



Doctoral Education in Rwanda, a Descriptive Analysis of Facts.

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“Doctoral Education in Commonwealth Africa (DECA)”
by

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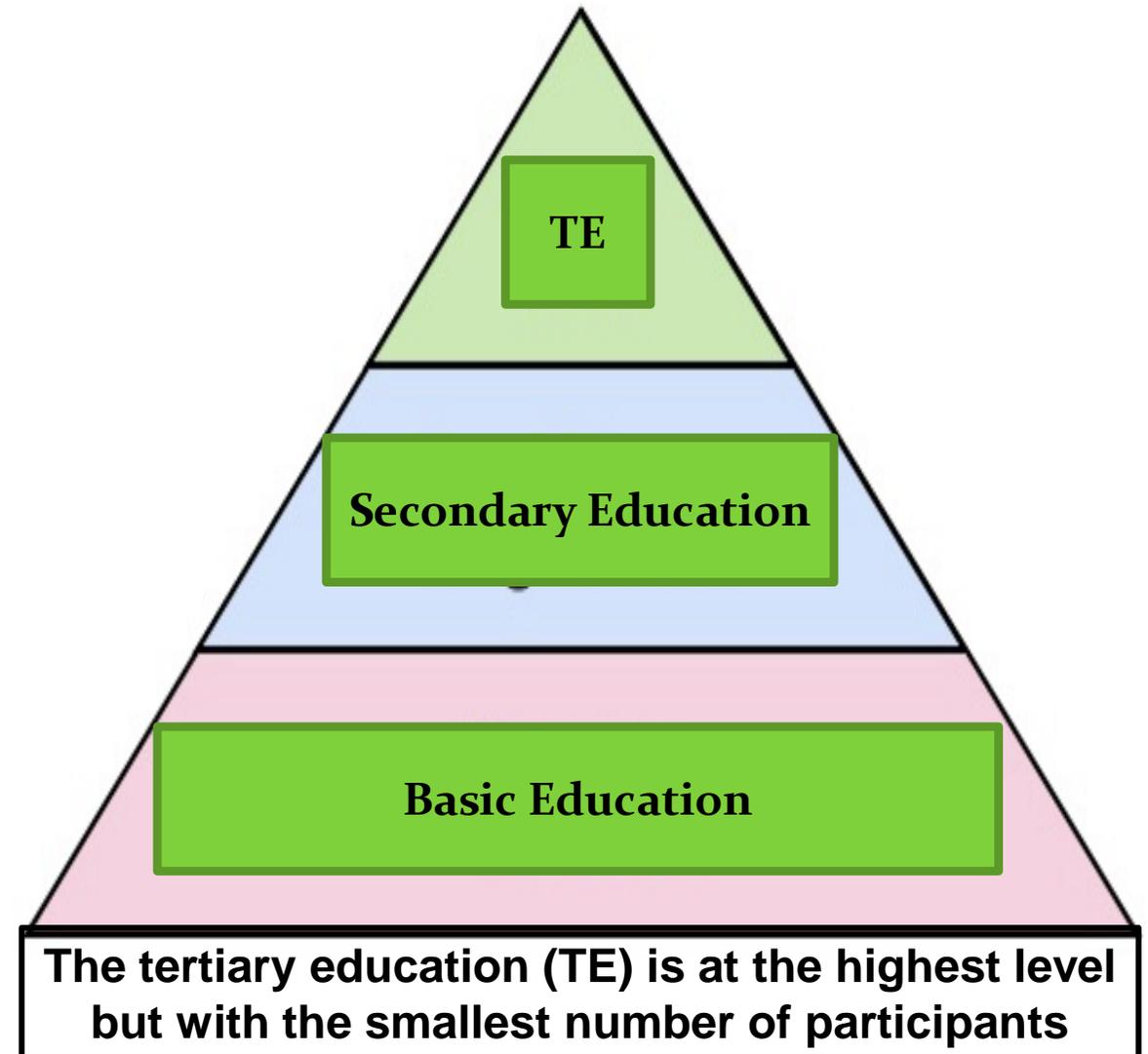
OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. Rwanda: Country overview and education system
3. Development of higher education in Rwanda
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Study background:

