



Legislation and policy addressing inequality and redistribution in Rwanda

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Question

How does national legislation and policy about inequalities and redistribution perpetuate inequality or work to address it? How effective are these policies and legislation?

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1. Overview

In its **Vision 2020** (revised in 2012)¹, the government sets out its vision of transforming Rwanda into a middle-income country and eliminating extreme poverty by 2020. Rwanda has achieved impressive sustained economic growth in recent years and considerable reduction in poverty. There is some disagreement about income and consumption inequality trends – these are based, in part, on discrepancies between national aggregate-level quantitative data and disaggregated data from smaller scale, often qualitative, research studies. It is generally agreed that inequality in Rwanda remains high, although important gains have been made in health, education and other development outcomes (for example meeting most of the Millennium Development Goals by the end of 2015). There is also evidence of significant geographic (urban/ rural) and regional differences and that certain groups (including the poorest, women, youth, persons with disabilities and historically marginalised people) experience particular disadvantage.

This report is one of three related K4D helpdesk reports on inequality in Rwanda. The other two examine links between poverty, inequality and exclusion (Carter 2018) and provide data on inequalities (Ornert 2018). This review summarises key national policies and legislation related to inequality and redistribution² in Rwanda. Where available, this review provides insights into how these policies perpetuate inequality or work to address it, as well as how effective they are. Undertaken in six days, this review draws largely on policy documents from the Government of Rwanda, and academic studies, as well as some reports by international donors. A comprehensive review of all the relevant policies and legislation is beyond the scope of this study. Thus, the review focuses on key policies and legislation in specific sectors (economic empowerment and agriculture; health; education; housing and infrastructure) as well as policies and legislation targeted at particular groups (the poorest, women and girls, youth and other marginalised groups).

Key findings:

- There is a lack of systematic evaluation of many Rwandan government policies, including those aimed at tackling extreme poverty and inequality. Existing assessments tend to be based either on aggregate quantitative data or small-scale (often qualitative) case studies. The two often draw different conclusions about the effectiveness of policies, legislation and relevant interventions. For example, studies including Van Gevelt et al (2016), Dawson (2018) and Ansoms et al (2016, 2018) indicate that some Rwandan development policies, which have been deemed successful through limited impact evaluations, are revealed by locally grounded, socially-disaggregated research to have exacerbated inequality.
- Evidence suggests that there exists a tension between the government's competing policy goals of achieving economic growth and decreasing inequality. In some cases (notably agricultural policies), the government prioritises its economic growth objectives, which can have a negative impact on vulnerable segments of the population. For example, agricultural modernisation policies tend to favour large-scale investors, at the detriment of smaller subsistence farmers.

¹ See http://www.minecofin.gov.rw/fileadmin/templates/documents/NDPR/Vision_2020_.pdf

² Understood to mean reduction in household income inequality.

- There is evidence that policies in certain areas – notably health and education as well as policies that tackle gender inequalities – have had positive outcomes. For example, policies to increase access to healthcare have been linked to increased life expectancy and significant declines in child and maternal mortality. The implementation of free primary school has successfully widened access to education, notably amongst girls. Rwanda is also often hailed for having more female parliamentarians than any other country in the world. Nevertheless, challenges remain – for example, a rural-urban divide and regional differences have been noted in access to education; girls’ attendance and attainment also decline during the progression to secondary and tertiary education, whilst women are less likely to participate in politics at the local level.
- In some cases, broader policies or legal frameworks have been met with approval but faced challenges in implementation. For example, the various legal frameworks related to gender equality have been praised but there have been difficulties implementing them, particularly with regards to inheritance and land rights.
- In others, the policies have been found to be ill-matched to realities in local communities and even exacerbated inequalities. For example, agricultural modernisation policies (a sector seen as key to alleviating poverty and inequality) were found to significantly increase food insecurity and threaten livelihoods (Ansoms and Rostagno 2012).
- In other cases, implemented policies may have been successful, but had unintended consequences that undermine their effectiveness in reducing inequality. For example, while the Bye Bye Nyakatsi policy improved housing quality, many new houses were found to be lacking in adequate sanitation facilities.
- Despite efforts to combat inequality on the policy-level, several groups remain significantly disadvantaged, including the poorest, women, persons with disabilities and historically marginalised people (HMP). Their experiences can be obscured in policy evaluations that depend on aggregate-level data.
- Finally, it has been suggested that many standard measures used to assess impact of policies on reducing poverty and inequality in Rwanda – such as income, consumption or even broader measures such as the Multidimensional Poverty Index - may not correspond well with perceptions of wellbeing in local communities (Dawson 2018). For example, access to education and educational participation and attainment levels are used to measure inequality in Rwanda; yet, education can be of limited value to households in rural communities where access to non-farm work remains scarce. Dawson suggests that indicators related to food insecurity and land tenure are more useful but notes that there exists a lack of data on these.

Evidence gaps:

- There is a need for a greater number of systematic reviews and evaluations of existing government policies related to inequalities and redistribution in Rwanda.
- There is a lack of policy assessments based on non-standard measures (such as food insecurity and land tenure) that may illuminate relevant insights about experienced inequalities in rural and agricultural communities and the impact of policies on these.
- Evidence of policy impacts on vulnerable communities, including youth, persons with disabilities and HMP remains extremely limited.
- Further research is also needed to understand the implications of the current Mutual Health Insurance benefits package.

- There is a need for data that provides insights into the challenges that interlocking inequalities present to policy-makers working to dismantle inequality.

2. National legislation and inequality

Agriculture and land

Agricultural reforms

Several studies of inequality in Rwanda have identified a rural-urban inequality gap (Abbott et al 2015; McKay and Verpoorten 2016) and, increasingly, regional differences (Finnoff 2015; McKay and Verpoorten 2016). More than 70% of Rwanda's population are subsistence farmers, working small plots of land (around 0.75 hectares) (The Conversation 2017). There is also a high incidence of landlessness, due in part to population pressures. The World Food Programme (WFP) (2015: 17) notes, 'the agricultural sector retains the greatest potential to reduce poverty in Rwanda'. The agricultural sector has become a key policy area for the Rwandan government in recent years; reforms align with UN's broader call for a 'Green Revolution' in Sub-Saharan Africa guided by the goal of formalising land tenure, investing in modern agricultural technology and inputs (seeds and subsidised fertilisers) and integrating small farmers into commercial commodity chains (The Conversation 2017).

