



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

JUNE 2025



# RALGA ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

**June 2025**

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# MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL

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It is with sincere appreciation and a deep sense of responsibility that I present this Annual Report of the Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA), offering an overview of the annual realizations in our continuous endeavor to serve our members.

The year marked the start of the Government's new five-year cycle under the National Strategy for Transformation (NST2). For RALGA, it was a moment to reflect and recalibrate, working closely with our members and partners to align our efforts with evolving national priorities.

Throughout the year, RALGA remained a trusted platform for engagement, policy dialogue, and capacity development in local governance. We ensured local governments had a voice in key national processes, such as climate action and national planning, and continued to advocate for their needs.

Despite funding challenges, we achieved strong results together: responding to all of our members' recruitment needs, providing induction trainings, reaching over 1,200 local government staff through targeted capacity building, and reinforcing the role of gender in local leadership, among others.

We can all be encouraged by the fact that Rwandan local governments continue to grow stronger and more effective, as reflected in national assessments of public finance, citizen participation, service delivery, and more. These achievements are the product of close collaboration.

On behalf of the entire Secretariat team, I extend heartfelt thanks to all our members and partners who contributed to this year's progress.

I invite you to explore this report as a testimony to what partnership and shared purpose can accomplish.

**Dominique Habimana**

*Secretary General*

RALGA

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. ABOUT RALGA

The Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) is a membership-based organization founded in 2002, representing all districts and the City of Kigali. Born out of Rwanda's decentralization process, RALGA supports its members to fulfil their mandates by promoting good governance, institutional capacity development and decentralization policy advocacy.

RALGA's core functions include strengthening the capacities of local governments, policy advocacy and fostering cooperation among Rwandan and international local governments. Its governance structure comprises the General Assembly, Executive Committee, four technical Commissions, the General Secretariat, and oversight bodies including the Audit and Conflict Resolution Committees.

RALGA plays a strategic role in advancing Rwanda's decentralization and development goals by empowering local governments to deliver effective, accountable, and citizen-centered services.



### 1.2. VISION

To be an enabler of innovative local governance, empowering local governments to deliver on their development priorities and national development aspirations.



### 1.3. MISSION

To serve as a trusted resource and advocate for Rwanda's local governments, ensuring value-added services and responsive support.



### 1.4. VALUES

Excellence, Integrity, Adaptability, and Independence guide RALGA's commitment to governance innovation and professional service delivery.

## 1.5. THE STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

This Annual Report presents a strategic overview of RALGA's achievements and performance for the year. It opens with an Executive Summary, followed by an Introduction to RALGA's mandate and values. The main body details achievements by unit across RALGA's key areas of work. A Financial Overview highlights funding and stewardship, while the final section offers reflections and a forward-looking outlook.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) continued its vital role in supporting decentralized governance throughout the 2024–2025 fiscal year. This Report outlines key achievements and lessons learned from the completed year and presents an outlook into strategic priorities for the coming period. The content is structured around RALGA's core mandate areas: **Local Government Capacity Development, Policy Advocacy, Member Services, and Institutional Strengthening.**

**Local Government Capacity Development:** Over the year, RALGA delivered **32 capacity-building interventions** reaching over **1,200 local government leaders and staff**, across themes including transformational leadership, inclusive economic development, climate action, and gender equality. Activities involved technical accompaniment, peer learning exchanges, leadership training, and thematic workshops. These efforts significantly improved practical knowledge, inter-district learning, and the ability of local entities to better meet citizen needs and national targets.

**Policy Advocacy:** RALGA reinforced its strategic contribution in national policy discourse through deepened evidence-based engagement. During the reporting period, the Association actively contributed to sector coordination platforms and conducted critical reviews of over **125 policy instruments**, enhancing their **accessibility for local government stakeholders**. It convened up to **11 multi-stakeholder policy dialogues** to elevate grassroots perspectives to national policy. These interventions strengthened RALGA's policy voice and ensured that ongoing decentralization reforms and national programs, particularly in climate change and sustainable urbanization, and local economic development, were meaningfully informed by local realities.

**Services to Members – LG Staff Recruitment:** A flagship accomplishment of the year was the successful rollout of the nationwide Mass Recruitment Model for local government staffing. Developed and implemented in close coordination with MINALOC, MIFOTRA, the Public Service Commission, and all districts, the model facilitated a transparent, merit-based recruitment of 4,942 new LG personnel. By integrating joint planning, standardized examinations, and strong quality assurance mechanisms, the model significantly enhanced efficiency, reduced recruitment time, while enhancing integrity.

**Institutional Strengthening and Governance:** Internally, RALGA finalized a new **Strategic Plan (2025–2030)** aligned with NST2 and SDG frameworks. It updated its governing instruments to comply with the revised NGO Law and enhanced its digital transformation through the completion of its **E-Learning Platform**. Governance organs were active throughout the year, with regular statutory meetings and oversight roles. The institution maintained a high standard of accountability, confirmed by a clean, **unqualified external audit opinion**.

Despite these achievements, challenges inherent to the **complexity of coordinating multiple stakeholders** and the **limited resources** available in comparison to RALGA's mandate were evident. Looking ahead, the Association will prioritize enhanced function-tailored and demand informed services, stronger institutional and stakeholder coordination in all mandate areas, **resource mobilization, institutional system upgrades**, to scale service delivery and meet evolving member needs more efficiently and sustainably.

