



Republic  
of Rwanda

# THE STATE OF GENDER EQUALITY IN RWANDA

Accelerating Gender Equality Progress for  
Sustainable Transformation

GENDER MONITORING OFFICE  
MARCH 2024

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of Rwanda

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Sustainable Transformation

Supported by



Gender Monitoring Office  
MARCH 2024



*Recent studies show that it could take more than a century to achieve gender equality targets at the current rate of progress. We must challenge ourselves to do things differently and with a sense of urgency*

**His Excellency Paul KAGAME**  
The President of the Republic of  
Rwanda, Women Deliver Conference,  
July 2023 - Kigali Rwanda



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# LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AFR</b>	Access to Finance Rwanda	<b>GBV</b>	Gender Based Violence
<b>BNR</b>	National Bank of Rwanda	<b>GBS</b>	Gender Budget Statement
<b>BPfA</b>	Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action	<b>GMO</b>	Gender Monitoring Office
<b>CBHI</b>	Community Based Health Insurance Scheme	<b>GoR</b>	Government of Rwanda
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer	<b>GRB</b>	Gender Responsive Budgeting
<b>CGSR</b>	Country Gender Status Report	<b>HEC</b>	Higher Education Council
<b>CHWs</b>	Community Health Workers	<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technology
<b>DPs</b>	Development Partners	<b>MAJ</b>	Maison d'Accès à la Justice
<b>EAC</b>	East African Community	<b>MIGEPFOP</b>	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
<b>EICV</b>	Integrated Household Living Conditions Surveys	<b>MINEDUC</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussions	<b>NAEB</b>	National Agricultural Export Development Board
<b>FP</b>	Farmer promoters		

<b>NEC</b>	National Electoral Commission	<b>RSSB</b>	Rwanda Social Security Board
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Government Organizations	<b>SMEs</b>	Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>NISR</b>	National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda	<b>SSP</b>	Sector Strategic Plans
<b>NST</b>	National Strategy for Transformation	<b>STEM</b>	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
<b>NWC</b>	National Women's Council	<b>TV</b>	Television
<b>PSF</b>	Private sector Federation	<b>TVET</b>	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
<b>PSTA</b>	Strategic Plan for Agriculture Transformation	<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>RAB</b>	Rwanda Agriculture Board	<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>RGB</b>	Rwanda Governance Board	<b>VUP</b>	Vision Umurenge Program
<b>RNP</b>	Rwanda National Police		
<b>RMC</b>	Rwanda Media Commission		

# INTRODUCTION

The Government of Rwanda (GoR) has implemented several policies and programs to promote gender equality. They are meant to ensure that human rights and fundamental freedoms are realized on equal terms between women and men. These efforts have expressed the will and commitment to promote accountability for gender equality and women's empowerment in all sectors and at all levels.

Rwanda's commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women is aligned with other global and regional instruments, development agenda and strategies such as Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Beijing declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA), the Global Sustainable Development Goals (2030), African Union Agenda (2063), East African Community vision 2050, African Union Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2018-2028) and African Union Gender Policy (2009).

From the National legal perspective, goals of gender equality and women's empowerment are enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda and other several laws that have been enacted to ensure gender equality and equal representation of men and women in decision making positions and access to socio-economic resources.

To ensure the implementation of National, Regional and International gender commitments, Rwanda established a National Gender Machinery including the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), the National Women Council (NWC) and the Gender Monitoring Office (GMO). This has facilitated coordination of gender and family policy formulation, empowerment of women and advancement of gender accountability.



To document and accelerate gender accountability across Economic transformation, Social Transformation and Transformational Governance Pillars, the Gender Monitoring Office published the first State of Gender Equality in Rwanda in 2019 showcasing gender progress, gaps, and areas for improvement.

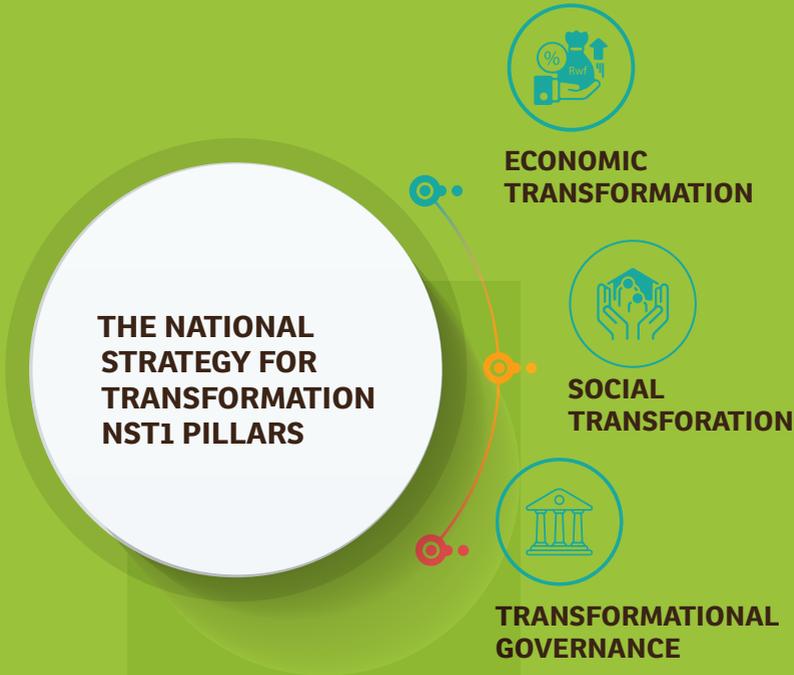
This report builds on official statistics from the National Census, surveys, and recognized sectoral data. It tracks progress made across different pillars from 2019 to 2023 and highlights key challenges, along with recommendations for ensuring gender equality in future NST generations. The Gender Monitoring Office thanks partners for their efforts to promote gender equality and calls for continued support and joint efforts.

# LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

A conducive legal and policy environment in Rwanda has greatly contributed to the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women across different sectors. Below are some examples:

- **The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda** enshrines gender equality and women's rights, and mandates a minimum 30% quota for women in all decision-making bodies.
- **Rwanda Vision 2050:** All youths, women, men, and elderly people will contribute as actors of sustainable development, ensuring that no one is left behind in benefiting from development.
- **National Gender Policy (2021):**The primary objective of this policy is to promote gender equality and equity in all sectors, while providing women with increased access to productive economic resources and opportunities. Additionally, this policy aims to ensure that both women and men are free from any form of gender-based violence and discrimination.
- **National Policy against Gender Based Violence 2011:** The overall objective of the policy is to eliminate gender-based violence through the development of a preventive, protective, supportive and transformative environment.
- **The National Decentralization Policy 2021:** The Rwandan government is committed to empowering its people to determine their destiny, with a focus on gender equality and social inclusiveness as fundamental principles
- **The Health Sector Policy 2015:** One of the guiding principles and values is to create "people-centered services" that prioritize the well-being of individuals and communities, with special attention given to women and children.

- **Sectoral Gender Mainstreaming Strategies:** Various sectors, including but not limited to the private sector, agriculture, and employment, Financial sector, have developed gender mainstreaming strategies to promote gender equality and empower women. These strategies are in line with the aspirations of the National Gender Policy (2021).
- **Organic Law N° 002/2022.OL of 12/12/2022** on public finance management: The Government of Rwanda has adopted a Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting programme (GRB) to ensure the realization of gender commitments. In order to reinforce this implementation, mandatory gender responsive planning and reporting have been instituted through Annual Gender Budget Statements (GBS).
- **Law No27/2021 of 10/06/2021** governing land in Rwanda, similar to the inheritance rights, Land reform in Rwanda supported women and men to have equal access, rights and enjoyment over their land properties. From this, both men and women have land titles registered in their names and this has facilitated especially women to access loans from financial institutions and engage in income generating activities.
- **Law N° 010/2021 of 16/02/2021** determining the organisation of education aims to eliminate all obstacles that hinder the development of girls and women education as well as of any other groups that need special attention.
- **Law N°27/2016 of 08/07/2016 Governing Matrimonial Regimes, Donations and Successions:** In 1999, Rwanda passed a law regarding matrimonial regimes, donations, and successions. This law was a significant milestone in terms of gender equality, especially regarding access to and management of family assets. It granted equal inheritance rights to boys and girls for the first time, ensuring that they both have an equal opportunity to inherit property from their parents.



The status of Gender Equality is measured based on three NST1 pillars: Economic transformation, Social transformation, and Transformational governance. This provides a clear indication of how both males and females benefit from various programs aimed at Rwanda's sustainable development.

# PILLAR ONE

## GENDER EQUALITY IN ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

Economic transformation is crucial to national policy and development. Gender equality is essential for inclusive socioeconomic transformation. Gender-responsive programs and interventions have been implemented, financing facilitated through Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB). This report will focus on areas such as agriculture, employment, financial inclusion, ICT, and private sector development.

## AGRICULTURE

- Land ownership 2017-2023
- Land ownership in agriculture (% and numbers)
- Access to agricultural inputs (%)
- Access to agricultural loans
- Percentage of Agricultural households who receive extension services by sex of head of household
- Percentage of agricultural households per different agricultural practices by sex of head of household
- Farmer field school (FFS) master trainers, facilitators and trained farmers (numbers)
- Livestock ownership (%)

1

INDICATORS

## EMPLOYMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- Labor force participation rate (%)
- Distribution of population (female and male) employed by sector of employment (% and numbers)
- Positions occupied by men and women in labour Market
- Employment in Agriculture, Industry and Services (%)
- Employed men and women by economic activity
- Average hours spent per week on own use production activities (domestic duties) by type and sex for population 16 years and above (numbers)
- Distribution of sole proprietor establishments, Small and Medium Enterprises by women and men (numbers)
- Distribution of sole proprietor establishments, Small and Medium Enterprises by women and men (numbers)
- Distribution of Establishments (enterprises by size) and by sex of manager (numbers)
- Distribution of sole proprietor establishments by economic activity and sex of owner (numbers)
- Gender in Cooperative

2

4

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

- Access to Internet (per household) and digital literacy (% and numbers)
- Number of Teachers Trained in ICT (2019 and 2023)
- Possession of Television, and radio %
- Percentage of Individuals aged 16 years and above who own mobile phones

## GENDER EQUALITY IN ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

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## ACCESS TO FINANCE

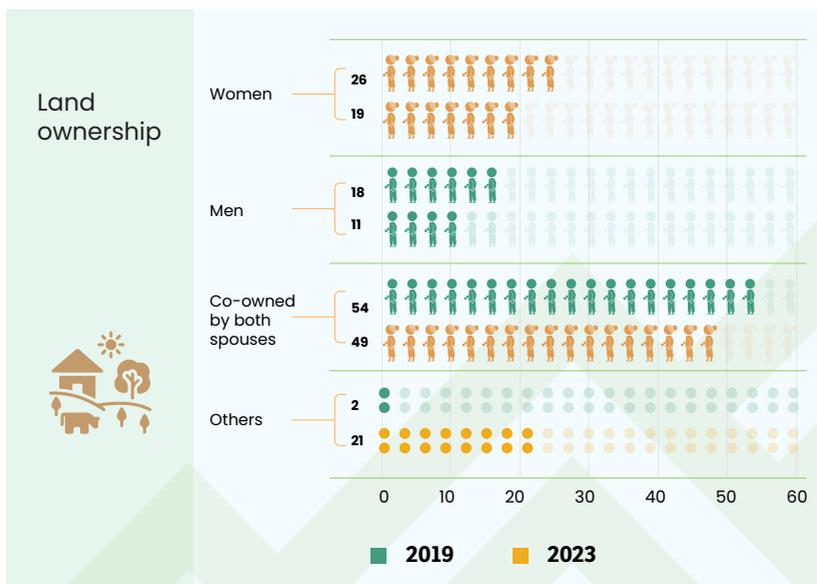
- Men and women uptaking financial products/ services
- Bank products by gender (%)
- Ownership of accounts, number and amount of loans received by bank clients (numbers)

# 1. GENDER EQUALITY IN ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

## 1.1. Agriculture

In Rwanda, 77.7% of women rely on agriculture as their primary source of income. To promote sustainable agriculture, gender equality is crucial. This section will analyze gender equality in agriculture, focusing on access to inputs such as land, seeds, fertilizers, livestock, agricultural loans, and extension services.

### Land ownership (%)

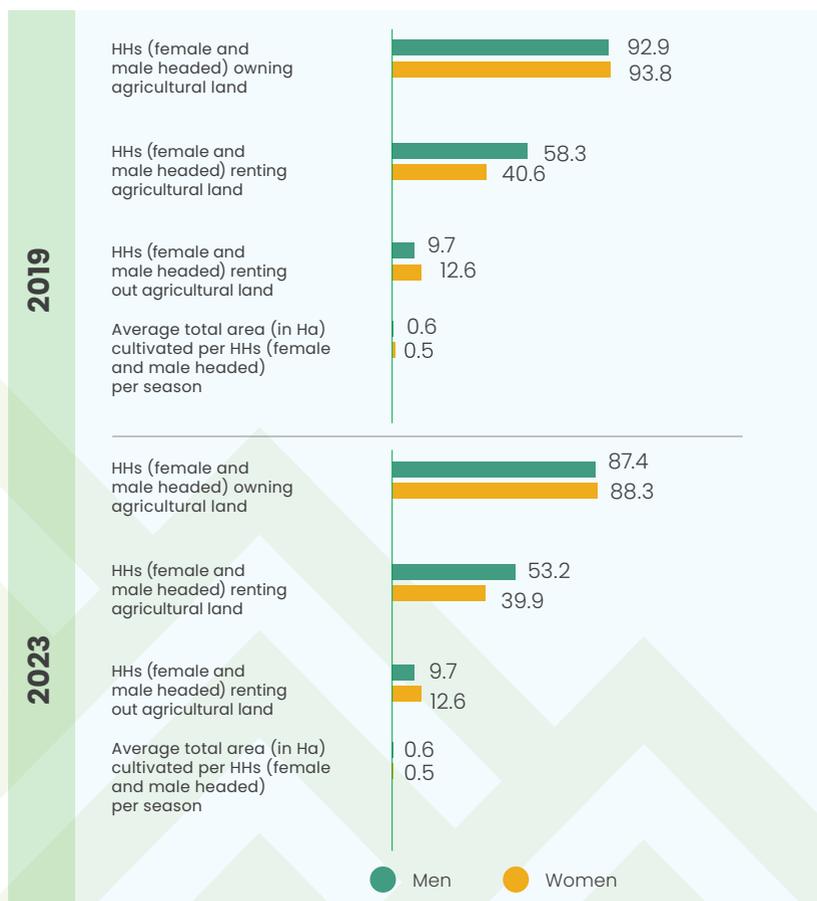


**Source:** RNLA, Administrative Data, 2019 and Rwanda Land Dashboard [Accessed December 2023].

Rwanda has made significant progress regarding gender equality in land ownership, use, and control. This is crucial for empowering women and men as land is an essential resource for food production, income generation, and collateral for credit. However, recent data shows a decline

in land ownership among various categories of owners from 2019 to 2023. The unclassified category has seen a significant shift from 2% to 21%, which requires further investigation to determine how it has contributed to the decline in individual land ownership. In addition, further research is needed to examine how ownership of land by both men and women is accelerating their economic transformation.

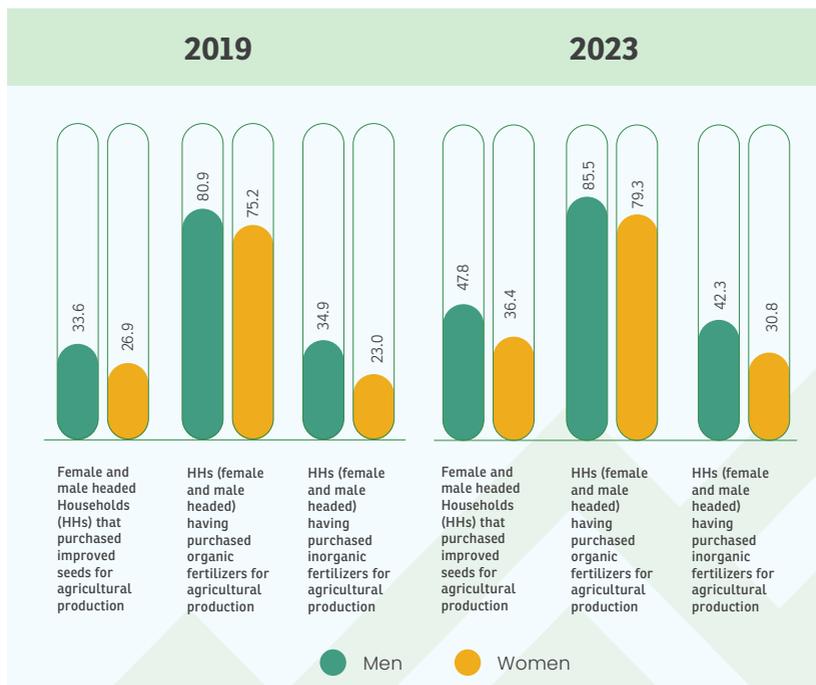
## Land ownership in agriculture (%)



**Source:** Rwanda National Land Authority Administrative Data 2019 & National Gender Statistics (NISR, 2021)

The ownership of agricultural land has decreased for both male and female and as a result, men and women in agriculture have limited access to financial loans for capital investment. Additionally, Women are more likely to rent out their agricultural land, with a 2.9% difference compared to men. Women’s inability to utilize their land is linked to renting their agricultural land, which reflects a decrease in their productive capacity which negatively affects their economic empowerment prospects.

## Access to agricultural inputs (%)

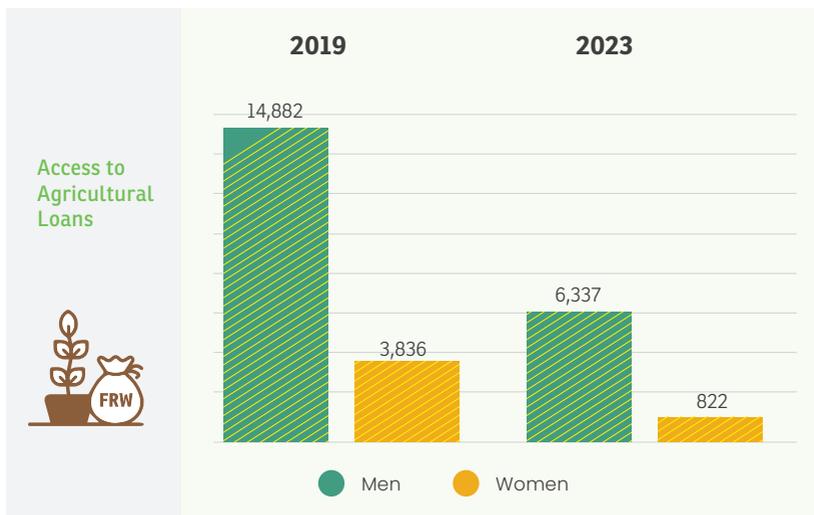


Source: Agriculture Household Survey (NISR, 2018 & 2020)

Recent data shows that women-led households' access to improved seeds increased by 10% from 2018 to 2021/22 as compared to men-led households recorded a 14.2% increase. However, access to improved seeds and inorganic fertilizers is still limited for both genders, with female farmers facing more accessibility challenges. The gender gap in 2020 is 11.5% for inorganic fertilizers and 11.4% for improved seeds.

As indicated above, women farmers have limited access to agricultural inputs. Access to agricultural inputs is mainly targeted at cash crops cultivated by men, while women focus on traditional subsistence crops. This is mainly attributed to their limited purchasing power, limited access to timely agricultural information, and limited land size among others. To bridge the existing gaps, it is recommended that the national agricultural input subsidy program by MINAGRI/RAB be reviewed to cater to the specific needs of both male and female smallholder farmers. Additionally, the program should utilize the available community mechanisms especially Inteko z'abaturage, umuganda, and National Women's Council to timely disseminate information on agricultural subsidies.