Rwanda's **Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture (SPAT)** outlines a framework for agricultural sector development within Rwanda's second **Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS II)**. This focuses on agricultural modernisation, intensification, professionalism and enterprise development and the government has designed policies for promoting mono-cropping and regional crop specialisation, land registration and the consolidation of plots (Ansoms and Rostagno 2012: 435). The policies are intended to improve efficiency, help farmers realise economies of scale in food production and, ultimately, contribute to poverty reduction (ibid). However, concerns have been expressed about how agricultural policy has been implemented. Goals have been set without a realistic timeline (Ansoms and Rostagno, 2012: 435). Moreover, the proposed modernisation has been criticised for being ill-matched with priorities and needs of small farmers; instead, they seem to be tailored to large private investors. Thus, while the Rwandan agricultural modernisation programme has increased overall economic growth and output, its benefit for vulnerable population groups - such as poor smallholders, female headed households, single mothers or other marginalised groups - has been questioned (Ansoms et al 2018: 13). For example, the crop intensification model has been criticised for being too simple; the topography of Rwanda is varied resulting in diverse growing conditions (The Conversation 2017). Mono-cropping poses significant risk to the fragile livelihoods of small farmers as well as a danger of food insecurity (Ansoms and Rostagno 2012: 436, The Conversation 2017). Additionally, whilst small farmers are obliged by these policies to concentrate on particular crops, their bargaining power (on which their income depends) is restricted (Ansoms and Rostagno 2012).

The Rwandan cooperative movement - including the **Policy on the Promotion of Cooperatives (2006)** and **Cooperative Law (2007)** - was intended to enable smaller farmers to benefit from economies of scale-effect in cooperative production schemes. According to Ansoms et al (2018: 8-9), these represent 'a solid law' and 'thoughtful policy'. Nevertheless, implementation has been problematic due to high entrance fees, which facilitate the structural exclusion of poorer socio-economic groups and more vulnerable farmers. Moreover, these farmers often have little say in

the management structure of the cooperatives and cases of corruption have been recorded (Ansoms and Rostagno 2012: 436).

Land rights

Land has been identified as a key source of inequality in Rwanda (Isakkson 2015; Finnoff 2015; Dawson 2018). Historically, a dual system of land rights (based on both customary and statutory law) created ambiguities, and potential inequalities, due to contradictions between written legislation and popular perceptions of customary land rights (Isakkson 2015). One of the objectives highlighted in the government's Vision 2020 was the creation of a modern land law to provide security of tenure and freedom of exchange. The **Land Law (2005)** formalises land rights - previously recognised on the basis of customary law - through official titling (Ansoms and Rosagno 2012: 346-347). Under this law, official titles must be acquired through a formal procedure of registration. Concerns include the costs involved – for information and land registration fees (Isakkson 2015: 63-64) – and the potential advantage these bestow on the financially more well off, particularly in the case of contested land rights (Ansoms and Rosagno 2012: 346-347). The law also prohibits the division of smaller parcels of land (one hectare or less) but does not set maximum sizes for landholdings, constraining poorer households whilst advantaging large-scale investors (ibid).

The impact of the Land Law on reducing inequality has been debated. It has been criticised for prioritising economic efficiency over equity (Silva Leander 2012: 239). An in-depth study of agricultural land policies found that the law led to perceived loss of control, tenure security and choice for small farmers (Huggins 2014). In another study of development impacts on rural Rwanda, Dawson (2018: 6) notes that between 2002-2012, land inequality increased due to population growth, intensification of land use, reduced fallow periods, reductions in livestock and land redistribution due to 'political and economic factors'. He suggests that policies – in particular the land policy and subsequent crop intensification program – may have exacerbated the redistribution of land away from poorer households (Dawson 2018: 5), with farmers frequently threatened with expropriation by local administration (The Conversation 2017). The scarcity of land and income-earning potential have been linked to regular food scarcity for a high proportion of households, particularly from poorer socioeconomic groups (Dawson 2018). Whilst Isakkson suggests that the land law is 'a progressive first step towards strengthening women's land rights', she acknowledges that challenges remain. For instance, the rights of women who are separated, divorced or non-legally married are not legally recognised. Isakkson (2015: 61) suggests that land rights are based on factors such as wealth, connections and previous land investment and identifies specific barriers – related to information, status, experience and available resources for defending land rights claims – for orphans, conflict-induced migrants and households resettled into the *Imidugudu* settlements (Isakkson 2015: 64-65) (see below).

Another government policy which has generated controversy is the '**Villagization**' policy (also known as *Imidugudu*). This sought to regroup rural residents in planned settlement areas under the stated aim of facilitating service provision and increasing availability of arable land (Silva Leander 2012: 238-239). This was implemented, in part, to tackle the massive resettlement problem (Lavers 2016), prompted by two different waves of refugees (Silva Leander 2012). According to the Government, the policy of *Imidugudu* was initiated and implemented to improve housing and living conditions. The aims included enabling the provision of social services and basic infrastructure at low cost; facilitating rational use of scarce land for housing and agriculture in order to promote growth and reduce poverty; and contributing to reconciliation through the

establishment of ethnically mixed housing areas (Rolnik 2012: 6-7). The initiative soon expanded from reintegrating migrants to relocating entire rural populations into planned settlements (Lavers 2016: 5). By 2011, the proportion of Rwandans living in *imidugudu* villages had risen to 39%, from 18% in 2005 (ibid: 7).

Rolnik (2012: 7) notes that ‘the policy of villagization is a worthy initiative, as it generally conforms with the idea of decent housing [...] the Rwandan Government understands the right to adequate housing to mean the right to a decent home, that is to say the possibility for the holders of that right to live in peace, security and dignity and to have access to basic services and infrastructure, as well as to socioeconomic opportunities’. She goes on to note, however, that villagization has not led to improved living conditions in many cases, with forced displacement of some populations to locations not yet provided with basic infrastructure and services. *Imidugudu* policy has also been criticised for being heavy handed in its implementation (HRW 2001a cited in Silva Leander 2012; Rolnik 2012). Others have noted that the policy was implemented at varying levels in different parts of the country, with a particularly heavy bias in the northwest (Silva Leander 2012: 238-239) and east (Ansoms and Rostagno 2012: 437). The policy has been criticised for its specific negative impacts on poor households and youth (Ansoms et al 2016: 8-9). Poor male youth in rural Rwanda face particular disadvantage as land process and house construction costs at *Imidugudu* sites are ‘often prohibitively expensive’ (Somers and Uvin 2011: 3 cited in Ansoms and Rostagno 2012: 437).

