Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities

RALGA STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2020

December 2014

Executive Summary

The Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) is a non-state actor that, through advocacy, representation and capacity building, seeks to promote the interests of Local Governments in Rwanda to improve their position within the overall institutional framework of the country by influencing decision making processes that affect them. Guided by a philosophy translated through professionalism, innovation, equality, accountability and independence as core values, RALGA's objective is "to assist Local Government entities in achieving their mission, complying with principles of good governance and decentralization".

To keep in line with the national orientation, this strategic plan was designed in the light of the National Vision 2020, Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy II (EDPRS 2), especially the Governance and Decentralization Sector Strategic Plan 2013/2014-2017/2018. Sector policies like the National Decentralisation Policy, the Community Development and Local Economic Development Policy and the Fiscal Decentralisation Policy were also taken into account.

The structure and the proposed strategic goals and objectives for the strategic plan were presented and pre-validated at various levels of RALGA governing bodies/organs, namely : Executive committee, Control Committee, Conflict resolution Committee, Commissions and were finally approved by the General Assembly meeting held on 30th May 2014. They reviewed the mission of the organization, its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. They also defined the goals and objectives to be achieved by 2020. These correspond to the four areas of focus as per the articles of association governing RALGA, and a fifth one related to its institutional setup.

The SWOT analysis indicated that RALGA has become a well established and reputable organization. However, gaps in the areas of advocacy, research, and documentation, inadequate integrated information management systems and communication frameworks and unclear financial sustainability strategies emerged as major concerns for its effectiveness.

With the intention to give more weight to the advocacy function rather than considering each of RALGA's classic three-fold mandate (representation, advocacy and capacity building) as an isolated thematic area and confining it in a single department or commission, these 3 components will be cross-cutting, contrary to the previous strategic plans where they were treated as separate strategic objectives.[1] It is also important to stress that RALGA will no longer carry out capacity building interventions related to training. These will rather be entrusted to the Local Government Institute, once fully established, in collaboration with concerned government and non-government institutions. RALGA will therefore endeavour to support and reinforce this Institute for the interest of its members.

RALGA's leadership and members will play a pivotal role in implementing this strategic plan, in collaboration with stakeholders among whom the Ministry of Local Government and its agencies,

[1] See RALGA Strategic Plan 2006-2009 and 2010-2015

the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning as well as Development Partners. The staff, with a structure adapted to this strategic plan will also be instrumental.

The strategic plan's implementation cost is estimated at RwF 14,619,262,827, compared to RwF 9 billion for its predecessor. The rapidly changing operational environment characterized by the growing demands and needs from members along with ambitious country's strategic orientation justify this increment. Therefore, resource mobilization will have to be streamlined to tap funding opportunities which might even require, if possible, that a department dedicated for resource mobilization be put in place. RALGA will also continue to explore and tap into business opportunities, especially through its daughter companies, such as LG Consult Ltd which is already winning a respectable share on the consultancy market in Rwanda, and activity cost-sharing and sponsorships with private and non-profit making organizations as well as investing in joint-ventures for income generation.

ACRONYMS

CDF	Common Development Fund
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CEPGL	Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DIP	Decentralization Implementation Plan
DMU	Decentralisation Management Unit
EAC	East Africa Community
EALGF	African Local Government Forum
EDPRS	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
GIZ	German Cooperation Agency
GoR	Government of Rwanda
LGA	Local Government Association
LGI	Local Government Institute
LODA	Local Development Agency
MICE	Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events
MINALOC	Ministry of Local Government
MINECOFIN	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
OPM	Operational Procedures Manual
RALGA	Association of Local Government Authorities
RLDSF	Rwanda Local Development Support Fund
RGB	Rwanda Governance Board
RwF	Rwandan Francs
SG	Secretary General
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VNG	Association of the Municipalities of the Netherlands

Chapter 1: Strategic overview

Introduction

The Local Government entities of Rwanda are the result of the decentralisation policy which resulted into a two-layer government: the Central Government on the one hand and Local Governments on the other hand. The City of Kigali (a uniquely structured Local Government entity), the District, the Sector, the Cell and the Village belong to the Local Government layer. As autonomous decentralized administrative entities, the Districts and City of Kigali established the Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA) as platform to share their experiences and to channel their opinions in one voice. Since 2002, RALGA has made remarkable progress in developing a framework for good service delivery to its members, and has had all along to cope with ever-changing working environment and ways of doing things.

RALGA has always recognised the importance of maintaining the quality of its services as high as members' expectations and contributing to addressing the challenges they constantly face as the result of rapidly changing operational environment as reflected by socioeconomic development, innovative governance activities or frameworks, and technology advancement. Moreover, new leaders with limited experience in Local Governments and staff constantly join the Local Governments. Consequently, RALGA has to ensure that these entities are not hampered by challenges linked with this lack of experience. It has the responsibility of advocating that its members get the most relevant, quality, and needed capacity for both the political leadership and technical management to outstandingly discharge their respective responsibilities. This will be very much true for this strategic plan as its kick off will nearly coincide with the next local elections to be held in 2016 and the expiration of the 3rd Decentralisation Implementation Plan whose succession plan, if ever it is deemed necessary by competent authority, may bring in new challenges for Local Governments.

The strategic goals and objectives were formulated taking into account the status of the Local Governments in the national and international context, their needs, challenges and opportunities. Thus, an important change is that RALGA's new strategic focus has been aligned to the national Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS 2), whereby four areas have been identified to serve as pillars for this strategic plan 2015-2020. These areas are: decentralization, increasing finances of local government entities, local economic development and social welfare development.

Structure of the Strategic Plan

This strategic plan is articulated in 6 main sections corresponding to chapters respectively depicting the strategic overview; the strategic planning context analysis; the strategic goals and objectives for 2015-2020; the leadership, staffing and stakeholders; financing the plan and finally success factors,

risks and review process. The detailed budget and the monitoring and evaluation framework appear as appendices.

1.1 RALGA's historical background

In March 2001, the first elections for Local Government leaders took place. This was a critical phase in implementing the policy of decentralisation adopted in 2000. In July 2002 the local authorities decided to establish an association responsible for promoting their interests through representation, advocacy and capacity building. An ad hoc interim committee composed of 24 people was set up and was assigned to prepare legal documents, to stimulate districts to become members and to mobilise resources. The committee visited all districts, towns and the Kigali City Council up to May 2002. Supported by MINALOC, it was able to secure a financial support from the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) through SALA-IDA.

On July 29th 2002, the interim committee reported to the inaugural General Assembly composed of delegates from the 92 District, 14 Towns and the City of Kigali City mandated by their respective councils. This General Assembly adopted the articles of association, elected the first Executive Committee and appointed the first Secretary General. The Executive Committee was then composed of 12 members, including 7 heads of commissions.

On 27th of March 2003, RALGA was legally registered as a Non-Profit Making Organisation by the Ministerial Decree N° 34/11, and was officially launched on May 21st 2003, in presence of Cabinet Ministers, Heads of Mission and diplomatic corps, Ministers of Local Government from the East African countries, delegates from sister associations and development partners. The ceremonies were presided over by the Right Honourable Bernard Makuza, Prime Minister, on behalf of His Excellency Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda.

In 2006, RALGA underwent a restructuring following the administrative and territorial reforms that took place in Rwanda in 2005. The number of its members was reduced from 107 to 31 as a result of the merger of former districts and towns. The number of the Executive committee members was also reduced from 12 to 7. The representation to the General Assembly increased from one delegate to 4 per each member.

In April 2013, the articles of association were revised again to accommodate the requirements of the new law on non-governmental organisations. This was an opportunity to align these articles of association with the realities prevailing in Local Governments and in the country in general.
Thus, the number of delegates to the General Assembly changed from 4 to 8 per member to widen the representation of local entities down to village (lowest level of administration).

1.2 Purpose, philosophy, mission and responsibilities

1.2.1 The purpose of RALGA

RALGA is a non-governmental organization whose added value, as a result of its prime mission, is that through advocacy and representation it seeks to protect the interests of local authorities and to improve their position within the overall institutional framework of the country by influencing decision making processes that affect them. Common challenges facing the members in fulfilling their obligations are collected, analysed and packaged for advocacy. This ability to formulate a common opinion on behalf of the members, coupled with the independence character of the association underpins RALGA's uniqueness in serving as a single voice for local authorities to express their opinion.

RALGA is an interest group whose proximity to the community confers a certain level of civil society legitimacy. This ambivalent nature between the public and civil society leads to what is referred to as a *non-state actor*.

The determinant factor for RALGA's recognition is the institutional trust deriving from its relevance. This relevance relies on how it does things and how it contributes to problem solving in a way that not only its members but also other actors, including local communities, find it indispensable. The question then becomes how and what the organization can do to remain relevant, practices and norms that convey a good image in the national and international context.

RALGA also exists to contribute to the improvement of the capacities of local government authorities, serving not only as a facilitator and advocate, but mostly as a platform for peer learning and experience sharing which constitutes its unique niche. However, RALGA's role in formal training is limited in principle to serving as an intermediary, and it therefore has to always be cautious and avoid duplication and conflict with other institutions. Nevertheless, when there is no service provider to meet an identified need, RALGA can combine advocacy with implementation, ready to pull out as soon somebody else is ready to take over. In either case, it retains the responsibility to ensure that the concerns of the members are really addressed. That is how, for example, training in general and LED mainstreaming shifted respectively to RGB and LODA.

Being in position to know and act on issues affecting local governments' needs and demands, RALGA is oriented to becoming also a think-tank holding basic information on such issues in particular and on decentralization and Rwanda's local governance in general. That is why it is keen to reinforcing knowledge management with emphasis on research and documentation.

1.2.2 The philosophy

The philosophy of RALGA defines how it will conduct its business in order to attain its goals over the five year period that the strategic plan will cover, and is translated through the core values highlighted and defined below.

Table 1: RALGA's values

Value	Definition
1. Professionalism	RALGA will be run through a business-like approach, with a staff committed to work to the highest standards, putting a special emphasis on quality, swiftness and confidentiality.
2. Innovation	RALGA will be pro-active and innovate in pursuit of change, looking for new mechanisms and tools to increase the quality of work and services both internally and in local governments in general, particularly simplifying operations by getting rid of unnecessarily complicated bureaucracies.
3. Equality	RALGA will endeavour to eliminate malpractices such as discrimination, corruption, nepotism and undue influence in Rwandan local government in a bid to avoid injustice and imbalance.
4. Accountability	RALGA will seek to remain accountable to its members through its organs, using agreed upon systems and interactions to maintain ownership and trust of the members. RALGA will also encourage and assist them in complying with the principles and laws of accountability.
5. Independence	RALGA is committed firstly to remain independent regarding its opinion statements, and secondly to move towards financial sustainability, despite the will to maximise the impact of its actions through synergies and partnerships.

1.2.4 The vision

The vision of RALGA as stated in the articles of association is "to have efficient local government entities where people and stakeholders are involved in development" (article 4). The particular vision for this strategic plan is "to have Local Governments that have further improved governance and service delivery and which therefore serve as true developmental engines". This means that a substantial change will have occurred in Rwanda by the completion of this strategic plan in 2020, with a clear role played by RALGA to contribute to the quality of governance and the swiftness of service delivery in Local Governments.

