

Public-Private Dialogue

Rwanda Public Private Dialogue (RPPD) mechanism Status and Progress

by

Daniel Nkubito, Expert in Public Private Dialogue, Rwanda Development Board,

Country: The Republic of Rwanda

Name of the initiator: Government of Rwanda

Year established: October 2012

Areas in which the initiative is designed to have an impact on: The Rwandan PPD is designed to have a direct impact on economic development through business reforms that foster growth of the private sector,

Main government and private sector sponsor: The main government sponsor is the Rwanda Development Board. The main private sector sponsor is the Rwanda Private Sector Federation,

Development Partner sponsor: GIZ, Germany.

Program management/coordinator/facilitation/main people/facilities:

The Rwanda Public Private Dialogue Secretariat at national level is located in the Rwanda Development Board. In addition there are champions at the sub-national level. The Private Sector Federation provides its own Secretariat support to the PPD activities.

Enacted reforms: Inclusion of the President of Private Sector Federation at District level in the District Councillors Committee; Tourism Bill; other regulatory reforms that directly impact the private sector.

RPPD Mandate and institutional alignment: RPPD is a structured mechanism for the Private Sector and the Government to jointly discuss key business issues and private sector constraints in an effort to make decisions leading to resolution. It has a mandate to work via the Rwandan Development Board. Through the RDB it is directly aligned to the office of the President.

Vision: "Creating solutions together on issues facing the business community and the Government"

Mission: “Solutions to demand driven issues through research, dialogue and effective coordination for the Business Community and Government Institutions.”

Motto: “By Business for Business”, the PPD begins with businesses-driven issues, and the results are for the business and the public sector partners for business reforms process.

Structure and participation: The RPPD is a national level dialogue. At the highest level the President has provided his direct support to the PPD activities. This political interest has been important in ensuring senior government participation in the PPD. This leadership has an influence throughout the country where sub national dialogues take place.

The Private Sector Federation (PSF) is an active supporter of the PPD. The PSF is the umbrella organization for the private sector. It organizes the input of its members into the activities of the PPD. The PSF actively works with its members on agenda development, research and participation in the PPD activities throughout the country.

The RPPD Secretariat is mandated to facilitate PPD activities. The Secretariat collects business issues in preparation for the dialogue. Decisions are consensus based so that there is a win-win for stakeholders on the issues under discussion. The Secretariat facilitates champions at the District to lead PPD activities at that level. It furnishes research on issues prior to the discussion in order to have centered research-driven issues for evidence based reports and invite various RPPD organs dialogues.

RPPD reports directly to the Joint Advisory Board (JAB). The JAB is mandated to channel issues emanating from the High level Working-Group and sub-national PPDs for higher institutional consideration. The JAB sets the annual agenda and action plan for the RPPD mechanism and approves the Secretariat members.

High Level Working Groups are the dialogues at cluster and sectoral level discussing business issues between private and public sector members and design solutions together so to spur economic development.

Parliamentarian PPD is where the legislators review the business laws and engage the business community to streamline procedures and regulations in order to boost and facilitate a friendlier environment for the business communities.

The Presidential Summit is the highest level of dialogues between the President of the Republic of Rwanda and the business community where together with other business people they settle any issues where consensus has not been reached and agreed on the agenda set forth.

Champions: The term champion in the Rwandan context is used for the facilitator of the RPPD mechanism at the grass-root level. These scouts are trained with moderation and dialogic change model skills to drive and facilitate dialogues for consensus building at the local level. At the national level the term considers the champions as vibrant and smart businesspeople that always strive to ensure that the nascent private sector can grow in Rwanda. Champions also exist with the public sector. The Presidents participation in the Presidential Summit, Parliamentarians and public sector members of the Working Groups have all been important in enabling the RPPD to be implemented.

Facilitator: The RPPD Secretariat has four members; two from the private sector and two from the public sector governed by the Joint Advisory Board, respectively RDB and PSF. They meet every Tuesday of the week to share information about the mechanism and any other time deemed necessary. The RPPDS solicits issues, analyzes them, researches and facilitates dialogues on the outcome of the issue paper as well as training related to the RPPD methodology.

Outputs: Enabling private-public dialogue for a better economic development through the business reforms by targeting to solve businesses obstacles. The RPPD has had an impact on changing laws and regulations. During its active sub national dialogues, the RPPD is able to clarify many issues and provide news on recent developments.

Outreach and communication: RPPD has a webpage www.rppd.rw which incorporates the SMS application where issues are being solicited from the business community and facilitated by champions in their vicinity to solve them.