# 3. ANNUAL ACHIEVEMENTS

## 3.1. LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

### 3.1.1. Introduction

Capacity development of Local Governments is a core and foundational mandate of the Association. Interventions in this area aim to empower local entities to effectively deliver on their mandates and meet citizen expectations.

We are pleased to report that this year saw a significant expansion of our partnerships, which has strengthened our ability to respond to the diverse and growing capacity development needs of our members. New collaboration frameworks and Memoranda of Understanding signed with the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC), the Rwanda Management Institute (RMI), and the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Rwanda (ICPAR) have positioned RALGA more strategically and increased our capacity to deliver targeted support to our members.

In the pages that follow, we present the key results achieved, structured around core outcome areas, along with the positive effects these efforts have had on local governments across the country. We end the chapter with a reflection on lessons learned and an outlook into the year ahead.

### 3.1.2. Building Sustainable Internal Capacity through Training and Induction



In the 2024/2025 fiscal year, RALGA made significant progress in strengthening the capacity of local governments to deliver effective and inclusive governance. A key focus has been building **internal training capacity** and **initiating collaboration frameworks** to ensure sustainability and reduce reliance on external providers. Through a partnership with

the Municipal Administrative Exchange Rhineland-Palatinate and the University of Public Administration Rhineland-Palatinate, RALGA developed a specialized **Training of Trainers (ToT) and Certification Course**. This initiative trained and certified 37 facilitators from local governments, MINALOC, and RALGA, equipping them with essential skills to independently lead future capacity-building efforts. These trained trainers have later served RALGA in facilitating Induction Trainings for newly recruited staff across the country.

Complementing this, RALGA's induction program reached 824 newly recruited staff from all Districts, including **244 women**, ensuring alignment with NST2 and enhancing **local ownership and performance**. These sessions introduced new employees to Rwanda's leadership philosophy, institutional roles, and how their work connects to national development frameworks such as NST2 and DDS. This comprehensive induction which demonstrated a partnership approach between RALGA, Districts and central ministries like MINALOC, MIFOTRA and MINUBUMWE, fosters ownership, accountability, and better service delivery across local government institutions.

### 3.1.3. Strengthening Leadership for Transformative Local Governance



Leadership development remains a cornerstone of RALGA's work. In December 2024, RALGA introduced an initiative of **Leadership Workshops for Transformation**, gathering 131 members of District Executive Committees and Council Bureaus, all districts' Mayors and Council chairperson across the country, with women representing 44.3% of the participants. The workshops emphasized **strategic leadership, transparency, accountability, and collaborative governance**, equipping leaders with practical tools to manage conflicts, foster trust, and promote citizen-centered development. The grouping per province enabled to have smaller groups and consequently high participation and learning potential. These efforts align local governance with Rwanda's national development objectives and political orientation, including unity and eradication of divisive ideologies. Participants reported renewed motivation and clearer strategies to leave a positive, lasting impact in their respective institutions.

### 3.1.4. Aligning Local Governance with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and other UN bodies RALGA facilitated a workshop on **National-to-Local Governance for SDG Implementation**. This training which contributes to the country’s demonstrated commitment to the international development agenda, benefited 35 local government planners and provincial representatives, providing them with tailored governance tools to localize SDGs effectively. Building on this momentum, RALGA and UN partners will continue to co-design training curricula and monitor progress, ensuring local governments contribute meaningfully to Rwanda’s Vision 2050 and international development commitments.

**Table 1: Summary of LG Capacity Development Reach**

Key Intervention Area	Main Figures	Strategic Effect
Induction of new LG staff	824 total, 244 women	Improved integration, role clarity, and delivery
ToT & Training Capacity	37 certified trainers	Internal capacity to scale training efforts
Leadership Workshops	131 top officials	Enhanced governance, trust, and collaboration
SDG Localization	35 planners trained	Local SDG planning aligned to Vision 2050
Council Affairs, Advisors of EXCOM & PRCOs	62 + 85 staff trained	Governance support & citizen engagement
Women’s Leadership Support	264 networked leaders	Stronger gender representation
Young Women Interns	210 (620 total for 6 cohorts)	44.1% employed in Public Institutions, many in LG roles
E-Learning Platform	4 courses, 2 live	Scalable, inclusive learning access

### 3.1.5. Enhancing Specialized Capacities and Communication

To improve governance functions and citizen engagement, RALGA facilitated workshops for **62 district council affairs specialists and advisors**, clarifying their roles and enhancing teamwork to overcome performance challenges. Additionally, **85 public relations and communication officers** from local government entities were sensitized with tools to strengthen local governments’ communication strategies, citizens interaction and visibility efforts. These interventions are expected to foster greater transparency and public trust, key elements for responsive and accountable local leadership.

### 3.1.6. Promoting Gender Inclusion and Women’s Leadership

Gender equality continues to be central in RALGA’s capacity development agenda. This past year, RALGA was capable to operationalize The **Local Government Women Network** for which General Assembly convened 264 women leaders to strengthen peer support and leadership development. Furthermore, the **Internship Program for Female University Graduates** permitted 210 young women, nurturing the next generation of skilled female leaders ready to influence decision-making at local government levels. These programs help



build more inclusive governance structures that better reflect and respond to the diverse needs of Rwandan communities.