## Access to agricultural loans



**Source:** Annual Report (BNR, 2021).

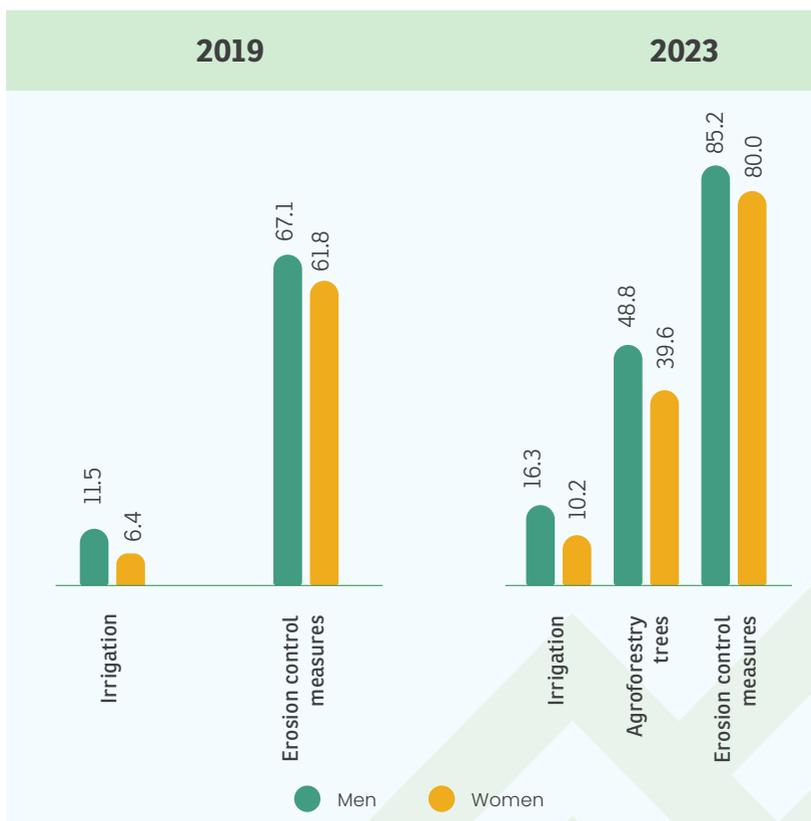
Access to loans for women farmers has reduced by 78.5%, compared to 57.4% for men farmers during 2019–2023. This gender gap is due to limited control over productive resources such as land, and women’s higher representation in subsistence agriculture that does not receive support from financial schemes. COVID-19 has further constrained access to loans and repayment capacity. To address this, financial institutions should design agricultural financial products for small-scale farmers, particularly women-headed households, aim to increase farmers’ saving capacity and put in place incentives that attract more women to agribusiness.

## Percentage of Agricultural household who receive extension services by sex of head of household



Source: Agriculture Household Survey (NISR, 2017 & 2020)

## Percentage of agricultural households per different agricultural practices by sex of head of household



**Source:** Agriculture Household Survey (NISR, 2017 & 2020)

The GoR, through agricultural extension and advisory agencies (MINAGRI, RAB, NAEB) and Districts, has instituted several mechanisms to promote extension services among farmers to bridge the gap in skills demand especially for youth and women.

These include farmer field facilitators through Twigire Muhinzi scheme, a community participatory approach that combines Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and field-based Farmer Promoters (FP).

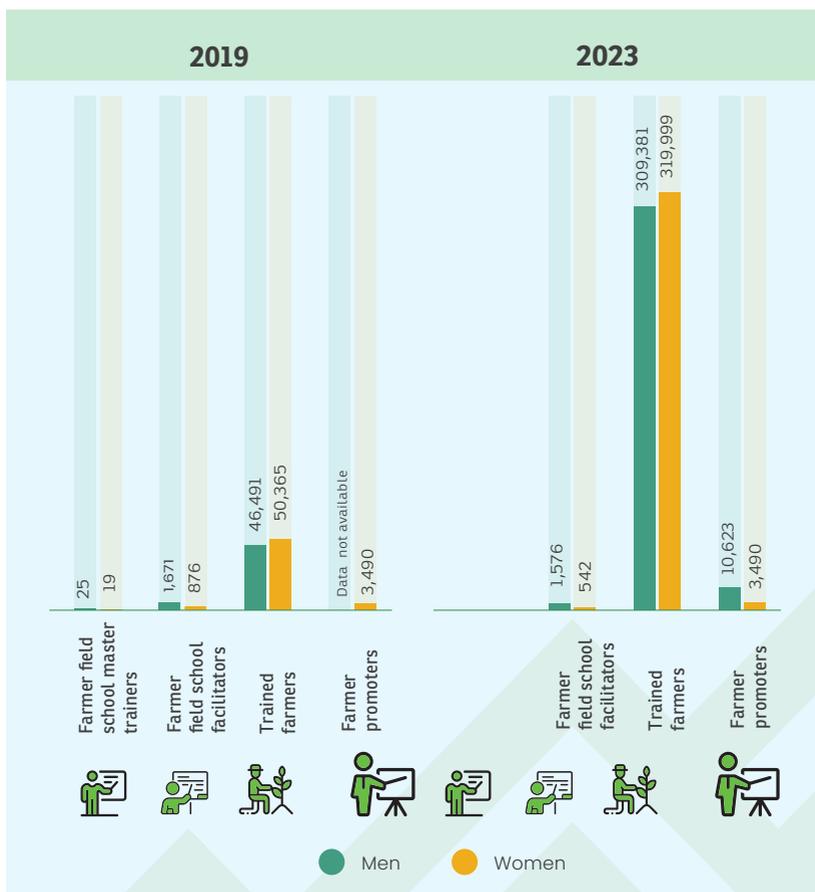
These services are designed to build farmers' abilities to adopt, use, and maintain good agricultural practices for increased agricultural productivity.

Through the National Strategic Plan for Agriculture Transformation (PSTA4), MINAGRI intentionally targeted 50% of women in FP and FFS as well as increased representation of women in district extension services and improved capacity building to ensure extension services are gender-responsive. The current status is that Rwanda has achieved the 50% target of women in extension services, and the trend is generally encouraging for both men and women.

However, there is a need to increase efforts in environmental-friendly agricultural practices (especially irrigation where the participation is very low for both men and women despite a slight increase compared to 2019 data), and raise women's participation in extension services beyond being recipient farmers and also be more visible as both active participants and leaders in all segments of the agriculture value chain.

This can be achieved through strengthening gender mainstreaming programs that are integrated into agricultural planning and investments that support the adoption of agricultural mechanization and technology transfer by rural and smallholder women. Additionally, market-oriented and agricultural value-adding programs can incorporate gender mainstreaming.

## Farmer field school (FFS) master trainers, facilitators and trained farmers (numbers)

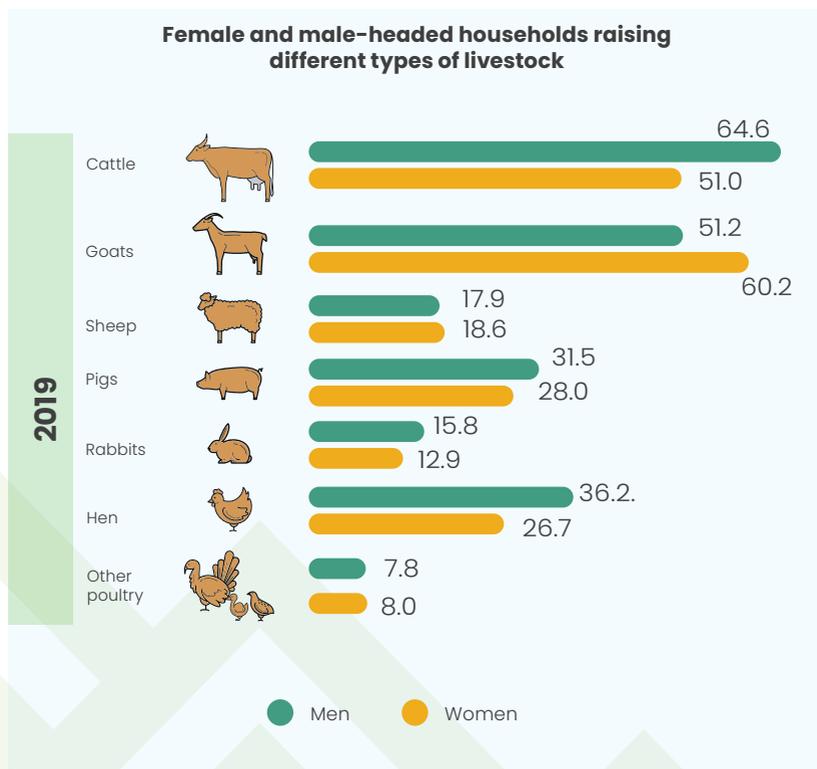


Source: Administrative data (RAB, 2019 & 2022)

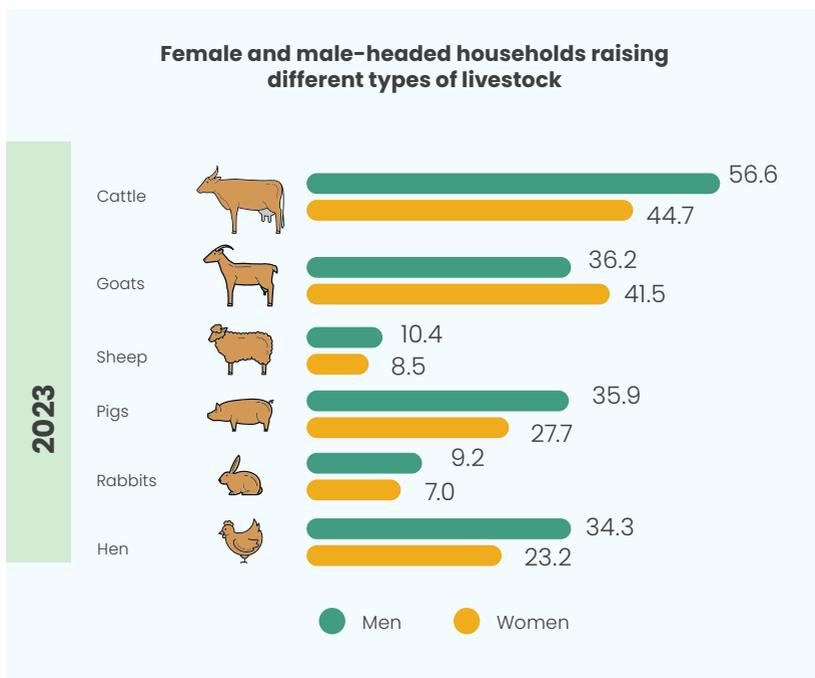
Data shows an 8.8% increase in male farmer field school facilitators, while female facilitators decreased by the same percentage. Women farmers trained through FFSs have slightly declined from 52% to 50%. Men represent 75.3% of farmer promoters compared to 24.7% of women, mainly due to domestic care work, gender-related stereotypes, and cultural norms that limit women's access to farming-related information.

Therefore, increasing women’s participation in extension services is essential beyond being just recipient farmers and encouraging them to become visible as farmer facilitators and promoters.

## Livestock ownership (%)



Source: Agriculture Household Survey (NISR, 2017 & 2020),



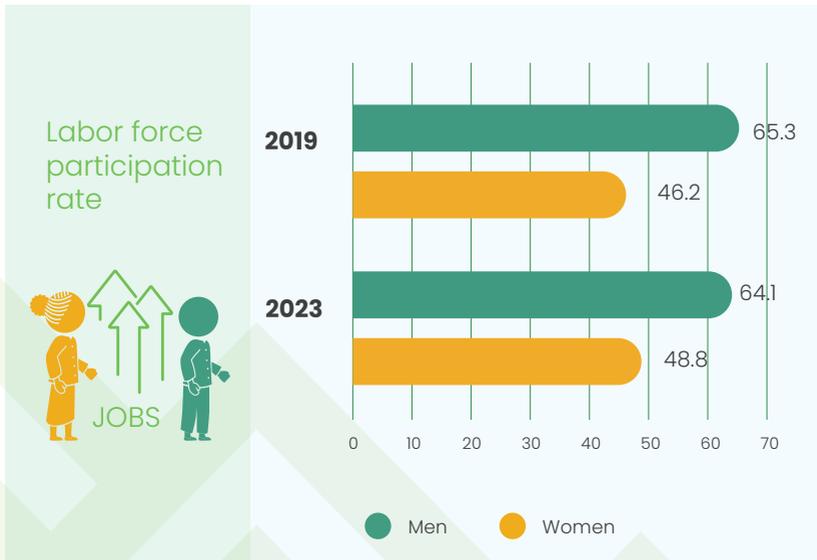
**Source:** Agriculture Household Survey (NISR, 2017 & 2020),

According to the 2022 Rwanda Population and Housing Census, cattle are the most commonly owned livestock among agricultural households in Rwanda, accounting for 28% of ownership. Following cattle, goats come in second at 19%, then pigs at 15%, chickens at 12%, and rabbits at 6%. From a gender perspective, male-headed households tend to own more cattle than female-headed households, with an estimated difference of 11.9% based on agricultural household surveys. However, the Girinka program has made significant strides in breaking cultural misconceptions regarding women owning cows. Although women have limited cattle ownership due to traditional cultural norms, limited land for livestock, and related costs, they predominantly raise goats, with a 5.3% difference compared to male-headed households. Given the multiplier effects, especially from a business perspective, it is crucial to encourage women to own cattle. Owning cattle can also provide access to organic fertilizers, milk for consumption, and a source of income.

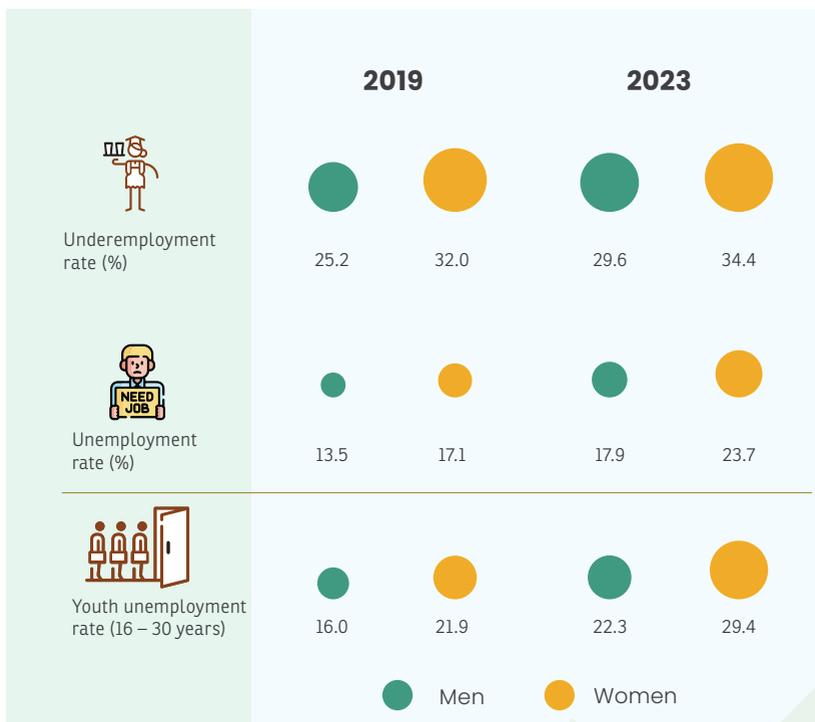
## 1.2. Employment, Entrepreneurship, and Business Development

This section focuses on the status of gender equality in relation to men and women's involvement in the labor force, the positions they hold in the job market, their employment status across different economic activities, the issue of unpaid care work, and women's participation in private sector and business development.

### Labor force participation rate (%)



Source: NISR, Labor Force Survey (LFS) 2019 and 2022

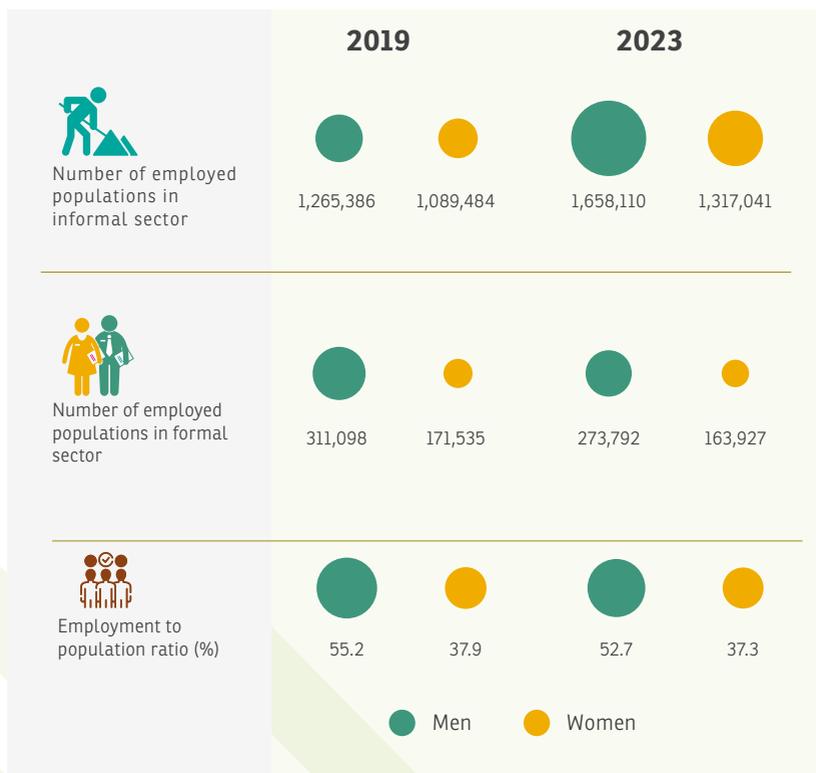


**Source:** NISR, Labor Force Survey (LFS) 2019 and 2022

Access to employment, especially decent and productive jobs, is crucial for the social and economic growth of both men and women in various sectors. However, according to the presented data, women still lag behind men in terms of labor force participation, which is partly due to mobility issues, limited access to finance, inadequate technical and soft skills, and their significant share in unpaid care work.

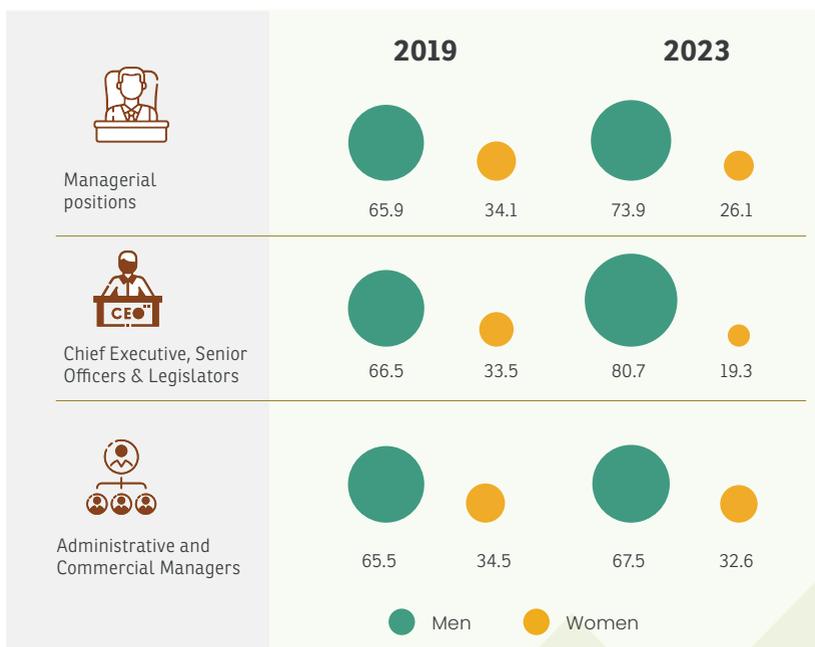
To enhance women’s active participation in the labor force, there is a need to focus on placing gender perspectives at all levels of education to ensure a smooth transition from education to employment. Furthermore, investing in facilities that reduces the burden of unpaid care work and ensures that all relevant employment stakeholders are accountable for gender equality.

