KIGALI
RWANDA

CITY OVERVIEW

Kigali, capital city of landlocked Rwanda is home to a population of around 880,000. In coming years, the city is expected to grow at a fast rate of 6 percent a year, in part due to migration from densely populated rural areas. The city sprawls across four ridges; these ridges are divided by wetland valleys, where some industrial, commercial and residential uses are at risk of flooding. Residents are highly dependent on wood and charcoal for fuel, which creates deforestation pressures in the hinterlands. Over the course of the 21st century, the impacts of climate change will create various stresses. The Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports that projected increases in annual global temperatures of 1.5 to 2.0 degrees C will likely impact fisheries in East African lakes, affecting food security. Further, analysts expect that parts of Rwanda that previously were malaria-free will become "highly suitable" for transmission of this disease by the 2080s. Rwanda’s National Adaptation Plan of Action to Climate Change (NAPA) lists several priorities for adaptation in urban areas, including improving access to drinking water, sanitation, and energy from alternative sources.

ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS & VULNERABILITIES

Due to climate change, Rwanda has to face different challenges. These will include longer dry seasons causing droughts, mostly in the eastern part of the country; and shorter wet seasons with higher intensity, more likely in the northern and southern region. Heavy rains, coupled with a loss of ecosystems services resulting from deforestation and poor agricultural practices, have resulted in soil erosion, rock falls, landslides and floods which destroy crops, houses and other infrastructure (roads, bridges and schools). Mostly rural population and farmers are affected by these events.

Within this background Rwanda launched the National Adaptation Plan of Action to Climate Change (NAPA) in 2006. This action plan highlighted several urban activities. It called for an increased adaptive capacity of grouped habitats ("Imidugudu") located in vulnerable regions by improving drinking water and sanitation, and supplying alternative energy services. The NAPA also proposes to create non-agricultural job opportunities to lower the dependency on agricultural resources.

Regarding these policies, coupled with the higher urban growth rate compared to the overall national growth rate, one of the biggest projected changes will be an increasing population pressure towards urban centers. Furthermore the functions of the wetland valleys are threatened by some industrial, commercial and residential uses despite legal prohibition. Likewise high demand for brick making, coupled with sand-mining due to construction needs, has led to further degradation of wetlands. One such example is the

---

1 Kigali Conceptual Masterplan, 2008
2 Rwanda State of Environment and Outlook, 2009
Gikondo valley. At present only parts of this valley still function as wetland; large parts have been degraded through drainage and compaction for development.

POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES WITHIN CCCI

1. Share knowledge through supporting and strengthening existing Climate Change networks on a local government level and increase synergies between national and local climate change policies and programmes.
2. Research and education on building policies & urban strategies towards resource friendly and energy saving urban development.
3. Promotion of these tools with local governments, civil society and private sector.

THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

Rwanda is a landlocked country, situated in central Africa and covers an area of 22,336 sq km. The estimated actual population is 10.5 million (2009). With a density of 408 hab/km² (2008)3 Rwanda is the most populated, but one of the less urbanized countries in Africa. Since the end of the Genocide 1994, economic growth rates have averaged 5.8% per annum. This economic success has enabled significant progress in the fight against poverty, with poverty rates dropping from over 70% at the end of the war to 56.8% today (with a national target of 23.8% by 2015).

Although the majority of the people in Rwanda currently live in rural areas, it is one of the fastest urbanizing countries in the region. In 2000, the urban population was estimated at 12%, which rose to 18% by 2009. Projections suggest that the urban population will rise to stand at 30% by 2020.

So Rwanda is facing an accelerated urbanization due to the rural exodus, a population growth rate of 2.78%4, economic growth and returnees from the 1994 civil war. This pressure on urban areas will be accelerated by the promotion of non agricultural jobs, poor agricultural productivity and lack of land to sustain an expanding rural population.

3 CIA Factbook, 2008
4 Kanombe International Airport Weather Station.