- Education is one of the fundamental factors for development of the country
- Education is a multi-level system: basic, secondary and tertiary levels;
- The tertiary level is the highest but with the smallest number of participants.
- The TE is also called “Higher Education(HE)”





1. Introduction

Study background:

- HE is a significant step for countries in achieving higher levels of development
- HE institutions support knowledge-driven economic growth strategies and poverty reduction
- “Doctoral education” stands at the highest level of the education pyramid
- Doctoral students are the potential backbone of all research programs and are instrumental in the discovery and implementation of new knowledge



1. Introduction

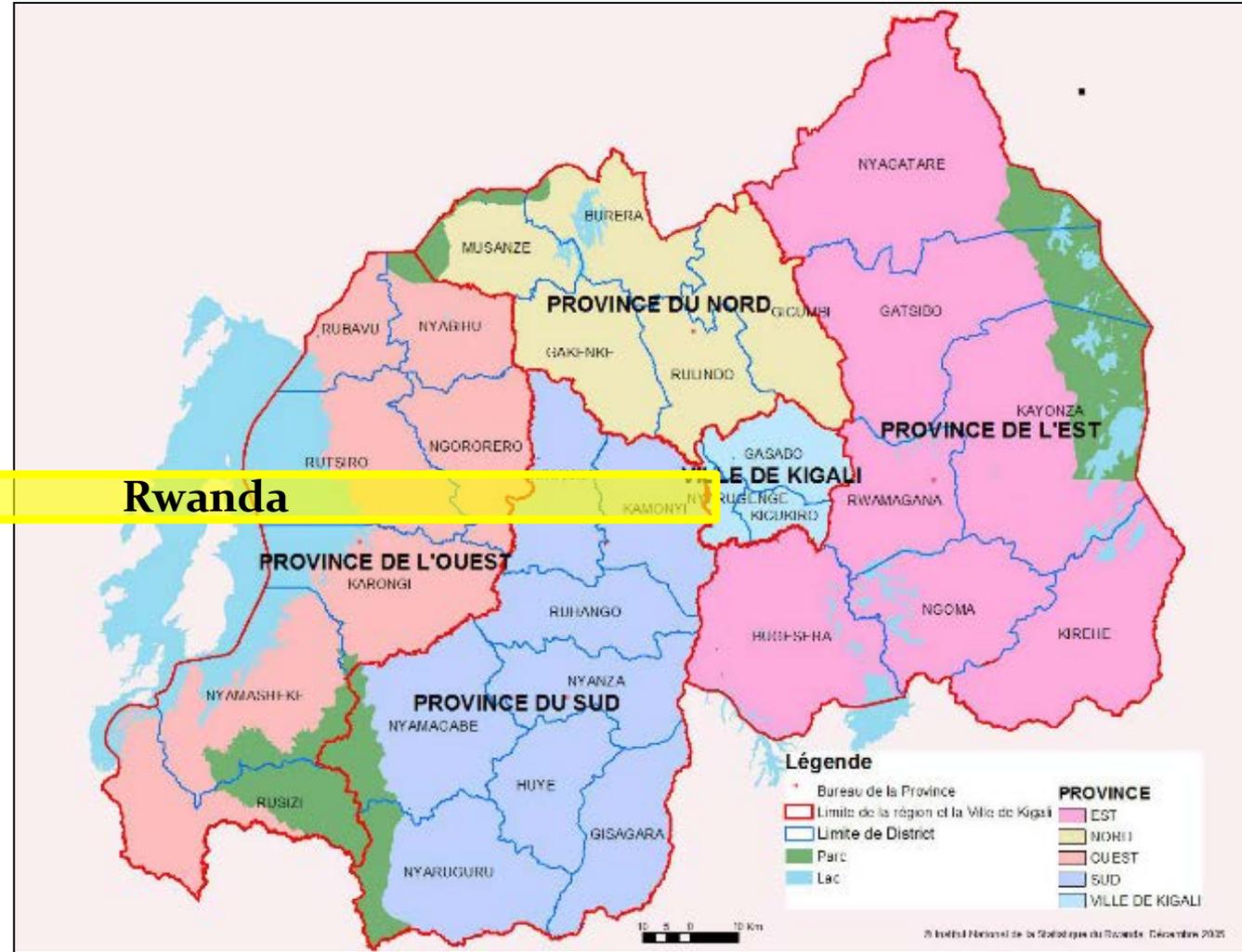
Purpose of the study:

