

## Urban development – Rwanda

A green district for the city of Kigali

The landlocked Eastern African country of Rwanda is one of the most densely populated countries on the continent. Although the rate of urbanisation here is currently comparatively moderate, Rwandan towns are following the worldwide trend – with the capital city taking the lead. A green district is being created here as a model of sustainability, that includes the construction of environmentally sound housing and an extension of the public transport system. The Rwandan Environment and Climate Change Fund FONERWA, together with KfW Development Bank, are building this promising new quarter. The 620-hectare area at the heart of the capital is a showcase project for eco-friendly and climate-friendly urban development. It also marks a paradigm shift towards green urbanisation, affordable housing and environmentally friendly mobility in the whole of Rwanda.

### Context

Rwanda's population of 11 million looks set to more than double to around 26 million inhabitants by the middle of the century. Since it is already one of the most densely populated countries in the world, the pressure on available land will further increase in the years to come. Migration from rural areas to cities is estimated at a constant 4 % a year. Sustainable and integrated urban planning is needed to ensure that towns do not expand erratically, developing slums and intolerable levels of traffic. This applies especially to Kigali, where traffic and the associated concentration of airborne fine particles are already increasing continually. The matter is made worse because Kigali's public transport capacities are rudimentary. This means that inhabitants resort to individual forms of mobility, mostly powered by com-

bustion engines. Cars, however, not only pollute the air and cause premature deaths, they also increase CO<sub>2</sub> emissions exponentially. They are therefore neither good for the environmentally nor for the climate.

Considering this, sustainable urban development and housing concepts are growing in significance. As a result, the topic is an important part of Rwanda's national development and anti-poverty strategy. To show how a city of the future could look like, Rwanda launched a project by the name of Green City Kigali. This green district is to be situated on Kinyinya Hill in the Gasabo district of Kigali and will encompass an area of 620 hectares. The aim is to achieve a sustainable, vibrant, affordable and green settlement where residential and commercial units coexist.

<b>Project name</b>	Green City Kigali
<b>Commissioned by</b>	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
<b>Country/Region</b>	Rwanda
<b>Lead executing agency</b>	FONERWA





Model of Green City Kigali. Source: KfW photo archive, photographer: Sweco Architects Sweden

## Impact

Integrated, green urban development offers ways in which Rwanda and the region can deal with growing urbanisation and prevent undesirable settlements. Through the creation of affordable housing, low-income layers of society can benefit from the positive effect of urban development. A compactly planned city enables inhabitants to get around without motor vehicles. That not only improves air quality and is climate-friendly it also spurs economic development. Endeavours to integrate electric mobility into the country's electrification process pave the way towards low-emission urban mobility. In the long term, the Green City can serve as a template for urban development in other Rwandan cities and elsewhere in Africa, and in this way contribute to preventing climate change.

## Project approach

With funding from KfW Development Bank, the Rwandan Environment and Climate Change Fund FONERWA is currently drawing up plans for this model city. First, a feasibility study will be carried out that lays down the main principles of green urban planning and mobility in Rwanda. Based on this study, an international architecture competition will be held to encourage participation from abroad in developing the master plan for this model city. The plan will include specific infrastructure projects such as affordable housing and public transport. Electric mobility is given high priority here and will be seriously considered. Rwanda's legal framework will be amended to create the requirements for investment in this sector. This first phase of the Green City Kigali project is receiving funds from KfW on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of EUR 5 million. Further financiers and investors, both public and private, are to be won later on.

The Rwandan Environment and Climate Change Fund FONERWA was established in 2005 to set up an official body for climate and environment protection. The fund is the engine of green growth in Rwanda. FONERWA invests in projects and programmes that drive this transformation and share Rwanda's goal of building a strongly green economy. It finances sustainable urban development as well as renewable energy, sustainable forestry, the protection of biodiversity, integrated water resource management and sustainable land use. Not only does it intend to make Rwanda's economy greener, it also hopes to serve as an example for other African countries to follow.



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