## Distribution of population (female and male) employed by sector of employment (% and numbers)



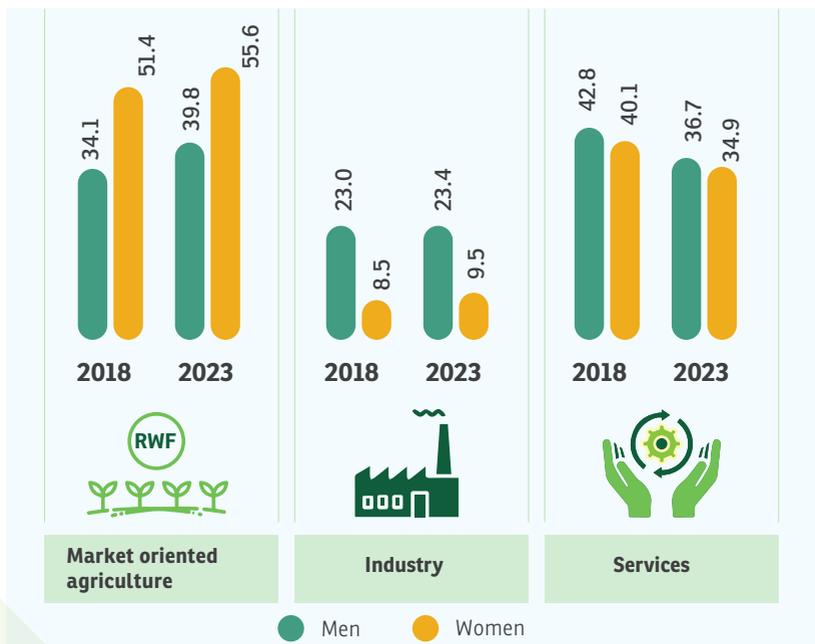
Source: NISR, Labor Force Survey (LFS) 2019 and 2022

## Positions occupied by men and women in labour market



Source: NISR, Labor Force Survey (LFS) 2019 and 2022

## Employment in Agriculture, Industry and Services (%)

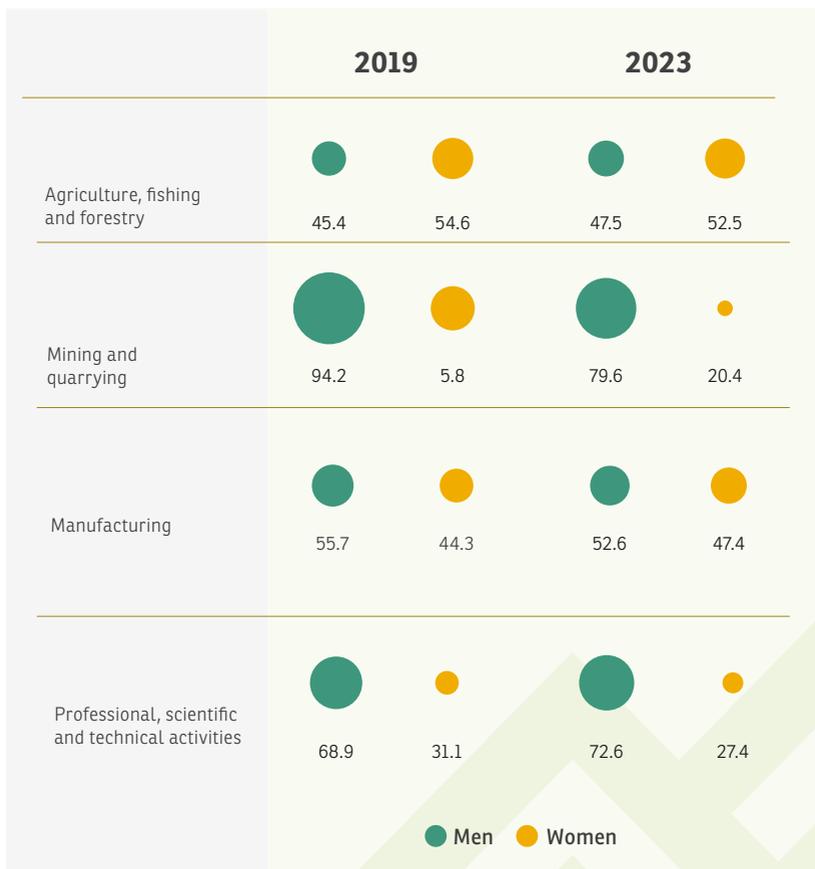


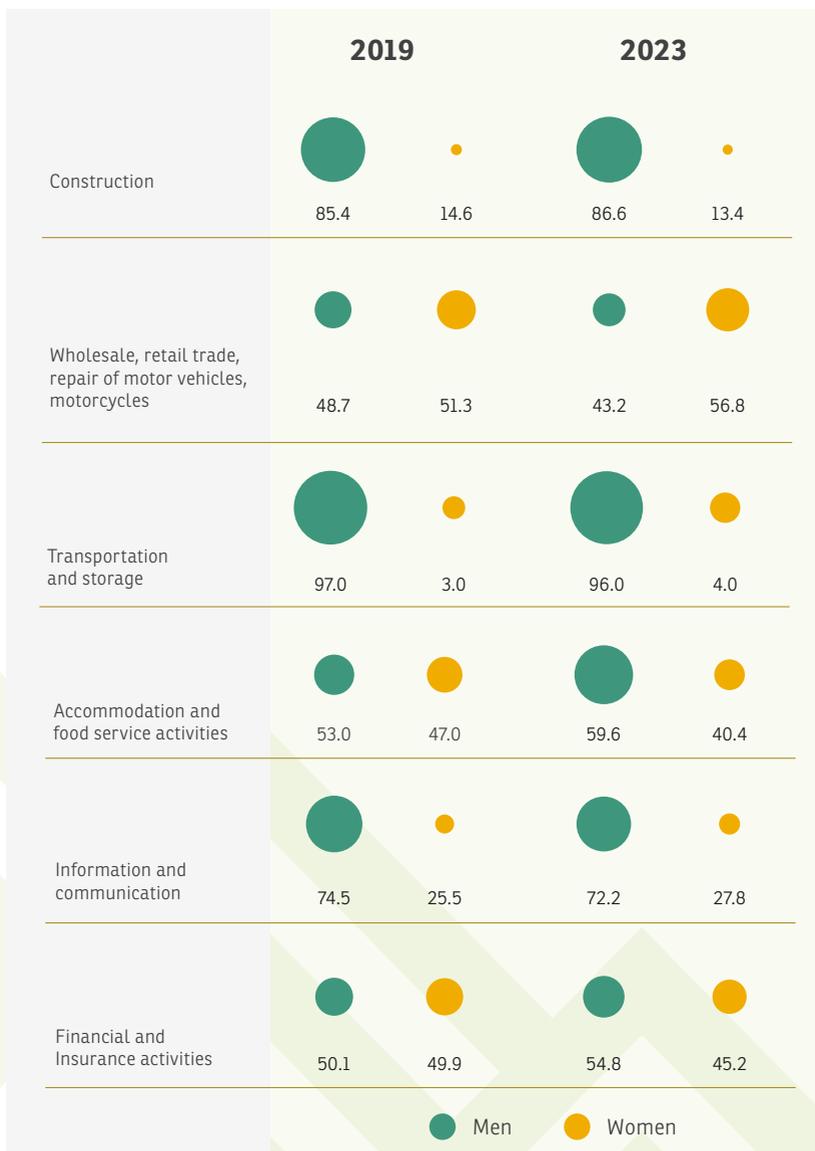
**Source:** Rwanda Labour Force Survey (NISR, 2019 & 2022)

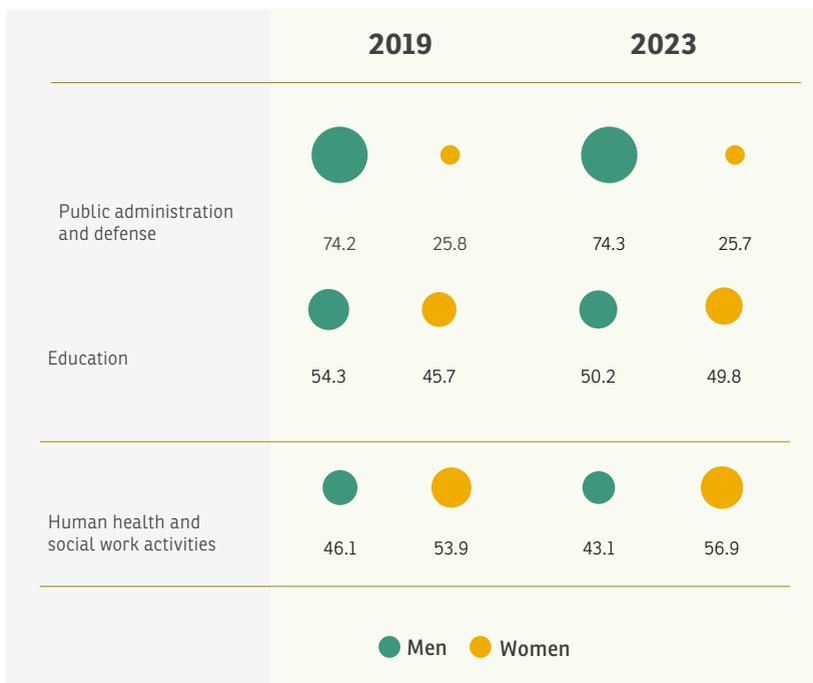
Looking at different sectors of the economy, it's important to indicate that the agriculture sector employs a larger percentage of women compared to men, particularly in market-oriented agriculture. Men tend to be more involved in the industrial sector, while both men and women are employed in services, with only a slight difference between the two. It's important to note that the majority of women working in market-oriented agriculture are those who work on a daily contract basis, and their average monthly salary is around 22,000 Rwandan francs. To improve women's meaningful employment in market-oriented agriculture, their skills need to be improved across agricultural value chain, including agro-processing.

In order to reduce the gender employment gap in the Industry sector, there is a pressing need for deliberate and focused initiatives to empower women and young girls, particularly in fields that are typically male-dominated, and establish connections with available job prospects in the sector.

## Employed men and women by economic activity







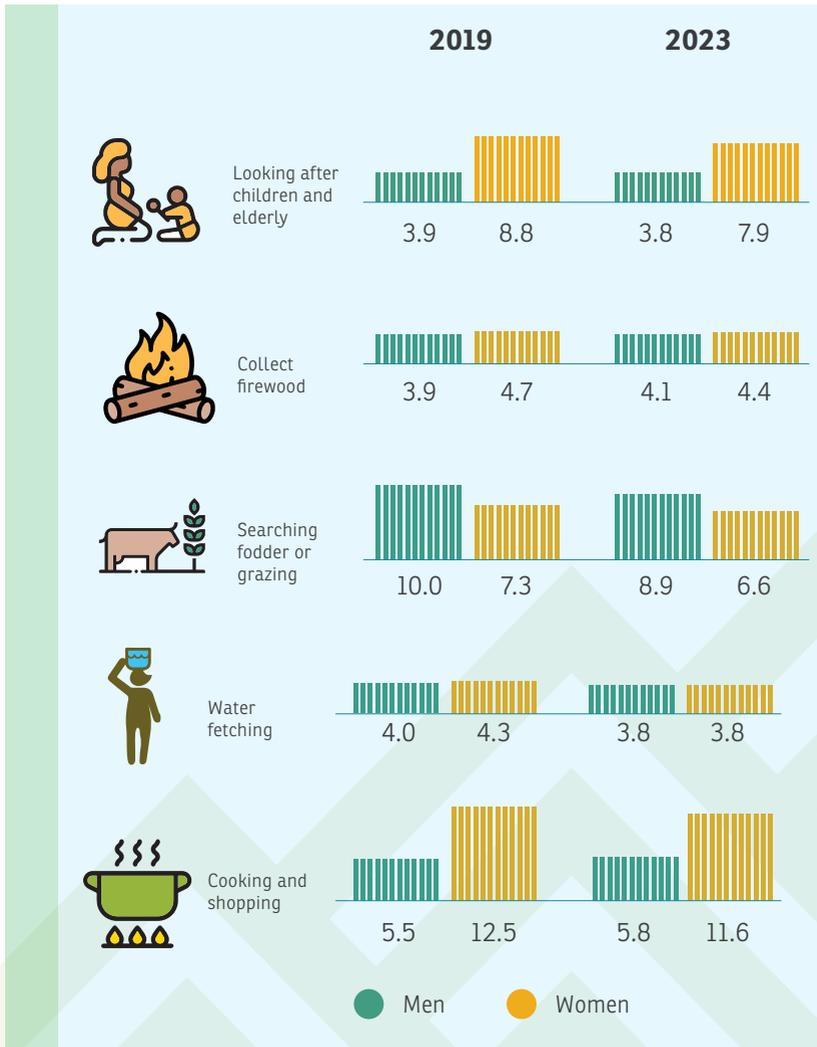
**Source:** Rwanda Labor Force Survey (NISR, 2018 & 2022)

It is observed that men and women are involved in different types of employment and positions. Women tend to work in informal jobs with lower pay and fewer legal protections. However, more women are entering sectors that were previously male-dominated, which is a positive change and can be attributed to a change in mindset towards education both at the level of families and communities. Women and girls are no longer expected to only pursue social-related courses. This shift generates decent income and addresses issues linked to unemployment and unpaid care work. Moving forward, Education actors need to ensure that girls and women are enrolled in courses that provide them with skills that align with market demand.

To address gender disparities in employment, entrepreneurship, and business development, the Government of Rwanda implemented various initiatives aiming at increasing market competitiveness and employment opportunities, especially for the youth and women. These include the VUP Classic and expanded public works, National Employment Program, the TVET program at different levels which aims at skills development for the youth leading to self-employment, UDUKIRIRO program (local crafts centers), and Special Economic zones among others. Additionally, other programs include the establishment of cross-border markets, especially for women traders, BDF which targeting youth and women with 75% collateral and grant coverage, YEGO centers facilitating entrepreneurship generation for youth especially women, and access to credit, etc.

The above-mentioned programs have contributed to the increase of jobs for special groups, especially women. It is expected that the same initiatives will facilitate bridging the existing gender gaps in the employment sector. However, specific programs are still required to ensure that all women in different socio-economic setups benefit from these initiatives through community-based initiatives like the National Youth Council and the women's councils.

## Average hours spent per week on own use production activities (domestic duties) by type and sex for population 16 years and above (numbers)



Source: Rwanda Labor Force Survey (NISR, 2018 & 2022)

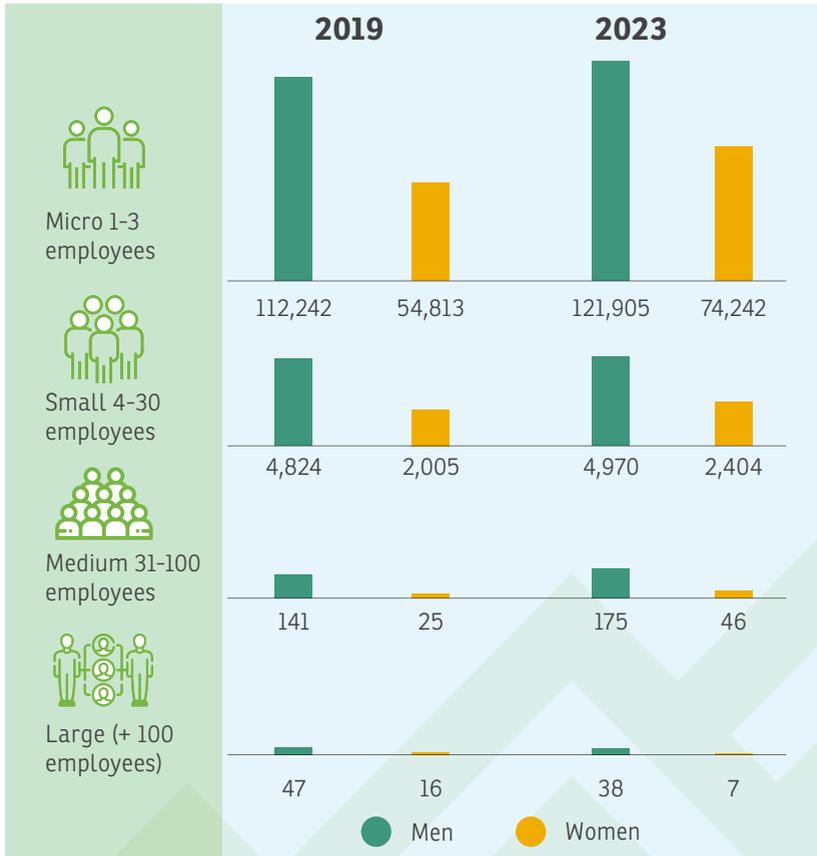
Unpaid care work is a major obstacle to women's economic empowerment and financial independence. Women generally spend more hours per week on domestic activities than men, including tasks like traveling to the market, cooking, child care, and caring for elderly or sick family members. Unfortunately, there has been no significant improvement in unpaid care work conditions between 2018 and 2023. The COVID-19 pandemic has only worsened the situation, with women taking on an even larger volume of care work.

Despite the progress in gender equality, unpaid care work remains a significant challenge. To address this issue, there is a need to reduce the burden of unpaid care work. This can be achieved by investing in time-saving facilities such as energy-efficient gas stoves, solar-powered washing machines, and childcare services. Providing education on integrating gender roles at the household level and implementing innovative measures can also be beneficial, thus increasing gender-aligned productivity and promoting women's empowerment.

## Entrepreneurship and Business Development

Rwanda aims to become an upper-middle-income economy by 2035 and a developed economy by 2050. The private sector is crucial in achieving this vision and inclusive and sustainable development. The data below shows the participation of both men and women in business development and entrepreneurship.

## Distribution of sole proprietor establishments, Small and Medium Enterprises by women and men (numbers)



**Source :** Establishment Census Report (NISR, 2017 & 2020).

Women are mainly involved in micro and small businesses, while men own medium and large-scale businesses. SMEs face challenges like lack of capital, fear of loss, and limited entrepreneurial skills. Increased support for small businesses is necessary to drive socio-economic transformation in Rwanda. Women entrepreneurs need access to training facilities to improve their skills and grow their businesses.