- Generally, the study intends to draw a well-documented image of the doctoral education in Rwanda as a way of increasing the public awareness of the doctoral education in Rwanda
- Specifically, the study aims at:
 - (1) showing the current situation of doctoral education in Rwanda,
 - (2) highlighting existing strengths and challenges; and
 - (3) discussing how policy can address some of the challenges.



2. Rwanda: Country overview and education system

Geographical details





2. Rwanda: Country overview and education system

Geographical details

➤ **Area:** 26 338 km²

➤ **Population:** 11 million (2013)

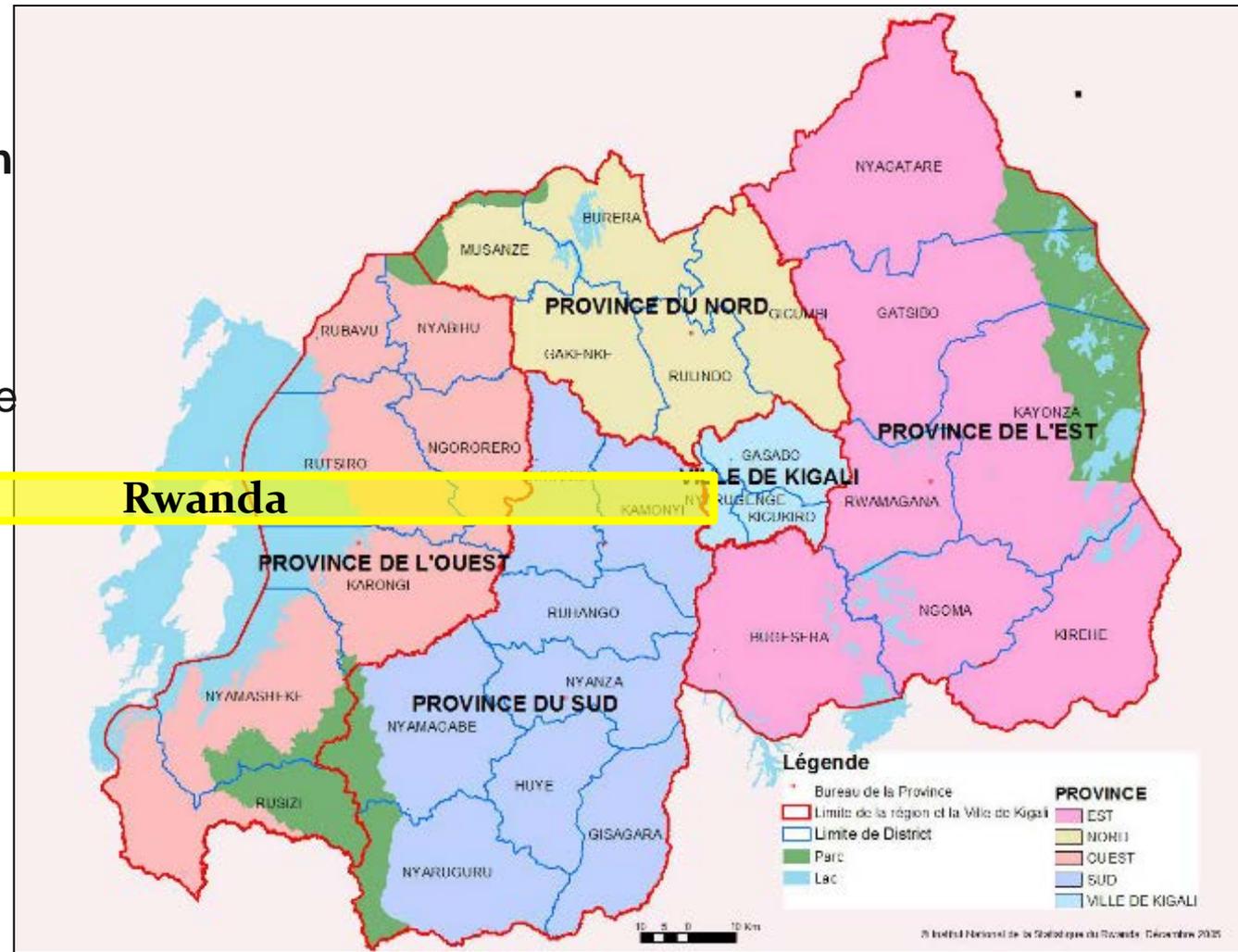
➤ **Location:** East Africa; South of Lake Tanganyika; East of the Democratic Republic of Congo; West of Uganda; North of Tanzania.