The RPPD has developed a communication strategy and action plan jointly with stakeholders. Results are very good and the training of champions has shown a tremendous yield of the work of RPPD across the country.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Every six month we sit down and evaluate the past semester to see the progress of what we have targeted. Our initiative is *“the participants of structured multi-actor dialogues adopt 10 measures to improve competitiveness of SMEs, 5 of which are focused on women-specific support activities.”* In each District every quarter there is community back-reporting where dialogues emerged during that period and consensus built are reported back to the business community. These issues are raised in the last quarter and new emerging requests are raised such that they are prioritized for the next quarter dialogues action plan.

Sub national: This is a very important topic - this is a priority for the RPPD as mandated by the Government Retreat Resolution No 40 in 2012. To operationalize and institutionalize the PPD mechanism at the grass-roots, we have been able to carry out road shows in 18 Districts out of 30, trained the champions in 18 Districts (both moderation and dialogic change model methods) - dialogues have been taking place in the 18 Districts and consensus built. There were 172 issues collected during the road show, with 101 to be resolved at the District level; 42 women business issues; and 30 national issues to be resolved by sectoral PPDs. So far 9 dialogues took place: the two dialogues at the national level resolved issues . To reduce the work load that has arisen from similar dialogues, the RPPD champions have toured to the Districts to discuss best practice and other successes and failures encountered under the RPPDF framework.

Sector-specific: The Tax Issues Forum was established to put the RRA and other key ministries into dialogues with the private sector on issues related to taxation and fruitful endeavor has been showcased; the Environment Issues Forum was established to deal with environment issues; the Standard Issues Forum deals with standards; Construction Working Groups, Tourism Working Groups, ICT Working Groups, and Manufacturing Working Groups all are up and operational to deal with specific business issues the sector faces. Kigali Investment Forum gathers the investment opportunities and issues hampering the businesspeople.

International role: RDB and PSF sit in the East Africa Business Council as a body mandate to vocalize regional business issues that are of regional nature for discussion in order to foster the block regional economic development. COMESA Business Council held PPD meetings and RPPD ensures participation where deemed necessary.

Crisis mitigation: Through the dialogue framework the mechanism sets the environment of neutrality and co-chairing system such that there is no level of power dominance. In the RPPD mechanism the public side and private sector side always co-chair the debate and agree completely with outcome results.

Development partners: So far the RPPD is partly financed by the Government of Rwanda and partly financed by the Rwanda Private Sector Federation. The RPPD is also privileged to have GIZ as partner and the latter supports the capacity building through training and facilitation of the dialogues mainly at grass-root level and partly at sectoral level.

Material or guidance used to help in the implementation of this initiative: RESC law, the PPD Handbook and webpage - however we have developed our own Home Grown Solution PPD manual (under drafting).

Objectives: To ensure that business issues are processed through a thorough research for evidence-based decision-making process for the business environment, all supported by constructive stakeholder dialogue.

Status of partnership to date: From the grass root to the national, regional and international level, the equality in participation and engaging for consensus-building based on win-win situation is still the driving force of the RPPD mechanism.

Structure, processes and milestones: The RPPD Secretariat coordinates and facilitates dialogue at national, regional and international level and is governed by the Joint Advisory Board who report to the High level institutions. The Presidential Summit is the highest level of RPPD mechanism whereas at District level, champions solicit business issues from the business community, and also facilitate the meeting at District level.

Results, if any:

- **RPPD process implementation:** The Awareness of the companies about the RPPD across the country, the training of RPPD Secretariats and dialogic change models and other methods of stakeholder dialogue have better-equipped the latter.
- **Capacity building:** Champions' training in moderation and stakeholder dialogue have changed the landscape of the mechanism across Districts visited.
- **Reform agenda:** Some resolutions to address business challenges. e.g the inclusion of the private sector federation representative in the district council of District Huye has helped find solutions for important decisions, as well as the government decision to pay delayed payments to businesses on national and local level and others.

Challenges on women: Women still remain at low pace of participation and stakeholder dialogue engagement.

Biography of Author

Daniel Nkubito, Expert in Public Private Dialogue for four years working with the Rwanda Development Board, former Deputy Executive Secretary of Rwanda Economic and Social Development Council (RESC) with three years facilitating dialogues of the Tripartite constituencies (Public, Private sector and Civil Society) under the Prime Minister's Office, including:

- Eleven years of experience in export marketing and management (EAC,DRC,Congo Brazaville, South Sudan and Malawi) dealing with stationary and schoolastic goods as well as commercial and security printing.
- Trained in Public Private Partnership Projects by South Africa.
- Trained in stakeholder dialogues by Collective Leadership Institute.
- Trained in moderation by GIZ.
- Master of Science in international marketing/bachelor degree in BBA generic and Chartered Institute of the Management Accountancy level three diploma.