The impact assessment and tracer survey of this program implemented under the support of the United Nations for Women (UN Women) revealed that it has indeed contributed to creation of opportunities for women in local government leadership. Up to date, **620 young women fresh university graduates have benefited**, up to intake 3, about **44.1% of its alumni are employed of whom 49% in the public sector, 63.5% in local government jobs (district, sector, cell levels) and 16.6% in elected local government positions.**

### 3.1.7. Leveraging Digital Technology for Scalable Capacity Development

Recognizing the limitations and costs of traditional face-to-face training, RALGA has embraced technology by operationalizing an **e-learning platform**. During this fiscal year, four blended courses covering citizen participation, education, agriculture, and health were developed. The **Citizen Participation module** is already live and freely accessible to all local government staff and elected officials, offering scalable, flexible, and cost-effective learning opportunities. Another milestone on our E-Learning Platform is that, thanks to the collaboration with Bloomberg Vital Strategies and MINALOC, the CRVS trainings are accessed through RALGA's E-Learning platform, making it easier for all local government personnel responsible for civil registration to be trained under RALGA's coordination. This digital innovation expands RALGA's reach and ensures continuous capacity development aligned with Rwanda's evolving governance needs.

**BOX 1: How the internships of young female fresh graduate is contributing to gender in local government, employment and transforming participants**

## ***Internship Program Impact Assessment and Tracer Survey***

Since its inception, the **Professional Internship Program for Female University Graduates**, led by **RALGA in partnership with MIGEPROF**, has proven to be a powerful gateway into employment, public service, and civic engagement for young Rwandan women.

A recent impact assessment covering the **first three internship editions reached 263 out of 380 participants**. The findings paint a compelling picture:

### **◆ Employment and Further Opportunities**

Today, **44.1% of interns are employed**, while others are forging alternative paths

- **6.8%** are self-employed
- **10.6%** pursued further studies
- **38.4%** remain job seekers

Among those employed, nearly half (**49%**) work in the **public sector**, and of those, local government is the biggest recruiter, absorbing **63.5%**. Interns have taken up roles at all administrative levels, including **district (48.5%)**, **sector (39.4%)**, and **cell level (12.1%)**. One even serves as a **Sector Executive Secretary**.

### **◆ Civic Engagement and Representation**

Beyond employment, the program has also fueled **political participation**. **16.6% of interns** now serve in **local elective organs**, with the most active involvement in:

- Youth structures (**41%**)
- Local committees (**28.2%**)
- Women's councils (**17.9%**)
- District and sector councils (**10.3%**)

### **◆ Districts' Appreciation and Institutionalization**

Local governments have lauded the interns' contribution, particularly in boosting performance contract (Imihigo) implementation. The program is now embraced by districts, universities, and training institutions, signaling its relevance and sustainability.

### **◆ Looking Ahead**

By June 2025, 756 young women will have graduated from the program. The upcoming 7th edition will mark a new phase. A new training package has been designed to offer closer coaching, mentorship and training to participants. More ties with other internship schemes and job readiness program will offer more opportunities to participants, aligned with the NST2 priorities on decent job creation and gender equality.

## STORIES OF CHANGE



### Ms BAYIHIMBAZE

BAYIHIMBAZE Emercienne is a graduate of Economics and Entrepreneurship from the University of Rwanda, Nyagatare Campus. She had the privilege of undertaking a professional internship in Ruhango District, in the Business Development and Employment Promotion Unit.

“This opportunity, facilitated by RALGA and its partners, was instrumental in shaping my career aspirations and professional growth. I learned about the internship opportunity through an official announcement and eagerly applied. Being selected marked the beginning of an enriching journey.”



### MS UWIRINGIYIMANA

Ms Uwiringiyimana Clementine is former intern in 2nd edition, a council member in Gisagara district, and a staff at RBA-Rusizi.

“I was deeply grateful for the opportunity that I had to be part of the 2nd edition of the internship program for fresh female university graduates”.

During hard time as an intern, she gained invaluable skills that have shaped her career.

“I started by working with the Public Relations Office, which allowed me to build essential communication skills and interact directly with citizens, giving me a deep understanding of community needs. These experiences not only boosted my confidence but also prepared me for my role as a journalist at RBA, Rusizi, where I now have the opportunity to share impactful stories with the public”.

## 3.2. POLICY ANALYSIS, RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

### 3.2.1. Introduction

The 2024/2025 financial year was a pivotal year in Rwanda's governance and thus important RALGA's advocacy and representation work. Key events included the Presidential and Parliamentary elections, the conclusion of Rwanda's National Strategy for Transformation (NST1, 2018–2024) and the launch of NST2 (2024–2029) alongside sector strategic plans from various ministries. Local governments also began aligning their development strategies to NST2.

Public Financial Management (PFM) in local governments improved steadily, as shown in recent Auditor General reports, but continued efforts were needed to sustain this momentum. The enactment of the Prime Minister's Order on sectoral decentralization in mid-2024 marked an important milestone in empowering local governments and further decentralizing public service delivery.