1.2.5 The mission

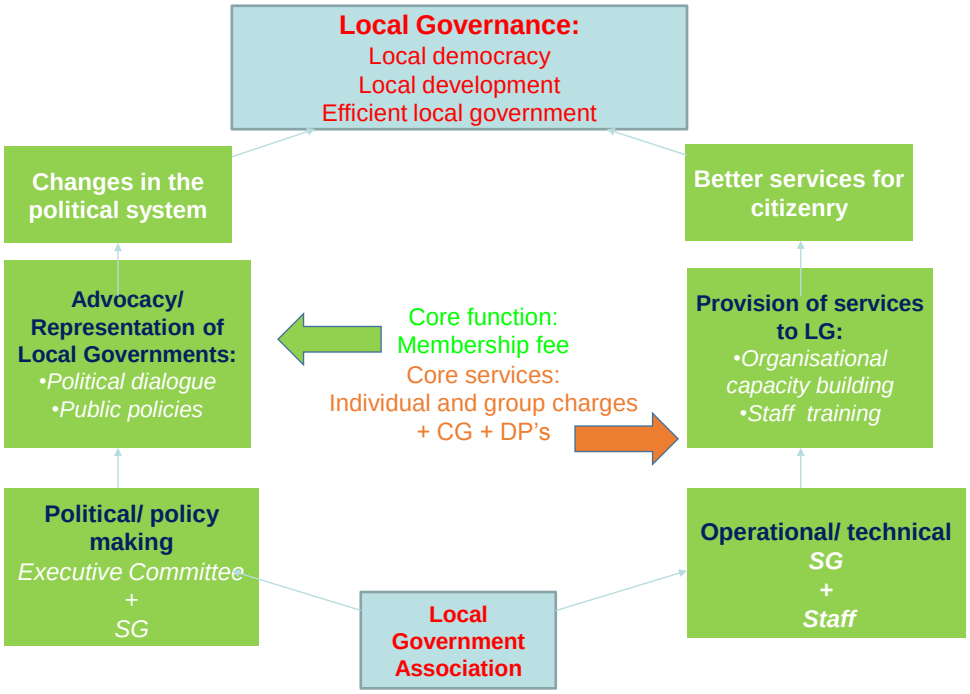
In line with RALGA's objective "to assist local Government entities in achieving their mission, complying with principles of good governance and decentralization" (article 5) on the one hand, and towards the vision stated above on the other hand, RALGA will have achieved the mission "to contribute to strengthened efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability in the Local Government System in Rwanda".

1.2.6 The responsibilities

This mission will be achieved through the fulfillment of the responsibility of representing local Government entities, carrying out advocacy and capacity building for them in matters of decentralization, finances of local Government entities, local economic development, social welfare and collaboration between local Government entities (article 6). RALGA will thus increase its relevance by providing demand-driven quality services to its members during the five year period

starting in July 2015 to June 2020, taking into consideration the general functions of a Local Government Association as represented in the framework below.

Diagram 1: The functions of a Local Government Association[2]



1.3 Policies, laws and strategies impacting on Decentralized administrative entities

1.3.1 Rwanda Vision 2020

The Vision 2020 of Rwanda, which is a national long-term social and economic vision, highlights good political and economic governance among the key objectives of the country. It stipulates that "The State will ensure good governance, which can be understood as accountability, transparency and efficiency in deploying scarce resources. But it also means a State respectful of democratic structures and processes and committed to the rule of law and the protection human rights in particular".[3]

[2] Saluaes, A.G; Mission Report on RALGA Financial Sustainability, December 2014
[3] Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Rwanda Vision 2020, 2000, p. 12

Vision 2020 seeks to actively mobilize the people and other resources towards the achievement of shared goals, and demands an annual economic growth rate of 11.5%.[4] Indeed, it clearly states that "People's participation at the grassroots level will be promoted through the decentralization process, whereby local communities will be empowered in the decision making process, enabling them to address the issues, which affect them, the most".[5] In the document several objectives are listed, basically focusing on stimulating local people to participate, making the political process more transparent, improving the planning process, and setting up a proper monitoring system.

Since the initiation of Vision 2020, Rwanda has made much progress towards attaining these objectives and even surpassed some of the targets. Local Governments have played a critical role towards these achievements as policy implementers at local level and community mobilizers, and so did RALGA consequently through its role in advocating for local governments and strengthening their capacity to deliver. RALGA still has the responsibility to accompany its members in carrying out the work to be done to reach the country's objectives, focusing on areas where challenges arise. Particularly, RALGA will contribute to indicators 46 and 47, i.e. citizens' satisfaction with service-delivery (up to 80%) and rank in world corruption (from 49th to 10th position)[6].

1.3.2 National Decentralization Policy

The Government of Rwanda adopted the decentralization policy in 2000 and revised it in 2012 as a way of promoting good governance, service delivery, and national development. "The Government believes that decentralisation is an appropriate platform for mobilizing citizens, nurturing leadership and eradicating poverty"[7]. The purpose of the decentralisation policy is to ensure political, economic, social, managerial/administrative and technical empowerment of the local population to fight poverty by participating in planning and management of their own development. Implemented in phases, along well defined decentralization implementation plans (DIPs), the original decentralization objectives are gradually achieved. Indeed, "Local Government structures are in place and functioning with institutional systems and staffing levels that are comparable to those in Central Government. The way they deliver services with cost-efficiency is perhaps the most impressive. In every domain, including public financial management, all 30 districts can be regarded as having basic competences"[8].

The first period from 2001 to 2005 was considered as a period during which decentralisation had to be institutionalised. During that period three key institutions were established: the Common Development Fund (CDF), the Decentralisation Management Unit (DMU) and the Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities. The second period from 2006 to 2010 was intended to be used as a period to entrench and deeply root not only the decentralisation institutions, but also

[4] Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Rwanda Vision 2020, 2012 (Revised version) , p.25
[5] Idem, p.30
[6] Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Rwanda Vision 2020, Revised indicators and targets
[7] Ministry of Local Government, Rwanda National Decentralization Policy (Revised), 2013, p.23
[8] Idem, p.7

the complete concept and consequences of the decentralisation policy by all stakeholders. The third phase from 2011 to 2015 is a consolidation phase to refine approaches, methodologies, tools, etc.

For each phase, a Decentralisation Implementation Plan (DIP) was developed, and Local Government entities underwent changes in their structure and direction, as the targeted performance continually required harmonization of policies, strategies, plans and budgets with the highly changing environment. They gained on each occasion more responsibilities and powers to implement and monitor development changes at their respective levels. This trend will continue as "the Government envisages that certain functions relating to service delivery to citizens will be devolved to Local Governments to the fullest extent possible.

The Decentralization Policy highlights that "the Government aims to make the District, Municipalities and City of Kigali autonomous Local Governments with devolved functions, in accordance with Article 167 of the Constitution, while ensuring that as much as possible, functions are delegated to or otherwise undertaken at the lowest administrative levels possible"[9]. Subsequently, RALGA became for them a necessary platform for devising frameworks to assist them to deal effectively with emerging issues and has been since then a key actor in the decentralization process as evidenced in this statement: "The implementation of decentralization strategic plan will be coordinated by the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC). The other actors which form the key institutions for Decentralization sector include the various levels of GoR administration and its coordination bodies, and the development partners, including civil society organizations (CSOs), RALGA, donors and the private sector."[10]

Nevertheless, despite impressive achievements, challenges still stand in the way of effective decentralization. However, the Government of Rwanda is aware that the Districts

> are not yet fully functioning as strong local governments capable of effectively initiating, planning, financing and implementing service delivery programs and accounting for resources in a timely and accurate manner. A major constraint remains inadequate functional linkages and collaboration between Local Governments and line Ministries/departments as well as joint planning among Local Governments and between Local and Central Government entities. Local Governments also may not be in position to feel and act as independent and autonomous on some policies and programs[11].

All this requires strategies and actions that involve various stakeholders, RALGA being among those at the forefront.

1.4.2 Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy II (EDPRS 2)

The EDPRS 2 is a national strategy that was developed in the context of the MDGs to operationalize the National Vision 2020. It provides for interventions in the governance, economic and social sectors. The overarching goal for EDPRS 2, derived from Vision 2020 long-term goal of "creating a productive middle class and fostering entrepreneurship" is "Accelerating progress to middle income

[9] Ministry of Local Government, *Rwanda National Decentralization Policy* (Revised), 2013, p.23, p.24
[10] MINALOC; *Governance and Decentralization Sector Strategic Plan 2013/14-2017/18*, July 2013, P. 20
[11] MINALOCL, *Rwanda National Decentralization Policy* (Revised), 2013, p.8

status and better quality of life for all Rwandans through sustained growth of 11.5% and accelerated reduction of poverty to less than 30% of the population".[12]

One of the 4 thematic areas for EDPRS 2 is "accountable governance" that translates the first pillar of Vision 2020 which is "good governance". The broad objective of this thematic area is to "enhance accountable governance by promoting citizen participation and mobilization for delivery of development, strengthening public accountability and improving service delivery"[13]. This theme "underpins all the other themes since citizen participation is an essential ingredient of sustainability of development programs"[14]. EDPRS 2 relies on the decentralized systems as they "provide a valid platform for citizen service delivery and participation and a "District-led development: creating strong, mutually supporting linkages between district and sectoral strategies, and supporting administrative standardization and efficiency"[15]. That is why "during EDPRS 2, Rwanda will focus on the improved service delivery, further decentralizing services closer to citizens and participation of citizens in planning and delivery of development for improved citizen centeredness of the development agenda and process"[16].

1.4.2 Governance and Decentralization Sector Strategic Plan 2013/14-2017/18

The Governance and Decentralization Sector Strategic Plan makes clear the new direction of the sector and new innovations that will drive Rwanda to achieve its Vision 2020 goals. It highlights six strategic areas of focus: legal framework and sectoral decentralization, service delivery, fiscal and financial decentralization, capacity building, local economic development and volunteerism, Participation, Accountability and Democratization[17]

Table 2: Decentralization strategic areas and outcomes[18]

Strategic Area	Outcomes	EDPRS 2 Thematic Area contributed to
SA 1. Legal Framework and Sectoral Decentralization	1. Coherent and harmonized decentralized structures, policy guidelines and laws to improve the effective implementation of decentralization	Accountable Governance
	2. Sectoral ministries and agencies operational frameworks harmonized with decentralization policy and principles	Rural Development, Accountable Governance and Economic Transformation
SA 2. Service Delivery	3. Increased efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery by Local Governments	Rural Development, Accountable Governance and Economic Transformation

[12] MINECOFIN, *Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2013 – 2018: Shaping our development*, p.1
[13] Idem, p.70
[14] Idem, p.69
[15] Idem, p.13
[16] Idem, p.70
[17] MINALOC, *Governance and Decentralization Sector Strategic Plan 2013/14-2017/18*, 2013, p.24
[18] Idem, p.39

SA 3. Fiscal and Financial Decentralization	4. Efficient and financially autonomous Local Governments are established for sustainable development	ral Development, Accountable Governance and Economic Transformation
SA 4. Capacity Building	5. Capacity building interventions are harmonized, well-coordinated adequately and demand driven to address local	Rural Development, Accountable Governance, Productivity and Youth Employment and

The Governance and Decentralization Sector Strategic Plan 2013/14-2017/18 clearly mentions RALGA as an important stakeholder in its implementation:

> The implementation of decentralisation strategic plan will be coordinated by the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC). The other actors which form the key institutions for Decentralization sector include the various levels of GoR administration and its coordination bodies, and the development partners, including civil society organizations (CSOs), RALGA, donors and the private sector [...] Decentralisation Strategic Plan commits to reinforce RALGA to easily implement its programmes through mobilization and sensitization of the community in development activities and good governance[19].

1.5 RALGA membership and organs

The members of RALGA are the 30 Districts of Rwanda and the City of Kigali, who are represented in the General Assembly as the supreme organ of the association. Each member is represented by 8 delegates, except for the City of Kigali. The General Assembly provides general guidelines, elects the members of the Executive Committee, Control Committee and Conflict Resolution Committee, establishes annual action plans and budgets, approves annual activity and financial report and appoints the Secretary General.

The General Assembly of RALGA is composed of the following:

1. Members of the Executive Committee;
2. Members of the Control Committee;
3. Members of Commissions;
4. Members of the Conflict Resolution Committee;
5. Mayor of the City of Kigali;
6. Chairperson of the Council of the City of Kigali;
7. Executive Secretary of the City of Kigali;
8. Mayors of Districts;
9. Chairpersons of Districts Councils;
10. Executive Secretaries of Districts;
11. A representative of Chairpersons of Sectors Councils in each District;
12. A representative of Executive Secretaries of Sectors in each District;
13. A representative of Chairpersons of Cells Councils in each District;
14. A representative of Executive Secretaries of Cells in each District;
15. A representative of Heads of Villages in each District.