Health

Rwanda’s health policy landscape is shaped by Vision 2020, which also sets out the Rwandan’s government’s goal of investing in public health (Ansoms and Rostagno 2012: 438). EDPRS II highlighted accessibility of primary healthcare as a key foundational issue (ROR 2013a: xvii). There have been several major policy initiatives to decrease inequalities in access to healthcare and health outcomes (Saksena et al 2011; WFP 2015; McKay and Verpoorten 2016; Njeleseni et al 2018).

Key priorities in the **Health Sector Strategic Plan 2012-2018³** (HSSP) include improving financial and geographical accessibility to healthcare, as well as improving outcomes in child and maternal health. The HSSP also emphasises links to other areas of social policy, such as promoting access to water and sanitation, whilst cross-cutting issues include gender and gender-based violence and social protection. The HSSP highlights the connection between health and economic growth, noting that good health is a precondition for productivity, helps reduce absenteeism at school and work and provides a foundation for economic growth and poverty reduction. It also commits the health sector to contributing to improving living conditions in rural areas, though expanding the network of health centres and provincial hospitals and improving the quality and quantity of care delivered by community health workers (GOR 2012: 21).

Health insurance

Important policies underpinning the goal of increasing access relate to decreasing the financial burden of accessing healthcare. The **Community Based Health Insurance Policy (2010)** set out the goal of health for all through universal and mandatory health insurance (based on risk

³ See http://www.moh.gov.rw/fileadmin/templates/Docs/HSSP_III_FINAL_VERSION.pdf

pooling, with graduated contributions and exemptions for the poorest) (Abbott and Mugisha 2014: 90). The **Mutual Health Insurance** scheme (MHI; also known as *Mutuelle de Santé*) was introduced in 2004/05. This aimed to increase health insurance membership of vulnerable groups, including genocide survivors and people living with HIV/ AIDS, and relieve the financial burden of accessing healthcare through providing premium subsidies (Saksena et al 2011; Njeleseni 2018: 7). In 2008, a formal legal framework made health insurance compulsory. (Abbott and Mugisha 2014: 88).

In 2011, the government undertook comprehensive insurance reform, transforming MHI to a system of tiered premiums to make it more financially progressive and sustainable (Makaka et al 2012). Local leaders and community health-care workers were incentivised to support individual MHI enrolment by inclusion of district coverage levels as a key indicator in their performance-based financing scheme. In some rural districts, a household cooperative savings mechanism (*Ibimina*) was implemented to help pay premiums, and evidence indicates that these have also reduced administration costs for MHI (ibid).

Evidence indicates MHI has resulted in increased access to healthcare. Makaka et al (2012) suggest that by 2010, coverage exceeded 90%. Verpoorten (2014: 16) state that the share of households with at least one member covered by MHI was 78% (up from 68% in 2007-08). Saksena et al (2011: 208) find that MHI has had a greater impact on usage in lower than higher quintiles. IMF (2017: 28-29) also attributes improvement in Rwandan health outcomes - including reduced maternal mortality - to MHI, suggesting that the scheme has had a particularly positive impact for poor women.

The scheme has been criticised, however, for being 'more [like] an additional tax for health than [...] a proper health insurance system' (Kalk 2008 cited in Verpoorten 2004: 16). Despite subsidies, the cost of membership has been prohibitive for the poorest (WHO 2008). The introduction of higher premiums in 2010 created a further barrier to enrolment in the scheme (Njeleseni et al 2018: 7), particularly for those living in rural areas (Ansoms and Rostagno 2012: 438). Dawson (2018: 6) finds that reduced material wellbeing for rural inhabitants means that a significant proportion (41% of those interviewed in the study) were unable to afford health insurance, despite the fact that the government had waived the cost for one-fifth of households. The compulsory nature of the health insurance scheme has had negative consequences for some, as the increased living costs due to having to buy medical insurance led to fewer available financial resources for investing in livestock (Dawson 2018). There is also evidence that, despite subscription to MHI, as well as proximity of newly built health centres, the poorest access healthcare less frequently than the financially more well off.

Nutrition

Food security and malnutrition were cited as foundational issues in EDPRS II (ROR 2013a: xviii). The HPSS identifies challenges to improving nutrition across Rwanda, including the low prioritisation of nutrition within the overall public health agenda and allocation of human and financial resources for implementation (WFP 2015: 66). Starting in 2011, **District Plans to Eliminate Malnutrition (DPEM) (2013)** were integrated into District Development Plans. Assessments of these plans in 2014 found that although DPEM activities were being implemented in all districts, the performance of these was variable (ibid). In 2013, a **National Food and Nutrition Policy** replaced the existing **National Nutrition Policy (2007)** (WFP 2015: 66). While the original National Nutrition Policy had included the implementation of district-based

nutrition interventions, included screening, health facility referral and treatment of children at risk of malnutrition, the focus of the 2013 policy was to reduce the incidence of stunting in children under the age of 2, as well as to improve food security for the most vulnerable families. Carter (2018) notes rates of stunting can illuminate how inequalities continue to shape the distribution of deprivations and outcomes. While levels of stunting remain high in Rwanda has been a reduction in recent years, and Rwanda has gone from being in a 'critical' situation (stunting above 40%) to 'serious' (stunting level between 30 and 39%) (WFP 2015: 67).

Education

Increasing access to education has been a major policy focus for the Rwandan government and international donors (Nkurunziza 2012; McKay and Verpoorten 2016). In 2003, Rwanda's **Constitution** introduced **free, and compulsory, primary education** (Nkurunziza 2012; McKay and Verpoorten 2016), whilst pilot schemes provided free school lunches and ran school farming programmes to encourage enrolment (Nkurunziza 2012: 4). For example, in 2002, the government partnered with the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and donors, to launch a **food-for-education programme** in food-insecure districts in Southern and Eastern Provinces. These provided meals to 160,000 students for 4 years. The programme also gave more than 28,000 girls in grades 4-6 a monthly take-home ration of vegetable oil; the sale of this oil was to cover school costs, with the aim of increasing girls' attendance (ibid).