In this context, RALGA ensured to participate actively in various spaces and working groups contributing to key sectoral policies evaluations, ensuring alignment with decentralization principles and views of local governments. RALGA commissions were active in reflecting on policies, engaging local governments and feeding the secretariat with necessary advocacy agenda items.

Through policy assessments, consultations, partnerships, and peer learning, both nationally and by participating in activities with regional and international sister organizations, RALGA reinforced its role in speaking for its local governments members and ensuring that policy decisions are evidence-based and grounded in local realities. This also enabled Rwanda's local governments to influence the international development agenda on issues such as climate action, sustainable urbanization, and governance.

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### 3.2.2. Policy Awareness and Advocacy

RALGA produced and disseminated five targeted policy briefs on critical topics: fiscal decentralization and local revenue, disaster management coordination, school feeding programs, local economic development, and the legal framework for local government employment and decentralization.

A comprehensive directory of 125 concise policy and regulatory briefs was made digitally accessible to our members, equipping members with easy-to-use resources to support compliant service delivery and strategic planning.

### 3.2.3. Strengthened Role in Socioeconomic Transformation

RALGA played a pivotal role in facilitating local government engagement in Rwanda's climate commitments, particularly the development of the Nationally Determined Contribution 3.0 (NDC3.0) for 2025–2030. The association convened leaders and technical staff from local governments, government institutions, and development partners for a high-level consultative workshop that ensured local priorities were reflected in national climate strategies.

Through active participation in national policy dialogues, including governance, social protection, fiscal decentralization, urbanization, and sector strategic planning, RALGA amplified local government voices, ensuring their perspectives inform broader policy frameworks.

RALGA also continued its efforts to streamline Public Financial Management at local levels, working side by side with the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Local Government, the Rwanda Revenue Authority and Transparency International Rwanda Chapter. In this regard, up to three core processes were facilitated by RALGA, including workshops focused on local revenue mobilization, own revenue collection targets setting, and dedicated processes to find solutions to persistent PFM challenges at local level.

### 3.2.4. Enhanced Representation and Partnerships



During the completed financial year, RALGA re-confirmed its commitment to partnerships and institutional collaboration in the interest of enhancing services to local governments. It expanded collaboration through new partnership agreements with key institutions, including MINALOC, Rwanda Management Institute, ICPAR, the Bloomberg Philanthropy, and others, strengthening capacity building and policy advocacy efforts.

On the international stage, RALGA represented Rwanda's local governments in multiple forums, by ensuring to share Rwanda's local governance experiences, advancing the imperative of local level consideration in decision-making processes, ensuring appropriate local levels financing and more. RALGA continued to be an active member of the East African Local Government Association, UCLGA, CLGF, and the World Urban Forum. In December 2024, RALGA handed over the chairmanship of the EACLGA to Uganda. RALGA was also recognized as the Best-Performing and Committed Subscribing Member at the EACLGA forum.

### 3.2.5. Innovative Solutions for Community Development

RALGA spearheaded an innovation competition focused on combating child malnutrition and stunting through community-based initiatives. From 60 district-submitted innovations, three best practices were selected, documented, and shared to promote peer learning and inspire replication across local governments.

### 3.2.6. Providing Tailored Advisory and Technical Support to Local Governments

To strengthen institutional capacities and enhance service delivery among local governments, RALGA, through the PARA Unit, provided targeted advisory and technical support throughout the year. This assistance was delivered through **on-site field visits**, **direct policy guidance**, and **peer learning exchanges** aimed at fostering best practices in local governance. By responding to specific district needs, these efforts enabled local governments to overcome operational bottlenecks, adopt better planning mechanisms, and align their interventions with national policy priorities. A strong focus was placed on facilitating knowledge sharing between peers to institutionalize successful models and reinforce learning-by-doing at the local level.

### 3.2.7. Supporting Inclusive and Participatory Urbanization Services

In partnership with the **Association of Flemish Municipalities (VVSG)** under the **GloBe Rwanda project**, RALGA advanced its efforts to promote inclusive and participatory urban development. This strategic initiative focused on supporting **Bugesera and Karongi Districts**, selected as pilot sites for secondary and satellite urban development, as well as engaging other urbanizing districts and the **City of Kigali**. The overarching goal was to equip these districts with the technical and institutional tools needed for participatory urban planning and to enhance citizen inclusion in shaping their urban futures.

### 3.2.8. International Peer Learning

To promote exposure to international best practices, RALGA, in collaboration with **VVSG**, coordinated a **five-day international training visit** from **20–24 January 2025 to Belgium**. The mission involved five officials from Bugesera and Karongi and provided immense insights in **inclusive and participatory urban planning**.



Certainly. Here's a more **strategic, impact-driven, and results-oriented** rewrite of the three parts, using a narrative that foregrounds **purpose, beneficiaries, institutional value, and policy relevance**, while still reflecting key details:

### **3.2.9. Support to inclusive and participatory land use master plan implementation in Districts**

In response to the growing need for more participatory and technically sound land management practices in rapidly urbanizing districts, RALGA, in partnership with the **National Land Authority (NLA)**, organized an intensive **peer learning program on land readjustment in November 2024**. A four-day program that convened 40 senior technical officers from satellite and secondary cities as well as the City of Kigali, covering services such as urban planning, GIS, building permits, and land administration helped to learn from the ground and share skills among experts practitioners.