[19] Idem, pp.20-21

The Executive Committee is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the policies and activities of RALGA. It is composed of 7 members, including 4 commissioners heading the following commissions: decentralization, finance of local Government entities, local economic development and social welfare development.

The other organs of RALGA are the Control Committee, the Conflict Resolution Committee and the General Secretariat which is its executive and administrative arm.

1.6 RALGA partners

RALGA's first key partner is the Central Government in general, with special ties with the Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. Close working relationships also exist between RALGA and government institutions such as Rwanda Governance Board, Public Service Commission, Rwanda Management Institute, Rwanda Public Procurement Authority, Local Administrative Entities Development Agency, Office of the Auditor General for States Finances and the Gender Monitoring Office. RALGA also intends to consolidate its partnership with the Office of the President of the Republic, the National Parliament and the Office of the Prime Minister and other sector ministries and affiliated agencies deemed necessary as it may be dictated by the nature of interventions at hand.

The second category of partners is composed of development partners, the most active during the strategic plan 2010-20115 being the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the German Cooperation Agency (GIZ), the European Union Delegation, the Belgian Technical Cooperation, the Swiss Development Cooperation, UNFPA, VNG International, UN Habitat and the Global Fund. RALGA intends to strategically expand this partnership base to other development partners especially those ones whose interventions, as dictated by the division of labor, are relevant to decentralization and local governance in Rwanda.

RALGA also collaborates with national and transnational civil society organizations and members of the private sector on specific activities that are in line with its responsibilities.

Chapter 2: Strategic planning context analysis

2.1 Planning process and methodology

First of all, the management of RALGA agreed on the orientation and roadmap to give to the process. Discussions were subsequently extended to the general staff to ensure a common understanding on the goal of the process, but also the roles and responsibility all along. A proposal was later on submitted to the Executive Committee for strategic guidance and endorsement, and finally to the General Assembly for adoption.

A wide consultation of members was thereafter organized to collect their ideas, needs and desires. All Districts were visited and in each of them an average 35 people representing different bodies at all levels of local government, from the District to the Village. The data were collected through both formal discussions and filling a questionnaire. The participants were asked to identify what they think RALGA should take as 3 top priorities during the five years period from 2015 to 2020, focusing on the areas of decentralization in Rwanda, finance of local government entities, local economic development and social affairs development.

The information collected was analyzed statistically to compare the weight of the ideas expressed by the respondents. These ideas were grouped into subthemes, and their weights were determined by the number of occurrences[20]. Those which scored higher were considered as the priorities according to RALGA members and were discussed at length to gauge their relevance in the context of RALGA and if they are in line with national strategic orientations. The priorities that emerged were turned into objectives for which possible interventions were also proposed.

The structure and the objectives proposed for the strategic plan were presented to the members of RALGA organs (Executive committee, control committee, conflict resolution committee and commissions). They reviewed the mission of the organization, its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. They also defined the strategic goals and objectives to be achieved by 2020. These objectives correspond to the four areas of focus as per the articles of association governing RALGA, and a fifth one related to its institutional setup.

The draft strategic plan was also discussed with RALGA partners and major actors in local governance and decentralization in Rwanda to collect advice and identify opportunities for synergies and risks of duplication.

[20] LG Consult Ltd, *RALGA Members' Perception Survey 2014*, August 2014

2.2 Situational analysis

2.2.1 Internal organizational and lessons learnt from the previous strategic plan

In general, RALGA has become a well established and internally strong organization as stated in the mid-term evaluation for its strategic plan 2010-2015: "The strength of an organization is the attributes the organization has and uses to achieve excellence in its operations. This assessment has thus shown that RALGA is internally strong as it discharges its duties to a high level of satisfaction"[21]. However, the same evaluation revealed that RALGA still needs to strengthen its core capacities to confidently adapt to the changing economic, infrastructural and technological conditions. As a matter of fact, adapting the organizational structure of the Secretariat to the changing environment demands and expectations from members has been challenging and still needs to be addressed. One reason was the structure of the two previous strategic plans itself at the level of strategic objectives and interventions. This has affected much the performance as RALGA, at some points, failed to remain focused.

The area of advocacy especially was affected as it was confined in a department without preserving its holistic and cross-cutting nature. So, the previous strategy could not fit properly with what RALGA needs to achieve, especially regarding the advocacy function. There is no clear and agreed upon guidelines for prioritization process of issues for advocacy: the members request RALGA things that are not planned in the strategic plan or which are not in line with its mandate, with a high risk of losing focus. This strategic plan therefore needs to address such deviations.

Communication, both external and internal, has also been a serious matter. Information is a prime mover of all administrative undertakings and an important determinant of lobby and advocacy success. Hence, an organization like RALGA generally depends much on information mapping, storage and utilization through appropriate channels and mechanisms. Aspects such as collection of information on issues affecting members, brand marketing of RALGA and its achievements, feedback on what RALGA is doing, culture of documenting what has been achieved, etc. are to be streamlined further[22]. Therefore, putting in place more appropriate mechanisms, involving RALGA management team, leadership and staff, as well as upgrading the use of ICTs, especially RALGA's official website, IT based operations and an effective and innovative use of the internet need a special emphasis.

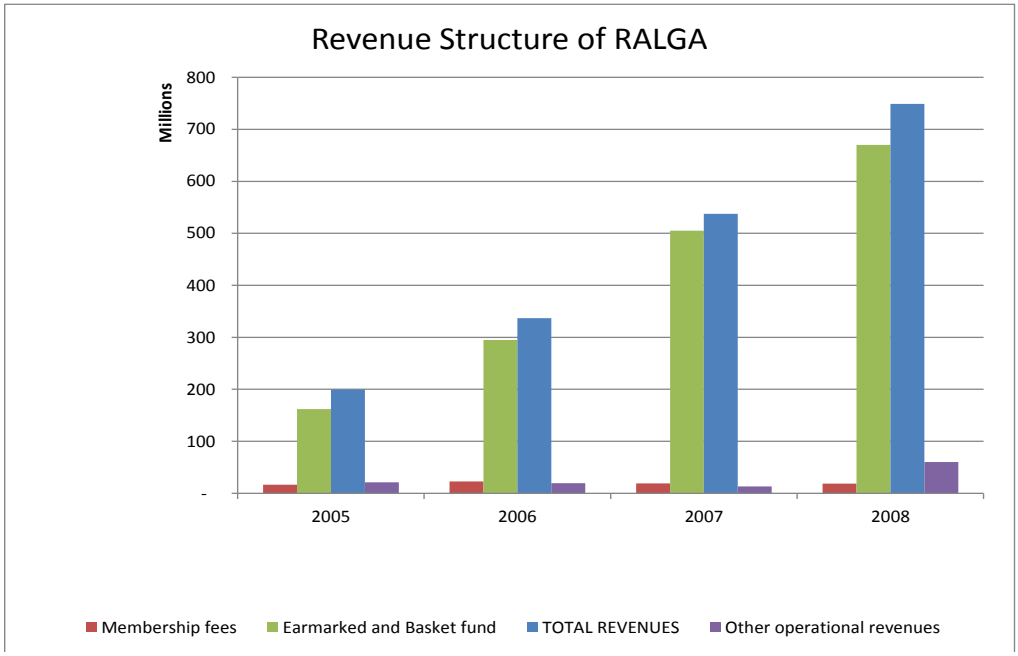
Another major challenge facing RALGA is financial sustainability. "Financial sustainability is the ability of a Local Government Association (LGA) to raise the funds required to achieve its strategic goals and cover its operational requirements in the short, medium and long term. An Association is financially sustainable when it is able to generate sufficient revenues (in the short, medium and long term) to perform: 1) its fundamental function which is to represent the interests of local governments (fulfilling its political mandate via lobbying and advocacy); and, 2) to deliver some core services up to a minimum acceptable level (quantity, quality and timing) that the members,

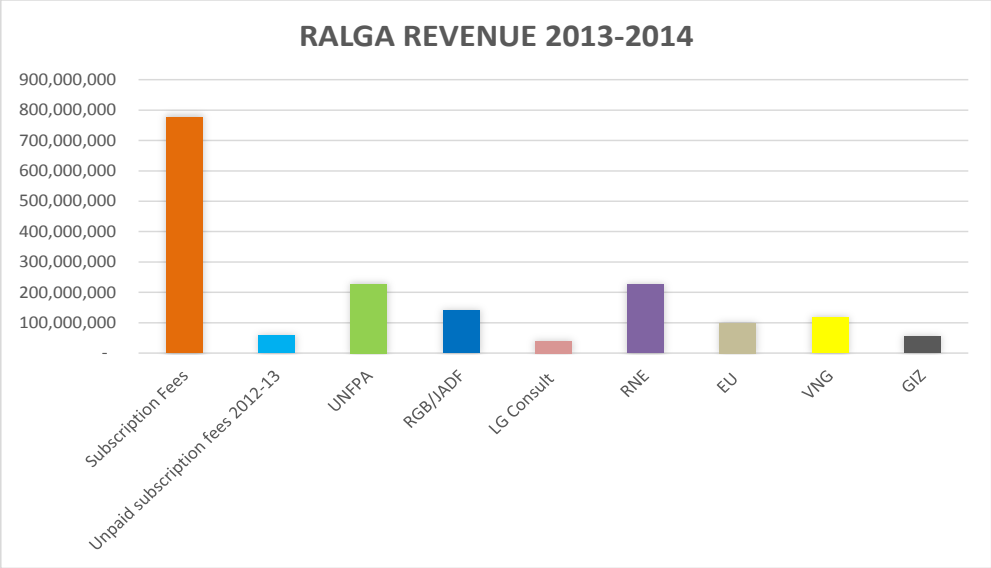
[21] LG Consult, *Mid-term evaluation for RALGA strategic plan 2010-2015*, June 2014, p.12
[22] Idem 2014, p.13

need, demand and are willing to pay for"[23]. In this regard, "RALGA has implemented important changes in terms of governance, accountability and responsiveness to the demands of its members. These changes have helped the association to increase the membership fees from 600,000 to 25 million within a five-year period (the contribution has been multiplied by 42 times)"[24].

However, while RALGA made tremendous success in reducing its financial dependence on donors, the trend is being over-dependency on one source of revenue, which consists of the members' annual subscription fees (see diagram 2).

Diagram 2: Evolution of RALGA revenue structure[25]





[23] Salaues, Alfonso Garcia, *Financial sustainability assessment of RALGA*, November 2013, p.5
[24] Salaues, Alfonso Garcia, *Financial sustainability assessment of RALGA*, November 2013, p.23
[25] Idem, p.7

In addition to adequate mechanisms to write and market project proposals for fund raising, the diversification of more sustainable sources of income needs a special attention. It is in this "move for self-financing that RALGA has created LG Consult Ltd, a business company which has started operations in consultancy. RALGA will have to inject more efforts in strengthening the operations of the company to be able to grab many opportunities in Rwanda and abroad"[26].
On the human resource aspect, despite the qualified, committed and highly motivated staff, skills upgrade and capacity development for the personnel also is not well channeled.

Regarding infrastructure, RALGA offers a conducive working environment as it has its own office building and modern equipment. It also has enough land to develop further facilities for further services such as training and documentation centers which should fall under the Local Government Institute (LGI) that is being established.

In line with the personnel, the past strategic plans invested much, but not enough, in human capital development. RALGA has been able to retain competent staff mainly due to good motivation strategies such as competitive salary and other attractive benefit packages such as comprehensive medical insurance, indefinite contracts for staff not working on a project basis, etc.

RALGA has institutionalized a number of good practices that should be utilized during this strategic plan 2015-2020. For instance, RALGA learnt a lot from the recruitment services rendered to Districts, and this can inspire the diversification of other services to members like contract management, DDPs quality check and evaluation, etc. The forums have also been much appreciated because of the results they yielded for the benefit of Local Governments. This experience has been successfully combined with study tours.

Another good practice is the sound management of the funds and assets of the association which maintain the high degree of trust of the members and development partners. This has been confirmed by the external audit reports carried out by RUMA Certified Accountants and PricewaterhouseCoopers Rwanda Limited (PWC), for the previous strategic plan.

2.2.2 External performance environment

From the national perspective, it is important to bear in mind that inadequacies still exist in the decentralization legal and regulatory framework. Indeed, as highlighted in the National Decentralization Policy, "the overarching legal framework for the implementation of this policy is the National Constitution which guarantees the democratic and other human rights and freedoms of Rwandans, and the roles and responsibilities that they have in their governance. But this only provides the principles. There are on-going efforts to consolidate and harmonize different pieces of legislation on decentralisation but gaps still exist"[27]. One example of such gaps is the lack of a law on sectoral decentralization and intergovernmental relations while provided for by article 167 of the

[26] LG Consult, *Mid-term evaluation for RALGA Strategic Plan 2010-2015*, June 2014, p.36
[27] MINALOC, *Rwanda National Decentralization Policy* (Revised), June 2012, p.23

Constitution. Another example is that Local Governments, despite being implementers, are not well engaged during the elaboration of public policies and or laws likely to directly affect them as entities or their institutional performance.

Also, despite the achievements in the decentralization process, the level of understanding about decentralization is still low among some stakeholders. In addition, due to the rapid changes that occur at national, regional and international levels, local authorities from the District down to the Village have too many expectations from RALGA as transpires from the specialized forums for Districts leaders and staff, online mailing groups, meetings of RALGA organs, direct calls, annual members' perception survey), etc.

Rwanda's local governments still need to strengthen their capacity in effectively initiating, planning, financing and implementing service delivery programs and accounting for resources in a timely and accurate manner. The inadequate functional linkages and collaboration between Local Governments and line Ministries and agencies as well as joint planning among Local Governments and between Local and Central Government entities continue to be a constraint.

Although much still has to be done to match the administrative Decentralization the fiscal decentralization, tremendous progress has been made in Rwanda. The legal framework for fiscal decentralization is coherent and clearly articulates the rights and obligations of central and local governments.[28] Thus it should be easy for RALGA to strengthen the financial management capacity through training as a way of helping more Districts achieve clean audit reports.

The fiscal transfer mechanisms have increasingly evolved to support local autonomy and the need to migrate from politician mindset to CEOs' thinking for District authorities. What remains to be done is to ensure that local government administrators have sufficient latitude to make decisions over the resources they receive and mobilize locally, in order to plan and spend prudently, and be confident that they are in charge. Issues related to administrative autonomy like limited discretion for Districts to design their own organizational structure and staff it according to their local needs and available means need also to be tackled.

Consolidating these impressive achievements and removing impediments to full autonomy will be the hallmark of RALGA intervention during the period covered by this strategic plan.

Major events will take place during the five year period of this strategic plan. Two of them are about elections, i.e. the local elections due to take place in early 2016 and presidential election scheduled in 2017. It is therefore important to be aware of such events, and certainly others which cannot be predicted as of now, because they will undoubtedly have an impact on the RALGA's operations. Other major events, external to the Rwandan operational context though, include the adoption, before the end of year 2015, of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), these being a post-2015 global development agenda which will succeed to the MDGs soon coming to their expiration. Similarly, the African Union has recently adopted the Vision 2063 along with its African Governance Architecture

[28] MINECOFIN, *Revised Fiscal and Financial Decentralization Policy*, 2011, P.19

and other instruments which will shape, in a way or another, country's effort in their pursuit of decentralization and good governance goals. There is no doubt that, these global and continental and other regional factors will shape the way Rwanda, as country, address its major public problems.

As the world is in constant change, RALGA has to cope with such an environment and be innovative enough to be able to deliver services and to meet her mandate. Indeed, the external forces directly affect RALGA, or her partners and stakeholders. As such, there are benefits for RALGA to engage in local, regional and international networking and partnerships, and it is necessary to identify external opportunities and threats so as to reconfigure strategies to achieve the goals and objectives accordingly whenever necessary.

It is obvious for example that the rapid integration process occurring in the East African Region is a major factor to take into consideration. In fact, The East Africa Community (EAC) is, through the framework of a range of protocols, undertaking more and more programs and projects that will involve communities across country members in general and local authorities therein in particular. A new national policy on EAC integration has been passed by the Government of Rwanda, and it provides opportunities for Local Governments to actively participate in local mobilization, awareness raising and guidance of their population to explore and take advantage of opportunities available. RALGA should then accompany its members through this regional integration process.

So activities in relation with building the capacities, networking, collaborating and advocating with national and regional bodies will be necessary. The local governments of member countries will play a role in implementing common policies about the free movement of persons and access to markets that will have an impact on the grassroots administration. Regional integration initiatives such as cross-border trade and foreign investment drives will be important aspects to consider while designing strategies to assist RALGA members in LED. In the same spirit, this strategic plan gives attention to regional frameworks such as the strategic plan of the East African Local Government Forum (EALGF) adopted in October 2014. The revival of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL), the ongoing efforts to strengthen the CIRGL and its civil society framework, with all the challenges and opportunities they present in the areas of sustainable peace, security, human development and economic growth, has also to be taken into account.

Furthermore, there is a generalized trend of giving Local Governments a key role in their international frameworks unlike the approaches used until very recently. For instance, the After 2015 Development Global Agenda is intended to be localized; the European Union, as major donor, is committed to "empower local authorities in partner countries for enhanced governance and more effective "[29]; and the African Union Agenda 2063 provides for a key role of local authorities in achieving its objective[30].

RALGA has therefore to encourage and support local authorities in taking the lead to mobilize and empower the citizens to take advantage of opportunities offered in trade, education, employment,

[29] European Union Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions*, Brussels, 2013
[30] African Union, *Agenda 2063: The Future We Want for Africa*, 2014

tourism and security.

Table 3: SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses & Limitations
1. RALGA is the single Local Government Association in Rwanda	1. Limited human and financial resources in comparison to what needs to be done
2. High recognition from members, stakeholders and partners	2. Inadequate integrated information management systems and communication frameworks, mechanisms and tools communication
3. The ownership by the members is relatively high	3. Pro-activeness and research for evidence-based advocacy not yet institutionalized
4. Wide operating network with Local Governments throughout the country	4. Unclear financial sustainability strategy with an imbalance between members' expectations and what they are ready to invest in
5. Capacity to mobilize resources, the biggest share being constituted by the annual membership fees	5. Strategies that do not yet fit what RALGA needs to achieve, including advocacy and capacity building
6. Capacity to render directly to members very important and demanding services such as recruitment	6. Gaps and weaknesses in internal organization and systems: operations, plans, tools staff skill audit and development plan, institutional memory and succession plan and human capital development
7. High level of credibility trust and legitimacy resulting from the continuous increase of the relevance and integrity of RALGA	7. Not all staff are aware of basic information about RALGA as contained in the organizational documents such as the statutes, strategic plan, OPM, etc.
8. Capacity to engage the members through its organs and structures	8. Gaps in delivery systems in the areas of advocacy, research, PRO, and documentation of what RALGA does
9. Capacity to engage partners and Central Government	9. Lack of clear policy on selection of donors and partners, with the consequence of accepting all opportunities regardless of RALGA priorities
10. Majority of staff are qualified, committed and motivated	
Opportunities	**Threats**
1. Stable and supportive political environment	1. Significant loopholes in the new law governing Local Government entities
2. Majority of partners from the Government and Development Partners understand and are interested in RALGA	2. Too many expectations from a huge number of beneficiaries that cannot directly benefit from RALGA services given its financial and human resource capacity
3. Various credible government and non-government institutions/ organizations wish to work in partnership with RALGA	3. Different levels of understanding about decentralization among stakeholders
4. The Post-2015 World Development Agenda intends to put a special emphasis on Local Governments	4. Culture of consultation not yet well entrenched in Rwanda
5. LGI will be operational and would play a primary role in research, recruitment, training, knowledge management, etc	5. The level at which the Central Government engages RALGA is still low
6. Possibility of funding from development partners	6. No structured local government studies in Rwanda and the decentralization process/journey remains largely undocumented, hence the difficulty to retain this precious experience on local governance and decentralization of Rwanda
	7. Regional and global issues and external shocks
	8. No information about the after DIP 3 due to take an end with the year 2015

	9. Negative bias and avoidance of RALGA by some stakeholders who consider RALGA's presence as disturbing and inevitably opposing and others who consider it as a competitor instead of a partner, hence resulting in avoiding working with the Association sometimes over areas of common interest and or interventions (challenge of duplication)

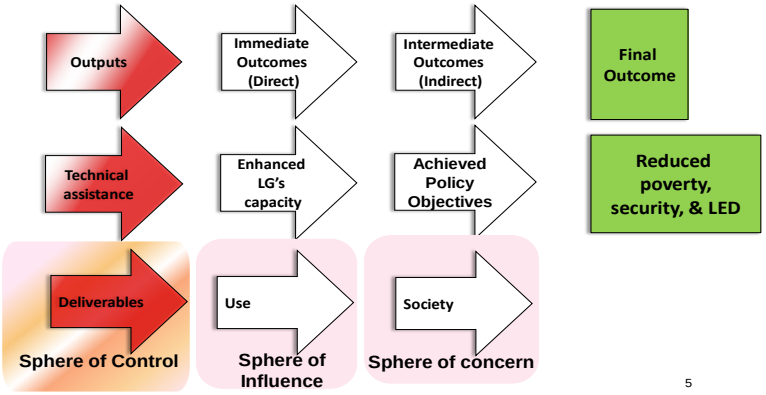
Chapter 3: Expected results for 2015-2020

3.1 Introduction

The expected results of this strategic plan were formulated following the focus areas highlighted in RALGA's articles of association to better assist its members in delivering against key national priorities, namely Vision 2020 and EDPRS 2. The outputs leading to these outcomes were formulated based on the priorities identified by the members through an extensive consultation process that targeted the governance bodies of the Association, the representatives of leaders and technical staff at all levels of local government.

Five outcomes and their corresponding outputs were formulated taking into account the delimitation of the outreach of this strategic plan as delineated in diagram 3.

Diagram 3: RALGA's Strategic Plan outreach



In the hierarchy of objectives, RALGA's outreach cannot go beyond its sphere of influence. This implies that RALGA, through this strategic plan, targets interventions to produce outputs (its sphere of control) which lead to immediate outcomes (sphere of influence), ensuring that they will contribute to the intermediate outcomes (sphere of concern), and finally to the ultimate outcome (sphere of concern and impact). The concrete activities and inputs shall be specified every year in the annual action plans as milestones with clear disaggregated targets and means of verification for each indicator.

It is worth noting that not all services to members were considered in this strategic plan, given the establishment of the subsidiary companies/agencies, namely LG Consult Ltd and LGI for the time being and any others the association might deem necessary to establish. The "division of labor" between RALGA and its subsidiaries is depicted in the table 3.

Table 4: Categorization, funding and implementers of services to RALGA members[31]

Category of services	Common services (Strategic Plan)	Individual services (on demand)	Club services[32] (on demand)
Nature of services (examples)	Advocacy Representation Communication Recruitment	Organizational assessments Manuals development Legal and fiscal technical support Etc.	Training courses Curricula development Administrative development systems
Source of funding	Membership fees	Fees charged to clients	GoR, DPs and beneficiary charges
Implementer	RALGA Secretariat	LG Consult Ltd	LGI

3.2 Detailed expected results and interventions

RALGA's pursued impact is to have "more efficient, citizen-centered and developmental Local Governments in Rwanda". Consequently, its effort during the 5 years from July 2015 to June 2020 will contribute to making the change needed to get there. This effort is translated into expected outcomes, outputs and interventions that are described below.

Outcome 1:
Public services with corresponding resources and capacity are further decentralized and accompanied with corresponding resources and capacity for their implementation.

Good governance and a capable state is the first pillar of Rwanda's Vision 2020, which has clearly been spelt out in EDPRS 2 through the "accountable governance" thematic area with the broad objective to "enhance accountable governance by promoting citizen participation and mobilization for delivery of development, strengthening public accountability and improving service delivery".[33] Further, EDPRS states that "Rwanda will focus on the improved service delivery, further decentralizing services closer to citizens and participation of citizens in planning and delivery of development for improved citizen centeredness of the development agenda and process."[34] Thus, RALGA intends to bring its contribution to reach these aspirations through actions related to the "Legal Framework and Sectoral Decentralization" and "Service Delivery" strategic areas (SA1 and 2) of the Governance and Decentralization Sector.[35] The objectives under this goal are:

Output 1.1:

[31] Adapted from Saluaes, Alphonso Garcia, *Mission Report on RALGA Strategic Plan and Financial Sustainability*, Kigali, Dec 2014
[32] Club services are those that are not common but still which are requested by more than one client.
[33] MINECOFIN, *EDPRS 2*, p.70
[34] Idem
[35] [35] Ministry of Local Government, *Governance and Decentralization Sector Strategic Plan 2013/14-2017/18*, p.39

Policy and legal frameworks governing decentralized services, resources and capacity transfer are regularly identified, analyzed and advocated for

The success for decentralization processes requires policies, legal frameworks and structures that allow decentralized entities to deliver against their mission in general related to national goals and their local specific priorities. Although "there is good indication of citizens' confidence in government, with 74.2% feeling that they participate actively in local decision making, and that local government is listening to and addressing their priority concerns, this has increased from 65% in 2006 and exceeds the 70% EDPRS target"[36], more needs to be done. Therefore, RALGA will seek to ensure that these policies, legal frameworks and structures offer a favorable environment for delivery services at the level closest to citizens, consulting them, giving them feedback, and being open to accountability demand and local innovation.[37] Decentralization Sector Strategic Plan sets the goals and objectives of the Sector, and details who does what, with whom, when, how and where and with what means. The strategic Plan also aims to promote co-ordination between stakeholders and increase efficiency."[38]

EPDRS 2 also puts a particular focus "on clarifying and streamlining the process of sectoral decentralization in areas of weakness as sectoral decentralization is being undertaken differently depending on the sector and specific service or function. Some sectoral agencies, notably education, health, agriculture and infrastructure, have established direct presence at provincial and district levels. But many of the sectoral service functions are parallel and have not integrated with local government systems. This will also entail allocating resources to decentralized entities which are matched with responsibilities."[39]

This will necessitate strong follow up and advocacy interventions by RALGA. The mid-evaluation of previous strategic plan indicated that RALGA in general needs a better organized and more structured advocacy. That is why RALGA has recently designed an appropriate advocacy strategy to that effect, and will follow the strategic areas of focus for decentralization under EDPRS 2.[40] Partnerships with institutions responsible for laws and policy formulation, including ministries and the Parliament will be utilized. This will contribute to ensuring "coherent and harmonized decentralized structures, policy guidelines and laws to improve the effective implementation of decentralization", and "sectoral ministries and agencies operational

[36] MINECOFIN, *EDPRS: Lessons Learned 2008 – 2011*, p.15
[37] MINECOFIN, *EDPRS 2*, p.73
[38] Ministry of Local Government, *Governance and Decentralization Sector Strategic Plan 2013/14-2017/18*, p. 6
[39] MINECOFIN, *EDPRS 2*, p.83
[40] The decentralization strategic areas are: (i) building fiscally stronger Local Governments through locally owned Local Economic Development (LED) strategies; (ii) deepening participatory, democratic and accountable local governance systems (iii) building capacity for effective local service delivery and ensuring efficient services delivery through further sectoral decentralization (iii) leveraging regional integration to expand opportunities for youth employment creation, local economic empowerment, cross-border trade and security (iv) consolidating national unity, cohesion and peace through resilient, synergetic local systems; (v) using ICT to deliver services efficiently and effectively, increasing citizen's empowerment through participation, as well as promoting transparency and accountability. (in MINECOFIN, *EDPRS 2*, p.83)

frameworks harmonized with decentralization policy and principles" (respectively outcome 1 and 2 of SA1of the governance and decentralisation sector)"[41] by:

1.1.1 Analyze the legal and policy frameworks governing decentralization and local governance: organization, powers, functions, responsibilities, services, resources and capacity transfer;

1.1.2 Identifying, analyzing and gathering evidences, on a regular basis, on issues affecting the implementation of decentralized responsibilities and advising on how to address them;

1.1.3 Carrying out evidence-based advocacy for more conducive legal and policy frameworks for the decentralization of responsibilities, services and corresponding resources.

Output 1.2:

Ad hoc advocacy issues are continuously identified as they arise, prioritized, analyzed and advocated for

As issues that necessitate advocacy arise any time, RALGA will be always ready to identify through different channels, prioritize and analyze them. Advocacy will then follow according to the principles and mechanisms stipulated in its Advocacy and Partnership Strategy. The progress and outcome of these actions will be properly recorded. Information shared with the members of RALGA governing bodies and, as necessary,

1.2 .1 Analyze and advocate prioritized ad hoc advocacy issues.

Output 1.3:

RALGA has continuously advocated for further Local Governments institutional, leadership and technical capacity building and for better working conditions of elected leaders and technicians to better fulfill their responsibilities.

Institutional and individual capacities need to be continuously enhanced for Local Government entities to fulfil their responsibilities. It is in this perspective that EDPRS II puts an emphasis on capacity building interventions under the governance and decentralisation sector, and one of the expected outcomes of strategic area SA4 spells out that "capacity building interventions will be harmonized, coordinated adequately and demand driven to address local needs"[42]. Moreover, optimum performance cannot be achieved without conducive working conditions. RALGA therefore intends to bring its contribution by:

1.3.1 Triggering the interest of relevant stakeholders in order to invest in or support the institutionalization of capacity building for elected local leaders and technical staff at all levels of Local Government;

[41] MINALOC, *Governance and Decentralization Sector Strategic Plan 2013/14-2017/18*, p. 39
[42] MINALOC, *Governance and Decentralization Sector Strategic Plan 2013/14-2017/18*, p. 39

1.3.2 Analyze, on a regular basis, the working conditions in local government and their impact on both institutional performance and staff retention and advocate for relevant improvement.

Output 1.4:

RALGA has advocated for more bottom-up led and evidence-based national public policies and programs

Sector Ministries, as the only agencies charged with the responsibility of policy formulation, are compelled by the Cabinet Manual to involve any relevant internal or external policy stakeholder in the policy formulation process prior to tabling any policy proposal for adoption by the Cabinet[43]. While this requirement indicates the existing political will to make the public policy formulation process as participatory as possible, existing evidence suggests that more efforts still have to be made in a bid to fully materialize this political will.

Local governments are responsible for implementing national policies and or programs and. In this respect, they play, through the localisation of national policies, a catalyst role not only in adapting these policies to the local specific conditions, but also in mobilizing the local community for the ownership and hence effective and efficient implementation of the governmental action. However, the key challenge today is that, local governments as primary policy implementers have persistently complained that they are quite often not consulted by sector ministries[44] prior to or during the elaboration and or review of national policies. Likewise, about one-third (33.1%) of Rwandans have the feeling that they are not given the space or the opportunity to influence public policies and or laws[45]. Similarly, 34.2% of citizens generally feel that they have a very little say on important governmental decisions which affect their lives[46]. Yet, the consultation of relevant stakeholders, from within and or outside of the government sphere, is compulsory prior to tabling any policy proposal for Cabinet approval[47].

The limited consultation/engagement of multi-stakeholders over national policy elaboration seriously hampers mobilization capacity and therefore effective and efficient implementation of national policies at the local government level. In fact, owing to their limited participation in the policy elaboration and or review process, a very few local leaders unambiguously understand the rationale of national policies, yet alone their content. As of today, about 89% of elected local leaders and staff at the District level are not aware let alone knowing and understanding the content of a range of policies and laws they are supposed to implement and enforce respectively[48]. The knowledge of and understanding of national policies is even lower it comes to local elected leaders and staff at Sector and Cell levels, yet these are among the decentralized administrative levels closest to citizens whereby much policy implementation and mobilization

[43] Office of the Prime Minister. Ministry of Cabinet Affairs (May, 2012). *Cabinet Manual*, Kigali

[44] See for instance the report of Forum of Districts and City of Kigali's Vice Mayors in charge of social affairs held in July 2012 at La Palme Hotel, Musanze See also the report of Districts and City of Kigali's Mayors held in July, 2012 at Gorilla Hotel, Musanze Forum of ES, Forum of Mayors, Forum of District Councilors held at Serena Kivu Hotel, in March 2013.

[45] National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (2010) , *Rwanda Reconciliation Barometer, Kigali,* p. 21

[46] Ibid

[47] Ministry of Cabinet Affairs (May, 2012). *Cabinet Manual*, p.47

[48] RGB (2013). *Local government Common Capacity Building Priorities*, Kigali, p.Vii

for implementation occurs respectively[49]. Thus, RALGA intends to advocate for more evidence-based and bottom-up led policies as a means, for local governments, to maximize the development impact of national policies. Towards this end, the following interventions will be undertaken:

1.4.1 Regularly assess the status of participatory and evidence-based public policy elaboration across various sectors of life, advocate and document the issues identified;
1.4.2 Organize policy dialogues at national levels around evidence-based and participatory public policies and or programs.

Output 1.5:
RALGA has continuously supported Local Governments in their endeavor to deepen democratic and accountable local governance

Knowing that priority area one for accountable governance thematic area, and given the fact that citizen participation "is also about letting citizens participate directly in decision-making at their local level"[50] implies that the administrative entities closer to them must be strong enough to play their role as catalysts and mobilizers.

1.5.1. Support the stimulation and deepening of interactions between Local Councils and constituencies around public problem posing, solving and feedback giving;
1.5.2 Support and advise Local Governments on efforts meant to deepen evidence-based and participatory local decision-making processes;
1.5.3 Support and advise Local Government on efforts meant to improve the practice of service delivery and citizenry complaints solving monitoring.

Output 1.6:
RALGA has actively taken part in the international debate around decentralization and local diplomacy

Rwanda has made tremendous progress in its decentralization process and local governance, and has much to tell and or share with the region and even the world. But on the other hand, good practices, challenges and lessons learnt also happen elsewhere. Thus, joint programs are also possible between Local Governments from within or from abroad through "local diplomacy" and regional integration. That is why RALGA believes that exchange and experience sharing could be mutually inspiring for its members and their foreign counterparts. Therefore, RALGA will play a role in organizing and participating in forums bringing together decentralization and local governance actors in the region, and where possible globally. This will contributes as well to the attainment of the national MICE

[49] See AJPRODHO JIJUKIRWA (2014). *National Baseline Survey of Citizens' Knowledge, Awareness and Perception on Public Policies and Programs in Rwanda*, Kigali, p.7
[50] Idem, p. 6

Strategy goals which aim at promoting the national tourism industry through international conferences and or meetings.

1.6.1 Publish on themes related to local governance and decentralization in Rwanda and/ or beyond;
1.6.2 Organize, co-facilitate and participate in international forums on decentralization, local diplomacy and regional integration;
1.6.3 Participate in international debates/conferences or forums on decentralization and local diplomacy and share lessons learnt for RALGA in particular and Rwanda in general.

Outcome 2:
Increased resources and capacity in public finance management for Local Governments

EDPRS 2 acknowledges that "With respect to administrative decentralization, a key policy objective is to match resource allocation with strengthened capacity of districts to plan, implement, monitor and report."[51] Further efforts need to be made to provide local entities with financial resources to run operations deliver services and implement development programs. Alongside with this financial resources mobilization, efficient management of the nation's resources through sound public finance management systems is a requirement.

So, as EDPRS 2 identified "strengthening the effectiveness of public finance management" as one of the foundational issues, RALGA intends to act on these 2 complementary aspects to promote local entities' high performance in PFM. On the capacity building side, the Local Government Institute will play a more practical role, while RALGA will focus more on advocacy and advice. The objectives under this goal are:

Output 2.1:
RALGA has supported and advocated for increased fiscal transfers and broadened local revenue base through local economic growth

Achievements in fiscal decentralization so far are commendable as "financial resources transferred from the Central Government to Districts have over the years increased tremendously. The budgeted transfers to Districts for the financial year 2014-2015 are 20% of the total national budget.

However, out of the total district budget the percentage over which Districts have discretionary control (block grants, LODA development budget and own revenues) is still low, and this was indicated as one of the challenges by the evaluation of the decentralization process conducted towards the end of its second phase "Fiscal and Financial Decentralization where funding is still highly earmarked, bureaucracies through inter-agency transfers, and generally low local revenue

[51] MINECOFIN, *EDPRS 2*, p.74 (outcome 1.3: Strengthened accountability)

generation and collection".[52] Another shortcoming is that "whereas the responsibility for service delivery has been devolved to decentralized levels, this has not yet been fully matched with a transfer of funds"[53]. This obviously calls for RALGA's advocacy interventions, which is fortunately a member of the National Decentralization Steering Committee [54]. These interventions which are listed below are in line with the expected outcome that "efficient and financially autonomous Local Governments are established for sustainable development (outcome 4 of strategic area SA3 of the EDPRS governance and decentralisation sector which is about fiscal and financial decentralization).[55]

2.1.1. Advocate for the increase of local revenue and block grants transfers corresponding to the cost of services provided by LG entities

Output 2.2:
By 2020, RALGA has supported the Districts to improve their performance in planning, PFM and stakeholders' participation

"The standards of financial management systems at the Local Government level are now substantially improved through the use of the integrated financial management system but further improvements are required."[56] Also, "There are still many gaps in Human resource capacity at all levels of Local Government. "[57]

Also, participation of local stakeholders in public financial management and budget cycle is one of the best ways to ensure that local authorities are held accountable with regard to public finance management. EDPRS 2 stresses that "as citizens are participating more actively in the planning processes and in delivery of development programs and as their awareness increases through improved development communication, ownership will also augment with the demand for accountability."[58] Yet, evaluations revealed that "Public access to information as a monitoring device is improving but can be enhanced further."[59] Thus, RALGA intends to contribute to information, education and communication programs to promote participation.

RALGA will thus make interventions especially intended to fill the gaps revealed in the Office of the Auditor General's reports by:

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[52] MINECOFIN, *Revised Fiscal and Financial Decentralization Policy*, 2011, P.5
[53] Idem, p.7
[54] The National Decentralization Steering Committee is chaired by the Permanent Secretary, MINALOC, and co-chaired by the Permanent Secretary/Secretary to the Treasury, MINECOFIN. Other members include a representative from RALGA, a representative of Rwanda Governance Board, the Accountant General, the Director Generals from MINECOFIN in charge of economic planning and national budget, and the Director of Planning MINALOC; the Commissioner General from RRA; and the Mayor of CoK. (in MINECOFIN, *Revised Fiscal and Financial Decentralization Policy*, 2011, p.19)
[55] MINALOC, *Governance and Decentralization Sector Strategic Plan 2013/14-2017/18*, p. 39
[56] Idem, p.7
[57] Idem, p.8
[58] MINECOFIN, *EDPRS 2*, p.73
[59] MINECOFIN, *Revised Fiscal and Financial Decentralization Policy*, 2011, p.7

2.2.1 Increase the capacity of Local Government Officials in PFM;
2.2.2 Support the Districts to effectively carry out the participatory planning and budgeting process with necessary tools.

Outcome 3:
Strengthened business environment through regulatory reform to spur local economic development

The Government of Rwanda is determined to fast-track poverty reduction through sustainable Local Economic Development as an approach aiming at stimulating the economy, increase jobs and incomes."[60] The Local Governments were given autonomy and responsibility to promote development and wellbeing of people through LED, including the creation of job opportunities to generate sustainable income for citizens. Local governments lack of experience in LED strategic planning and implementation. Moreover, common understanding and coordination are still problematic both at national and local levels for LED as a new concept. Local Governments thus need more capacity to optimize local opportunities and stimulate enterprise.

RALGA has so far been instrumental in promoting LED, especially regarding the design of training modules, enhancing the capacity of local officials in developing and implementing LED strategies in accordance with national development goals and to some Districts in assessing economic opportunities in collaboration with GIZ, Embassy of the Netherlands and European Delegation to Rwanda, assistance.

The National Strategy for Community Development and Local Economic Development 2013-2018 recognizes this role and maintains that "with respect to LED, RALGA has gained significant experience and expertise and has development training modules and tools for the Local Governments of Rwanda. It has also commenced capacity building. This expertise and experience can be used to support RLDSF (now LODA) and RGB in any LED activities […] RALGA can further facilitate the link between central and local government in its role as a representing body for Local Governments."[61] Against this background and to contribute to "creating vibrant local economies that are attractive to investments and skills (outcome under strategic area SA5 of the EDPRS governance and decentralisation sector which is about fiscal and financial decentralization),[62] RALGA is committed to pursue the following objectives under this goal:

Output 3.1:
By 2020, RALGA has effectively advocated for the desired reforms in the processes, laws, policies and procedures related to business environment at local level.

[60] MINALOC, *Governance and Decentralization Sector Strategic Plan 2013/14-2017/18*, July 2013, P. 15
[61] MINALOC, *Strategy for Community Development and Local Economic Development 2013-2018*, p.57
[62] MINALOC, *Governance and Decentralization Sector Strategic Plan 2013/14-2017/18*, p. 39

Although most of the tasks assigned to RALGA under the national framework with regard to LED capacity building will shift to LGI, but RALGA will remain with the representation and advocacy responsibilities by:

3.1.1 Compiling and examining the existing and intended legal and policy frameworks and processes affecting or likely to affect business environment at the local level;
3.1.2 Carrying out and documenting evidence-based advocacy on identified key policy and legal issues.

Output 3.2:
By 2020, RALGA has successfully accompanied Local Governments in their endeavor to coordinate and engage LED stakeholders

LED "is a process by which public, business and nongovernmental sector partners' work collectively to create better conditions for economic growth and employment generation".[63]
Yet, "insufficient involvement of private sector and cooperatives (NGOs/CSOs) in some areas has affected the quality of policy dialogue especially at the District level."[64] The coordination and sensitization therefore need to be improved so as to bring stakeholders from all the categories of the community on board. RALGA has already developed training modules to be applied in Rwanda[65], but they have also to be used. In that sense, in addition to the capacity building services that will be delivered though the LGI, RALGA will undertake the following interventions:

3.2.1 Organize interventions meant to build and strengthen Local Government policy capacity in the area of LED;
3.2.2 Facilitate peer learning and innovative experience sharing in the role of LG in promoting LED: competition and qualifying, documentation, study visits, etc.

Outcome 4:
Improved capacity in Local Governments to implement effectively national and local social welfare development programs

With respect to the Vision 2020 objective of transforming the conditions of Rwandans to become a healthy and productive population, considering EDPRS 2 social development issues under the label of foundational issues, this strategic plan will contribute to achieving EDPRS 2 objective on healthy and productive population by consolidating RALGA's previous interventions in the area of social welfare sector.

[63] Idem, p.13
[64] MINECOFIN, *EDPRS: Lessons Learned 2008 – 2011*, p.29
[65] MINALOC, *Strategy for Community Development and Local Economic Development 2013-2018*, p.24

In fact, the previous strategic plan enabled RALGA to initiate direct community support programs in sensitization and promotion of healthy behaviours on a number of topical social welfare issues like HIV/AIDS, maternal health, family planning, gender mainstreaming, gender based violence prevention and civil registration. The present strategic plan will focus on one key objective which is, through advocacy and support interventions, to ensure that local social welfare development programs are promoted and strengthened. To meet this goal, the objectives described below will be pursued.

***Output 4.1**:*
RALGA has regularly advocated for Local Government officials participation in policy formulation and facilitated policy dialogue on social welfare development

The revised decentralization policy adopted in 2012 emphasizes that Local Governments are the most appropriate channels for implementing different national sectoral policies including social protection and inclusion, environment and climate change, disaster management, HIV/AIDS and non-communicable diseases as well as family and gender. While social welfare development programs have to be complementary with more straightforward thematic areas, yet local official have often raised concern that it not always technically easy for them to integrate in other programs. So, RALGA will bring and/or advocate for support to Local Governments for effective implementation through the interventions described below.

4.1.1 Identify critical issues through studies and assessment in the sector of social welfare;
4.1.2 Carry out advocacy activities to ensure that the challenges facing local governments in implementing social welfare programs are dealt with effectively;
4.1.3 Design strategies for proactive engagement of LGs in national policy formulation related to social welfare development.

***Output 4.2**:*
By 2020, RALGA has accompanied Local Governments in their effort to localize social welfare programs and coordinate partnerships related to social welfare development

This expected result is in connection with national and local programs designed uplift the social welfare conditions of the citizens and communities at large. In EDPRS 2, such programs have been put either under rural development for poverty eradication or crosscutting issues. RALGA will specifically look into initiatives related to poverty eradication, gender, environment and climate change, HIV/AIDS, disaster management, disability and social inclusion

4.2.1 Conduct regular assessment and advise on the effectiveness of coordination mechanisms in place for social welfare development and stakeholders involved

Outcome 5:
RALGA's capacity to provide to its members quality services in accordance with their needs constantly increased

The fourth strategic objective of the two previous strategic plans has been achieved, because evaluations have shown that RALGA has become well established and recognized organization. The next level is that it aims at becoming a modern organization that provides quality and effective services to its members. That is why it has chosen professionalism and innovation among its key values. But this needs to be supported to really turn into an organizational culture, and the major factors to be taken into account are the state of its revenues and its overall organization. Thus, the objectives below have been identified to achieve this goal.

Output 5.1:
RALGA's organs are functional

All the meetings of the decision making and consultative bodies will be held on time as provided for in the articles of association to monitor, supervise and provide guidance towards the realization of RALGA's goals. This will be achieved through:

5.1.1 Organizing timely statutory meetings for RALGA organs.

Output 5.2:
RALGA's internal organization is functional and copes with the rapidly changing environment by accommodating systemic, managerial and technological innovations

Beside human and financial resources, RALGA needs to streamline its internal organization pertaining to advocacy, communication, capacity building and working environment to maximize its effectiveness and efficiency. Indeed, these aspects which in general are referred to as RALGA's mandate used to be as pillar for planning under the previous strategic plans, but this time they are considered as crosscutting across the five thematic areas of this strategic plan. In other words, they are not confined in one single department or unit. As such, RALGA will:

5.2.1. Streamline advocacy/representation, communication, capacity building, knowledge management, resource mobilization and ICT across the units;
5.2.2 Maintain/establish a state of the art infrastructure (building, equipment, ICT, etc.) that are conducive for the efficiency of the organization and its agencies;
5.2.3 Implement and progressively update an affordable organizational structure with qualified and efficient staff able to deliver to the expectations of the members.

Output 5.3:
By 2020, 70% of RALGA's annual budget is financed through own revenues to increase its financial independence and sustainability

The financial sustainability assessment indicated that RALGA has been effective in terms of generating revenues via the membership fees and development partners. On one hand, important changes have been implemented in terms of governance, accountability and responsiveness to

the demands of its members. These changes have helped the association to increase the membership fees from 600,000 to 25 million within a five-year period. On the other hand, RALGA has over time gained a good reputation among donors and has been able to sustain an important volume of operations oriented to develop capacities at local level.[66]

The next step RALGA wishes to take is to be more independent financially. Yet, "the external support still represents 50% of the total revenues of RALGA. So far, the association has made exceptional progress towards financial independence but, still depends significantly on donor support."[67] Therefore, basing on the recommendations of this assessment, RALGA will and streamline revenue generation systems and revise its structure for a better resource mobilization and utilization that ensures its financial sustainable independence. RALGA will deliver against this objective by:

5.3.1 Establishing /strengthening and monitoring RALGA's agencies;
5.3.2 Recovering the membership fees;
5.3.3 Enhancing partnerships and sponsorships and mobilizing resources.

Output 5.4:
RALGA has delivered specialized services to its members on demand

All RALGA members are entitled to common services it delivers, but individual services and club services, which are specific to the member in need, will be paid. The common services are basically advocacy, representation, communication, and recruitment to a certain extent as the core business of the association and are spelt out in the Strategic Plan. Individual and club services are addressed on demand. Individual services include for instance Local Government organizational assessments, manuals development, legal and fiscal technical support, etc., while club services are for example training courses, curricula development, administrative development systems, etc. By the elaboration of this strategic plan, individual services are delivered by LG Consult Ltd and club services are envisaged to be delivered through the Local Government Institute (LGI). However, other agencies might be established depending on the specificity of the services. The intervention will be:

5.4.1 Provide technical assistance to the Districts and City of Kigali in specific services including staff recruitment and legal services

[66] Saluaes, Alphonso Garcia: *Financial sustainability assessment of RALGA*, p. 23
[67] Saluaes, Alphonso Garcia: *Financial sustainability assessment of RALGA*, p. 23

Outcome 1:

Public services with corresponding resources and capacity are further decentralized and accompanied with corresponding resources and capacity for their implementation.

Output 1.1: *Policy and legal frameworks governing decentralized services, resources & capacity transfer and issues affecting implementation are regularly identified, analyzed and advocated for.*

Output 1.2: *Ad hoc advocacy issues are continuously identified, prioritized, analyzed and advocated for.*

Output 1.3: *RALGA has continuously advocated for further Local Governments institutional, leadership and technical capacity building and for better working conditions of elected leaders and technicians to better fulfill their responsibilities.*

Output 1.4: *RALGA has advocated for participatory and evidence-based public policies.*

Output 1.5*: RALGA has continuously supported Local Governments in their endeavor to deepen democratic and accountable local governance.*

Output 1.6: *RALGA has actively taken part in international debate around decentralization, local diplomacy and regional integration.*

Outcome 2:

Increased resources and capacity in public finance management and participatory budgeting for LGs.

Output 2.1: *RALGA has supported and advocated for increased fiscal transfers and broadened local revenue base through local economic growth*

Output 2.2: *By 2020, RALGA has supported the Districts to improve their performance in planning, PFM and stakeholders' participation.*

Output 2.3:

RALGA has brokered between Districts and providers in capacity building to improve PFM performance

Outcome 3:

Improved business environment through regulatory reform to spur LED.

Output 3.1: *By 2018, RALGA has advocated for the desired reforms in the processes, laws, policies and procedures related to business environment at local level.*

Output 3.2: *By 2020, RALGA has successfully accompanied LGs in their endeavor to engage and coordinate LED stakeholders.*

Outcome 4:

Improved capacity for LGs to implement effectively national and local social welfare development programs.

Output 4.1*: RALGA has regularly advocated for the participation of LGs officials in policy formulation and facilitated policy dialogue on social welfare development programs.*

Output 4.2*: By 2020, RALGA has accompanied LGs in their effort to localize social welfare development programs and coordinate partnerships in this area.*

Outcome 5:

RALGA's capacity to provide quality services to its members in accordance with their needs maintained.

Output 5.1: *RALGA's organs are functional.*

Output 5.2: *RALGA's internal organization is operational and copes with the rapidly changing environment by accommodating systemic, managerial and technological innovations.*

Output 5.3: *By 2020, 70% of RALGA's annual budget is financed through own revenues to increase its financial independence and sustainability.*

Output 5.4*: RALGA has delivered specialized services to its members on demand*

Chapter 4: Leadership, Staffing and Stakeholders

4.1 The leadership

The success of this strategic plan will depend on various factors and actors, but the most prominent role will be played by the leadership of RALGA. The General Assembly will monitor the progress of implementation and will provide policy and strategic guidance at its annual meeting to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will also play a crucial role in ensuring that all the plans demonstrate action towards the achievement of the objectives set, with the support and checks and balances from other organs.

4.2 Administrative plan

The management and administration part of the Association will be in the hands of the General Secretariat which will need an appropriate organizational structure to deliver against the set and strategic objectives. Although it must allow flexibility to accommodate changes dictated by the prevailing situation, the structure will be matched as much as possible with the strategic objectives.

The challenges and lessons learnt as summarized in the section about the internal organization analysis and the SWOT analysis as well as in the evaluation of the previous strategic plan will have important implications on the structure of RALGA's Secretariat. Notably, the new spirit to streamline advocacy interventions, the establishment of the Local Government Institute which will absorb the biggest part of capacity building function, and even the existence of LG Consult Ltd[68] will dictate the nature and size of the Secretariat which should be limited to the core function and basic services covered by the membership fee.

Thus, the administrative structure and the posts within it will be specifically designed to carry out the planned interventions. They will also have been harmonized with the current commission structure to better deliver against the priorities identified by RALGA members.

The job descriptions and person specifications will be supported by a commitment to individual improvement through clear on-demand training for plans and performance management mechanisms. The purpose and philosophy of RALGA will be contained in the published plans and strategies and or corporate policies and clearly expressed and evaluated for the leadership, the staff and membership respectively, rather than being left to individual staff.

RALGA's personnel will be composed of highly qualified, committed and professional employees, and everyone will need to know their responsibilities and be well prepared to deliver. However, considering the limited capacity of RALGA in acquiring all the human resource and expertise required, RALGA will use alternative means such as outsourcing and volunteer

[68] See the table on the division of labor between RALGA and its subsidiaries

development in form of internships. For all of them, not only ongoing good practices, but also innovation and pro-activeness will be institutionalized as their guiding principles.

4.3 The stakeholders

The area of decentralization and local governance are not issues that are dealt with by one or even a few organizations. So RALGA is not a sole player and cannot act alone. Consequently, it will have to build strong partnerships, collaboration and synergies. Obviously, being the center of RALGA's existence, the Local Government authorities themselves are the prime stakeholders and will be dealt with as such. Interaction with them will be done mainly through representation in the governing bodies, but also directly through different mechanisms, including field visits, study tours, forums and electronic communication utilizing available technology.

Nonetheless, unlike its predecessor which put a stronger emphasis on partnerships with the members to increase their understanding and ownership of RALGA, this strategic plan will focus on other stakeholders, especially the Government of Rwanda and development partners. The Government is a major partner through its institutions, the most important ones being the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Local Government, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the National Parliament, Rwanda Governance Board, the National Capacity Building Secretariat, the Local Development Agency and the National Commission for Civil Servants. Beside these Government stakeholders, other partnerships may be forged with Government institutions on a need basis, depending on the issue at hand and the intended intervention and who has a direct or indirect stake in it.

Development Partners constitute another important category of stakeholders because some of them have agendas that are similar or are complementary with RALGA's goals. In such cases, RALGA will seek frameworks for cooperation either in programs design, implementation and or project financing.

RALGA will also target the private sector and civil society for collaboration and synergies. Indeed, the private sector is crucial for RALGA members in fulfilling their responsibilities. Therefore RALGA will need to work together with them with a view to support its members in developing local economies. RALGA will particularly concentrate on raising the capacity to build strong public-private partnerships and the complementarity between the local authorities and the civil society organizations.

Chapter 5: Financing the Plan

5.1 Funds mobilization

During the previous strategic plan period, RALGA successfully managed to increase its financial independence. The result is that the annual subscription fees from the members were increased twice and reached 25 RwF million per member. Up to 52% of average RALGA's budget for the last two years could thereby be financed by own revenues, compared to 7% for 2010-2011 which was the first financial year of the strategic plan. The other part was covered by funds granted by development partners.[69]

For the next 5 year period, changes in the amount to be paid by a member annually are not likely, unless unforeseen circumstances occur that would affect either positively or negatively the revenues of the Districts. This implies that additional sources of funding will continue to be needed. Thus, resource mobilization will have to be streamlined to tap funding opportunities from existing and new development partners. Approaching potential funders requires systematic collection and management of information, to produce good project proposals and to build sustainable networks and working relationships. This might therefore necessitate that a department for resource mobilization be put in place.

RALGA will also continue to explore and tap into business opportunities, especially through its daughter companies, such as LG Consult Ltd which is already winning a respectable share on the consultancy market in Rwanda. It is also expected that the Local Government Institute will contribute to RALGA's financing in future years, when it will be fully functioning and well established towards the end of this strategic plan by 2018.

RALGA will strengthen its collaboration with other institutions, private organizations and business companies through activity cost-sharing and sponsorships and joint-ventures. The General Assembly meetings and other big events that bring together RALGA members present good opportunities to that end.

5.2 Budgetary/finance plan

5.2.1 Income

Before the beginning of the financial year, an annual budget will be prepared and adopted. The subscription fees will continue to be the main source for financing these annual budgets in terms

[69] RALGA Annual Reports 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013

of volume as forecasted in table 4. As suggested far above, this main source of financing will be supplemented by dividends from RALGA subsidiary institutions such as LGI and LG Consult Ltd along with contributions by development partners/donors.

Table 5: Estimated income by sources

Source	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	Total
Membership fees	775,000,000	775,000,000	775,000,000	775,000,000	775,000,000	**3,875,000,000**
LG consult Ltd (Dividends)	100,000,000	105,000,000	110,250,000	115,762,500	121,550,625	**552,563,125**
LGI (Management fees)	100,000,000	105,000,000	110,250,000	115,762,500	121,550,625	**552,563,125**
Investments as per Financial Sustainability strategy	-	150,000,000	157,500,000	165,375,000	173,643,750	**646,518,750**
Development Partners	1,295,400,909	1,449,307,144	1,203,806,165	939,560,138	904,487,621	**5,792,561,978**
Total	**2,270,400,909**	**2,584,307,144**	**2,356,806,165**	**2,111,460,138**	**2,096,232,621**	**11,419,206,978**
DP's	**57%**	**56%**	**51%**	**44%**	**43%**	
RALGA	**43%**	**44%**	**49%**	**56%**	**57%**	

5.2.2 Expenses

RALGA will need to finance its activities and cover its administrative costs. The allocations will be done taking into consideration RALGA's core business as priorities, while additional activities will be classified in the category of projects. The budget will be structured around the strategic priorities identified in this plan. The estimated amounts required are summarized in the following table, and a detailed estimated budget is in annex.

Table 6: Summarized estimated budget by goals

	Year 1 (2015-2016)	**Year 2** (2016-2017)	**Year 3** (2017-2018)	**Year 4** (2018-2019)	**Year 5** (2019-2020)	**Total**	**%**
Goal 1	472,825,024	379,250,026	398,112,528	417,918,156	438,714,064	2,106,819,799	18%
Goal 2	412,400,000	433,020,000	454,671,000	477,404,550	357,874,212	2,135,369,762	19%
Goal 3	282,424,097	193,305,240	297,620,415	227,708,003	261,793,444	1,262,851,198	11%
Goal 4	183,859,284	193,052,248	202,704,861	1,852,200	1,944,810	583,413,403	5%
Goal 5	918,892,505	1,385,679,630	1,003,697,361	986,577,229	1,035,906,091	5,330,752,816	47%
Total	**2,270,400,909**	**2,584,307,144**	**2,356,806,165**	**2,111,460,138**	**2,096,232,621**	**11,419,206,978**	**100%**

Chapter 6: Success Factors, Risks and Review Process

6.1 Critical success factors:

For RALGA's mission to be achieved, the goals and objectives were formulated to follow the priorities expressed by members. Broad actions were also identified to meet those objectives. In order to make them specific, measurable, and attainable, annual action plans will be drawn from this strategic plan and realistically high targets set in an attempt to turn the vision into reality. Responsibilities and timelines will also be clearly stated.

IT is also a critical success factor for this new strategic plan, and there will be need to design and invest in modern management software for M&E, reporting like, Microsoft Project Management which can ease the coordination of the its implementation.

Finally, the level of commitment and motivation of all the people and organs involved, with the availability of funds, adequate tools and a conducive working environment, are indispensable. The tools that are provided for this purpose are:

- This strategic plan document;
- Its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework which contains a logical framework;
- Annual and quarterly plans which contain the review process and allocated responsibilities;
- Periodical reports (quarterly, annual and mid-term evaluation reports).

6.2 Review process

To implement this strategic plan, specific activities and inputs will be spelt out in the annual action plans, and regular reviews will be conducted to measure the performance towards the attainment of the targets and objectives set. This will be done through meetings of RALGA organs, including the General Secretariat at frequencies that are determined in the articles of association, the internal rules and regulations, the operational procedures manual or the M&E framework. For this purpose, quarterly and annual reports will be presented to these organs depending on their competences as indicated in the M&E framework.

