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**Development cooperation with Rwanda**

**‘Digital Solutions for Sustainable Development’ programme**

Rwanda's national vision of development for 2020, which was drawn up in 2000, aims to lead the country away from subsistence farming towards a knowledge-driven and service-based society. The increased use of information and communications technology (ICT) is considered essential for achieving development goals. The *Smart Rwanda 2020 Master Plan*, SRMP (2016–2020), focuses on capacity building and the use of ICT in seven sectors. The Ministry of Youth and ICT (MYICT) has limited capacity for implementing these comprehensive, strategic frameworks and ambitious objectives. Other sector ministries that are responsible for selected priority projects of the SRMP lack the required sector ICT strategies and capacities. In 2015, the cabinet decided to create a new implementation agency for ICT-related topics, the *Rwanda Information Society Agency* (RISA), which is expected to launch in mid-2017. The necessary financial resources have been set aside for the new budget year (July 2017–June 2018); however, the organisational structure, job descriptions and progress descriptions are not yet available.

Although the country is striving to become a digital hub, weak structures and skills have so far made it difficult to fully utilise the potential of digital technology in the context of development policy. This applies to implementing digital management processes in Rwanda’s business and public administration sectors as well to creating digital products. Despite having an innovation ecosystem in place, innovative ideas have only been supported in specific cases rather than systematically, and, as a result, the number of newly developed and adapted digital technologies for Rwanda and Africa fell short of expectations. Rwanda currently lacks the capacities and structures required to develop, implement and disseminate digital solutions in Rwanda and Africa in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (core problem).

The aim of the project is to establish structures and capacities to develop, implement and disseminate digital solutions in Rwanda and Africa in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals in Rwanda (module objective). Implementation of the measure focuses largely on Rwanda, although the digital solutions developed will be scaled to include the East African Community (EAC) and the whole of Africa.

The primary focus is the implementation of the *Smart Rwanda Master Plan* and its priority projects*.* This involves improving the basic conditions, primarily by strengthening the human and institutional capacities of the relevant key institutions (MYICT, RISA) and promoting the development, implementation and dissemination of digital solutions as part of the African Centre for Digital Transformation (digitalisation centre). The national and regional/pan-African implementation and scaling of the digital solutions will be instrumental in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Rwanda and on the African continent.

The term of the project is three years (July 2017 to June 2020) and the German TC contribution will cost up to EUR 7,000,000.