➤ **Neighboring countries:** Uganda to the north, Tanzania to the east, Democratic Republic of Congo to the south, and Burundi to the west.

West

➤ **Altitude & relief:** Most of the country lies above 1000m and has a mountainous relief with altitude declining to the east towards the Indian Ocean.

➤ **Administrative divisions:** 5 Provinces (including Kigali City), 30 Districts, 416 Sectors.



5 Provinces (including Kigali City), 30 Districts, 416 Sectors.

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2. Rwanda: Country overview and education system

Historical background

- A centralized monarchy where the king was supreme but with the rest of the population (Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa) living in symbiotic harmony
- 1899: Rwanda became a German colony
- 1919: Rwanda became a mandate territory of the League of Nations under the Belgium indirect rule system
- 1959: hundreds of thousands of Batutsi were killed and almost two million of them were sent into exile.
- 1961: end of the colonial regime but the 1st and 2nd Republic regimes institutionalized discrimination against Batutsi



2. Rwanda: Country overview and education system

Historical background

- 1990: the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), formed by Rwandan refugees in exile to mobilize against divisive politics and genocide ideology, launched armed liberation struggle against the dictatorship regime of that time
- 1994: more than one million Batutsi were killed in a one-hundred days genocide prepared by the dictatorship regimes during the first and the second Republic and stopped by the RPF Army in July 1994
- 2003: end of the government of transition through democratic elections won by RPF with His Excellency Paul Kagame, the President of the Republic



2. Rwanda: Country overview and education system

Rwanda education system

The Rwanda education system goes through six levels of education preceded by the pre-primary education:

- (1) Primary education or first stage of basic education (**6 years**),
- (2) Lower secondary or second stage of basic education (**3 years**),
- (3) Upper secondary education (**3 years**),
- (4) Post-secondary non-tertiary education,
- (5) First stage of tertiary education not leading directly to an advanced research qualification (**4 years**), and
- (6) the second stage of tertiary education leading to an advanced research qualification.

The system is presented as “**6-3-3-4**” from level 1 to level 5 (Bachelors’ Degree)



3. Development of Higher Education in Rwanda

Leadership:

- Ministry of Education is responsible of the whole higher education system but the Ministry deals with that at the policy level and leaves the technical facet to its implementing agency known as
- Higher Education Council (HEC) is the Ministry agency that implements the higher education policies
- Rwanda Education Board (REB) and Workforce Development Authority (WDA), other Ministry agencies, have the responsibility to implement some components of the higher education policies.



3. Development of Higher Education in Rwanda

Historical overview:

- The first and unique Higher Learning Institution (HLI) opened in 1963 and only less than 2000 students who managed to graduate until 1994
- From 1994 to 2008, the following developments took place:
 - Expansion of the National University of Rwanda
 - 2 public specialist institutes: KIE & KIST
 - 2 colleges of education (Kavumu & Rukara)
 - 2 colleges of technology (Kicukiro & Tumba)
 - 5 colleges of nursing
 - 12 new private higher learning institutions
- Currently, Rwanda has 2 public HLIs of which one has six colleges and 33 private HLIs



4. Methodology used

Historical research method :

- **Definition of the method:** HRM is an approach in the research study to the past history or to recount some aspect of past life” (Singh, 2006:114). It uses documents and remains of relics, of primary and secondary sources, of bibliographical procedure and of organization of materials (Singh, 2006).
- **Method of data collection:** Documentation
- **Source of data:** policies, laws, reports, announcements, and news articles that have a say on Rwanda higher education in general but specifically on doctoral education in Rwanda.