The day to day follow ups will be the responsibility of the Secretary General and the staff, and a mid-tem evaluation will be carried out. The findings will dictate necessary revisions to be applied to the original strategic plan.

Chapter 4: Monitoring & Evaluation Framework for implementation

4.1 Definitions

Performance monitoring and evaluation are two functions that provide different but complementary types of information, both of which are necessary for effective **results-based management**.

Monitoring: is used to track progress and serves as an early-warning system to alert managers when there are difficulties and impediments to work plan implementation.

Evaluation/Review: allow for a more in depth judgment about achievements of results measured against a set of indicators, providing an understanding of the factors that influence levels of achievement, success or failure. It provides the basis for informed decision-making for the revision of policies, strategies and programmes.
Performance monitoring, review and evaluation are conducted in relation to two key instruments within the RALGA results framework: Strategic Plan 2010-15 and Annual Action Plan.

4.2 Logical Framework

4.2.1 Hierarchy of objectives

The Impact: Statement of the mid to long-term beneficial change or impact to which the RALGA plan contributes.

The Outcome: Describes the change resulting from uptake, use or implementation of the outputs by beneficiaries outside the management team.

The Outputs: Describe what will be put in place in order to achieve the outcome. They are the results that must be delivered.

The Activities: Describe what actions will be undertaken to achieve each output.

The Assumptions: Describe the conditions which need to exist for completion of activities, and achievement of outputs, outcome and impact. They are outside the control of the management team and cannot be mitigated by activities.

4.2.2 Performance indicators, targets and means of verification

Indicators and means of verification show what data RALGA intends to use to measure progress, and how that data will be collected. Indicators are the standards against which change will be measured. They will help answer the question of how much or whether progress is being made towards achievement of RALGA objectives. RALGA staff will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating

progress against the set targets and will be held accountable for the results. They will always remember that data collection will have to be cost-effective in terms of both time and financial cost.

4.2.3 Logical Framework

See Excel sheet

4.3 Monitoring, Review and Evaluation Processes

4.3.1 Annual action plan monitoring and revision

Who	• Implementation staff
What	• Monitor technical and financial progress in implementing activities in action plans
Why	• Identify immediate corrective actions in response to problems, delays and departures from what was planned • Reschedule, revise or cancel activities • Re-allocate financial and human resources within and across action plans
When	• On a continuous basis

1. The specific process and focus for ongoing action plan monitoring shall be determined by the implementation officer directly responsible for an activity or set of activities. The quarterly reporting template proposed in Section 4 can be considered as basis for developing such an action plan. It is very important that whatever the format of action plan is, it must be closely linked with the log frame and Monitoring and Evaluation framework proposed in this document;

2. Staff participating in ongoing action plan monitoring shall reflect their responsibilities in their performance management agreement;

3. Activities shall be rated “green,” “yellow,” and “red” reflecting their achievement status;

4. Revision of action plans shall be undertaken based on the findings of the ongoing action plan monitoring and mid-term review;

5. Revision that changes the scope of what is being undertaken to achieve the outputs, raise the cost beyond the approved budget or reallocate financial and human resources within or across action plans must be formally approved by the Management Committee.

4.3.2 Mid-term review

Who	• Head of Unit in close consultation with the implementation staff members
What	• Analyze progress in achieving outputs
Why	• “Take stock” of organization-wide progress towards the delivery of outputs • Identify potential problems which might demand their attention;

	• Inform decision making on re-programming and re-allocation of resources for the remainder of the implementation period.
When	• End of 2017

There are five steps in the mid-term work plan review process:

Step 1: Analyzing progress in the delivery of outputs

- Reviewing the delivery of outputs, that is whether they are being delivered as foreseen;
- Determining whether the outputs are proving to be relevant and adequate to achieve the outcome;
- Rating each output as either:
  - "green" indicating progress towards achievement of the output is as foreseen and impediments and risks are not expected to significantly affect progress;
  - "yellow" indicating progress towards achievement of the output is in jeopardy and action is required to overcome delays, impediments and risks; or
  - "red" indicating achievement of the output is in serious jeopardy due to impediments or risks that are expected to significantly alter progress.

An overall colour rating would be assigned in relation to threshold percentile figures:

Greater than 85% = green
65 % to85% = yellow
Less than 65% = red

In assessing progress, a series of concerns need to be addressed. The checklist below provides a simple set of questions for assessing progress. Information from the ongoing action plan monitoring will assist in responding to the questions. It is important, however, not simply to respond with the indicated YES or NO, but to be able to justify the answer.

Progress in achieving Unit results	Yes	No
Q1 Are related activities proving relevant and adequate to achieve the output?		
Q2 Are related activities advancing on schedule or have been completed as planned?		
Q3 Have action plan milestones been met as per the M&E framework?		
Q4 Are impediments (e.g. lack of adequate human or financial resources, scarcity of data) or risks (e.g. adverse policy changes, likely budgetary reductions.) expected to significantly affect progress during the remainder of the period?		

Step 2: Analyzing impediments and constraints

- Identifying and analyzing impediments and constraining factors (internal and external to RALGA) related to outputs where progress is deemed less than optimal.

Step 3: Analyzing financial implementation

- Reviewing actual expenditure against planned costs;
- Analyzing financial implementation rates.

Step 4: Identifying corrective actions

- Identifying necessary revisions in the action plans and consequently the monitoring and evaluation framework: rescheduling, revision or cancellation of outputs, re-allocation of financial and human resources within and across action plans.

Step 5: Recording monitoring information, revising and feedback

- Document the findings of the mid-term review and providing the findings to the Unit responsible for the delivery of outputs (progress in delivery, financial implementation where significant differences between actual expenditure and estimated planned costs are identified and explained, major lessons learnt, impediments corresponding corrective actions)
- Revise the Strategic Plan according to the findings
- Provide feedback to RALGA Executive Committee for presentation to the General Assembly.

4.3.3 Strategic Plan Evaluation Assessment

Who	• RALGA Management
What	• Analyze progress in achieving the outcome
Why	• Provide a thorough assessment of the achievements in relation to the indicator targets established at the onset • Provide an analysis of the main achievements during the implementation period, success factors, obstacles, lessons learnt and actions required to improve performance
When	• April 2020

Step 1: Assessment of each Unit in contributing to the delivery of outputs

- Provide a bullet point summary of each unit's major achievements towards outputs based on the action plans developed for each department;
- Provide a brief summary description of the main achievements, most significant success factors, obstacles and impediments that affected each department's delivery performance of output results as well as lessons learnt;
- Highlight significant differences between actual expenditures and budget allocations and why such differences occurred;
- Provide a bullet point summary of lessons learned and the required actions for improving performance in the next phase for each department.

In assessing performance, a series of concerns need to be addressed. The checklist below provides a simple set of questions for assessing the performance. Information from the ongoing work plan monitoring, the mid-term work plan review and indicator tracking will assist in responding to the questions. It is important, however, not simply to respond with the indicated YES or NO, but to be able to justify the answer.

Performance in achieving Unit results	Yes	No
Q1 To what extent have the outputs been achieved? Refer to indicator baselines and targets.		

Q2 Have all outputs been delivered?		
Q3 Did the outputs prove to be (a) relevant and (b) adequate for achieving the outcome?		
Q4 Were there significant differences between actual costs and budget allocations?		

Step 2: Assessment of performance in the achievement of the outcome

- Provide a "bullet point" summary of the main achievements of RALGA as a whole towards the outcome;
- Assess the extent to which the outcome has been achieved based on indicator tracking and a review of output delivery;
- Provide a brief summary description of main achievements, success factors, obstacles and impediments of RALGA that affected the achievement of the outcome;
- Provide a bullet point summary of lessons learnt and the required actions for improving performance in the next phase.

Step 3: Consolidation and organisation-wide for the contribution to the impact

- Prepare a summary of the main organization-wide achievements towards contributing to the impact relying on information provided in mid-term review and from the above steps;
- Provide a brief narrative assessment of performance in relation to the impact noting key achievements by departments, success factors, obstacles and impediments;
- Provide a bullet point summary of organization wide lessons learnt and required follow-up actions for improving performance in the next phase.

4.3.4 Roles for Monitoring and Evaluation and reporting frequency

Secretary General

- Advise and guides the Executive Committee on monitoring and evaluation issues, and ensures proper mid-term review and the end of strategic planning evaluation are carried out and reports of these are submitted on time;
- Consult with key internal and external stakeholders – in cases where major reformulation [material deviation from what was originally agreed], cancellation or addition of new outputs and associated budgets are required;
- Provide strategic guidance to Heads of Units regarding the strategic plan implementation, M&E and reporting.

Heads of Units

- Ensures proper action plan monitoring;
- Coordinates and advises on issues related to mid-term review;
- Coordinates and advises on the collection of information/data for tracking of result indicators;
- Advices the need to reformulate, cancel or develop new results on the results of the monitoring/review/evaluation;

- Makes recommendations to the Secretary General where intervention is required for approval of major reformulation, cancellation or addition of new results and associated budgets;
- Consolidates reporting;
- Monitors resources gaps in funding and provides feedback to the Secretary General.

Staff responsible for direct implementation

- Performs ongoing action plan monitoring;
- Collects information/data for tracking result indicators.
- Consults with the head of respective Unit, as appropriate, on issues and any required changes to results, including reformulation, cancellation or addition of new results, and associated budgets and action plans based on the results of the monitoring.

4.3.5 Reporting Frequency and Reporting Format

The reporting process below follows the components of the logical framework, thus keeping a clear relationship between the logical framework and progress.

	What	**Frequency**	**Responsible**
Progress/ Monitoring Reports	Activities	Quarterly	Staff
	Outputs	Annually	Head of Unit
Progress Reports: Impact Evaluation	Output to Outcome	Mid-term review	Head of Unit
	Impact	End of the implementation phase	Management Committee

Performance Scoring

The reporting format below has a column for performance scoring using a 'traffic light' system to give a clear indication of whether an activity or output is 'on track' (has been achieved or will be achieved); 'warning' (may not be achieved – needs immediate action) or 'off track' (will not be achieved). Concomitantly, emphasis should be given on "forward looking mitigation strategies". The format for the Quarterly Reports will be used by all concerned Units to prepare their quarterly reports to be submitted to the Executive Committee. The report will be completed with reference to the Log Frame and M&E and the annual Action Plan. Indeed, it is important that there is consistency between all the documents that support planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Therefore, all the indicators will be identified from the Log frame and M&E framework which are relevant to each Unit and ensure that they have been recorded in the action plan. All the activities for the annual action plan shall be identified for each indicator, recorded at Activity level and linked with outputs as reflected in the log frame.

Dates for submission of quarterly reports:

- Quarter 1: 15th Oct
- Quarter 2: 15th Jan
- Quarter 3: 15thApril
- Quarter 4: 20thJune

4.3.6 Table format for the Quarterly Report

Outcomes	Activities (Refer to Annual Action Plan)	Indicators for each activity	Annual target	Actual to date	R Y G	Unit: QUARTER: Progress and Challenges	Actions taken to overcome the challenges
	Select the activities for the financial year from the log frame (they can be disaggregated further	Identify the indicators for each activity using the log frame	Activity level target for specific activity	Identify and record the actual level of implementation e.g. percentage, number, date (as suggested in the logframe)	Greater than 85% = green From 65 % to85% = yellow Below 65%= red	Briefly describe the progress that has been made. Identify internal or external factors which have supported achievement. Describe any challenges which have arisen. Identify the reason for the challenges arising and what impact they had. NB: use bullet points and 50 words maximum	Describe any actions that: • have been taken to overcome the challenges • are planned to ensure the challenges are overcome Make sure these actions are recorded in your action or operational plan NB: use bullet points and 50 words maximum.
1. Public services are further decentralised to the levels as closer as possible to citizens and accompanied with corresponding resources and capacity for their implementation							
2. Increased resources and capacity in public finance management for Local Governments							

3. Strengthened business environment through regulatory reform to spur local economic development							
4. National and local social welfare development programs are effectively implemented by LGs							
5. To constantly increase RALGA's capacity to provide to its members quality services in accordance with their needs							