist and others will be called on an ad-hoc basis. The legal policy officer is in charge of the commissions whereas other staff members will advise commissions when it comes to their specific fields of expertise.

Success indicators are:

- RALGA commissions take political stands in their meetings which are well prepared by RALGA staff; Political stands are communicated by RALGA in relevant forums in and outside the country;
- At least seven annual meetings of commissions composed of five members are held.

1.3 Organise regular field visits to ensure communication with membership and ensure increased visibility of the association

Being part of RALGA's communication policy regular field visits will be made to consult the membership. This will ensure that there is a good understanding in the secretariat of the needs of the membership and increase the visibility of the Association within the country. In the 2006 local elections RALGA has played a monitoring role.

Success indicators are:

- RALGA technical officers will spend an average of 40% of their annual working days in visiting the Districts, which will be reported in six monthly RALGA progress reports;
- Filed visits result in RALGA 's capability to voice the needs and concerns of Local Governments and to establish productive linkages for their members (e.g. NGO support in specific areas);
- Membership appreciation of RALGA 's presence in the field is expressed in General Assemblies and results in a strong membership bond with its association;
- The local elections have been monitored by RALGA in a selected number of Districts.

1.4 RALGA represents its members in international forums

Local governments meet, exchange, lobby and learn from one and each other in international contexts. In the regional setting EALGA, the East African Local Government Association, has been founded recently and RALGA will play an important role in this network. Also on a world scale, RALGA will assume a role in UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments). RALGA sits in the board of both organisations. RALGA will foster its particular relationship with the national local government associations of Sweden (SALA) and the Netherlands (VNG) as a result of their involvement in the creation of RALGA.

Success indicators are:

- RALGA (selected board members and secretary general) will participate in relevant meetings and exchanges, such as Africities (September 2006), UCLG Africa section meetings and EALGA gatherings;
- Participation has resulted in strong ties between national local government associations in (East) Africa which results in capacity building initiatives, joint publications and increased recognition of the voice of Local Authorities in poverty reduction strategies, eradication strategies of pandemic diseases etcetera.

1.5 Joint purchasing for local authorities (fuel coupons, insurance, motorcycles etc..)

Representing its members is not only evident on a political and policy level, but also in activities where a joint operation can result in a benefit for all members. RALGA has in the past successfully negotiated contracts with insurance companies and suppliers of goods and services that were beneficial to its members. Also some feasibility studies have been made for the establishment of a

RALGA Bulk Purchasing Company. This is however not to be expected in the first half of this strategic plan period.

Success indicators are:

- RALGA will continue to negotiate commercially interesting deals for its members with suppliers of goods and services;
- RALGA has organised a Local Government Fair in 2008 related to a general assembly where service providers can present their products to the RALGA members;
- A study in 2008 will provide the basis for a go / no go decision for RALGA to establish a Joint Purchasing Office.

4.2 Strategic objective 2: Lobby and Advocacy for Rwanda's local authorities

Under this objective all activities are grouped that aim at influencing policies, legislation and measures that effect the position of local government in Rwanda. RALGA is expected to succeed in influencing decentralisation policies, favouring conditions under which funds are transferred to local governments and be the advocate of local government interests in administrative reforms, public sector retrenchments.

The activities under this strategic objective are:

2.1 Design and elaborate lobby strategy

RALGA is doing a lot of lobby work and has established certain ways of doing so, however RALGA feels the need to elaborate a clear lobbying strategy that will define where lobbying would be needed, by whom and along a certain way. Lobbying will be based partially on research at local level that will provide relevant data, such as (e.g) timeliness of central government transfers.

Success indicators are:

- In December 2006 RALGA will have a strategic document that spells out its lobby strategy. The strategy will enable the RALGA board to set priorities on which boards it would like to be represented and what the expected effects of the lobby would be;
- RALGA will be assisted in this field by an international expert that will share his / her experience in this field; the result of this advice is a clear document.