These policies have had many positive outcomes, including increased net enrolment (exceeding 90%), improved attendance for the poor and very poor, and greatly narrowed gender gap (Nkurunziza 2012; McKay and Verpoorten 2016). In certain areas, girls have outperformed boys. Abbott et al (2015: 930) note that net parity in primary school enrolment was achieved in 2001 and, according to EICV3⁴, girls are now 2% more likely to be in primary education than boys. Nevertheless, there are spatial variations from the overall pattern of attendance. For example, the gap is wider in rural areas than urban ones and, in Kigali, boys are more likely to attend school than girls (ibid).

Barriers to education

A number of barriers to taking up primary education have also been noted in the literature. For instance, although education is free during the first six years, many parents are still expected to make unaffordable contributions to their children's primary school (Karangwa et al 2010: 269). Additional costs that can serve as barriers to attendance include the purchase of school uniforms and educational materials (Karangwa et al 2010; Nkurunziza et al 2012). Moreover, beyond primary school, fees must be paid, which impedes the transition into post-primary education for many (ibid). As Nkurunziza et al (2012: 2) note, poor parents/ caretakers may weigh the 'trade-off between the direct and indirect costs of schooling and the benefits of child labour for the family'. This is 'true even for moderately poor parents with land to work or a business to run' (ibid). For girls, this can reflect gendered division of household labour as well as cultural norms and practices. Other factors include proximity of home to school, availability and accessibility of schools as well as quality of education (ibid). According to Nkurunziza et al (2012: 3) the

⁴ EICV3 is the quantitative assessment used to assess national progress in poverty reduction.

elimination of school fees was a useful first step, but more needs to be done to increase access for the poorest – for example, providing subsidies for school uniforms for extremely poor families.

Girls' education

During the past 15 years, the Rwandan government has supported girls' education as a key component of all strategies for inclusive education through **increased investment in infrastructure, financial and human resources and curriculum change** (Stavropoulou and Gupta-Archer 2017: iii). The **Girls' Education Policy (2008)** aims to eliminate gender disparities in education and training (IMF 2017: 27). This gender focus has resulted in improved primary and secondary school enrolment rates for girls. However, between 2010-2014, primary school completion, transition and promotion rates declined for girls, who are also performing below boys in national primary school leaving examinations. Although girls comprised 53% of all enrolled students in secondary education in 2014, this was in the context of low overall rates. At this level of education, girls also score lower than boys in national examinations; are underrepresented in subjects like science, technology and engineering; and their numbers decline during the progression at secondary (ibid). The authors argue that despite the progress made, several significant challenges remain: poverty, gender-based violence in school, early pregnancy, continuing discriminatory norms and expectations, child labour and domestic work (ibid).

Tertiary education

The problem of access to post-primary education has also been attributed to lack of available places due to insufficient post-primary provision (Karangwa et al 2010: 269). In 2010, **reforms to the system of student loans in tertiary education** affected approximately 24,000 students (70% of beneficiaries) (Ansoms and Rostagno 2012: 438-439). These reforms categorised students as 'well-off', 'quite well-off', 'quite poor', 'poor' or 'vulnerable'. Because study loans are only available to those categorised as 'vulnerable' (ibid), the cost of tertiary education has become unaffordable for many poor and middle-class families. As a result, the authors argue, 'even more than in the past, tertiary education risks becoming a privilege of the elite'.

Housing

While the 2003 Constitution contains no explicit references to the right to housing, it does establish rights to own private property and land. Rwanda is also party to several international treaties that provide for the protection of the right to decent housing, including the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** and the **African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights** (Rolnik 2012: 1-2). The key housing policy implemented by the government of Rwanda was the **Bye Bye Nyakatsi policy** in 2011.

Until 2010, a large proportion of rural houses were built with thatched roofing (Dawson 2018). By 2011, as a result of effective implementation (Rolnik 2012: 8) of the Bye Bye Nyakatsi policy, thatched roof houses (*nyakatsi*) were banned and replaced with houses with metal (or sometimes tiled) roofs. Officially deemed a success, the policy resulted in 98% of thatched roof houses being destroyed and replaced with houses with modern roofs (ibid). Nevertheless, a 2012 special report by the UN Human Rights Council on adequate housing (Rolnik 2012: 8) points out that in practice, hasty implementation of the policy meant that destruction of thatched dwellings often left people homeless. The haste with which the policy was implemented was also 'potentially problematic' due to lack of consultation or genuine participation of affected

populations (ibid). Additionally, there were reports of excessive force being used during the policy's implementation (ibid: 9). Although many houses now have metal roofs, they still lack adequate sanitation.

Infrastructure

A priority of the EDPRS II Rural Development thematic area was **connecting rural communities to economic opportunity through improved infrastructure**. Planned interventions include a feeder roads programme and information and communications technologies (ICT) expansion for rural areas (with the aim of linking communities to markets) (ROR 2013a: xvi). Nevertheless, Ansoms and Rostagno (2012: 436) note that the government 'seems to have opted for projects offering a potential for attracting private entrepreneurs though quite often at the expense of more deprived population groups'.

Utilities

The Rwandan government also regards rural electrification and widespread adoption of improved cookstoves as 'essential components' of the strategy to connect rural communities to economic opportunity through investment in infrastructure (Gevelt 2016: 122). The EDPRS II sets out goals to extend grid coverage to rural areas, serve 22% of rural households through off-grid solutions, ensure that 100% of schools and health facilities have access to electricity by 2018 and halve the dependence on biomass fuel by 2020. It also set goals for full coverage of quality water and sanitation (ROR 2013a: xvi). In their small-scale study of an energy-poor Rwandan village, however, Gevelt et al (2016: 127) found significant differences between average low, medium and high socio-economic status households and expenditure on lighting, other electricity services, willingness to pay for grid electricity, sources of income and food security. They highlight that energy poverty is negatively linked to rural development at the household level, with both direct and indirect effects on a household's income and access to health, education, food security and quality of life. Gevelt et al (2016: 128) suggest that initiatives to tackle energy poverty and rural development must account for different potential impacts of policies on households of different socio-economic status. Ignoring the different socio-economic status of households may have the unintended consequence of furthering inequality, since less wealthy households may not be able to afford access to modern energy or utilise it effectively.