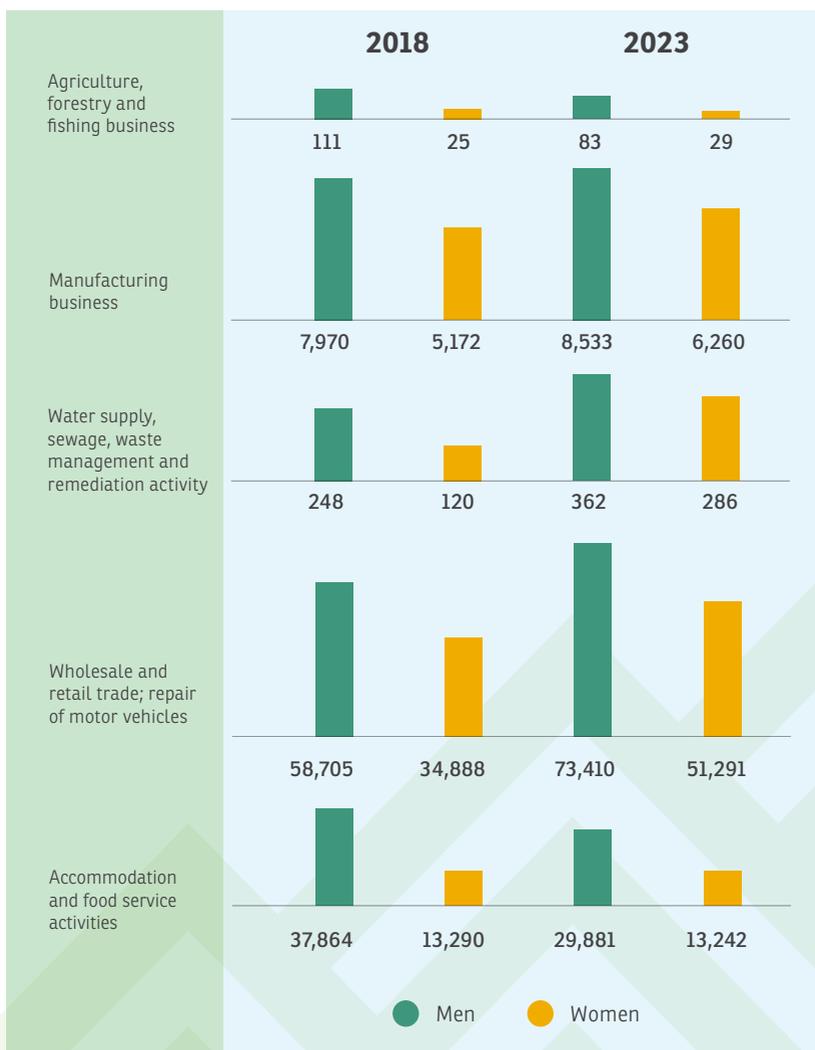
## Distribution of Establishments (enterprises by size) and by sex of manager (numbers)



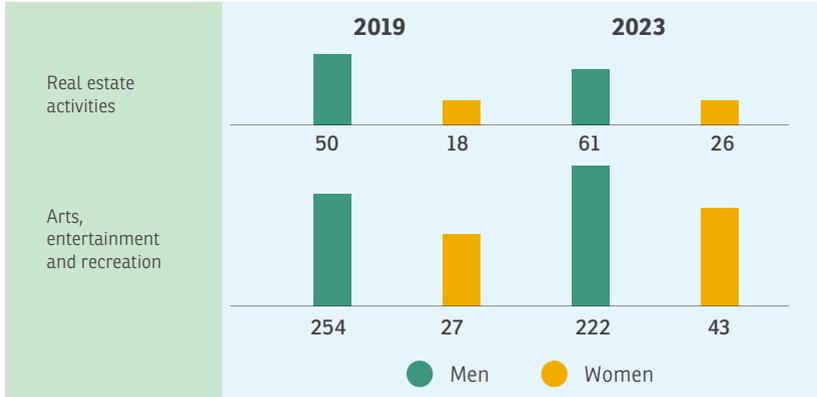
**Source :** Establishment Census Report (NISR, 2017 & 2020).

Despite an increase in the number of businesses, women still hold fewer managerial positions than men. In small, medium, and large-scale businesses, women only comprise 29.3%, 21%, and 17.8% of the management positions, respectively. This underrepresentation can result in negative consequences, such as limited opportunities for non-agricultural jobs and reduced productivity. To address this issue, women must improve their self-esteem and confidence, develop their leadership skills, and participate in peer-to-peer mentorships with the goal of attaining managerial positions at various levels of the business world.

## Distribution of sole proprietor establishments by economic activity and sex of owner (numbers)



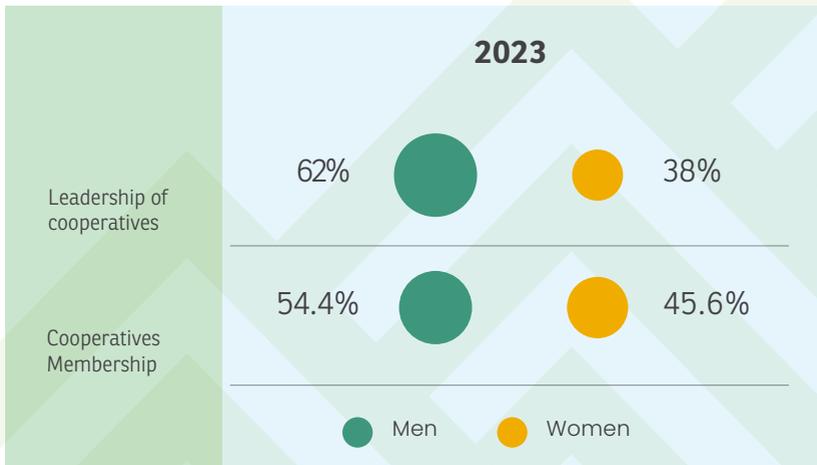


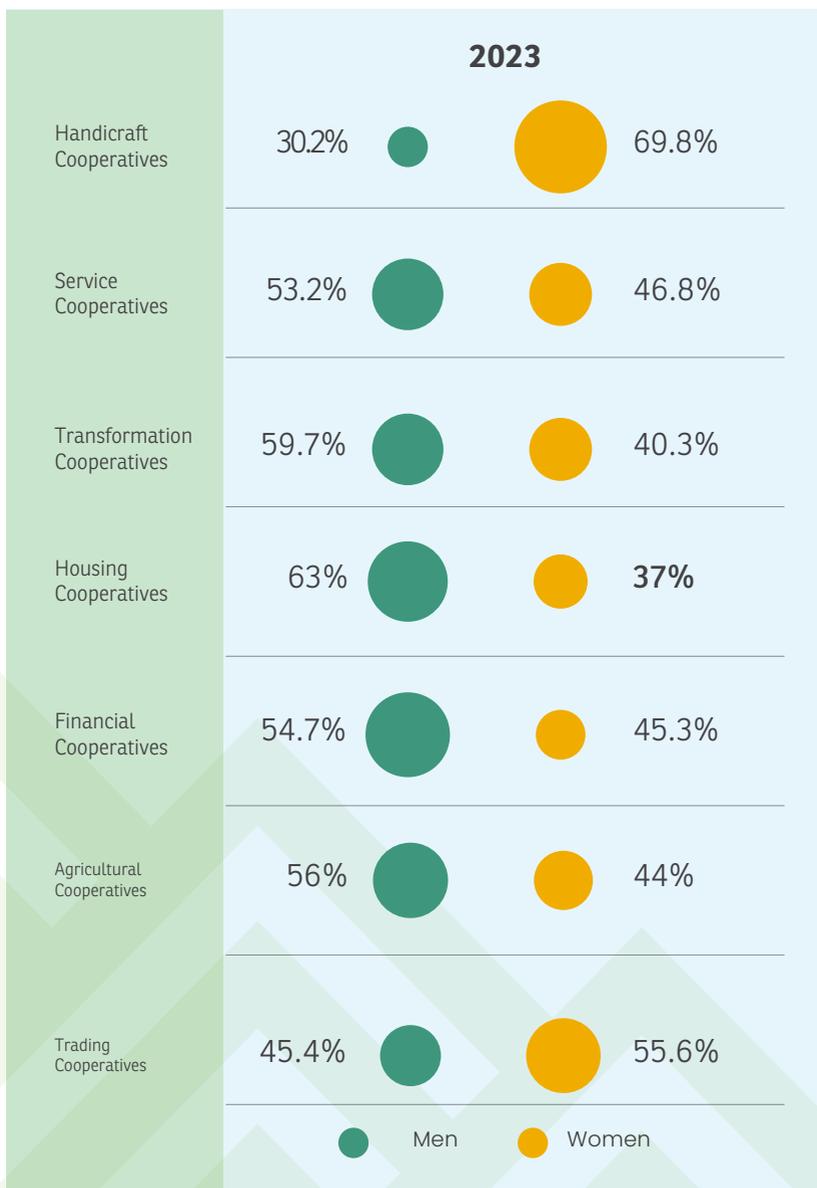


Source : Establishment Census Report (NISR, 2017 & 2020)

The aforementioned data shows that there has been an increase in the number of businesses in certain sub-sectors over the past five years. However, it is concerning to note that women’s representation in these businesses is still lower than that of men. Women only make up between 25.9% to 44.1% of these businesses, while men make up 55.8% to 74.1%. Businesses owned by women face challenges such as low skills in cash flow management, and limited skills in business planning among others.

## Gender Representation in Cooperatives





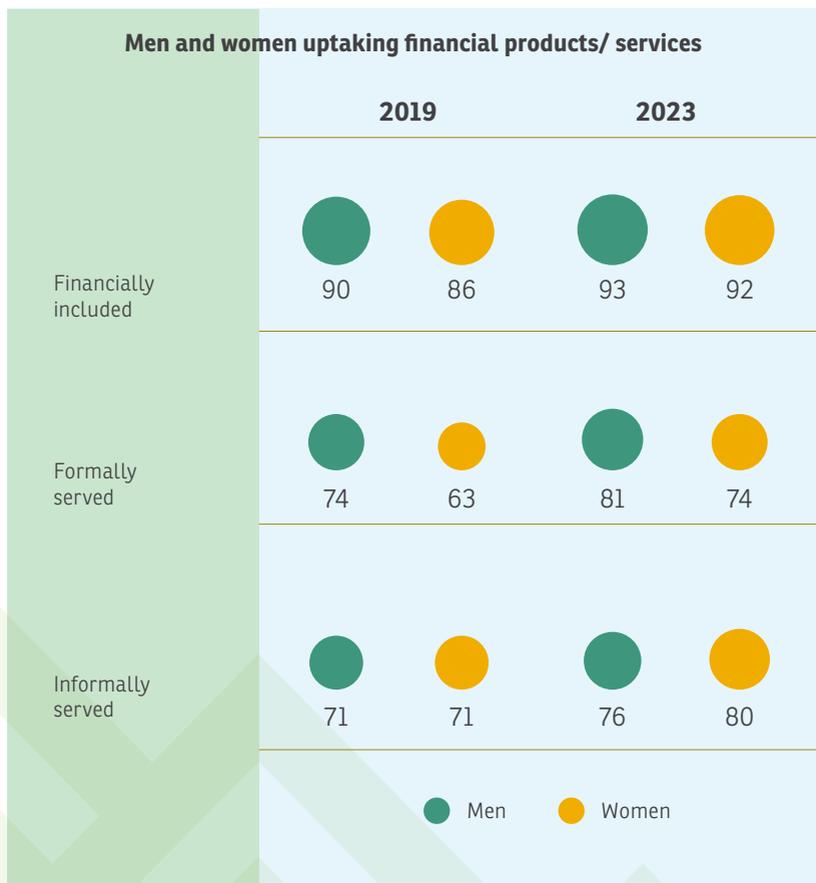
**Source:** RCA Administrative data, 2023

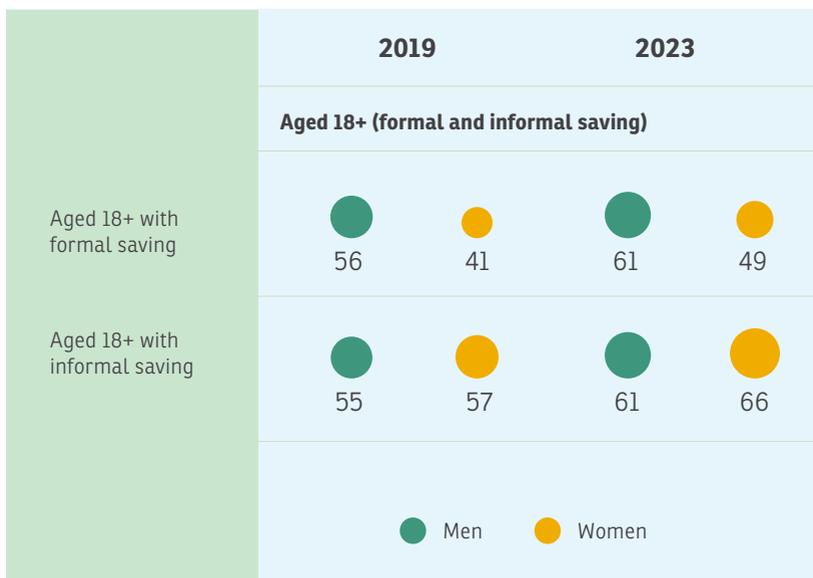
Cooperatives are private, self-reliant business entities that aim to significantly contribute to the national socio-economic transformation by creating productive jobs and generating wealth. It is worth noting that both men and women have participated in the cooperative movement in various categories, playing a crucial role in transforming the national economy. Women have also taken up leadership roles, although the data indicates a greater disparity between men and women. While maintaining these results, it is essential to work towards narrowing the gender gaps highlighted in the above data.

### **1.3. Access to finance**

Access to finance is essential for promoting growth, productivity, and employment in firms. Financial inclusion is one of the key priority areas (priority area 5) in achieving the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1), which is a critical pillar in overseeing the transition from Vision 2020 to Vision 2050. Although Rwanda is getting close to reaching gender parity in terms of financial inclusion, there is still a need to improve women's financial inclusion to the same level as men.

## Distribution of financial products/ services (%)



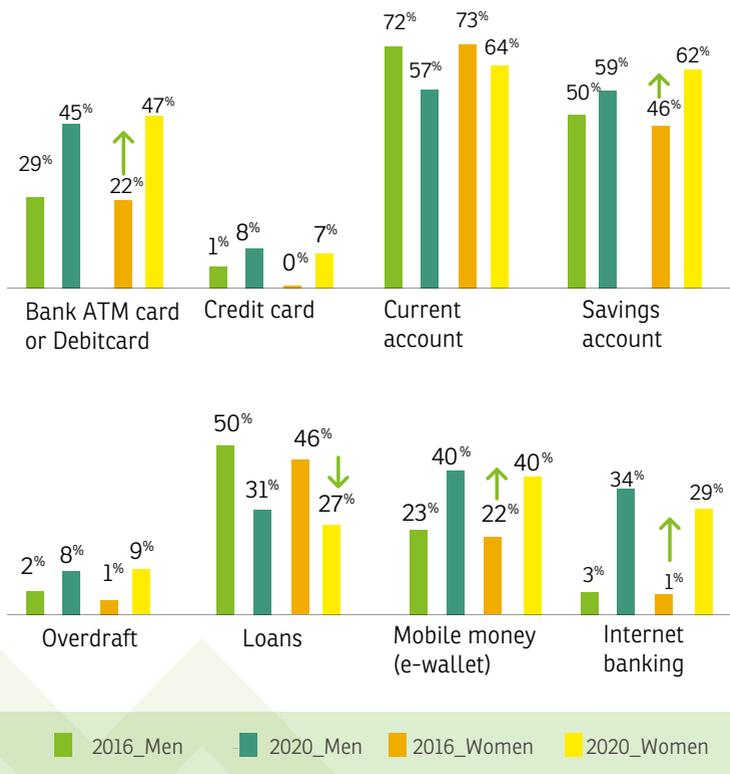


**Source:** FinScope Gender thematic report (AFR, 2016 & 2020)

Between 2019 and 2023, there was a significant improvement in men’s and women’s access to financial products provided by formal financial institutions in Rwanda. This led to an overall increase in financial inclusion, which mobilized and allocated resources to cater to the development needs of all Rwandans. Additionally, financial services are becoming digitized, financial literacy is being promoted, and initiatives are being created to ease access to finance and village savings groups.

The data shows that women’s access to financial opportunities increased by 11% (from 63% to 74%), while men’s access increased by 7% (74% to 81%). Although there was a gender gap in formal and informal savings, it is essential to note that women’s formal savings increased by 8% from 2016 to 2020. While women have seen this increase, it is essential to note that there is still a gender gap in formal and informal savings. Therefore, there is room for improvement, and efforts must continue to promote financial literacy and ease access to financial services.

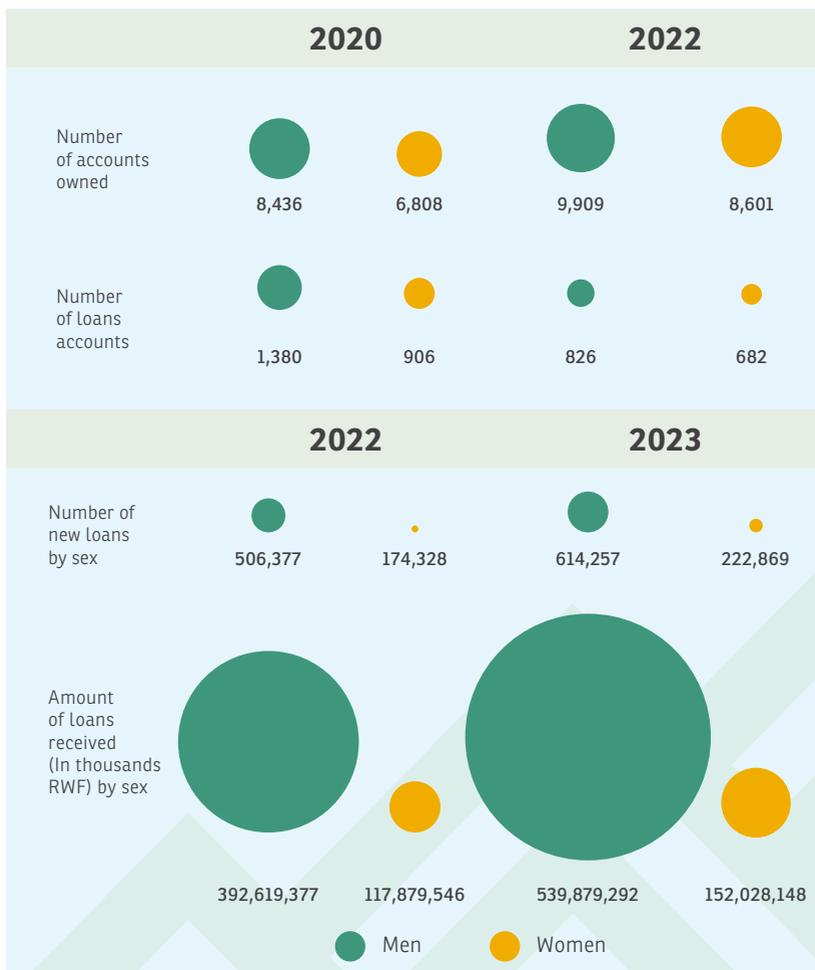
## Bank products by gender (%)



**Source:** Finiscope Thematic Report 2023

Based on the data provided, there has been a significant increase in women’s response to banking products since 2016. However, the pandemic has considerably impacted their financial behavior in 2020. Nevertheless, females have shown an increased preference for digital banking products, such as bank ATMs or debit cards, mobile money, and Internet banking. This shift can be attributed to the growing public awareness of e-banking services and financial products and the limited availability of physical banking services. Furthermore, the convenience factor of using digital banking services has been realized by many, leading to an increased adoption of such services.

## Ownership of accounts, number and amount of loans received by bank clients (numbers)



Source: BNR Administrative Data 2021, 2022 and 2023

It has been observed that men have more bank accounts and receive more loans than women in terms of quantity and value. This could be because men traditionally have greater control over productive assets, such as land and livestock, which can be used as collateral for bank loans.

However, to improve women's productivity and promote economic growth, enhancing their ability to obtain loans is crucial. Between 2020 and 2022, the number of loans given to women increased by 43%, while the number of loans given to men increased by 16.5%. This is one of the strategies to empower women and promote gender equality regarding access to financial resources, which is essential for achieving economic independence.