2.2 Conduct research on key advocacy issues

For any kind of advocacy to be credible and impact, it must be backed by well researched and analysed information. RALGA will therefore be carrying out assessments in the field to inform its advocacy strategy and enrich its lobbying capabilities.

Success indicators

- Research results on advocacy have been used and have created impact on the targets
- One Advocacy and Lobbying Strategy is completed and used by the board of RALGA

2.3 Weekly 15 minutes radio broadcasts on local government matters

Being part of RALGA's communication and advocacy policies, the weekly radio programmes for Local Government in Rwanda will be continued. These programmes serve to inform and debate issues such as the newly adopted legislation, good governance, decentralisation policies and transparency issues.

Success indicators are:

- At least 40 radio broadcasts will be made on an annual basis on topics of interest for Local Governments;
- There is evidence of positive feedback from listeners to RALGA.

2.4 Information, Education and communication activities

Information communication activities form one of the key components of lobbying among members of RALGA as well as the stakeholders. RALGA will use information gathered and analysed from the field as well as from the stakeholders to inform its members on the one hand while influencing the partners and stakeholders on the other.

Success indicators

- 30 Districts and the City of Kigali use intranet to communicate and share information on all matters relevant to the Association
- Information on and about RALGA create more understanding to the stakeholders and increase the number of agencies that want to work with RALGA on issues related to the improvement of local governments.

2.5 National events and farewell ceremonies

National events create opportunities to market RALGA while farewell ceremonies create space for lobbying. Farewell activities also allow new members and stakeholders the chance to meet RALGA and explore new partnerships and potential for new and future cooperation. RALGA has, as a matter of advocacy and lobbying tactic, budget, plan and implement these activities as circumstances may require.

Success Indicators

- Participate in only national and international strategic meetings that can market RALGA

2.6 Ensure regularly updated website and intranet with members

Being part of RALGA 's communication policy its website will be a tool for communication with the membership. Only regularly updated websites will keep attracting visitors to the site. RALGA will study the possibility to create an intranet environment in which it exchanges with its membership will be facilitated. It is projected to recruit a communications officer by January 2007 to be in charge of all communication related matters. Recruitment will depend on the availability of funds.

Success indicators are:

- RALGA website is attractive with relevant information for both Local Governments as for people interested in the cause of Local Governments in Rwanda;
- RALGA intranet operational (2008);
- RALGA will monitor from 2007 onwards the number of hits on its website (if technically possible);
- RALGA will recruit a communication officer (2007);
- The website is at least 6 times per year updated.

2.7 Organisation of yearly local government competition and award

In order to strengthen the self-esteem of Local Governments in Rwanda, RALGA has the intention of organising a yearly competition on a specific topic between its members. As example could serve “the cleanest District of Rwanda” – award, “the most innovating citizens participation initiative of the year” – award, or the “best practice on transparency” - award. The contest will be accompanied by radio and television programmes which will positively reflect Rwanda’s Local Authorities.

Success indicators are:

- A yearly competition is organised resulting in awarding one the RALGA members for its outstanding performance;
- Concomitant radio and television attention will positively highlight Districts in Rwanda.

2.8 RALGA is an active member of (restrictive number of) boards that deal with local governance

RALGA is actively involved in CDF, National Decentralisation Steering Committee, ... It will study the proposition to sit on the District Incentive Fund Committee of the Twubakane Programme, gender and human rights related organisations. RALGA will be consulted by Central Government and parliament and will deliver inputs in new legislations.

Success indicators are:

- On the basis of the above mentioned strategy RALGA will prioritise on what boards / steering committees / etcetera it would like to sit (December 2006);
- RALGA staff will assemble the necessary information and do the necessary groundwork for their representative on the boards (ongoing);
- RALGA will have provided important inputs that reflect the stand of Local Governments in legislation (ongoing).

2.9 Produce clear political statements within the RALGA commissions and in the board

Under Objective 1, activity 2 the need for revitalising the commission structure has been emphasized. RALGA commissions will be very important for its lobby work since they will make the analysis of the situation and take the policy stands.