3. Specific legislation aimed at marginalised groups

The poorest

Social protection

Rural development was chosen as one of the four thematic areas of EDPRS II to achieve poverty reduction between 2013-2018. This focused on increasing the productivity of agriculture, alongside developing **social protection** programmes that aimed to help the poorest escape extreme poverty. Building on Rwanda's Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS 2008-2012), a **National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS)** was approved in January 2011. This set out a comprehensive vision of the social protection sector in the short, medium, and long term (Kamurase et al 2012). It was updated in 2013 to align with the EDPRS II timeline and to consider findings on poverty and on social protection coverage from the EICV3 survey (ROR 2013; NISR 2015; Lavers 2016).

The NSPS proposes a system of social protection that provided a **‘social protection floor’ for the most vulnerable** households and individuals. It identifies particularly vulnerable groups within the population, including **the elderly, persons with disabilities, young children, female-headed households, genocide survivors and the historically marginalised people (HMP)**. The social protection floor comprises cash transfers (to provide a minimum income and livelihood security) and access to core essential services (health, education, water and sanitation). Alongside this, NSPS proposes a contributory social security system component (emphasising increased participation of the informal sector.) The strategy highlighted that the social protection should be **‘protective’** (providing direct support to the poorest and most vulnerable); **‘preventative’** (serving as a safety net to those at risk of falling into poverty) and **‘promotive’** (supporting people’s graduation out of poverty). Although the strategy focuses mainly on activities delivered by the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC), it notes that social protection programmes in other sectors also complement these. The strategy acknowledges that **social protection needs to be combined with investments across a range of areas including improvements in the quality of other public services, activities to enable poor people to access jobs or undertake investments (including training etc) and continue to tackle discrimination’** (ROR 2011: 28). The NSPS has been criticised, however, for lack of detail about how to achieve its objectives as well as poor integration with other related government policies (Lavers 2016: 6).

The Rwandan government’s main social protection programme is the **Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP)** (first set up during EDPRS I). MINALOC is responsible for the three key components of the VUP: a **regular cash transfer for very poor households** with no labour capacity; a **public works programme for very poor households who are able to work**; and a **microcredit scheme that provides small loans at low interest rates** to individuals or groups (NISR 2015: 17). By mid-2014, public works were operating in 180 of 416 sectors and providing support to 104,310 households, while direct support reached 61,948 households in 330 sectors. Total programme coverage was roughly 6% of the Rwandan population (and 13% of those living below the national poverty line) (Lavers 2016: 1).

Despite the government’s strong commitment to the VUP, and a low tolerance of corruption, challenges have been identified with the programme’s implementation (Lavers 2016: 13). Firstly, VUP targets⁵ are seen by some as unrealistic⁶ (Lavers 2016: 12). Although the VUP is often framed as a social protection programme (and a direct response to distributional problems), there are multiple, and often competing, objectives. For example, a tension emerged between targets for infrastructure development and those for poverty reduction. Lavers (2016: 8) suggests that ‘while poverty reduction was undoubtedly a core concern driving the original adoption of the VUP, [...] implementation failings point to competing priorities [...] that undermine the actual contribution of the programme to poverty reduction.’ Concern has also been expressed about the use of *Ubudehe* wealth classifications as a mechanism for identifying and selecting programme participants (Lavers, 2016: 14).

⁵ According to Lavers (2016: 9), VUP targets were derived from the gap between Vision 2020 targets and the slow progress by 2007, rather than a realistic assessment of what the programme might be able to achieve.

⁶ Lavers (2016) notes that headline targets on growth and poverty reduction shaped the unrealistic targets set for the VUP for 2013–18.

An assessment of Rwanda's social protection sector by the World Bank (Kamurase 2012: vi) finds that it has 'grown rapidly in recent years, extending the coverage of new programmes but also developing core functions related to policy development and oversight. As a result, the sector has matured significantly; whereas only a few years ago it was characterised by a host of fragmented, un-coordinated and largely off-budget donor programmes, it is now very much government-owned (and funded) and increasingly coherent as an overall system of social protection.'⁷

Women

Gender equality

The government of Rwanda is widely viewed as a global leader in advancing gender equality (IMF 2017: 36). Institutional and policy forms have narrowed or reversed the gender gap in several key policy areas (Ansoms and Rostagno 2012; IMF 2017), with notable gains in political representation, health outcomes and access to primary education. The **Constitution (2003)** mandates gender equality, gender is mainstreamed in all government policies, gender quotas ensure the representation of women at a national level in government and gender-responsive budgeting is practiced (Ansoms and Rostagno 2012; IMF 2017:34, Abbott et al 2018). Supporting institutions have been set up to champion and monitor progress in gender equality, including the **Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion**, the **Gender Monitoring Office**, the **National Women Council** and the **Forum for Women Parliamentarians** (ibid: 25). The National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) also regularly collects **gender-disaggregated data**.

There is evidence that Rwanda's legal and policy framework provides a strong basis for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women (Abbott and Malunda, 2015: 3; Abbott et al, 2015b: 81). Following the 2013 Parliamentary elections, for example, 64% of elected members of the House of Representatives, and 58% of all the members of both Houses of Parliament, were women. Poverty amongst women have declined; girls' enrolment rates in primary education have surpassed boys; maternal mortality rates have declined; and women's life expectancy dramatically increased. Despite these gains many ordinary Rwandan women continue to be disadvantaged, especially poor women and those living in rural areas (Abbott et al, 2015: 932). CEDAW (2017: 14) highlights that women in non-formal unions (for example, women married under customary law or in polygamous unions) are often excluded from legal protection.

The **Constitution (2003)** was revised in 2015 to include principles of gender equality and provide a platform for gender mainstreaming, by establishing 30% quotas for female representation at all levels of decision-making (McKay and Verpoorten 2016: 3; IMF 2017: 33-34). Despite this, a study by Abbott et al (2015: 930) indicates that women are underrepresented at the local level of politics. For instance, in 2013, only 11% of District Mayors were women. 16% of Vice Mayors for Economic Affairs were women, whilst 80% of Vice Mayors for Social Affairs were women. Men

⁷ In addition to VUP, MINALOC runs two other social assistance schemes, the Genocide Survivors Support and Assistance Fund (FARG) and Rwanda Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) (these are outlined later in this report). Key initiatives administered by other ministries include the Ministry of Agriculture's Girinka 'One Cow per Poor Family' programme and its Rural Sector Support Project, subsidised subscriptions for mutual health insurance and in-kind social care services run by the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion and Ministry of Health (NISR 2015: 1).

are still perceived to be the major decision-makers at household and community levels (Stavropoulou and Gupta-Archer 2017: v). An examination by CEDAW (2017) of Rwanda's record on women's rights⁸ also highlights the lack of mechanisms to ensure participation of vulnerable women (for example, female heads of households, women with disabilities, rural women and Batwa women).