Beyond capacity building, the forum positioned local practitioners as contributors to **national policy refinement**, creating a bottom-up policy engagement opportunity. Participants provided technical and practical feedback on draft **NLA implementation instructions** and the proposed Prime Minister's Order on urban governance. This engagement ensured that future urban land policies are grounded in field realities and district-level innovation. The training's success was underpinned by strong institutional collaboration involving **MININFRA, RHA, MINECOFIN, and MINALOC**, reflecting coordinated national support for sustainable urban land governance. The intervention not only built local capacity but also reinforced RALGA's role as a strategic interface between decentralized governments and central institutions on key reform processes.

Moreover, to address the practical knowledge gap in planning and managing inclusive urban development projects, RALGA facilitated a strategic peer exchange between pilot secondary and satellite urban districts and the City of Kigali in December 2024. This learning experience brought together 18 delegates from Bugesera and Karongi, including district executives, One Stop Center staff, site committee members, and private sector stakeholders.

Through guided learning visits to participatory planning and rehousing project sites in Kigali, the delegation gained direct insights into real-case implementation strategies, ranging from community engagement to land acquisition and service delivery models. The visit effectively **demystified complex planning procedures** and provided actionable models that could be contextualized to the realities of secondary and satellite cities. Most importantly, it **fostered cross-district relationships and practical knowledge transfer**, enhancing the technical readiness of district teams to lead inclusive urban development processes. The initiative affirmed the value of inter-district learning as a low-cost, high-impact approach to local government capacity development.

Lastly, recognizing that sustainable urban development depends on strong community ownership, RALGA intensified its efforts to institutionalize **citizen engagement** through an **Umujyi Wanjye Campaign**, in **Karongi** and **Bugesera** in **August 2024**. The campaign aimed at operationalizing the principle of social accountability in urban planning by enabling dialogue between district authorities and urban residents on the implementation of master plans and physical plans.

Implemented in partnership with MININFRA and NLA, the campaign mobilized **700 local leaders and grassroots actors** in participatory forums across urban sectors. These sessions were complemented by targeted **radio talk shows**, which extended outreach to broader constituencies. The result was a notable shift in public awareness and civic ownership over urban planning initiatives. The campaign provided a replicable model for building trust and accountability between local governments and citizens, especially in districts facing rapid urban transformation.

#### **Box2: Summary of Result, advancing inclusive urban development**

In 2024/25, RALGA significantly advanced inclusive urban development in pilot districts by enhancing local capacities in participatory land use planning, promoting citizen engagement in master plan implementation, and influencing national urban governance frameworks. Through targeted technical support, peer learning, and cross-institutional collaboration, over 700 local actors were empowered, contributing to more responsive urban governance and stronger linkages between local development practice and national policy reform.

It also highlighted RALGA's growing leadership in facilitating inclusive local governance and promoting people-centred urbanization.

#### **3.2.10. Reflections on Results and Added Value**

Across these interventions, RALGA's strategic and hands-on support helped bridge the gap between policy and implementation in local urban governance. By focusing on **peer learning**, **policy advocacy**, **capacity building**, and **citizen participation**, the Association significantly

contributed to more inclusive, technically sound, and people-centered urbanization processes in targeted satellite and secondary cities of Bugesera and Karongi Districts. The **active participation of over 700 local actors, opinion leaders**, tangible contributions to **national urban policy frameworks**, and strengthened collaboration between **local governments and central institutions** highlight RALGA's growing role as a catalyst for effective, inclusive local governance.

These achievements however are a small portion of the work needed. Going forward, it is important to maximize on the potential of peer learning as an opportunity not only for capacity building but also for policy learning and improvement as demonstrated by the projects and activities within the PARA department.

**Table 2: Summary Results, Policy Analysis, Research and Advocacy (PARA Unit)**

Focus Area	Key Results Achieved	Quantitative Highlights	Impact
<b>Evidence-based Policy Advocacy</b>	RALGA conducted technical analyses and advocacy on critical local governance issues including land use, decentralization, and urbanization.	3 major policy areas analyzed and inputs used in policy forums (e.g., Local revenue, land use, decentralization)	Strengthened voice of local governments in national policy formulation processes.
<b>RALGA Commissions Field Visits</b>	RALGA Commissions, i.e Local Economic Development Commission, Local Government Finance Commission, Social Development Commission, Commission in charge of Decentralization conducted field missions to assess policy and program implementation and identify emerging issues.	5 districts visited; over 46 local officials engaged	Enhanced accountability and provided direct feedback for policy dialogue and advisory support.
<b>Peer Learning &amp; Technical Capacity Building &amp; dialogue on key policies</b>	Supported inclusive urban planning and management in pilot districts through GloBe-Rwanda with VVSG, emphasizing participatory methods.	40 technical staff trained in participatory land readjustment; 18 officials joined study tours;	Institutional capacities of Bugesera and Karongi strengthened; lessons influencing district plans and national frameworks.
<b>Citizen Engagement in Urban Development</b>	Rolled out the Umujyi Wanjye campaign to promote grassroots involvement in urban planning.	2 districts covered; 700 participants; national radio coverage	Fostered community ownership of urban plans, improved transparency and accountability.
<b>International Exposure for Local Leaders</b>	Facilitated knowledge transfer through Belgian learning exchange for urban governance leaders.	7 officials trained abroad (5 district, 2 RALGA);	Advanced understanding for urban innovation and strategic planning.

