

CONCEPT PAPER ON ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE THEMATIC AREA

Accountable Governance refers to the mechanism by which citizens and groups define their interests, interact with institutions of authority and with each other. It is how people relate with their leaders in determining their destiny and the way leaders became accountable to their stakeholders for development.

Accountable governance is one of the four thematic areas that will elaborate priority areas of EDPRS 2 that aims to ensure better quality of life for all Rwandans through transforming Rwanda into a middle income economy; where the per capita income will be USD 1,240 towards realization and achievements of Vision 2020 targets.

The thematic area plays a key role in the economic development and poverty reduction which calls for strong governance that can out stand the development challenges as well as transforming those challenges and emerging issues into opportunities that could lead to the realization of the mentioned objectives above. This will be reflected into the rapid economic growth and poverty reduction.

This paper elaborates details of the Accountable governance thematic area. It reflects findings from different institutions' rankings of Rwanda's performance on accountable governance from various indexing bodies, Research institutions both local and global as well as various academia institutions and civil societies; current performance situation, challenges, emerging issues, desired targets and interventions for the accountable governance thematic area.

Despite the vast achievements as well as improved positive placement in the rankings; some outstanding and emerging issues have been elaborated under the following areas; service delivery, Justice, participation and freedom, level of implementation capacity at district; civil society participation, and development communication among others.

The main objectives of the thematic area will be to elaborate and address issues leading to the achievements of strengthening accountability for development, maximization of the citizens' participation in and ownership of the national development process, elaboration of necessary reform in the governance sectors to support growth and poverty reduction as well as accountability reinforcement.

The following questions stemming from the current outstanding and emerging issues under this thematic area:

I. Quality Service delivery

- How and what mechanisms can be put in place to enhance quality of service delivery? For both public and private sectors (individual and institutional)?
- How can management of customer care be institutionalized?
- How to improve the culture and significance of time factor in development as a key resource?

II. Justice

- What mechanism can be put in place to root out inequality in access to justice?
- What can the judiciary and courts do to end the persistent back log of case in the various courts in the country in general and with regard to commercial cases in particular? What mechanism can be put in place to improve and speed up the competence of courts? How can the use of ICT be enhanced in all courts and tribunals to contribute to the reduction of the cases backlog?

III. Participation and development communication

- What can be done to address the perceived insufficient level of popular participation in decision making?
- What can be done to popularize coordination, harmonize and instill ownership of the development initiatives and process among the beneficiaries?
- How can media and local administrative structures strike a balance in sensitizing the public to participate in the development process?
- How can development communication be mainstreamed into national planning system to enhance information dissemination on government programs?