Rwanda's **National Gender Policy** was published in 2010⁹ to serve as the government's guiding framework for promoting gender equality in Rwanda (Government of Rwanda 2010 cited in IMF 2017; Ansoms and Rostagno 2012: 440). The policy aims to achieve gender equity and for a gender perspective to be integrated into all sectors and institutions. A key element is the involvement of men in addressing gender issues (Abbott and Mugisha 2014: 91).

Employment and financial inclusion

The **Labour Law (2009)** specifies equal access and pay in the labour market and prohibits sexual harassment (IMF 2017: 29). Nevertheless, women are still significantly less likely than men to be in decent paid employment, regardless of educational attainment (Abbott et al 2015: 932; CEDAW 2017: 10). In their review of gender equality policies in Rwanda, Debusscher and Ansoms (2013) suggest that despite strong political will and target-driven policies which offer opportunities for promoting gender equality in Rwanda, the transformative potential of policies is jeopardised by the dominance of an underlying economic rationale. In particular, the formalistic implementation of gender policies and their focus on quantitative results in neglect of the 'invisible labour' of women. Women are overrepresented in low-paid agricultural and informal sectors, have a higher overall unemployment rate (CEDAW 2017) and work significantly longer hours than men when domestic work is considered (Abbot et al 2105). . There is also evidence of persistent sexual harassment in the workplace (CEDAW 2017). Poor and rural women are particularly socially and financially disadvantaged (Abbott et al, 2015: 932).

The government's **Financial Sector Development Strategy** emphasised women and youth in its aim to increase overall financial inclusion to 80% by 2017 and 90% by 2020 (IMF 2017: 31-32). The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion's **Access to Finance Strategy for Women and Youth (2012)** aims to facilitate financial access for women by guaranteeing up to 75% of loan value through the Business Development Fund and the decentralised Credit and Savings Cooperatives. Established in 2009, the **Women's Guarantee Fund (2009)** supports women's access to micro-credit, encourages entrepreneurial activities and aims to close the poverty gap. Nevertheless, CEDAW (2017: 12) finds that women are often incapable of providing the guarantees necessary to obtain loans and other forms of credit, as in most households the main assets are controlled by men.

Inheritance and ownership

The **Inheritance Law (1999)** has been hailed for granting equal access to male and female children to inheritance from parents. In 2016, a **New Inheritance Law**, reforming the original succession law, was introduced to also ensure equal inheritance rights within matrimonial

⁸ See <https://ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21182&LangID=E>

⁹ See http://www.migeprof.gov.rw/fileadmin/_migrated/content_uploads/National_Gender_Policy-2.pdf

regimes. The **Land Law (2013)**¹⁰ guarantees equality for women with regards to 'land access, ownership and utilisation' (IMF 2017: 29). IMF (2017: 29) notes that these changes in legislation have created 'a more level playing field'. Differences between men and women in land ownership have declined and more equal distribution of property has strengthened women's financial inclusion. Women in Rwanda are more likely to own property and provide loan collateral than women in neighbouring countries. (ibid). Finnoff (2015: 214) also points to notable success in reducing poverty for widow household heads in rural areas, attributing this to the effectiveness of social safety net programmes (including cash transfers), the **genocide survivors' fund**, as well as the **land law**. Nevertheless, both with regards to inheritance and land rights, formal rights that define women's access to land often clash with informal customary arrangements where discriminatory attitudes towards women still prevail (Ansoms and Rostagno 2012: 440; CEDAW 2017: 3). For example, the inheritance law does not address the rights of a 'sizeable and vulnerable group of wives in non-legal polygamous marriages'. Although women have the right to be mentioned by name on land ownership certificates, this right does not extend to second and third wives since the law only recognises civil monogamous marriages between men and women.

Gender based violence

The **National Policy Against Gender Based Violence (GBV) (2011)** aims to, foster an environment where GBV is not tolerated; reduce the vulnerability of the most at risk groups to GBV; provide comprehensive services to victims of GBV; improve accountability and eliminate impunity for GBV; build coordination, monitoring systems and expand evidence available on GBV (Abbott and Mugisha 2014: 94). Despite this, high rates of domestic violence remain prevalent, underpinned by negative cultural attitudes to women (Abbott 2015: 932). CEDAW (2017: 3) highlights that despite the anti-discrimination legislation several discriminatory provisions remain in the law (e.g., punishment for marital rape being lower than that for rape). There have also been noted advances in legal assistance for women (for example, specific legal aid desks within the legal aid system and establishment of **Isange One Stop Centres** which provide limited legal assistance to women who are victims of gender-based violence); and exemptions from court fees for claims related to GBV against women. Nevertheless, there is also an absence of specific legal aid schemes for women that consider their disproportionate lack of economic independence and exposure to sociocultural barriers in access to justice (for example, when seeking to file complaints for gender-based violence or land inheritance claims). Moreover, many women are not aware of their rights or how to claim them (ibid).

Youth

Youth employment

Youth (defined in Rwanda as those aged between 14 – 35) comprise the largest age group within the population at 38.5% (ROR 2013b: 1). Whilst the unemployment rate for Rwandan youth has historically been relatively low¹¹, there is a growing number of young people entering the labour market. It has been estimated that in order to reach its Vision 2020 objectives, the Rwandan

¹¹ According to EICV3 it was 1% for 14-35% (ROR 2013b: 7)

government will need to create two million off-farm jobs to absorb the young people entering the labour market (Malunda 2011: 18). Policy priorities related to young people therefore concern their participation in economic activity and employment of young people. The government has aimed to strengthen youth representation in public decision-making through participation in child and youth councils, forums and committees. For example, a **National Youth Council** was established in 2003¹² to support youth in expressing their views and ideas and discussing these with decisionmakers (Stavropoulou and Gupta-Archer 2017: iv)

In 2005, the Ministry of Youth, Culture and Sports (MINISPOC)¹³ published a **National Youth Policy (2005)**¹⁴, which highlights the needs and challenges facing the growing youth cohort¹⁵ and streamline these into the country's development plans (ROR 2005: 8). A review by Malunda (2011) of youth employment policies notes that despite containing specific objectives to create employment, sectoral plans – such as the National Youth Policy - lack explicit mechanisms to coordinate the implementation of these outcomes at the inter-sectoral level. There is therefore a risk of duplication of activities as each of ministry implements its own agenda (Malunda 2011: 36).