## STORIES OF CHANGE

### Mr. HUNDWITIRO

During a field visit by RALGA's Commission to Gisagara District in May 2025, something important happened. As revealed by Mr. HUNDWITIRO Herménégilde, Division Manager for Corporate Services in Gisagara, the visit turned out to be an eye-opener.

"We really appreciate RALGA for creating this space," he said. "It's not just a meeting; it's an exchange of ideas between districts."

Mr. HUNDWITIRO Herménégilde was especially inspired by how other districts were managing to raise their own local revenues and set more ambitious goals. "What we've just heard from our peers pushes us to raise our standards," he added. "We'll discuss this with our district leadership and even plan a study visit to Nyamagabe. There is a lot we can learn from them."



### 3.3. SERVICE DELIVERY TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

#### 3.3.1. Introduction

An effective local government system relies fundamentally on the availability of qualified, motivated, and well-positioned personnel to deliver services to citizens. Recognizing persistent gaps in staffing levels across districts, sectors, and cells, RALGA has continued to play a pivotal role in coordinating and facilitating the recruitment of staff for its members.

Providing recruitment services to its members remains one of the most noble and distinguishing roles of the Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) as a local government association. This critical function supports the continuous strengthening of local government capacities by ensuring that skilled and motivated personnel fill essential positions across districts and the City of Kigali.

This reporting year, a significant shift took place with the introduction of a nationally coordinated mass recruitment model. This new approach empowers local governments with increased responsibilities in the process as hiring entities while maintaining robust oversight and strong coordination by RALGA and concerned public institutions. The success of this approach was grounded in strong institutional collaboration, involving key partners such as the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC), Ministry of Public Service and Labor (MIFOTRA), the National Public Service Commission (NPSC), and district authorities.

As a result of this collective effort, RALGA recruited 4,942 new local government employees, (including 1435 women) within a shortened timeline, delivering substantial improvements in recruitment efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and transparency. Together, we were therefore able to meet almost all recruitment needs of the year rendering districts able to deliver services to citizens.

#### 3.3.2. Recruitment Service Model and Approach

Ensuring that local governments are staffed promptly, effectively, and efficiently has always been critical to the delivery of essential public services. Over the years, it became increasingly clear that delays in recruitment, often caused by sporadic, uncoordinated requests submitted throughout the year, were creating service gaps and placing added pressure on existing staff and systems. To address this, there was a need to establish a recruitment model that enables timely, streamlined, and high-quality staffing support for local entities, while also reducing the cumulative costs of delayed recruitment.

In response, a joint institutional process was launched in July 2024, bringing together all key actors concerned with local government staffing, namely RALGA, MINALOC, MIFOTRA, the National Public Service Commission, and local governments. This inclusive consultation led to the design of a coordinated Mass Recruitment Model

The model, fully aligned with national legal and institutional frameworks, is built around the following features:

- 1. Planning and Consolidation:** Local governments compile and submit their staffing needs to RALGA, which reviews and consolidates them into a comprehensive national

recruitment plan.

- 2. Joint Advertising and Shortlisting:** All vacancies are advertised simultaneously across districts. Local governments conduct shortlisting and submit the reports to RALGA for planning of next steps.
- 3. Centralized Examination Coordination:** In collaboration with districts, MINALOC, and other partners, RALGA confirms examination venues and develops a harmonized schedule for written and oral exams. Applicants for similar positions undertake similar tests on the same day across the country.
- 4. Enhanced Role of Local Governments with Central Oversight:** Local governments are placed at the heart of the model. They advertise posts, conduct shortlisting, supervise exam centers, and can now contribute technical experts to the hiring process. Meanwhile, a joint command post ensures quality control, integrity, and oversight of all procedures.

This new approach has enabled local governments to meet their staffing needs more effectively, while strengthening the overall quality and credibility of recruitment. By harmonizing efforts, fostering institutional synergy, and advancing the principle of decentralization, the model, now successfully implemented in two editions, has proven both practical and impactful

### 3.3.3. Recruitment Results



The 2024–2025 Local Government Recruitment cycle marked a major milestone in improving staffing outcomes across Rwanda’s decentralized entities. Through two large-scale, mass recruitment exercises and an additional targeted recruitment for Cell staff, a combined total of **136** positions were processed, aiming to fill **2,967** vacancies. Of the **9,413** who sat for the oral tests having passed the written Exams, **4,942** were successfully passed over **70%**. The successful candidates exceeded the required number, resulting in a waiting list of **1,975** candidates ready for placement in various district posts. Additionally **103** candidates appealed at the 2nd level (NPSC), **79** for **MRI**, and **24** for **MR2**. None of those proved valid. Financially, the total cost for the recruitment services stood at **RWF 190.164 million**, resulting in an

average recruitment cost of **RWF 38,479** per recruit, marking an **85%** decrease from previous years' averages.