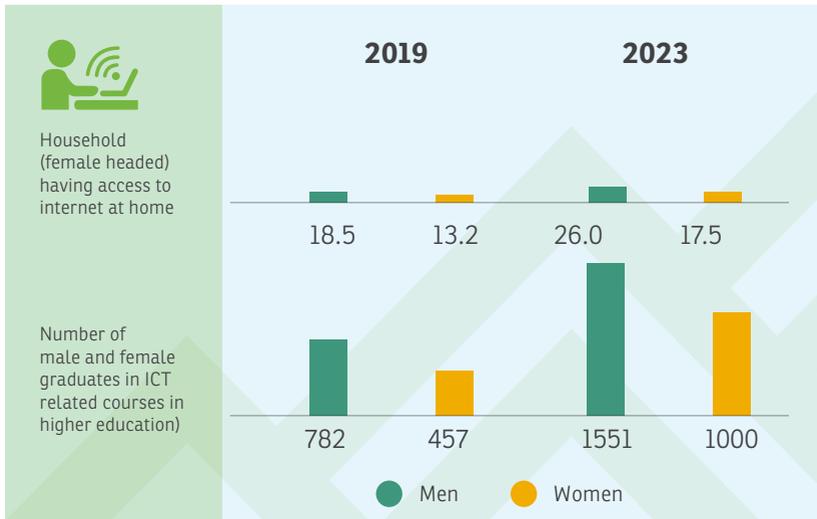
It is important to point out that programs are available that make accessing finance and financial inclusion services easier. For example, Ejo Heza is a voluntary government-sponsored scheme accessible to all Rwandan citizens, facilitating saving money. It provides an equal opportunity for everyone to save money for their old age based on their unique cash-flows and savings capacity, regardless of whether they work in the formal or informal sector. Other initiatives, such as the CEO Women Forum and the National Bank of Rwanda's gender mainstreaming strategy, which regulates the banking industry, are also driving the gender agenda in the financial sector.

It is crucial to accelerate efforts to create gender-friendly financial products, support women in transitioning from informal to formal banking, and ensure the availability of such products in financial institutions.

## 1.4 Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is increasingly becoming the driving force behind national economic transformation. This is achieved through digitizing products and services, knowledge transfer, and increased efficiency in service delivery. During the Covid-19 lockdowns, ICT platforms were crucial in providing access to essential services. The growth and adoption of ICT can potentially improve access to information and services, leading to gender equality. ICT can empower women through capacity-building opportunities, employment, business development, and service access. This section discusses the impact of ICT on gender issues and its potential to address gender disparities across selected indicators.

### Access to Internet (per household) and digital literacy (% and numbers)



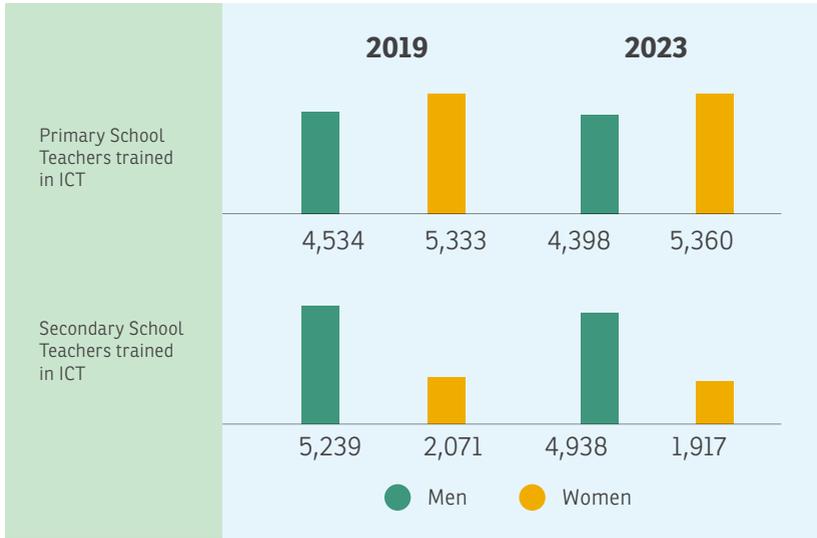
**Source:** EICV: Thematic Report on Utilities and Amenities (NISR, 2018), Administrative Data (HEC, 2021)

Access to the Internet remains limited for both men and women. However, recent data shows a significant difference in home internet access between households led by men and women. Between 2017-2018 and 2021-2022, there has been an increase in home internet access. The estimates indicate that there has been a 7.5% increase in households led by men and a 4.3% increase in households led by women.

It is important to note that access to the Internet can significantly impact employment opportunities, access to educational resources and information, and enhance knowledge and social networks. It also provides opportunities for personal development, remote work, freelance work, and online entrepreneurship. In addition, internet access facilitates access to essential services such as healthcare, online banking, and other civil services, primarily through the Irembo platform.

Therefore, there is a need to increase knowledge and awareness of digital literacy, access, affordability, and its relevance to socio-economic development. By ensuring that women have equal opportunities to access and benefit from the Internet, we can unlock their potential, amplify their voices, and create a more inclusive and equitable future for all.

## Number of Teachers Trained in ICT (2019 and 2023)



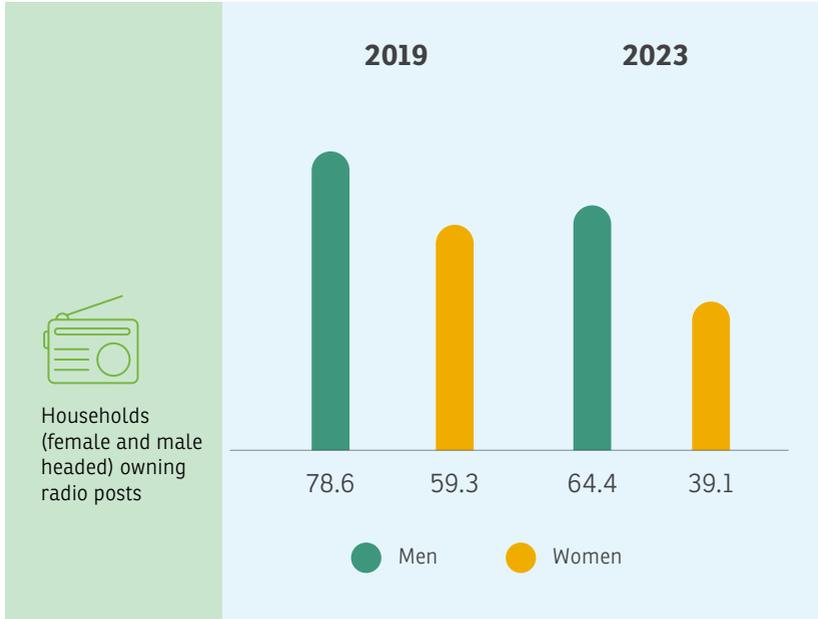
**Source:** HEC Administrative Data 2023.

Rwanda is committed to providing universal access to digital literacy for all, focusing on empowering women and girls. To achieve this goal, it is essential to develop ICT skills and ensure that primary and secondary school teachers receive adequate training that will be cascaded to their learners. However, there is currently a gender gap in ICT training among teachers, which needs to be addressed. As Rwanda transitions to an economy driven by ICT and innovation, it is crucial to prioritize efforts to build a strong team of male and female teachers skilled in ICT.

## Possession of Television, and radio %

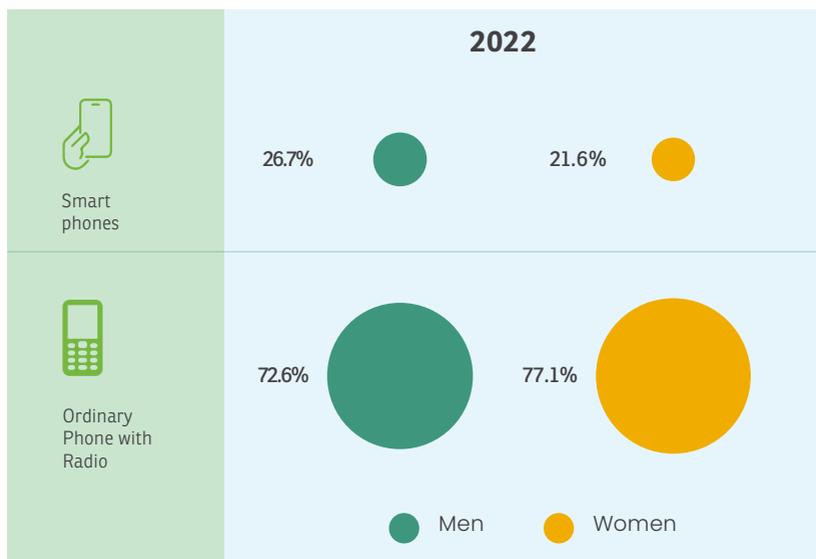


**Source:** EICV: Thematic Report on Utilities and Amenities (NISR, 2018) and FinScope: Gender and Financial Inclusion in Rwanda (AFR, 2020)



**Source:** EICV: Thematic Report on Utilities and Amenities (NISR, 2018) and FinScope: Gender and Financial Inclusion in Rwanda (AFR, 2020)

## Percentage of Individuals aged 16 years and above who own mobile phones



**Source:** RPHC Gender Thematic Report, 2022

It has been observed that male-headed households have more access to mobile phones than female-headed households. During the two periods, there was a 20.2% decrease in the ownership of mobile phones among female-headed households; however, the ownership remained relatively stable in male-headed households.

According to national statistics, 82.4% and 67.4% of households headed by males and females have at least one member owning a mobile phone. The ownership of mobile phones is crucial as it enables people to access information and digital services such as mobile banking.

Numerous initiatives in the tech industry are bridging the gender digital divide despite the current situation. Two such initiatives are the Miss Geek Competition and Tech Kobwa Boot Camp. The Tech Kobwa, Boot Camp program, brings together girls from remote high schools with limited access to technology and computers.

They learn basic programming and benefit from mentors from various sectors who help them understand the advantages of technology. On the other hand, the Miss Geek Competition brings together young women who compete based on their innovative ideas and ability to develop specific technology or business solutions. The Miss Geek Competition aims to demonstrate that girls and young women can also excel in technology and build their confidence to compete in the open market.

Additionally, there is a Women in ICT awareness campaign, an annual program that involves women in rural areas interacting with other women to understand their different contexts and actual needs. Rwanda also established the Rwanda Coding Academy, a model school designed to be the center of excellence in coding training. The academy produces local expertise in software development, cyber security, and embedded systems. Its 50/50 gender student enrollment aims to close gender gaps in the ICT workforce and among tech entrepreneurs.



# PILLAR TWO

## GENDER EQUALITY IN SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Rwanda's National Strategy for Transformation 1 (NST1) aims to develop the country's citizens into skilled and capable individuals with a high standard of living in a secure and stable society. Significant progress has been made towards achieving this goal, with improvements in education, healthcare, social protection, and access to water and energy. This section will outline the progress made in these areas for both men and women.



## EDUCATION

- Enrollment of students/ learners at all levels of education (% and numbers)
- Enrollment of students with disabilities (at all levels)
- Distribution of boys and girls in STEM (Upper Secondary and Higher Education)
- Qualified teaching staff at all levels of education (% and numbers)
- Students (boys and girls) passing national primary, S3, S6, TVET exams and higher education graduates (%)
- National average on repetition and dropout by sex
- Transition rate by category and sex (%)
- Distribution of scholarships (numbers)

## HEALTH

- Health insurance coverage among men and women population aged 15- 49 years (%)
- Women Receiving Antenatal Care from a Skilled Provider (age category) (%)
- Family planning among currently married women
- Male engagement in family planning

1

INDICATORS

2

5

## ENERGY

- Access to electricity (%)
- Cooking energy by HHs (Female and male-headed) %

4

## WATER AND SANITATION

- Percentage of private households that have access to improved drinking water
- Households with access to improved and shared sanitation facilities (%)

## GENDER IN SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

3

## SOCIAL PROTECTION

- VUP beneficiaries by component (public works, direct support, financial services) and gender (numbers)
- Beneficiaries of social security programs (% and numbers)

## 2.1. Education

The Government has implemented various mechanisms to ensure equal access to education for boys and girls. This is achieved through programs such as school feeding, access to 9- and 12-year basic education, gender-friendly school environments, girls education policy, early childhood development centers, digitalization of education, education grants, and improved infrastructure for learning facilities, including those for learners with disabilities. These programs have significantly improved the quality and accessibility of education for both genders.

### Enrollment of students/ learners at all levels of education (% and numbers)



Source: Education Statistical Yearbook (MINEDUC, 2019-2022).



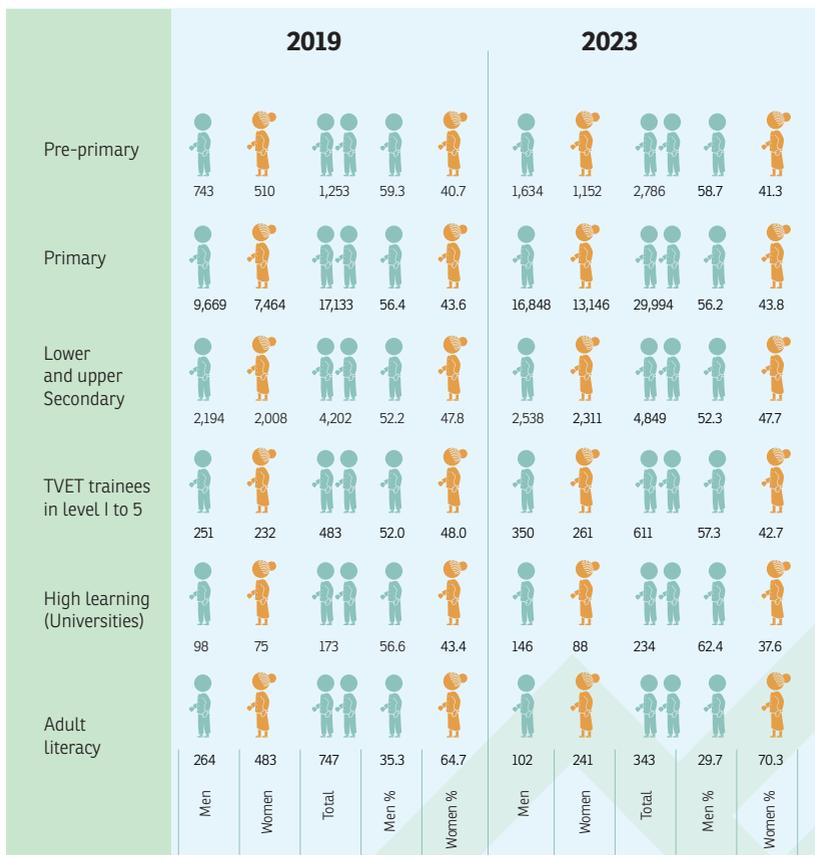
**Source:** Education Statistical Yearbook (MINEDUC, 2019-2022).

Gender parity is maintained at pre-primary and primary levels for both boys and girls. However, there is a decrease in the enrollment of boys in lower and upper secondary levels, and their dropout rates are higher than girls'. This is partly attributed to social expectations that boys should work and earn money rather than attend school. Furthermore, there is a gender disparity in higher education, particularly in natural sciences, where women are underrepresented.

Regarding TVET, there is no doubt that it is a relevant pathway for equipping young people with the skills and knowledge required in the labor market. Therefore, TVET is a way to reduce youth unemployment. With the current status, it is clear that the female participation rate in TVET is above 40%, which is commendable progress. However, gender stereotypes and practices are still observed, which hinder women's participation in male-dominated trades.

The University of Rwanda's statistics for 2021 show that only 34% of its undergraduate and graduate students are female. Girls often have more responsibilities at home among other factors, consequently, their scores are usually lower than boys', resulting in fewer girls being admitted to public universities as indicated by data relating to the transition from upper secondary to higher education. They are often forced to attend more expensive private institutions.

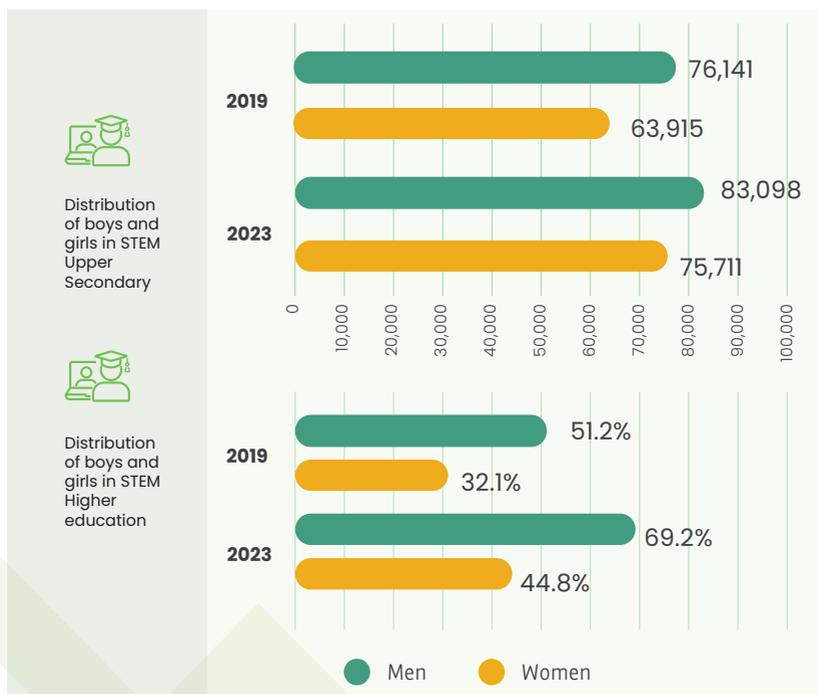
## Enrollment of students with disabilities (at all levels)



**Source:** Education Statistical Yearbook (MINEDUC, 2019-2022).

In the academic year 2021/22, there was an increase in school enrollment by students with disabilities from 30,803 to 38,937, of which 44.4% were female students. However, female students' enrollment is the lowest at the university level, standing at 37.6%, compared to male students' enrolment at 62.4%. Another significant gender gap relates to enrolment in adult literacy, where males with disabilities make up 29.7% vis-à-vis 70.3% of females. Gender norms, cultural biases, and stigmatization of persons with disabilities are still prevalent. Therefore, there is a need to establish strategies aimed at increasing the participation of female students with disabilities at the university level.

## Distribution of boys and girls in STEM (Upper Secondary & Higher education)



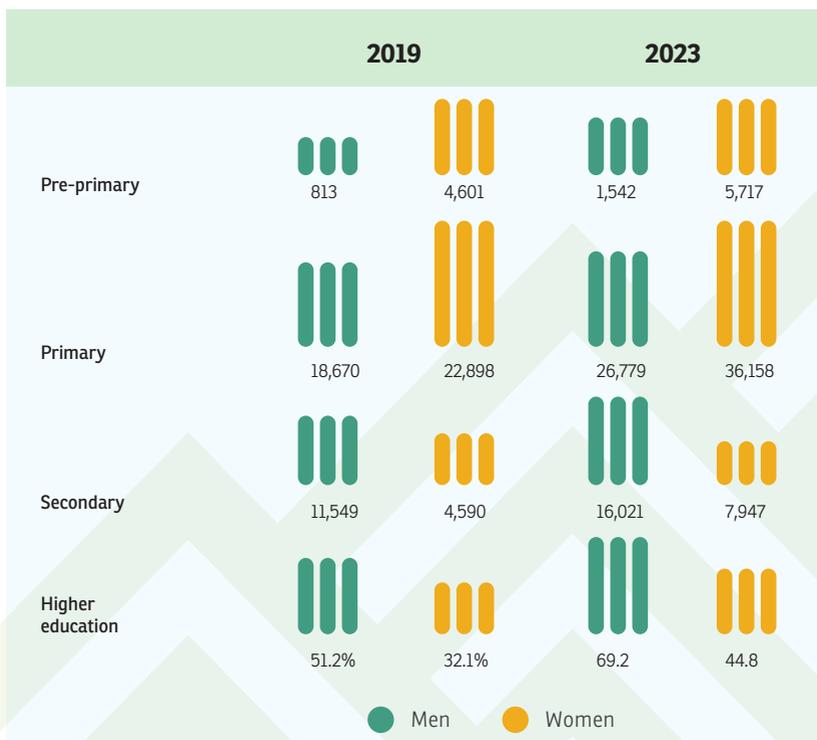
**Source:** Education Statistical Yearbook (MINEDUC, 2019-2022).

Although there are fewer girls in STEM fields than boys, with only 47.7% as opposed to 52.3%, there has been a commendable increase of 2.1% in the enrollment of girls in STEM-related subjects. This positive trend can be attributed to various initiatives such as awareness campaigns, mentorship programs, and the availability of school infrastructure, among others. At the higher education level, 63.6% of students enrolled in STEM are male, while only 36.4% are female in the 2021/2022 academic year.

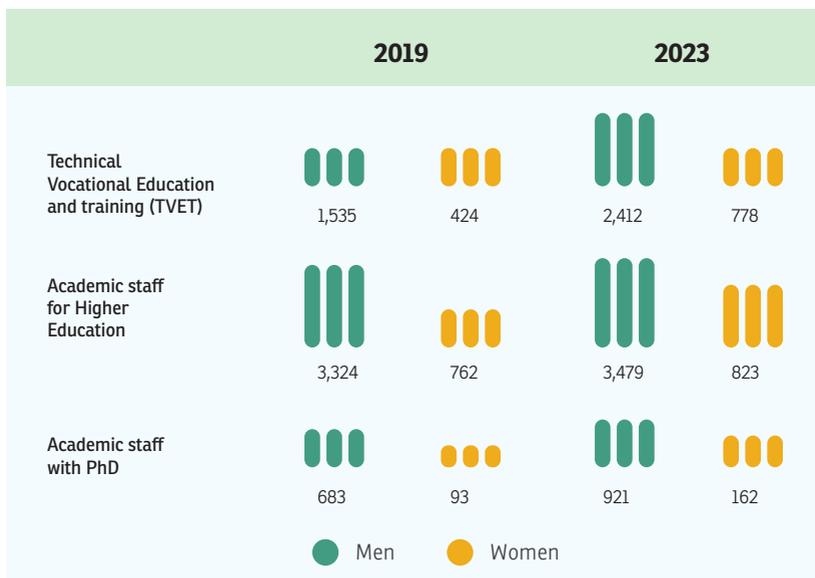
At the higher education level, 69.2% of students enrolled in STEM are male, while only 44.8% are female in the 2021/2022 academic year. However, there has been a 4.3% increase in female enrollment in STEM in higher education, whereas male enrollment has decreased by 4.3%.

While there is progress in STEM-related aspects especially for girls, it is essential to create linkages between the graduates and job markets and address the existing gender inequalities at the labor force, especially in technical fields that are STEM-related. By doing so, this will pave the way for a future where more women and men equally drive innovation and create an industry that can fully leverage the benefits of a more diverse workforce

### Qualified teaching staff at all levels of education (% and numbers)



Source: Education Statistical Yearbook (MINEDUC, 2019-2022).



**Source:** *Education Statistical Yearbook (MINEDUC, 2019-2022).*

There is a significant discrepancy in the number of male and female teachers at different levels of education. The majority of female teachers are found in the pre-primary level (85.6%) and primary education level (56.9%), while male teachers are more prevalent in the secondary level (68.3%) and higher learning education level (81.0%).

This suggests that male teachers tend to occupy higher-paying positions in secondary and higher-learning institutions than their female counterparts. While it is encouraging to see more female teachers in primary education, it is important to support and encourage them to pursue advancement to other levels, including leadership or managerial roles.

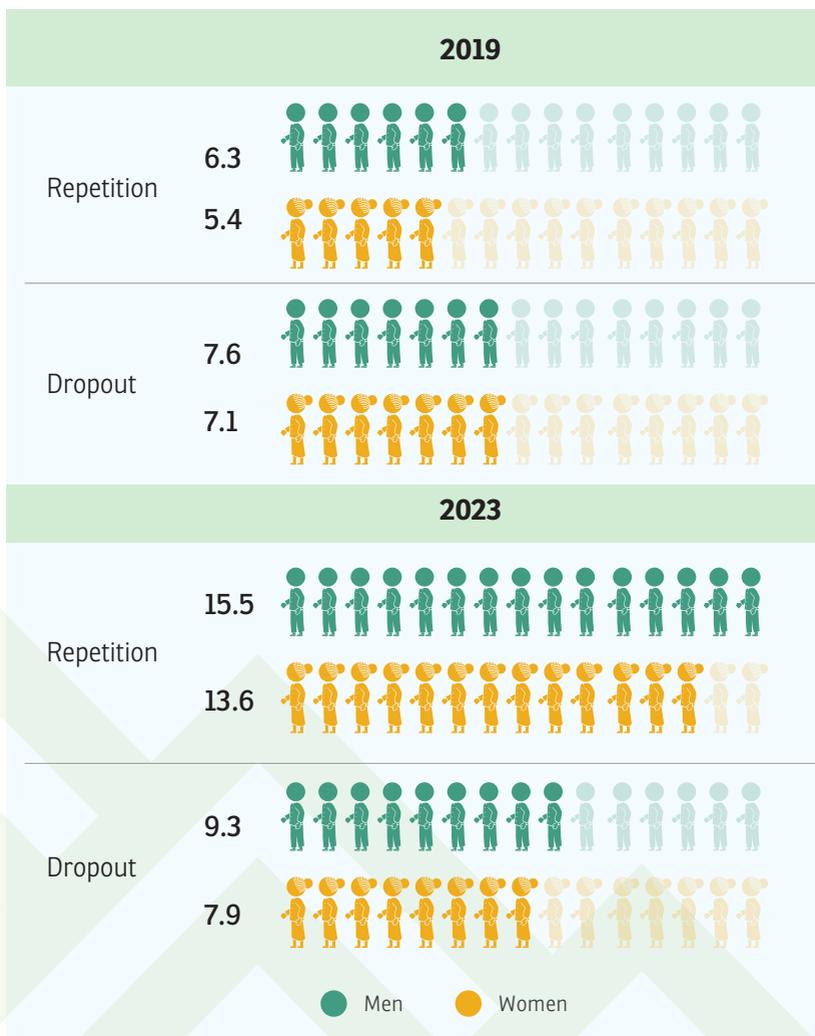
## Students (boys and girls) passing national primary, S3, S6, TVET exams and higher education graduates (%)



**Source:** Education Statistical Yearbook (2019–2022).

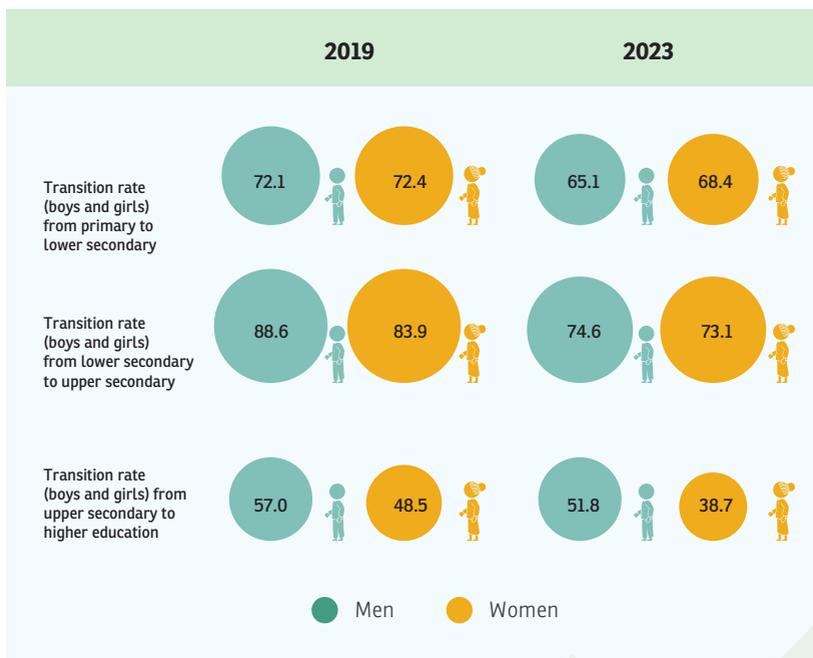
The passing rates for primary, lower, and upper secondary education, as well as TVET, have slightly increased for both genders in 2022 compared to 2019. While it is essential to maintain these gains, it is equally vital to address the reasons behind the low passing rates in higher education. This is particularly important as it affects the transition from upper secondary to higher education especially in public universities and consequently the development of a skilled and professional workforce.

## National average on repetition and dropout by sex



Source: Education Statistical Yearbook (2019–2022).

## Transition rate by category and sex (%)



**Source:** *Education Statistical Yearbook (MINEDUC, 2019-2022).*

In recent years, the Government of Rwanda has significantly improved students' transition rate from primary to secondary education. However, attention must be paid to the transition rate between the final year of primary school and the first year of secondary school to ensure it is on track. Moreover, there has been a decrease in the transition rate for male and female students from lower secondary to upper secondary levels which is mainly attributed to dropout and repetition levels.

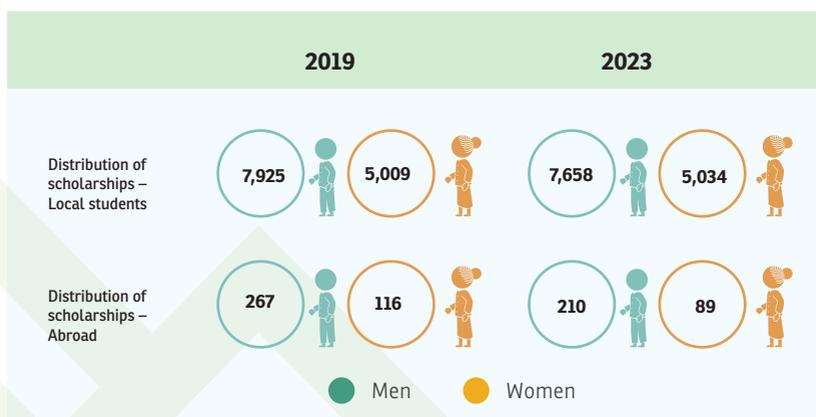
It is essential to acknowledge that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a high dropout with 9.3% for males, 7.9% for females, and repetition rates during this period of 15.5% for males and 13.6% for females as indicated in the data above. The disruptions to learning and learning loss caused by the COVID-19 pandemic could explain drops in the academic achievements of students that led to high repetition rates and low promotion rate. Other factors that affect the transition to secondary school include teenage

pregnancy for girls, distance to and from school, and the cost of higher education, especially for those who don't meet the requirements for public universities.

Therefore, it is crucial to actively involve parents and guardians in their children's education and inspire them to study, especially encouraging girls to stay in school to transition to other levels.

Furthermore, the education sector stakeholders and local governments must implement programs like catchups that help students who have dropped out, focusing on assisting teenage mothers in reintegrating into the education system.

## Distribution of scholarships (numbers)



**Source:** HEC Administrative Data 2022 (MINEDUC)

Evidence shows that many students who complete their secondary education and aspire to pursue higher education require financial support. Unfortunately, the number of scholarships available for both male and female students looking to study abroad has decreased over the past two years. Scholarships, typically offered through loans and grants, are crucial in ensuring that students receive a quality education and can bridge significant professional development gaps. This, in turn, helps to create a skilled workforce..

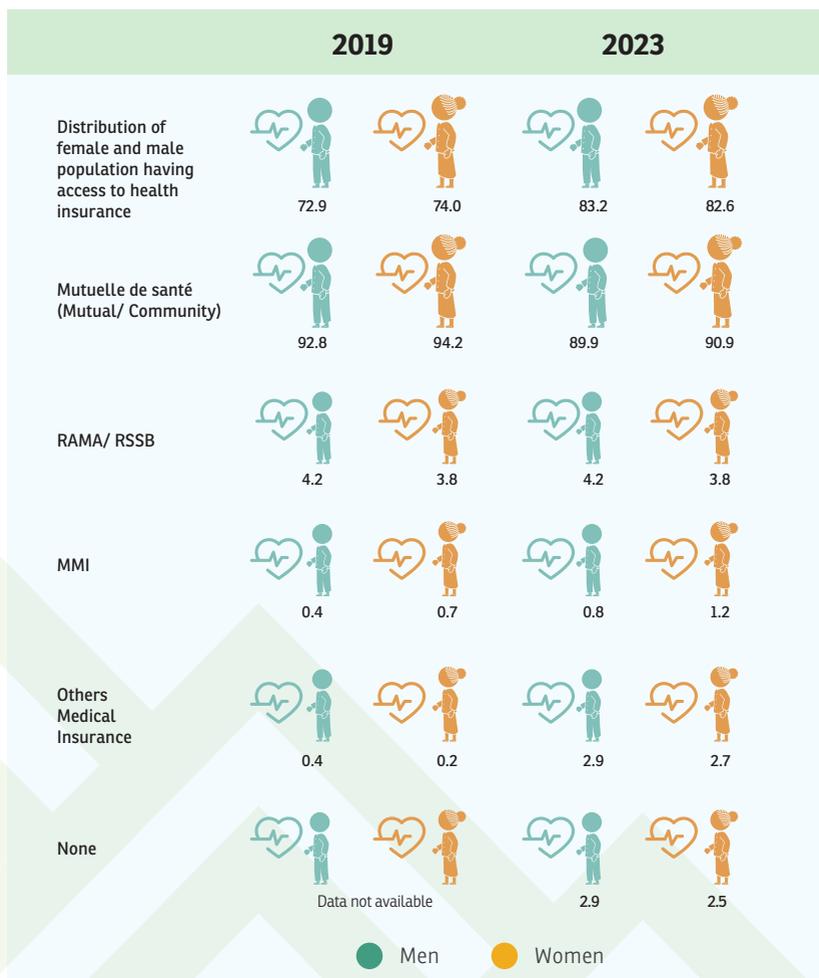
## 2.2. Health

A healthy population is instrumental both in terms of productivity and people's improved livelihood. In this case the health sector in Rwanda has received remarkable interventions that have improved health standards in general and that of women in particular.

Among the key enablers that has resulted into improved life expectancy of (67.7 years for males and 71.2 years for females) include increased community health insurance coverage schemes, use of drones' technologies that ensures efficiency and timeliness in the delivery of much needed supplies like blood. Also the use of RAPID SMS (used to easy communication for any emergency cases regarding child and maternal health), increased health professionals, significant increase of public and private health facilities with a focus on specialized services have improved geographical access to health services by all Rwandans and women in particular. More so, the institutionalization of Community Health Workers has played a critical role for maternal and child health service provision at community level across the country.

This sub-section explores gender equality with regard to health mirrored through access to health insurance, mortality rate, and access to services such as antenatal and family planning.

## Health insurance coverage among men and women population aged 15- 49 years (%)



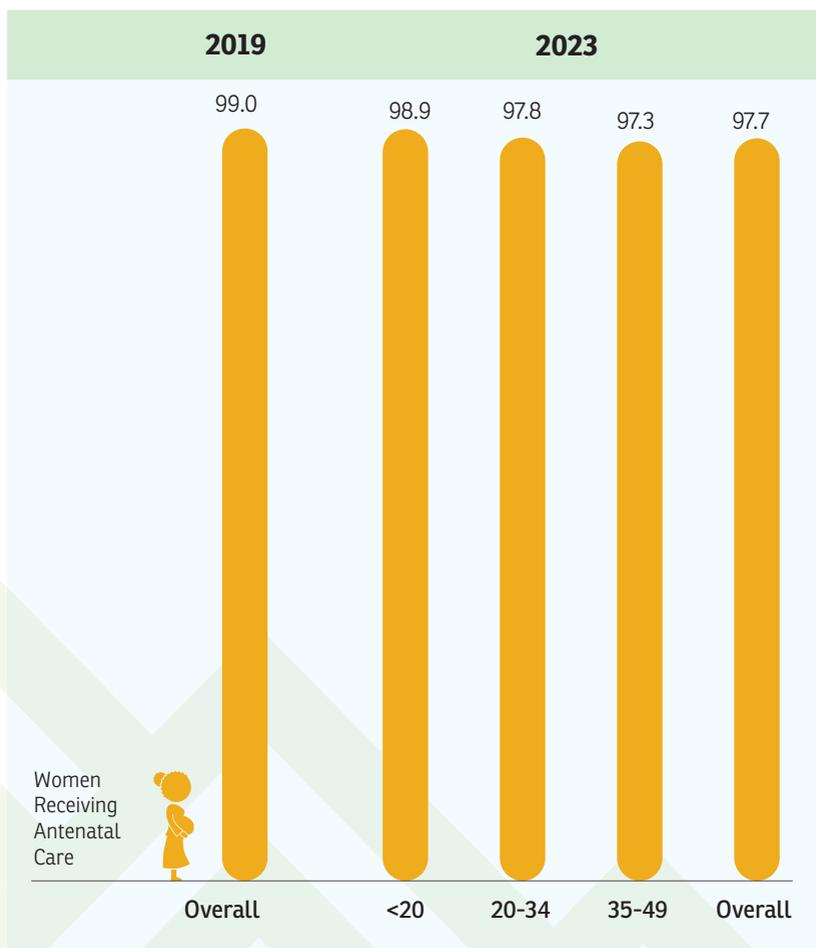
Source: Demographic and Health Survey 2019 - 2020 & RPHC, 2022

Based on the latest analysis, both men and women in Rwanda have equal access to health insurance. 82.6% of women and 83.2% of men have access to it due to increased awareness of the Community-Based Health Insurance Scheme (CBHI) benefits.

CBHI includes annual performance targets (Imihigo) and community-level mobilization efforts. However, access to CBHI, also known as Mutuelle de Santé, has slightly decreased compared to 2019. The percentage of women accessing CBHI has declined from 94.1% to 90.9%, and the rate for men has decreased from 94.0% to 89.9%.

Despite this slight decrease, health insurance has significantly increased access to healthcare services for women giving birth at health centers. This has reduced child and maternal mortality rates from 27 to 12 for females, 27 to 14 for males, and 210 to 203 for mothers.

## Women Receiving Antenatal Care from a Skilled Provider (age category) (%)

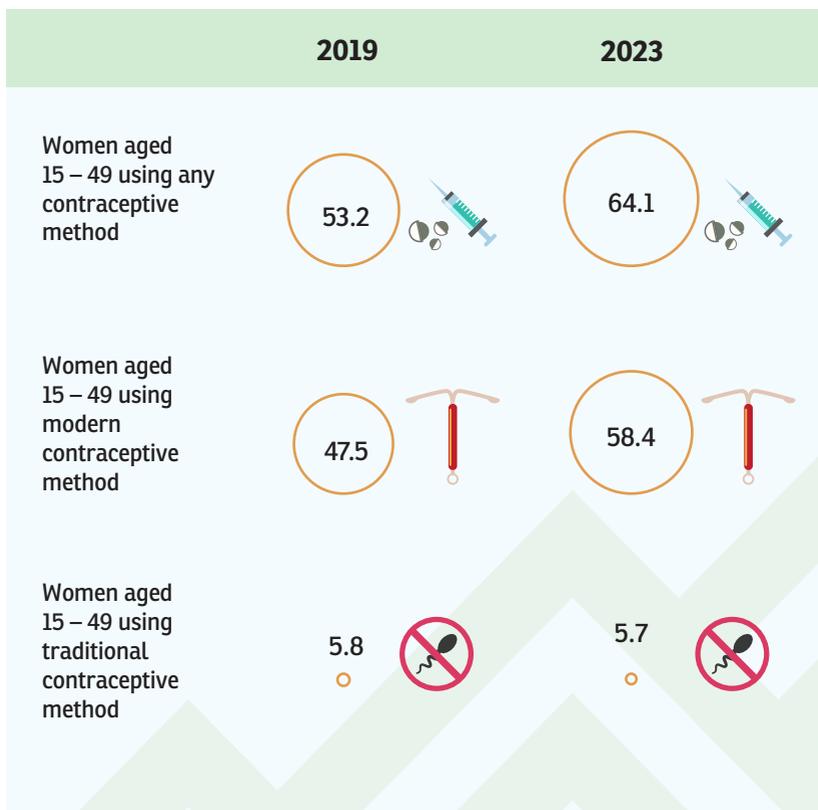


**Source:** Demographic and Health Survey (NISR, 2016 & 2022)

The levels of access to antenatal care services are very satisfactory, with an estimated 97.7%. This is attributed to an increase in the follow-up of Community Health Workers (CHWs), access to community health insurance, and improved skills for birth attendants, among others. In addition, community awareness/dialogues on gender equality were

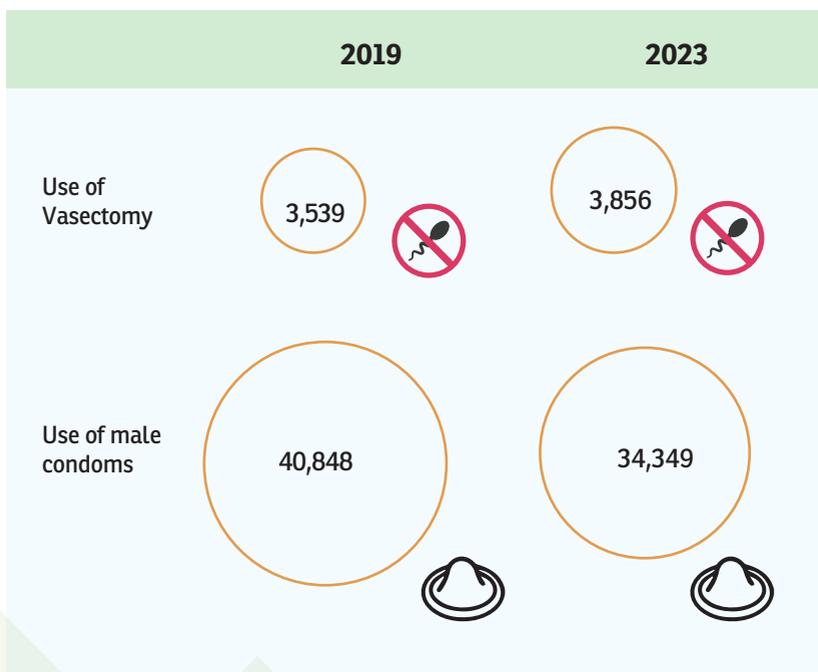
conducted to promote gendered decision-making at the household level and ensure men’s engagement in maternal and child health issues. All these initiatives have significantly contributed to Rwanda’s success in achieving performance in antenatal care services.

## Family planning among currently married women



Source: Demographic and Health Survey (NISR, 2016 & 2020)

## Male engagement in family planning



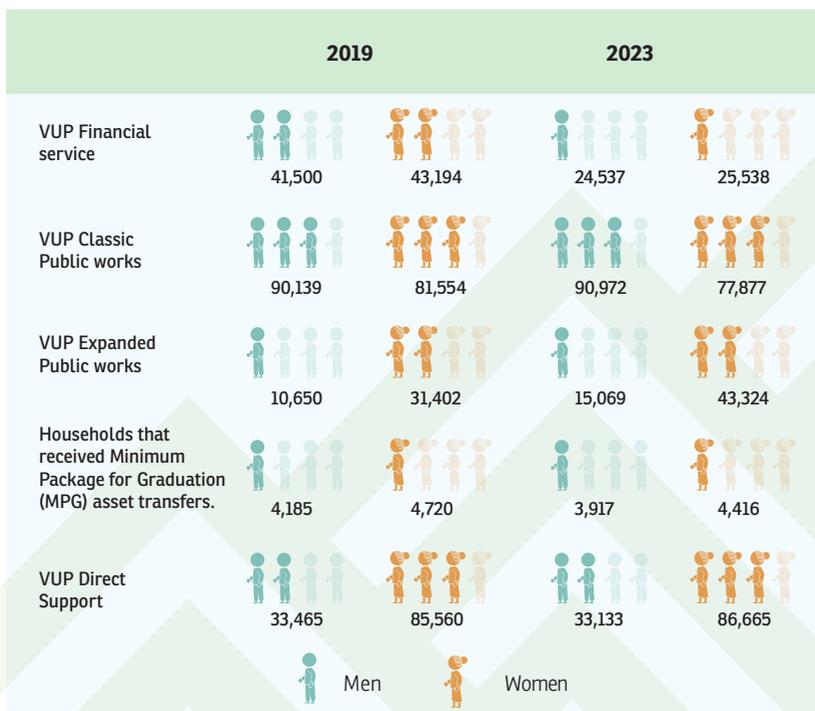
**Source:** Demographic and Health Survey (NISR, 2016 & 2020)

Around 64.1% of married women aged 15–49 use some form of birth control. However, the number of men opting for vasectomy and use of male condoms as a birth control method is still very low. This is because of negative social norms and attitudes that prevent men from accessing health services, including family planning, and young people from accessing sexual and reproductive health services and information. Therefore, it is important to create culturally appropriate programs that address these issues, especially for young men. Moreover, it is crucial to implement educational programs that focus on sexual and reproductive health for adolescents to reduce the incidence of unwanted pregnancies and prevent school dropouts related to pregnancy.

## 2.3. Social protection

The Government of Rwanda has implemented various schemes and interventions in the social protection sector to reduce poverty among the population and achieve national and international development goals. The social protection policy (2020) aims to eradicate extreme poverty and promote human capital development, serving as a foundation for long-term prosperity. This policy also intends to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty and support the delivery of equitable and inclusive social transformation and growth. The policy is built on four key areas: social security, social care services, short-term social assistance, and livelihood and employment support.

### VUP beneficiaries by component (public works, direct support, financial services) and gender (numbers)



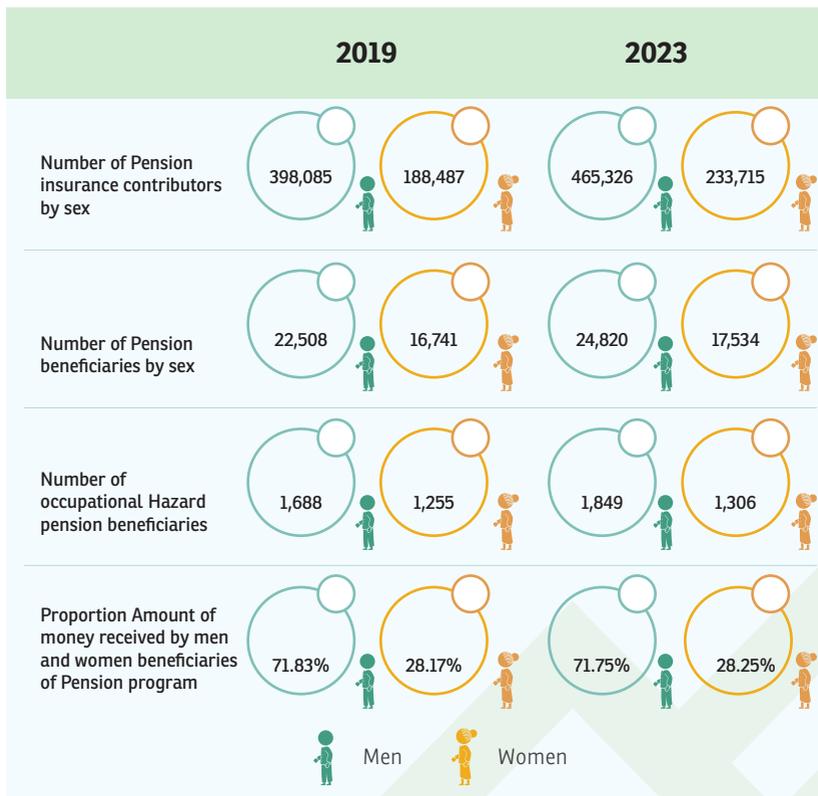
Source: Annual Report (LODA, 2018 & 2022).

The social protection program has played a significant role in improving the livelihoods of both male and female beneficiaries and has helped to reduce poverty.

This is attributed to women being generally more impoverished than men, and the program works to improve their living standards while supporting their families. Women's active participation in VUP classic and expanded public works is expected to create more job opportunities, especially in community infrastructure projects such as terracing, irrigation, classrooms, and access roads.

As the Government aims to track poverty graduation levels, it is crucial to align women's technical skills with existing employment opportunities, particularly those related to infrastructure projects.

## Beneficiaries of social security programs (% and numbers)



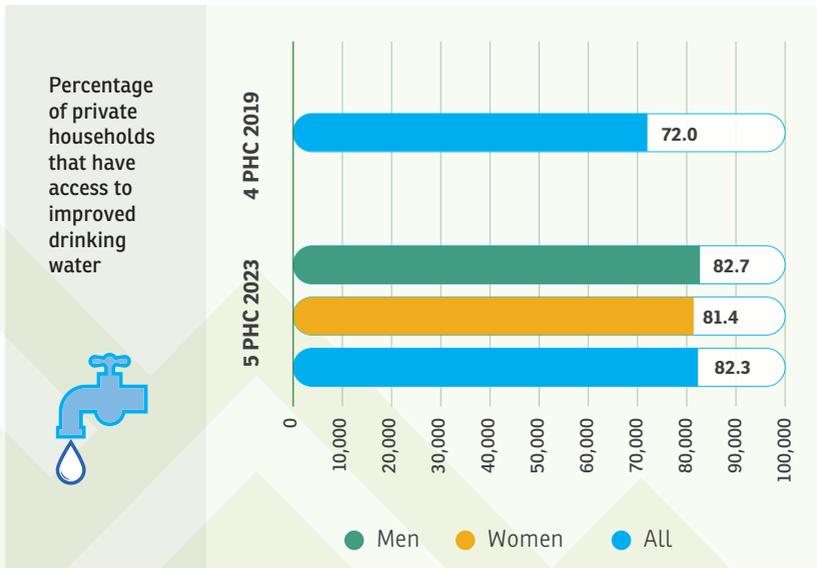
Source: Administrative Data (RSSB, 2022)

There are still gender inequalities in social security programs, particularly in pension insurance and occupational hazard pension. Men and women do not receive the same amount of money from these programs. Women face several challenges in accessing pension schemes, such as their high employment in the informal sector, which makes it difficult for them to access the national pension scheme. To address these issues, the Ejo Heza program was initiated, especially for the workforce in the informal sector.

## 2.4. Access to Water and Energy

This section provides an overview of gender equality status regarding access to water and energy in Rwanda. Access to water and energy are basic needs and essential to the NST1’s objective to achieve a modern Rwandan household in both urban and rural areas. To further this objective, interventions were implemented to increase access to water from 87.4% to 100% and access to electricity from 34% to 100% in urban and rural areas by 2024.

### Percentage of private households that have access to improved drinking water

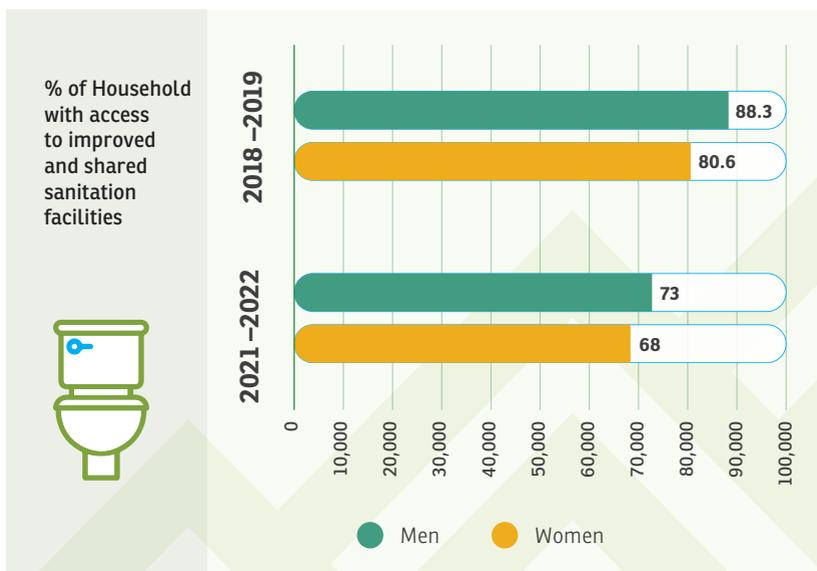


Source: Fifth Population and Housing Census (NISR, 2012 & 2022)

Water is an essential resource for life and has a wide range of uses, including industry, agriculture, drinking, sanitation, and hygiene. Access to water and sanitation is crucial for women and girls, who are often responsible for managing household water and sanitation and their reproductive and menstrual health needs.

According to Rwanda’s latest population census report, 82.3% of the population has access to clean drinking water. Households headed by men have slightly higher access to clean water (82.7%) compared to those headed by women (81.4%), with no significant difference in water access within the distances of 200m in urban areas and 500m in rural areas as set by NST1 for both categories. These statistics indicate that there has been significant progress in improving access to clean water, which saves women and girls from traveling long distances to collect water, allowing them to use their time and energy for more productive and profitable activities.

### Household with access to improved and shared sanitation facilities (%)



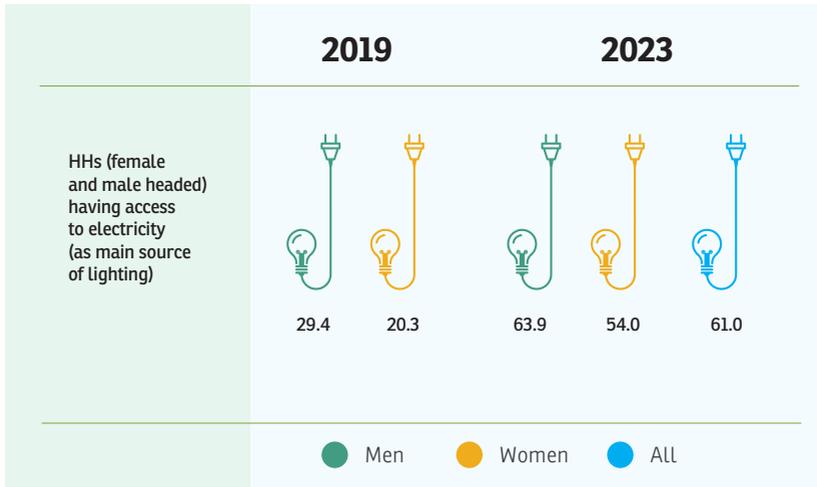
Source: Fifth Population and Housing Census (NISR, 2012 & 2022)

According to the figure above, male-headed households (73%) have better access to improved sanitation facilities than female-headed households (68%). The data also show that male-headed households in rural (80%) have better-improved access to sanitation than those headed by females (74%). This difference in access to sanitation facilities between genders may be partly due to income differences, where men have more financial resources to construct these facilities than women. Therefore, future interventions should consider establishing sanitation facilities for both males and females through community support programs such as umuganda and human security interventions.

## Access to energy

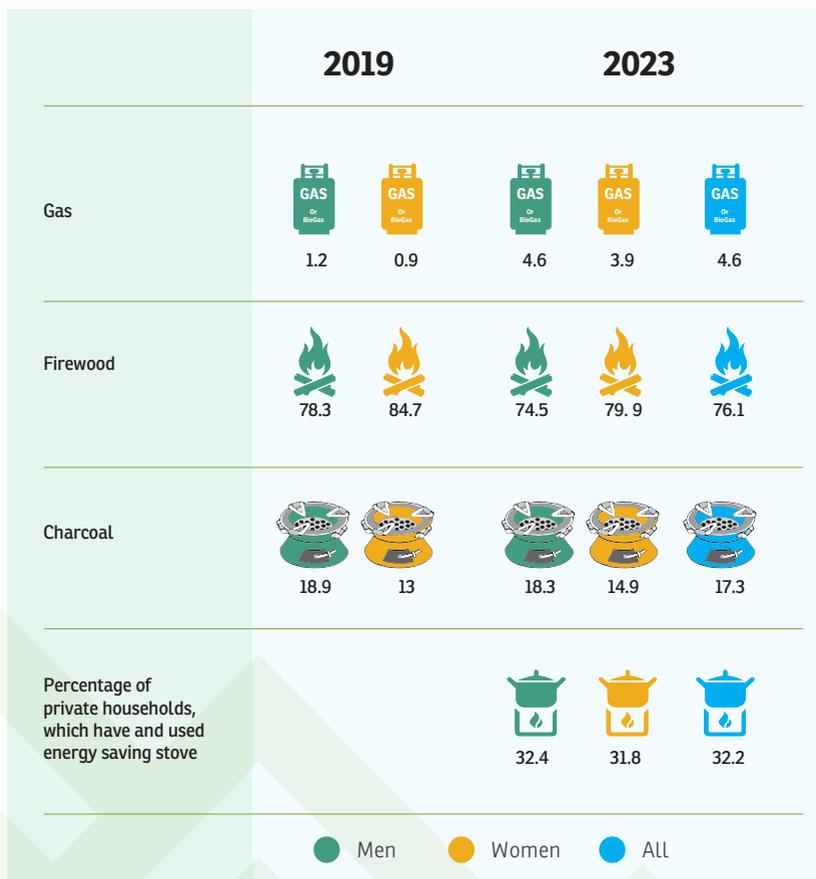
Globally, access to reliable and affordable energy is increasingly recognized as a critical driver for economic growth. Energy boosts productivity and enables different industries to thrive, ultimately improving individuals' social and economic outcomes. On the other hand, lack of access to energy negatively impacts individuals and communities, and its inadequacy hinders several economic opportunities. In particular, the lack of access to modern energy disproportionately affects the health and safety of women and girls who shoulder care work burdens. They are exposed to indoor air pollution from cooking with dirty fuels and face heavy loads and risks of traveling long distances to collect biomass. Rwanda has made efforts to increase electricity connectivity, and the 5th population census indicates that the cumulative connectivity rate is 61.0% of Rwandan households, including 47% connected to the national grid and 14% accessing through off-grid systems (mainly solar).

## Access to electricity (%)



**Source:** EICV: Thematic Report on Utilities Amenities (NISR, 2018); Fifth Population and Housing Census (NISR, 2022)

## Cooking energy by HHs (Female and male-headed) %



**Source:** EICV: Thematic Report on Utilities Amenities (NISR, 2018); Fifth Population and Housing Census (NISR, 2022)

It has been revealed that amongst households that utilize electricity for lighting, 63.9% are headed by men, while only 54.0% are led by women. Although both male (74.5%) and female (79.9%) households mostly rely on firewood as their primary energy source, women-headed households tend to use firewood more frequently.

It is crucial to improve the current situation and provide women access to clean, safe, and environment-friendly energy for cooking and lighting. By doing so, women will have more time for productive activities due to the reduction of their dependence on charcoal and firewood.



# PILLAR THREE

## GENDER EQUALITY IN TRANSFORMATIONAL GOVERNANCE

Rwanda has implemented a principle of good governance that promotes equal participation of both women and men. The country's constitution mandates a minimum representation quota of 30% for women in decision-making organs. This is supported by a strong political will, gender-responsive legal and policy frameworks, and institutional mechanisms aimed at improving gender equality in development programs.

This section provides an overview of the current status of gender equality across different levels of governance, including the legislature, executive, and judiciary, as well as local government and public and quasi-public institutions.



## GOVERNANCE

1

### INDICATORS

- Representation of women and men in the Parliament (%)
- Cabinet members and other central-level leaders by sex (%)
- Distribution of judges and inspectors in the judiciary system (2019 - 2023) (%)
- Women Representation in Rwanda National Police
- Representation of men and women in decentralized local government (%)
- Representation of Men and Women in the Media Sector
- Distribution of elected men and women in the PSF committees (numbers)

# 2

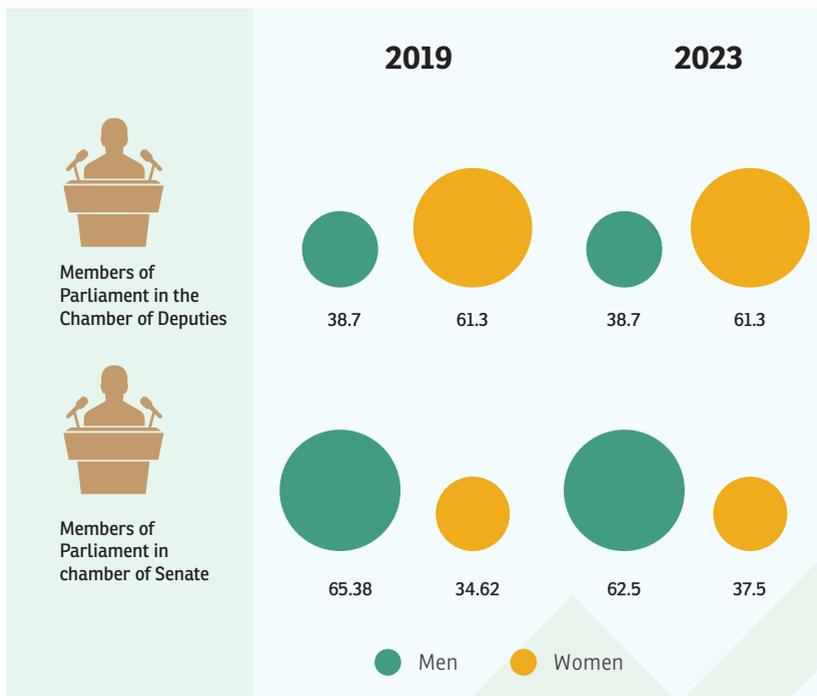
## GBV SERVICE DELIVERY

- Isange One Stop Centers
- Teenage Pregnancy and Motherhood (%)

## GENDER IN TRANSFORMATIONAL GOVERNANCE

### 3.1. GOVERNANCE

#### Representation of women and men in the Parliament (%)



**Source:** Administrative data, Parliament, Mifotra 2022

Rwanda is leading the world regarding women’s representation in the parliament, especially in the lower house. This is due to the country’s decision to adopt inclusive governance. The significant representation of women in the national Parliament has resulted in the enactment of laws sensitive to gender issues, enhanced gender accountability through oversight programs, and played a vital role in ensuring that financing for gender equality becomes robust and pertinent. Maintaining the gains made so far in the next elections is crucial.

## Cabinet members and other central level leaders by sex (%)



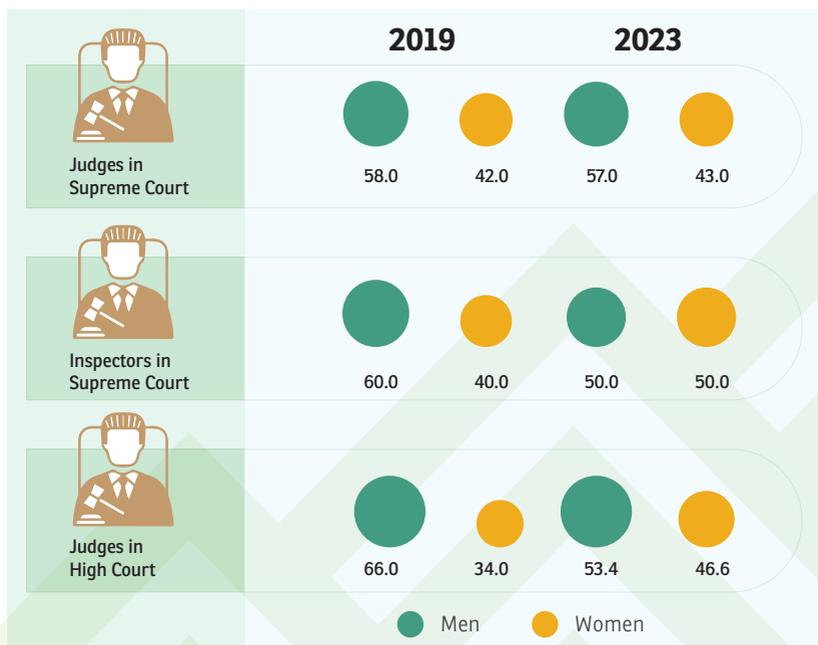
**Source:** MIFOTRA Administrative 2023 and Government website accessed by December 2023.

The active and meaningful participation of women and girls in national development is crucial for the progress of any society. When women are empowered to lead, it benefits everyone. Studies have shown that women in leadership positions can increase productivity, enhance collaboration, inspire dedication, and improve fairness. This has been evidenced by women’s role in Rwanda’s transformational Governance.

In addition, it is important to highlight that as a result of Rwanda’s Political system that empowers and values women, Rwandan Women are also contributing to global governance with examples of Francophone, AGRA, African Union Commission, NBA Africa, United Nations, ILO, and IFAD.

It is important to note that women’s representation in leadership positions is not just an end goal but also a means to systematically challenge the gender stereotypes and norms that hold women back from leadership roles. To continue to sustain the gains and accelerate progress, patriarchal attitudes and stereotypes that discriminate against women need to be addressed. This can be achieved by nurturing young boys and girls on gender-responsive political education, challenging the status quo of women’s participation in elected positions, strengthening mentorship and coaching of young women leaders, and addressing challenges related to managing triple roles. It is also crucial to ensure the full support of the community.

## Distribution of judges and inspectors in the judiciary system (2019 - 2023) (%)

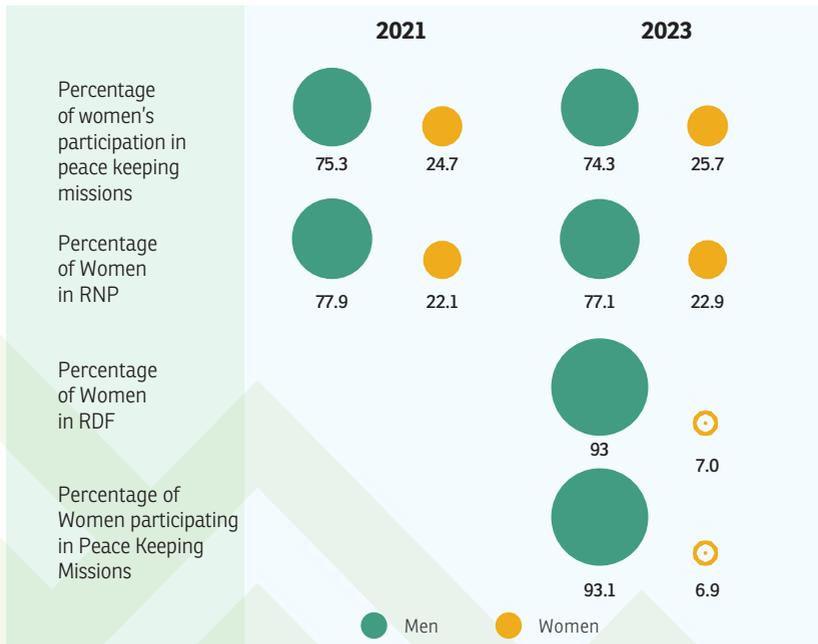


Source: Judiciary 2018 & 2022

The judiciary system plays a vital role in promoting gender equality. It is not just about having equal representation of women as judges but also

about considering gender equality while interpreting the law and making judgments. Over the years, Rwanda has witnessed a significant increase in women judges. This can be attributed to a rise in the number of women studying law and deliberate intentions to nominate women judges. It is essential to continue this trend to ensure that a diverse team of judges handles cases related to gender and family matters.

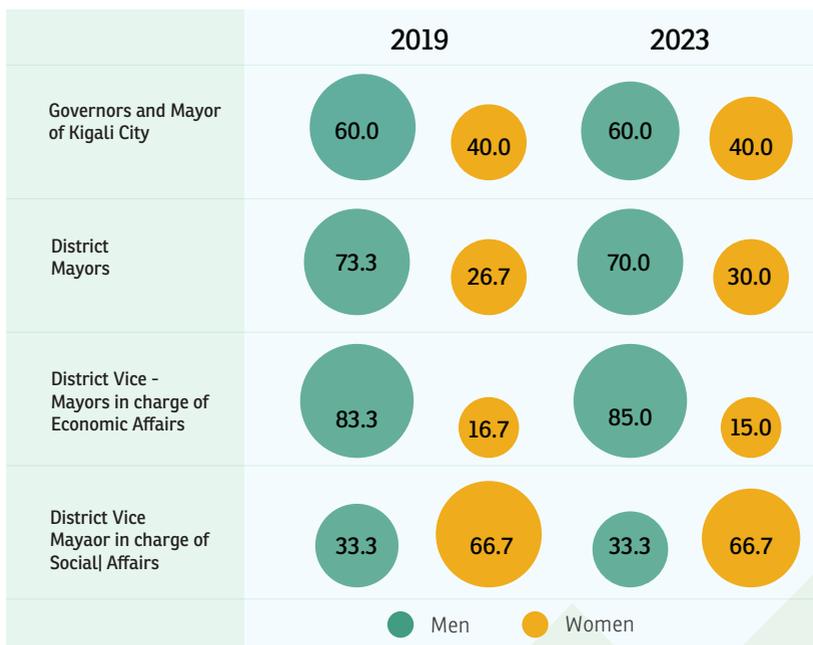
## Women representation in Rwanda National Police and Rwanda Defence Forces



**Source:** RNP Administrative Data 2021-2023 and RDF Administrative data 2023

Rwanda is among the leading contributors of female police officers in peace keeping missions the numbers have been growing progressively over the last decades.

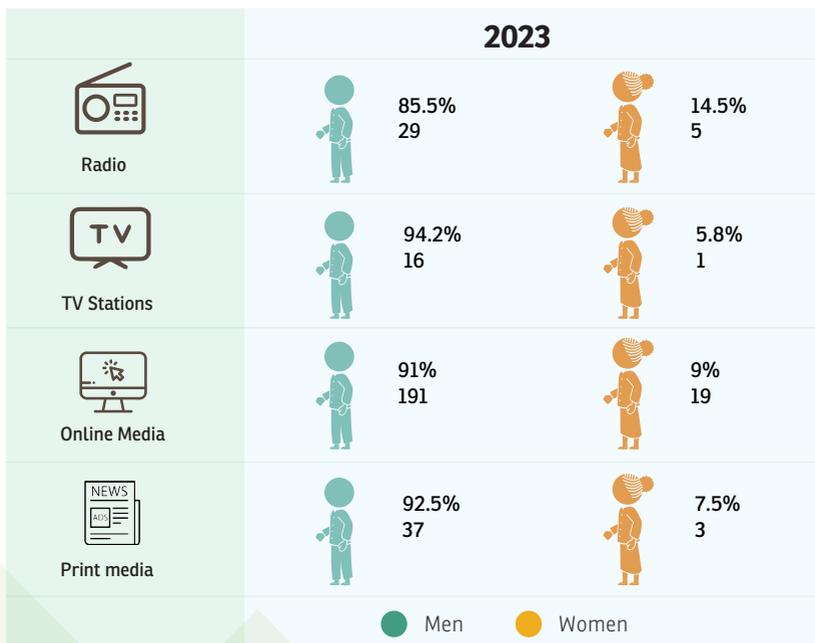
## Representation of men and women in decentralized local government (%)



**Source:** NEC, 2018 & 2022

Rwanda is committed to promoting women's participation and contribution to local governance, and this effort has led to progress in decentralized leadership, particularly in the position of governors. In 2023, women held 40% of provincial governor positions; in 2021, 30% of district mayors elected were women, and 78% of district vice mayors in charge of social affairs were women. Despite this progress, gender stereotypes continue to limit women's ability to occupy certain positions, considered as "hard seats." Women's family responsibilities, including unpaid care work and the fear of leaving their families, also hinder their participation in some positions. As a result, women are still primarily found in so-called "soft positions" at the district level, perpetuating the biased belief that women are suitable for some responsibilities, particularly social affairs, but not others.

## Men and Women in the Media Sector Governance (percentage & number)

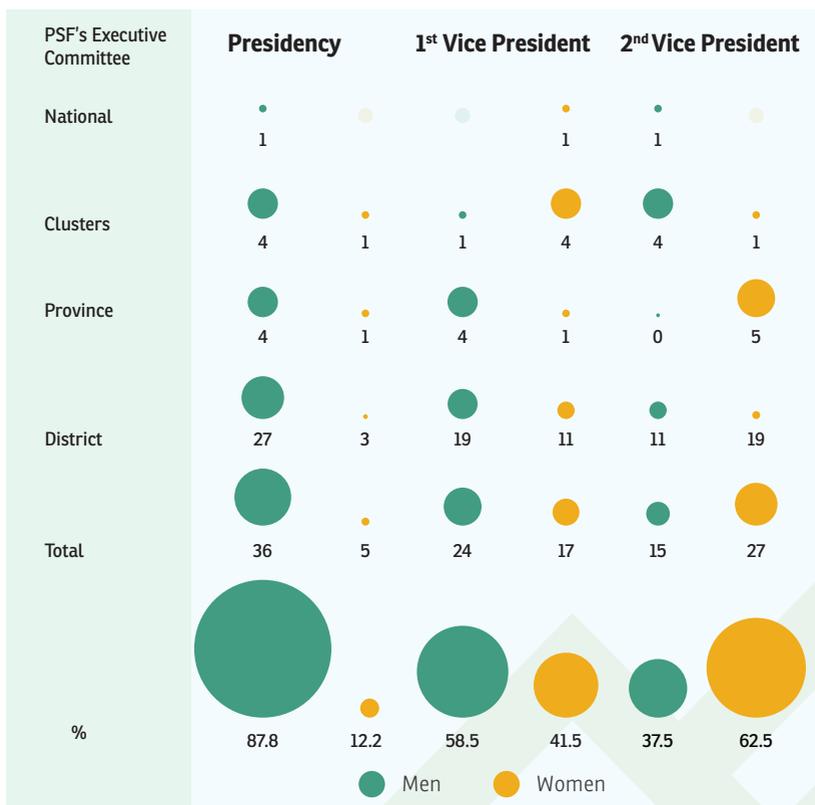


**Source:** Administrative Data RMC, 2023

The media significantly impacts how the community perceives men's and women's societal roles. From a gender perspective, the media can play a transformative role in achieving gender equality through creating gender-sensitive and transformative content as well as breaking gender stereotypes. In terms of management, the above data shows a huge gender gap in terms of representation in accredited media channels, houses, and decision-making positions.

In Rwanda, the media landscape is male-dominant and this poses some disadvantages, especially regarding the coverage of gender-sensitive issues. While media coverage should be objective, the presence of women in radio, television, online, and print media is more likely to provide positive role models for women and girls, gain women's confidence as sources and interviewees, and attract a female audience.

## Distribution of elected men and women in the PSF committees (numbers)



Source: PSF Elections report 2022

The private sector in Rwanda requires the participation and representation of both men and women for sustainable and inclusive development. To promote gender equality, the recent PSF elections have made significant progress in implementing the gender mainstreaming strategy. The minimum quota requirement of 30% was respected at various committee levels, with the percentage ranging from 41.5% to 62.5%. However, the presidency level has not yet met this quota, and women still mainly occupy the 2nd Vice Presidency which is also linked to secretarial roles.

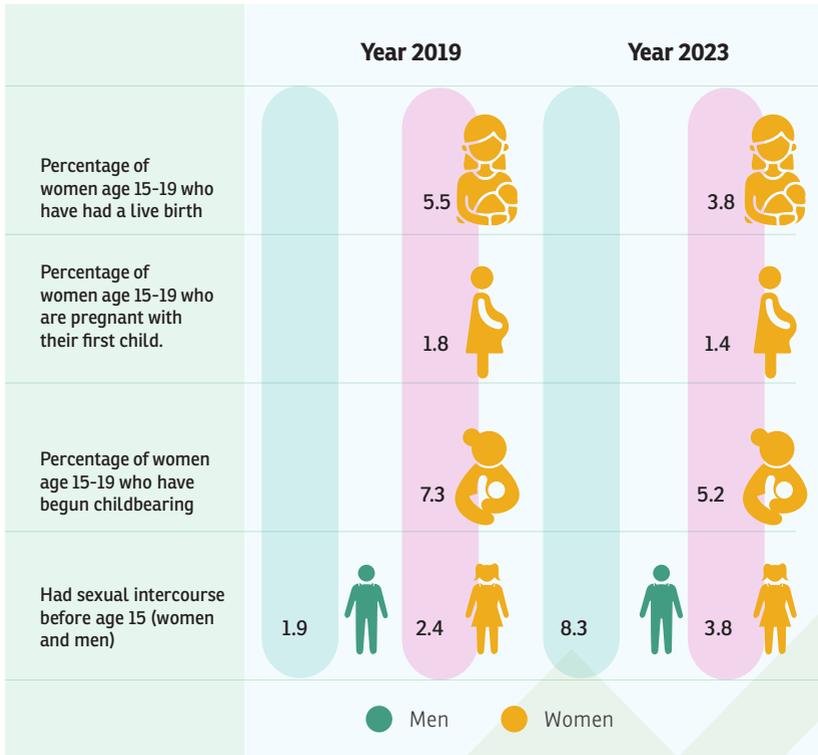
## 3.2. GBV Service Delivery

### Isange One Stop Centers

Gender Based violence (GBV) is a serious health and legal issue that affects women and girls worldwide. To address this concern, the Government of Rwanda (GoR) and its partners have established various programs and resources. One of the primary initiatives is the Isange One Stop Centre, which provides free comprehensive services to GBV victims, including medical care, legal assistance, psycho-social counseling, and support for reintegration into society.

These services have been expanded to decentralized levels (48 Isange One Stop Centres), such as health centers, to ensure effective delivery and accessibility. Additionally, community-based programs like Umugoroba w'imiryango, Inshuti z'Umuryango, MAJ, and GBV committees at the district level have been established to prevent and respond to GBV. Also, the Rwanda National Police (RNP) created gender desks that equally address GBV issues.

## Teenage Pregnancy and Motherhood (%)



**Source:** Demographic and Health Survey (NISR, 2016 & 2020)

Teenage pregnancy is mainly considered to be one of the consequences of child defilement, drug abuse, family conflicts, and limited adolescent education on sexual reproductive health within homes and schools. The government has put in place various efforts to eradicate GBV and curb its effects, including teenage pregnancy. Other initiatives include the adoption of comprehensive sexual education in schools, social reintegration like going back to school, and parents being mobilized to support young mothers.

## 5. STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

### General Recommendations

The following recommendations are in response to the identified gender gaps across the three pillars and aim to sustain previous gender gains while accelerating progress toward gender equality.

### Economic Transformation

- Empower women and girls with entrepreneurship and employability skills to increase their participation in business, access to decent employment, and benefit from national, regional, continental, and global trade.
- Efforts to bridge the gender digital divide must be intensified in the tech world. This is essential for empowering women and young girls to fully benefit from the digital economy.
- Ensure inclusive access, use, and control over productive resources for men and women in urban and rural areas, thus supporting accelerated economic growth.
- Women must have access to technology to increase agricultural efficiency and productivity, including technical extension and advisory services, agricultural inputs, and irrigation facilities.
- It is important to address the ongoing inequality in the amount of “unpaid care work” women are expected to do. This can be achieved by implementing various strategies, such as investing in time-saving facilities like energy-efficient gas stoves and solar-powered washing machines, providing child care services, and working towards eliminating gender stereotypes and social norms contributing to women bearing disproportionate care responsibilities.
- Increase strategies to strengthen women’s position in the labor market, especially in the private sector, and leverage their contribution to national socio-economic transformation.

## Social Transformation

- The gender disparity in education, particularly in fields such as Tertiary, ICT, STEM, and TVET education programs, must be addressed. Gender education should be incorporated at all levels of education to tackle negative gender norms and stereotypes from an early age and foster a gender-responsive next generation.
- Ensure the provision of adequate resources to promote equal access to quality health services, especially in addressing non-communicable diseases facing women.
- Continue to accelerate efforts geared towards alleviating poverty and extreme poverty among women and young girls, with a particular focus on those living in rural areas.

## Transformational Governance

- It is important to integrate gender equality into existing accountability mechanisms, such as Imihigo, to ensure gender responsiveness in planning and budgeting processes at different levels.
- Enhance prevention, support, and response strategies to combat GBV and reintegration of victims of child defilement and sexual and gender-based violence, such as re-integration of teen mothers in schools along with strengthening programs on men's engagement in championing gender equality and women's empowerment initiatives.
- Increase women's representation and participation at all levels of leadership and decision-making, including the public, private, security organs, media, and household levels, to inform and influence gendered impact at all levels.



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