Success indicators are:

- The degree to which the commissions are indeed producing clear policy statements;
- Evidence of at least 7 well documented, yearly, cases of RALGA lobby.

2.10 vest in relationship with ministries (marketing of RALGA)

RALGA will continue to invest in maintaining its good relationships with Central Government. Especially the relationship with MINALOC and MINECOFIN are of utmost importance for the Districts. RALGA board and staff members will visit and involve counterparts from Central Government in their work.

Success indicators are:

- The degree to which RALGA succeeds to have good working relationships with the central government departments.

2.11 Invest in relationship with other stakeholders

Likewise the relationship with civil society organisations and the donor community are important since their voice can sometimes be crucial in matters that effect local governments.

Success indicators are:

- The degree to which RALGA succeeds to have good working relationships with civil society organisations and the donor community, sometimes reflected in working agreements and Memoranda of Understanding.

2.12 Disseminate annual report and other RALGA publication to wider audience

RALGA will produce an annual report that will serve the dual purpose of informing the donors and the membership on its progress, and at the same time serve as a marketing tool for interested parties in Rwanda and abroad.

Success indicators are:

- Annual report produced yearly
- Annual report is widely distributed.

4.3 Strategic objective 3: Capacity building for local governments in Rwanda

RALGA has a clear vision on its role in capacitating Local Governments in Rwanda and will spell that out in a strategy paper. RALGA sees its role primarily as a broker between the capacity building needs expressed by its membership and the service providing institutions, donor funded projects and consultancy firms. RALGA will invest in documenting service providers and the quality of their services in a database and likewise it will keep track of the needs at the level of their members. Gender mainstreaming into local government will also form a key component in capacity building for RALGA members. RALGA will document best practices and favour peer to peer exchanges as a way of capacity building. It will link Districts with projects such as Twubakane for gender, SNV for District Development Planning and DED/GTZ for local economic development. RALGA does perceive a role to train newly elected councillors on their roles and responsibilities and overall governance issues (local decision making, participative planning, and accountability). Finally RALGA will study the possibilities to foster municipal partnership relationships as a means to develop capacities through

District / municipal exchange. The RALGA capacity building officer is sponsored by Twubakane and receives backstopping by VNG International.

The activities under this strategic objective are:

3.1 Design a detailed capacity building strategy with action plan

A capacity building strategy for RALGA will be presented by October 2006.

Success indicators are:

- The existence of a well documented capacity building strategy;

3.2 Capacity building of elected officials

RALGA will develop materials for the newly elected councillors on decentralisation, the related legislation, poverty reduction strategies and on localising the MDGs. It will study how it can make use of the training materials developed by others such as those developed under the SALA IDA project in the former provinces of Butare / Gikongoro, by Twubakane and others. RALGA aims at training at least 2000 councillors (District and Sector levels; chairpersons of the youth committees and the women committees) on a yearly basis.

Success indicators are:

- The existence of high quality training materials for newly elected councillors;
- At least 80% of the above mentioned target group has been trained during 3 days;
- Councillors are better performing after the training to be testified by District Authorities.

3.3 Procure technical assistance

RALGA will procure technical assistance to accompany the Association in the implementation of the strategic plan. It is estimated that 12 – 16 weeks of consultancy services on a yearly basis are needed. This might be international, regional or local. RALGA will procure technical assistance in compliance with its procurement policy. TA needs expressed are related to defining a gender policy, HRD policy, Lobby strategy, Communication strategy, Capacity building strategy, general accompaniment, support to commissions and general assembly.

Success indicators are:

- A contract for Short Term Technical assistance is signed and procured according to RALGA procurement rules and regulations in April / May 2006;
- Terms of references are prepared and consultants reports available.

3.4 Development of M&E system for strategic plan

RALGA will develop a Monitoring and Evaluation system that will enable the association to keep track of the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The M&E system would include a reporting format that will reflect the implementation of the plan. It should enable RALGA to analyse how its follows the plan and, if necessary, why changes in the planning have occurred. RALGA will translate the strategic plan into yearly action plans. RALGA will hire local consultants to monitor the RALGA impact at District level. RALGA will call their donors / partners at quarterly meetings. Two meetings will be dedicated to

the annual plan and annual report respectively. Two other meetings will have a more informal character.

Success indicators are:

- An M&E system is in place by Nov 2006;
- A reporting format for the implementation plan is in place by Nov 2006;
- 6 monthly reports on the implementation of the strategic plan;
- Feed back from Districts through independent evaluators (December each year);
- Quarterly meetings with donors.

3.5 Provide for capacity building of staff

RALGA will invest in its own personnel by using a proportion of the budget for staff training, team-building and a study-tour for the staff to learn from other Associations.

Success indicators are:

- Staff training is part of Human Resources Policy;
- Number of staff trained and budget spent on training;
- A yearly staff retreat is organised and has contributed to building the team;
- A study visit is organised for the RALGA staff end 2006 / beginning 2007 and a second one in 2008.

3.6 Organise technical forums in order to ensure adequate responses to questions of members and facilitate inter-district learning

RALGA will organise specialised forums and peer groups with representatives from the Districts that will favour peer to peer exchange between people of the same function (District Auditors, Executive Secretaries et cetera).

Success indicators are:

- The number of specialised forums that have been organised;
- The feedback from the participants on the usefulness of the exchanges;
- The number of forums that will be organised by the same peer groups;
- At least 200 people have participated on a yearly basis in specialised forums.

3.7 Accumulate best practices, develop benchmarks on service delivery and disseminate them

RALGA will document best practices and develop benchmarks for District performance that will be disseminated through the communication channels that have been mentioned under specific objective 1.

Success indicators are:

- The existence of well documented best practices;
- Dissemination of best practices through RALGA channels of communication.

3.8 Assume and make operational the intermediary role that RALGA plays between the demand of Districts and the supply by training institutes, NGO's and consultancy firms (including establishment database)

Success indicators are:

- RALGA has coordinated a SWOT analysis of District capacities and a needs assessment for capacity building support amongst its members within framework of Twubakane program;
- RALGA has developed a database where it keeps track of training and capacity building suppliers and will document the satisfaction of its members on the training provided;
- A clear capacity building plan

- There is evidence that RALGA has successfully linked demand and supply in at least three occasions per year;
- RALGA participates in initiatives by others (or might even organise itself) to coordinate and harmonize capacity building activities.

3.9 Facilitate partnerships of Rwandese local authorities with local authorities elsewhere

In many countries national local government associations play an important role in facilitating partnerships between local authorities all over the world. Exchanging on specific municipal related topics is a recognized way of capacity building.

Success indicators are:

- RALGA have made an inventory in 2007 of existing District partnership relations;
- RALGA will have liaised with UCLG and northern RALGA 's such as VNG, SALA IDA, etc.. to try to match Rwandese Districts with cities and local governments elsewhere.

3.10 Local economic development programme

RALGA has entered into agreement with DED to create a unit on promotion of Local Economic Development in RALGA. Under this agreement two people (1 DED/GTZ, 1 local counterpart) will be placed within the organisation. The ultimate aim is poverty reduction through the promotion of local economic development. Work will be undertaken in pilot Districts in the Eastern Province where GTZ sponsors local development. Under this agreement a roadmap for the creation of a RALGA consultancy services will be developed.

Success indicators are:

- A placement of two advisors in RALGA (May 2006);
- Successful public-private initiatives are developed (2007);
- A roadmap for RALGA Consult is developed (2007);
- The first paid services by RALGA consult by 2008.

3.11 Recruitment of new staff

As part of capacity building and staff development, RALGA needs to recruit staff competent enough to implement and its strategic plan. Currently, RALGA's organisational structure is not fully filled with the recommended number of staff. As the financial resources become available, RALGA will recruit the remaining staff in the coming year(s).