**Table 3: Summary on Recruitment Results**

Type	Applications	Shortlisted	Attended	Passed WT	Eligible for OT	Attended2	Passed	Required staff	Waiting list
July-Sept 2024 (Before MR)	184,160	82,870	10,926	3,329	3,329	1,065	621	605	16
MR 1 From Oct 9 – Nov 21 /2024	350,131	252,481	23,511	8,941	8,941	5,344	2,628	1,386	1,242
MR 2 From Feb 18 –Mar 21/2025	141,226	99,028	8,565	3,043	3,939	2,487	1,306	816	490
Cell ES From 7 to 12 Feb 2025	23,188	2,635	Single exam		2,635	460	350	136	214
DES On 22nd Jan & 14 Feb2025 (Kamonyi & Coffee Proximity Technician (Huye) on 09 May 2025	47	20	Single exam		20	13	3	2	1
	659	52	Single exam		52	44	34	22	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>699,411</b>	<b>437,086</b>	<b>43,002</b>	<b>15,313</b>	<b>18,916</b>	<b>9,413</b>	<b>4,942</b>	<b>2,967</b>	<b>1,975</b>
<b>%</b>		<b>62%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>36%</b>		<b>50%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>40%</b>

### 3.3.4. Success Factors

- ❑ **Institutional coordination improves delivery:** Joint planning and execution significantly reduce duplication, costs, and delays.
- ❑ **Pre-recruitment planning is vital:** Early consolidation of needs and calendar compliance are essential to optimize time and efficiency.

### 3.3.5. Challenges and Constraints

- ❑ **Delays in shortlisting:** Due to big number of applicants, some districts faced difficulties meeting centralized timelines of submitting shortlisting reports.
- ❑ **Low turn-out and unpredictability:** Despite high numbers of applicants and shortlisted candidates, attendance during exams remained low, complicating planning and increasing operational costs.

### 3.3.6. Recommendations

- Put emphasis on early planning and abidance to shared recruitment schedule will further increase legal compliance and quality of recruitment outcomes.
- **Enhance IPPIS candidate management:** Improve the candidate interface and feedback mechanisms in the IPPIS system to better track turnout patterns, predict attendance, and provide timely updates to applicants.

## 3.4. INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

### 3.4.1. Strategic Focus and Governance

In the 2024/2025 reporting year, RALGA maintained its commitment to institutional transformation through strategic visioning and improved governance. A key milestone was the development of the **Strategic Plan 2025–2030**, articulating the Association’s vision, mission, priorities, and direction over the next five years. The new strategy was developed through deep members and stakeholders ‘consultations and fully aligning with the second National Strategy for Transformation (NST2).

Additionally, to uphold good governance and legal compliance, RALGA undertook a revision of its governance and management tools, including its **Articles of Association and internal rules**, adapting them to the new national legal framework governing non-governmental organizations (Law No 058/2024 of 20th June 2024) as well as updating its Operational Procedure Manual. RALGA’s governance organs (General Assembly, Executive Committee, Commissions and Committees) convened regularly to perform their strategic responsibilities in realization of the Association’s mandate to its members. They continued to provide policy guidance and oversight across key areas such as decentralization, local finance, and social and economic development, reinforcing transparency and member trust. In sum, **81%** of recommendations and decisions from the governing organs were implemented.

### 3.4.2. Internal Human Resources and Capacity Development

This year, RALGA advanced its internal staffing and human capital development to ensure it remains fit for purpose. **Five new staff** were recruited into key positions, to strengthen operational efficiency and deliver on programmatic commitments. These included replacement of one of our longstanding staff member who proudly started his retirement, **Mr. Faustin Serubanza**, after serving the Association for over 18 years, where he served in different capacities, the last one as Corporate Services Manager. These additions not only addressed gaps but also helped balance workload and improve service delivery across units. Staff Capacity Development was prioritized, with training opportunities reaching 35% of the staff, and internal processes were reorganized to maximize teamwork, cross-fertilization and collective intelligence as means of staff development.

### 3.4.3. Systems and Resource Management

On the systems side, RALGA continued its efforts to modernize and digitize internal management functions. The **Operational Procedure Manual (OPM)** was updated, as a comprehensive guide that standardizes workflows, promotes consistency, and enhances accountability across departments. The **E-Learning system** which is now in use by members is a strategic shift in serving members.

RALGA also ensured sound resources and financial management. Three external audits were successfully conducted, covering FY 2023/2024 and mid-year FY 2024/2025 as well a GIZ project audit, and all resulted in **unqualified audit opinions**. This reflects the organization’s financial integrity, adherence to regulations, and responsible utilization of funds, contributing to increased stakeholder confidence and institutional credibility.

### 3.4.4. Budget Execution

During the reporting year, RALGA utilized resources amounting to Rwf **1,249,911,773** from different stakeholders and has had an overall annual execution rate of **94%**.