The importance attributed to youth is reflected by the inclusion of **Productivity and Youth Employment** as one of the four thematic areas for the **EDPRS II**. This highlights the 'growing youth share of population' as a challenge for Rwanda's medium and long-term development aspirations (ROR 2013a: xiv). To support the implementation of EDPRS II goals, the Government published a **Youth Sector Strategic Plan (YSSP - 2013-2018) (ROR 2013b)** to guide youth sector activities, improve programme efficiency and strengthen links and networking within the sector-wide planning framework, ensuring that different government ministries mainstream youth programmes into their development plans¹⁶ (ROR 2013b: 2). The YSSP identifies '**economic empowerment**' as a priority to address economic poverty and unemployment amongst youth. It proposes job creation (particularly in off-farm jobs), improving relevance of education and training to employment, linking Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) to large farms and leveraging ICT to raise productivity in public and private sectors (ROR 2013b: 17). Another key focus of the YSSP is '**youth mobilisation**' (defined as changing negative attitudes towards manual employment and improving vocational training opportunities)' (ROR 2013b: 19). It also outlines a **Youth Access to Finance** programme to address the challenge of youth having limited access to finances for investing in productive enterprises. This is based on developing financial literacy and financial and credit enhancement schemes. A separate **Women and Youth Access to Finance Programme** is highlighted to build capacity, provide financial literacy training and offer financial access and credit enhancement programmes (ibid). Gender is a cross-cutting theme in the YSSP and the collection of sex-disaggregated data is proposed to track youth progress (ROR

¹² By the law n° 24/2003 of 14/8/2003 (ROR 2005: 10)

¹³ The government later set up a separate Ministry of Youth (MINIYOUTH) to identify and plan for the needs of Rwandan youth and streamline these into the government's development plans. MINIYOUTH later merged with the Ministry of ICT to create a new department (MYICT) (ROR 2013b: 1).

¹⁴ See http://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Rwanda_2005_National_Youth_Policy.pdf

¹⁵ Youth in Rwanda generally refers to those aged between 14 and 35 (ROR 2013b:1).

¹⁶ See http://www.minecofin.gov.rw/fileadmin/templates/documents/sector_strategic_plan/Youth_Sub_Sector_SSP.pdf

2013b: 26). Despite the government's commitment to tracking the progress of youth, there appears to be a dearth of systematic reviews of the effectiveness of Rwanda's youth policies.

Other marginalised groups

Rwanda's 2003 Constitution identifies the following vulnerable groups: the **survivors of genocide**, the **disabled**, the **indigent**, the **elderly**, **historically marginalised people (HMP)** as well as **orphans** and other **vulnerable children** (UN CERD 2014: 9).

Persons with disabilities (PWD)

Njelesani (2018: 1) suggests that signing the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)** in 2008, is one of the most significant disability actions taken by the Rwandan government to date. This marked national recognition of the rights of people with disabilities and represented the adoption of a social – rather than medical – model of disability. Alongside this, the government has created 'progressive policy efforts and legal government framework (Njelesani 2018: 2-3) encompassing several key initiatives: the **National Policy on Disability (2003)**; **Law No. 01/ 2007** relating to **protection of people with disabilities in general**; **Law No .54/2011** which provides **protections for children with disability**. The **National Council of Persons with Disabilities (NCPD)** was also set up as a forum for advocacy and social mobilisation for people with disability.

Within Rwanda's social protection program, disabled demobilised soldiers are provided with monthly direct support in the form of a subsistence allowance. Transfers are significantly larger (by up to ten times) than those received under VUP and FARG direct support; the rationale being that these former soldiers need additional support to ensure they can lead functional lives. The overall numbers of beneficiaries are, however, very low, with only around 2,500 in total (Kamurase et al 2012: xi).

No comprehensive review of the realisation of rights for PWD's has been carried out since the signing of the UN CRPD (Njelesani 2018:4). The evidence of the effectiveness of policies and laws in reducing inequalities experienced by persons with disabilities is limited. Carter (2018) highlights that many Rwandans with disabilities continue to face discrimination, including being excluded from development projects, vulnerable to sexual abuse and discouraged from seeking support from service such as HIV prevention. CEDAW (2017: 13) note that Law No. 01/ 2007 relating to the protection of disabled persons in general, does not provide for specific measures for women and girls with disabilities. They raise concern that there is limited representation of women with disabilities in decision-making positions (only one seat in Parliament reserved for a person with disabilities). Stavropoulou and Gupta-Archer (2017: 49) note that women with disabilities, are less likely to participate in the labour force.

Karangwa et al (2010: 269) examine the outcomes of long-term education strategies - developing an accessible and flexible curriculum; increasing public awareness about disability and special educational needs; reducing barriers to educational access and offering appropriate teacher training programmes. They hint at tensions that emerge from the Rwandan government's aims to build a 'contextually appropriate community-based response to disability' (building on features of traditional Rwandan society) but are also aligned with international **Education for All** goals (which are 'necessarily generic and in need of informed interpretation'). They note that children with disabilities are often unable to attend their nearest neighbourhood school due to distance. Those able to attend may face discriminatory attitudes from staff and peers, communication

barriers (for deaf or blind students), lack of support for teachers and inaccessible school infrastructure (ibid).

In the healthcare sector, despite the implementation of MHI outlined earlier in this report, PWDs face obstacles because of lack of healthcare funding and resources. For example, there is an inadequate number of radiography machines to assess individuals with soft tissue or spinal cord issues, whilst mental health services are underfunded (Njelesani 2018: 7). Furthermore, the costs of devices or treatments to support people with disabilities (for example, cochlear implants or eliminating 'needless blindness') is prohibitive for many Rwandans (ibid).