Success indicator

- Four new staff recruited by of 2008

3.12 Gender programme to integrate gender in District Development Plans and to emphasize the involvement of women in governance as an affirmative action

RALGA will maintain a strong focus on affirmative actions that support women political leaders and councillors and to mainstream gender in District Development Plans. RALGA 's Gender Program Officer will contribute in the elaboration of the gender strategy and develop yearly action plans. RALGA has received funding from CIDA until may 2007 for this programme. RALGA will furthermore liaise with projects such as Twubakane to ensure maximal impact of its gender programme. The

strong involvement of RALGA during the 2006 local elections has contributed to high percentage of female local politicians.

Success indicators are:

- RALGA has a gender strategy in local government by June 2006 and action plan that is endorsed by its general assembly by December 2006 and includes activities such as leadership training and gender planning for councillors and District staff;
- On a yearly basis at least 310 male and female councillors and District staff trained on gender mainstreaming in development planning, gender analysis and gender budgeting;
- Specific RALGA activities result in strong support for elected female councillors and executives;
- Gender notions are mainstreamed within the organisation testified by a presence of at least 40% women in RALGA's political structure, personnel and gender paragraphs in all its policy documents.

4.4 Strategic objective 4 : RALGA manages to be an effective and efficient membership organisation

This activities under this objective aim at a well run RALGA administration. The ideal picture portrays a well located RALGA office manned by a staff that is motivated and above-all committed to strengthening local government in Rwanda. RALGA disposes of a management that has vision and is able to delegate responsibilities to its staff. RALGA is visible for its membership and professional in its services. The RALGA secretariat is capable of monitoring this strategic plan and report thereon. Also the finances of the organisation are properly managed and accounted for.

The activities are:

4.1 Build multi-purpose office with library / resource centre

Success indicators are:

- RALGA has constructed its multi-purpose office by 2007;
- RALGA library / resource centre is frequently made use of by local government personnel, students and others.

4.2 Develop ICT network in office

Success indicators are:

- RALGA disposes of an internal network that will facilitate internal communication, shared documents and products by 2007.

4.3 Ensure high quality staff

The strengths of the Association depends on the quality of the staff. RALGA currently disposes of a highly qualified staff. It is projected to recruit a Finance and Administration Manager and cashier by April 2006 and a policy officer in charge of communication by January 2007.

Success indicators are:

- RALGA staff in place;
- Recruitment of additional staff according to schedule;
- Human Resources Policy developed (2007).

4.4 Adopt procedures manual

RALGA has a procedures manual. This manual will be updated to the demands of the new funding arrangement and in-line with the M&E system developed.

- Procedures manual updated by September 2006.

4.5 Ensure annual financial statements by certified auditor

RALGA will produce annual financial statement that are certified by an auditor firm that complies to international standards. The financial statement will include contributions from all donors and obviously the membership fees.

Success indicators are:

- A yearly audit report produced by a certified auditor.

4.6 Ensure well functioning RALGA secretariat

RALGA will require funds for the running costs of the association, including stationary, cars, fuel and equipments.

Success indicators are:

- The secretariat is running effectively en efficient;
- Equipment is procured according to the RALGA procurement rules.

4.7 Increase RALGA's capacity to generate its own revenues

RALGA is during the period of the strategic plan highly dependant on donor contributions². Therefore RALGA will develop strategies to increase its income. This can be done in several ways: paid service delivery to individual members through RALGA Consult (example RALGA Consult could develop an expert pool of local consultants that could assist District in designing their development plan); service fees on joint procurement (see act. 1.9); fund raising activities; organisation of marketplaces where service deliverers present their products to Districts and pay RALGA for a stand at the marketplace, etcetera..

Success indicators are:

- RALGA will develop a strategy on revenue generation (2007);
- RALGA has established RALGA Consult (2008);
- RALGA generates increasing yearly revenue for the association starting from 5 million FRW in 2006 to 25 million FRW in 2009.

² It is estimated that RALGA when no donor support will be received, will be able to organize at least the general assembly, board meetings and some commission work.