**Table 4: Budget Execution as of June 2025**

Code	Outcome	Expenses	Annual Budget	%
1a	Participation in socio-economic transformation (policy analysis and advocacy)	890,000	890,000	100%
1b	Improved working environment in Local Government Entities	10,267,200	13,428,000	76%
2	Representation & partnership at global, regional and national levels	54,570,012	64,599,980	84%
3	Capacity development for Local Government Entities	259,936,118	292,129,036	89%
4	Enhanced quality service delivery to members (including recruitment)	318,166,285	260,712,684	122%
5a	Membership and functioning of RALGA organs	39,791,856	39,620,000	100%
5b	General Secretariat operations	560,378,622	651,317,223	86%
5c	Information sharing with members and stakeholders (communication)	5,911,680	7,760,000	76%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,249,911,773</b>	<b>1,330,456,923</b>	<b>94%</b>

**Table 5: Income execution FY 2024-2025**

Source	Annual Budget	Received	% of Received income
5001 · Membership fees	887,000,000	873,000,000	98.4%
5012 · MIGEPROF	99,319,014	179,319,014	180.5%
50122 · .UNWOMEN	9,607,550	5,879,378	61.2%
50124 · Balance carried forward	45,490,000	6,563,075	14.4%
5013 · Rhineland Palatinate	28,476,425	0	0.0%
5015 · Assets auctioning	11,018,379	5,779,500	52.5%
5018 · VV-SG	57,140,705	54,267,888	95.0%
59009C · Grants from GIZ	156,904,850	81,508,000	51.9%
5019.Savings accounts	35,500,000	35,500,000	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,330,456,923</b>	<b>1,241,816,855</b>	<b>93%</b>

**Table 6: Other Partners that played a vital role in supporting RALGA's activities**

Other Partners that played a vital role in financially supporting Ralga's activities	Amount
MINALOC	198,121,070
MINISANTE	11,959,412
UNEDESA	19,000,000
ICLEI	18,000,000
Rhineland Palatinate	28,476,425
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>275,556,907.00</b>



## FAUSTIN SERUBANZA

As I close this chapter of my professional life, I look back with a heart full of gratitude. Serving the Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) for over two decades has been more than a career, it has been a calling and an incredible journey of learning, service, and growth.

My story with RALGA began in 2001, when I was elected to the Ad Hoc Committee tasked with establishing the Association. I had the privilege of serving as its secretary, helping to draft the very first statutes and legal documents that gave life to RALGA. A year later, I was elected as Secretary of the Executive Committee, a role I proudly held for two terms. Those early days were intense but full of hope, we were building a foundation for something that would go on to serve our country in meaningful ways.

In 2006, I transitioned into a technical role at the Secretariat. Over the years, I served as Programs Manager, Strategic Planning Unit Manager, and finally as Corporate Services Unit Manager. In each role, I tried to give my best, supporting planning, implementation,

financial management, internal systems, and documentation. My goal was always to strengthen the institution from within, ensuring RALGA could serve its members effectively and uphold the values of decentralization.

As I take my final bow, what stands out most to me is the spirit of collaboration that has carried this journey forward. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to the leadership of our country for their vision and support for decentralization. I thank the local government family for their trust and partnership through the years. And to my colleagues at the RALGA Secretariat, you are a team of remarkable dedication and talent. Working alongside you has been a true honor.

I leave with pride in what we have built together and hope for all that lies ahead. RALGA remains in strong hands, and I trust its future will continue to shine in service of our local governments and the communities they serve.

Thank you, from the bottom of my heart.

### 3.5. FINAL REFLECTIONS

The 2024/2025 reporting period marked a pivotal year for RALGA, characterized by substantial progress in fulfilling its mandate to support the effective functioning and development of local governments in Rwanda. Through a focused and strategic approach, RALGA has strengthened its role as a trusted service provider, policy advocate, and institutional capacity builder for decentralized entities.

Among the most transformative achievements was the introduction of a new LG staff recruitment model that enabled to timely meet local government staff needs. This was made possible through strong institutional collaboration involving MINALOC, MIFOTRA, the National Public Service Commission, and all districts. The model has not only improved the quality and speed of recruitment but also reinforced local ownership and coordination.

In parallel, RALGA delivered extensive technical support and capacity-building initiatives tailored to local government needs, including inductions for new staff, while also expanding its evidence-based policy engagement through field missions and multi-stakeholder dialogues. The engagements on Climate Action stood out, in particular, for their relevance and timeliness in relation to both national priorities and globally coordinated Climate Action Plans. These efforts have contributed to shaping responsive and well-informed decentralization policy reforms.

Internally, the Association undertook key organizational reforms to enhance its strategic and operational effectiveness. This included the development of a new Strategic Plan (2025–2030), the update of its legal instruments in line with the revised NGO Law, staff capacity development, operationalization of the E-Learning system, and strengthened governance through active engagement of its organs. Financial accountability and institutional integrity were reaffirmed by the clean audit results.

Despite these achievements, the year also presented notable challenges. Coordinating across multiple institutions with diverse mandates required continuous labor intensive engagements. Moreover, the scope of RALGA's mandate, driven by both member demands and vast sectoral needs, place significant pressure on the organization's financial and human resources. The resource gap remains a structural constraint, limiting the pace and scale at which the Association can respond to growing expectations.

Moving forward, RALGA recognizes the imperative to further invest in its internal systems, particularly digital and operational platforms, as levers for efficiency and improved service delivery. Securing adequate and predictable resources will be essential to support the next phase of implementation of its strategic plan and to ensure that the benefits of decentralization continue to reach communities across the country.

With its strategic direction clarified, tools enhanced, and institutional credibility reaffirmed, RALGA is well positioned to sustain and scale its support to local governments in delivering responsive, efficient, and high-quality services.



Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities