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GERMAN GOVERNMENT AND FEDERAL STATES PROGRAMME
BUND-LÄNDER-PROGRAMM (BLP)

Hiking trails are to be developed and made accessible to tourists

Federal state - partner country

Rhineland-Palatinate - Rwanda



Title

Further developing community-based tourism in Rutiro District, Rwanda

In cooperation with the GIZ programme

Skills for economic transformation in Rwanda
(PN 22.2091.1)

Financing arrangements

BMZ contribution	240,000 EUR
Rhineland-Palatinate contribution	156,906 EUR

Duration

01.09.2025 - 31.12.2026

Responsible ministry

State Chancellery of Rhineland-Palatinate

This project helps to achieve the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



Nature-based and sustainable – tourism as a regional opportunity

Local situation

Tourism is one of the most important sectors of the global economy, accounting for every tenth job worldwide. It is therefore of greater economic significance than, for instance, the automotive industry. As the world's largest service sector, tourism offers great opportunities for micro and small enterprises, but also low-skilled workers, the skilled trades and local farming businesses. Also women play a key role. Examples show that women invest a large proportion of their income directly in the local community, strengthening their regions on a long-term basis. Tourism is already a driver of economic growth and employment in Rwanda. However, the development potential of tourism beyond the main attractions, such as the famous mountain gorilla trekking, has so far been untapped. Diversifying tourism offerings to include small communities will help improve income opportunities for the local population. Tourism can also support the preservation and appreciation of nature. The focus here is on tourist attractions with a strong emphasis on nature-based tourism, agriculture and forestry.

Cooperation arrangements

On the German side, the funding provider is the State Chancellery of Rhineland-Palatinate and the implementing partner is the 1,200 inhabitants municipality of Kallstadt located on the German Wine Route and the Palatinate Forest Biosphere Reserve. It has experience in designing attractive tourism

'The BLP project is a great opportunity for all stakeholders in the grassroots partnership – whether in Rwanda or Rhineland-Palatinate. The aim is to work towards the common goal of developing sustainable tourism from which everyone can learn and benefit.'

Katharina Krings
Project Manager for Development Cooperation
State Chancellery of Rhineland-Palatinate



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Attractive mountain landscapes invite to go hiking

offerings centred on viticulture, with gastronomy and numerous accommodation options. In Rwanda, Kallstadt works with the Rutsiro district administration and the Ejo-Heza cooperative. The focus is on the village of Bitenga on the edge of the Gishwati-Mukura Biosphere Reserve with its cloud forests at around 2,000 metres above the sea level and the Riverside Trail along the Congo-Nile watershed. Other participants on the Rwandan side include the Community Based Tourism Association and the Coordination Office of the Rhineland-Palatinate/Rwanda Partnership.

What we are doing - and how

The state of Rhineland-Palatinate has maintained a partnership with Rwanda for over 40 years, which from the outset has focused on direct partnerships and continuous exchange between schools, church communities and local authorities. This grassroots partnership supports a wide range of projects throughout the country. The Rutsiro district in the west of the country, between Lake Kivu and the Gishwati-Mukura Biosphere Reserve, has already received support from the municipality of Kallstadt in setting up the Bitenga Basecamp and mapping hiking trails. The project builds on these activities.

Currently, there is no connection to a water supply in the region. In order to make the Rutsiro district more attractive for tourism, the Bitenga Basecamp will receive a water supply that will also benefit the surrounding population. In addition, further hiking trails will be mapped and themed hiking trails

developed. To complement this, the idea of rural women's associations from Germany is to be transferred to Rwanda around Bitenga. Mutual support, lectures and cooking, handicraft and craft courses are intended to raise women's awareness of the opportunities that arise along the tourism value chain. The production and sale of souvenirs or tourist services is intended to create opportunities for additional income.

Useful links

- Further information on the BLP:
<https://www.giz.de/en/projects/german-government-and-federal-states-programme-iii>
<https://bund-laender-programm.de/en>
- GIZ programme 'Skills for Economic Transformation':
<https://www.giz.de/en/projects/skills-economic-transformation>
- Cooperation between the German federal state of Rhineland-Palatinate and Rwanda:
<https://www.rlp-ruanda.de/en/about-us/grassroot-partnership-rhineland-palatinate-rwanda/>
- Rhineland-Palatinate / Rwanda Partnership Association:
<https://rlp-ruanda.de/en/home/>

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