

Special Initiative on Training and Job Creation

Strengthening the pharmaceutical and biotechnological sector in Rwanda

Accelerating investment and skills development

Invest for Jobs supports the Government of Rwanda in **building a conducive ecosystem for the pharmaceutical and biotechnological industries**. By promoting investment, strategic partnerships, skills development, and holistic supply chains, we support Rwanda's ambition to become a regional centre for pharmaceutical manufacturing.

Rwanda's potential as regional hub for pharmaceutical manufacturing

Ensuring access to efficient and affordable medicines and vaccines has always been crucial to fight infectious diseases, including COVID-19. Currently, less than one per cent of administered vaccines are produced on the African continent. This means that Rwanda, too, is largely dependent on international supply chains, as its pharmaceutical sector is still in its infancy.

To increase the local availability of essential medicines and enhance the health system's resilience, the Government of Rwanda's vision is to transform the country into a regional hub for pharmaceutical production and vaccine manufacturing. While the pharmaceutical market on the African continent is rapidly growing and has the potential to generate significant economic value, **Rwanda is strategically well positioned to provide a platform for production and distribution into the region**. The African Continental Free Trade Area is expected to reduce barriers to trade and integrate a larger continental pharmaceutical market.

Moreover, Rwanda is actively seeking to become a digital champion on the continent and is at the forefront of innovation – a great potential for highly automated processes and scaling up pharmaceutical production. With its National Skills Development and Employment Promotion Strategy, Rwanda is pursuing the ambitious goal of accelerating private sector-led economic growth and creating 1.500.000 decent jobs by 2024.



Addressing broader elements required to build and sustain a new sector

Producing pharmaceuticals is highly complex and depends on a strong ecosystem throughout its entire value chain. The pharmaceutical sector encompasses a range of interconnected institutions and companies from both the public and private sector. Central is a strong regulatory body and framework that is capable to perform the respective market release procedures. Various other resources and processes are needed to enable the manufacturing of high-quality medical products. Such elements include raw material and active ingredient supply, technology, validation and auditing, service and maintenance and logistics and warehousing, among others. Above all, skilled personnel are essential for smooth operation and quality assurance.

Invest for Jobs supports the Government of Rwanda in their endeavour to develop the pharmaceutical and biotechnological sector and strengthen synergies through cross sectoral collaboration. Together, we strive to promote growth and innovation in the industries to create good jobs in Rwanda.

Implemented by

Promoting businesses in Rwanda

Invest for Jobs supports companies that are seeking to invest in Rwanda's pharmaceutical and biotechnological sector. For this, we create strategic partnerships with industry, educational institutions, and development partners, to identify and reduce potential investment barriers. Together, we can address, among others, issues related to human resource capacity development, raw material and active ingredient supply, infrastructure, and regulation.

We assist both entrepreneurs to accelerate their business and well-established companies that intend to expand their investment in the Rwandan market. From raw material supply to formulation and distribution, the goal is the targeted and local development of pharmaceutical supply chains.

To this end, Invest for Jobs provides companies with **networking, matchmaking, advisory and financial support to scale up investments** and thus create jobs in the pharmaceutical and biotechnological sector. Together with our Rwandan partners, we are creating a **one-stop shop for investors to identify market opportunities and facilitate the market entry** of global industry players. This includes a progressive image campaign to promote the sector in and Rwanda itself as a pioneering destination to produce high-quality pharmaceuticals products.

Developing skills

Pharmaceutical companies rely on a highly specialised and fit-for-purpose workforce with the right set of skills to develop, produce, and distribute their products. At the same time, the public sector requires the right talent to ensure regulation, licencing and oversight of these companies. In Rwanda, such specialised skills are still scarce. Invest for Jobs therefore supports Rwanda's Ministry of Education as well as public and private educational institutions and companies in creating and updating training plans and curricula for vocational education and training (TVET) and higher education. Teachers and lecturers at the respective institutions will be trained on the new curricula. With these updated curricula, the learning content will

be more closely aligned with actual industry needs. Ultimately, we are jointly seeking to train suitable candidates for current and future investors. In addition, qualification measures for professionals are being offered to better align their skills with the requirements of the pharmaceutical industry and open new employment perspectives.

Particular focus is placed on the development of practical skills. Especially in the pharmaceutical sector, it is important that graduates of universities and TVET schools gain hands-on experience in laboratories, production or distribution. Learners need to be exposed to specific diagnostic and production procedures, techniques and workflows, and learn how to apply them in a Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) and Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) conform environment. For this, we engage learning institutions and companies to build mutual partnerships that enable industry placements for students.

To ensure that the provided training is catered to industry and public-sector needs, Invest for Jobs conducted a study to identify the required skills and assess the available training programmes for pharmaceutical production in Rwanda. Overall, the results prove that there is a promising basis to build on existing programmes of academic and TVET institutions, but still more work is needed to meet the sector's growing needs.

This project is implemented in Rwanda by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH – one of the implementing organisations of Invest for Jobs.

Under the Invest for Jobs brand, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has put together a package of measures to support German, European and African companies engaging in Africa. **The Special Initiative on Training and Job Creation** – the official title – offers comprehensive advice, contacts and financial support through its implementing organisations to overcome investment barriers.

The development objective is to team up with companies to create up to 100,000 jobs, generate training opportunities and improve working conditions in the African partner countries. Programmes are currently in place in the Special Initiative's eight partner countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal and Tunisia.



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