Survivors of the genocide

Since 1998, the **Genocide Survivors Support and Assistance Fund (Fond d'Assistance aux Rescapees du Genocide) (FARG)** has supported survivors of genocide with education, health care, housing, social assistance and income generation activities. Besides cash transfer payments, FARG provides educational scholarships; supports mutual health insurance payments, shelter development and rehabilitation; and promotes income-generating projects (ROR 2011). The programme targets vulnerable genocide survivors, including orphans, elderly people and adults with disabilities (Kamurase et al 2012). Direct Support transfers are largely oriented towards orphans and elderly and disabled adults who lack other support systems (Kamurase et al 2012). Beneficiary selection and identification is undertaken at the community level. Although it is not explicitly poverty-targeted, a list is drawn up of 'needy' genocide survivors who fit the selection criteria. Kamurase et al (2012) note that the number of beneficiaries increased between 2001 and 2007 (from around 23,000 to 80,000), although numbers have dropped significantly since then, dropping back to 23,000 in 2010. This dramatic fluctuation may be, at least partially, driven by the demographic profile of beneficiaries; as the cohort of orphans going to school is now finishing it would be expected that numbers of eligible beneficiaries would decrease (ibid).

Historically marginalised people

There are few studies on the inequalities experienced by the **Historically Marginalised People (HMP)** in Rwanda (part of a broader group who lived in the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa and numbering approximately 35,000 in 2012) (Abbott et al, 2012). Although HMP are mentioned in the **Social Protection Policy (2011)**, there is limited evidence on how effective this policy has been in improving their situation and raising them out of poverty. Abbott et al (2012) find some evidence that HMP are benefitting from government programmes. For example, between 2003 and 2011 the number of HMPs living in thatched-roof housing declined significantly. Abbott and Mugisha (2014: 8-9) suggest that HMP have also benefitted from the government's efforts to increase access to education, with more children from HMP communities attending school. Stavropoulou and Gupta-Archer (2017: 51) highlight, however, that Batwa¹⁷ children are still stigmatised and discriminated against, face difficulties and may feel discouraged from attending schools. CEDAW (2017: 13) also raises concerns about 'intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalisation experienced by Batwa women, who are exposed to extreme poverty, limited access to basic services, illiteracy, unemployment and gender-based violence.'

¹⁷ The Batwa are a cultural minority group in Rwanda comprising about 1% of the population.

Abbott and Mugisha (2014: 8) suggest that efforts are being made to end negative stereotyping of HMP and integrate them into the broader community as a part of the **One Rwanda Policy**¹⁸. They find evidence of declining stigma against HMP, noting that ‘HMP now share food and drink with other community members and even intermarriages are seen as possible’ (Abbott and Mugisha 2014: 44). While HMP are less likely to have health insurance, there was no evidence they are less able to access sexual and reproductive health services than the general population (Abbott and Mugisha 2014: 8-9). However, HMP remain extremely disadvantaged, with low land ownership, limited access to productive employment and poor health status. Poverty levels remain extremely high, with virtually a 100% of the population poor and 87% extremely poor, based on *Ubudehe* categories (Carter 2018). CEDAW (2017) raises concerns that the government’s post-genocide policy avoiding any form of ethnicity-based categorisation may be obscuring the specific problems of Batwa women. Others have noted that this policy makes it difficult to assess horizontal inequalities due to the lack of ethnically disaggregated data (Silva Leander 2012). Dawson (2018) suggests that the problem has specifically problematised understandings of the rights of cultural minorities like the Batwa.

Orphans and vulnerable children

In Rwanda, an orphan is defined as ‘a child who has lost one or both parents’; vulnerable children are defined as ‘a person under 18 years, exposed to conditions that do not permit him/her to fulfil her/his fundamental rights for her/his harmonious development (SAF 2003 cited in Kuehr 2015: 7). The **Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF)** is mandated to coordinate the formulation and implementation of national policies, strategies and programmes regarding the promotion of gender, family and children’s rights. Guided by the **National Policy on Orphans and Vulnerable Children (2003)**¹⁹, MIGEPROF provides and coordinates all support to orphans and other vulnerable children with emphasis on the ‘most vulnerable’, through a minimum package of services including health, nutrition, education, shelter, protection and psycho-social support.

The National Policy for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children focused on the integration of OVCs into society by ensuring access to health services, free primary education and continued education (secondary and technical/ vocational training); providing psychosocial support to children who need it; and supporting the socio-economic status of OVCs and their families through support to income generating activities, access to credit and improved agricultural production. There is limited evidence on the impact of this policy on OVCs. Within the sphere of education. Nkurunziza et al (2012: 4) note that, despite efforts to increase overall access to primary education, the attendance of orphans did not improve; instead, orphans lagged more significantly behind other children in 2005 than in 2000 (Nkurunziza et al 2012: 4). Nkurunziza et al (2012: 8) suggest that foster children and orphans continue to face discrimination with regards to primary education enrolment.

¹⁸ Lavers (2016:4) notes that ‘Lavers (2016: 4) ‘According to the RPF, ethnicity is a purely colonial construction that introduced previously non-existent divisions into Rwandan society (Pottier 2002). The government’s aim is to promote a unified national identity in place of ethnic and regional self-identification and thereby return to the supposed harmony of the pre-colonial era. This rationale translates into the rejection of ethnicity or region as the basis for policy choices (Golooba-Mutebi and Booth 2013);

¹⁹ See https://www.unicef.org/rwanda/RWA_resources_ovcrwanda.pdf

In 2012, Rwanda's government announced a **Deinstitutionalisation (DI) Policy**, which aimed to support the wellbeing of children and young people living in institutionalised care, by closing all registered orphanages by the end of 2014, and returning/ unifying the residents to/ with their communities or Rwandan foster families (Kuehr 2015: 2). A qualitative research study by Kuehr (2015) identifies some challenges related to this policy. MIGEPROF²⁰ subscribes to an understanding of orphans as a vulnerable group without agency, which can create a tension between the goals of protecting them and empowering them (Kuehr 2015: 7). While the future of children growing up in institutional care is insecure, the unification process is also uncertain and caused significant anxiety for many orphans in Kuehr's study. Social and psychological pressures from extended family and society meant that many youth resist the unification process (ibid). Additionally, lack of attention to the follow-up process creates doubt on the long-term sustainability of DI. There is also a lack of psychological support for children and new parents/guardians to understand the orphans needs and overcome their (often troubled) pasts (Kuehr 2015: 12)

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