5. Findings and discussion

Current situation of doctoral education in Rwanda

➤ PhD holders among academic staff in Rwanda

Year	Male	Female	Total	%
2011	363	42	405	15.7
2014	607	76	683	16.9
2015	569	80	649	16

- In 2014, only 281 (19%) staff of the University of Rwanda are PhD holders and the target is to increase this number up to 22% by 2018
- This justifies the high demand of more PhDs



5. Findings and discussion

Current situation of doctoral education in Rwanda

- Government sponsored students doing PhD program abroad

Year	Male	Female	Total	%
2011-2012	42	8	50	6.6
2012-2013	85	5	90	8.2

- The Government decided to enhance a staff development program by sending a number of young graduates overseas so that they can complete their training to Masters or PhD level and replace foreign lecturers and professors when they return to Rwanda.
- However, the budget constraints does not allow many people to benefit



5. Findings and discussion

Current situation of doctoral education in Rwanda

- Enrolled PhD students in tertiary education by exit award from 2013

Year	Male	Female	Total	%
2013	10	2	12	0.01
2014	60	18	78	0.1
2015	138	31	169	0.2

- In 2013, the first doctoral education program started in Rwanda with 12 students and the number increased up to 169 in 2015 making 0.2% of all students.
- More efforts need to be made in order to bridge the existing skills gap



5. Findings and discussion

Current situation of doctoral education in Rwanda

- **Quality:** the Rwanda National Qualification Framework for Higher Education is the key instrument for monitoring and evaluating the quality of accredited education program which falls under responsibility of the Higher Education Council
- **Funding:**, like in other higher education programs, the funding of the doctoral education program is differently done in public and private institutions. In public, a budget line from the national budget allocated to the university of Rwanda and is seconded by cooperation grants; in private, the program is mainly funded from tuition fees and other service fees paid by students.



5. Findings and discussion

Strength and challenges of the program

- **Strength:** the major strength areas of the doctoral education are formulated as follows:
 - (1) a strong Government commitment to higher education,
 - (2) establishment of public private partnership,
 - (3) establishment of strong Government agencies [9] and
 - (4) establishment of a strong and sustainable system for higher education students financing.
 - (5) availability of a wide market for private universities that invested in doctoral education which was newly introduced after a long period without it.



5. Findings and discussion

Strength and challenges of the program

- **Challenges:** though they are faced in other higher education programs, the following challenges are particularly affecting the doctoral education in Rwanda:
 - low access in higher education,
 - gender imbalance,
 - insufficient funding,
 - donors' prioritization,
 - low professional and academic development,
 - low research development among academic staff,
 - low academic quality of higher education system, and
 - inadequate infrastructure and equipment



5. Findings and discussion

Implication of policies in facing challenges

- Policies and laws were already put in place to make sure the higher education subsector, including the doctoral education, is well managed
- However, more efforts need to be made to make sure the existing policies, laws and institutions are really used to address identified challenges
- All stakeholders in education sector should contribute to any mechanism leading to transforming the knowledge of Rwandans into a long term investment capital by promoting research domain through strong doctoral education programs.



6. Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn from the study:

- Strengthening the education sector at all levels is key factor to developing a strong doctoral education
- Putting a particular emphasis on increasing the public awareness of doctoral education will be an important option for bridging the gaps caused by a historical delay that characterized the doctoral education in Rwanda.
- There is need to consider more the outcome of research activities and transform them into a strong basis for taking any decision to be implemented in all life areas of the Rwandan society.



End



“The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows” Sydney J. Harris