

UMWIHERERO

1. Background Information

Since ancient times, Rwandans have always sought solutions to specific problems they faced. For any solution to be effective, it was necessary for all the actors to put together, talk to each other and discuss about the ways and means of reaching an adequate solution.

There were times, however, when the problem was so thorny that broad consultation would be difficult. In this case, a reduced number of experts was appointed to retire (*kwiherera*) to a quieter place in order to tackle the problem in depth and come out with tentative ways of solution to be submitted to the supreme authority for approval as well as the clear timetable for its execution.

All those whom the Mwami considered essential and important to have a contribution in the search for a solution to the identified problem were called upon. They could be from his direct court or from outside of the court.

The Mwami played a central role in the organization and the course of Umwiherero, and the monitoring of its resolution, and all who have participated were accountable to the Mwami.

In modern times, the Government of Rwanda is drawing on this tradition to reflect on, and address, the challenges the country faces on an annual basis

2. Contemporary definition of Umwiherero and its purpose

Today, The Government of Rwanda, worried by the socio-economic development of its citizen has borrowed this ancient system and made it a Homegrown Solution in the aim of boosting Rwanda's development.

For that, the leadership of Rwanda at all levels (central and local government) come together and agree on the steps that need to be taken to strengthen the development of Rwanda. It means therefore a self –critic forum for leaders with the main purpose of evaluating themselves against the set development milestones, and devise strategies aimed at achieving the country's vision.

3. Importance of Umwiherero

- An occasion for the President of the Republic to address to the high hierarchy of the Republic on his thoughts on the country's development



- Unique governance tool that allows Rwanda's leaders to hold themselves accountable



- Forum of deep discussions with people with high capacity on the issues that affect Rwandans; knowledge and experience sharing



- A concerted solution among the nation's high spheres

Umwiherero enhances the government's effectiveness, control of corruption and accountability. During this meeting every participant has to explain about anything arise in his/her area of activity. Furthermore, different institutions have mandate to peruse how resolutions are implemented.



4. Organization of Umwiherero

- Umwiherero sessions are organized out of Kigali (the city where we find most of the Rwandan leaders): This allows participants to be more concentrated, being far from their working stations.



**Kivu Serena Hotel-Rubavu
Lodge-kayonza**



Akagera Game

It is organized by the Office of the President of the Republic (the Strategy and Policy unit) in collaboration with the Office of the Prime Minister (Coordination unit) and focuses more on strategic issues rather than accomplishments.

Media sector is invited to cover the course of Umwihherero to inform citizens so that they can support and actively participate in the implementation of Umwihherero's resolutions.



5. Participants:

Initially, Uwihherero was about exclusively for *senior public officials* of the Rwandan executive (President, Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, DGs of Government bodies and Ambassadors); the group later expanded to include members of parliament, local government officials, the private sector and civil society organizations.



M. Immaculee Ingabire-
Private Sector
TI/Rwanda Chapter



Mr. Malick,

6. Themes

Leaders meet for Umwiherero every year at a specific place and they make sure that all their discussions is oriented on the selected theme.

Year	Location	Theme	Date	# of participants
2004 1st	Akagera Game Lodge	Government policy	10-17/1/2004	100
2005 2nd	Akagera Game Lodge	Corporate approach to nation building	16-20 /1/2005	150
2006 3rd	Akagera Game Lodge	Importance of interdependency	12-17/2/2006	150
2007 4th	Akagera Game Lodge	Social assistance to disadvantaged populations	13-17/2/2007	150
2008 5th	Akagera Game Lodge	Economic growth and national development	24-28 /2/2008	200

2009 6 th	Kivu Serena Hotel/Rubavu	<i>Beyond Aid: Mindset for Delivery and Development</i>	15 – 20/2/2009	200
2010 7 th	Kivu Serena Hotel/Rubavu	<i>EDPRS action plans</i>	20-23/2/010	200
2011 8 th	Kivu Serena Hotel/Rubavu	<i>Accelerating the progress to Vision 2020</i>	1-4/3/3011	250
2012 9 th	Gako military academy/bugesera	<i>Consolidating citizen- centred development</i>	3-7/3/2012	250
2013 10 th	Gabiro Scholl of Infantry/Gatsibo	<i>Working together to deliver EDPRS II</i>	28-30/3/2013	
2014 11 th	Gabiro Scholl of Infantry/Gatsibo	<i>Accountable Governance</i>	8-10/3/2014	250
2015 12 th	Gabiro Scholl of Infantry/Gatsibo	<i>Common Vison, New Momentum</i>	28/2/- 2/2/2015	300
2016 13 th	Gabiro Scholl of Infantry/Gatsibo	<i>Reaffirming brand Rwanda: Delivery to achieve Vision 2020</i>	12-14/3/2016 march	300
2017 14 th	Gabiro Scholl of Infantry/Gatsibo	<i>Achievements by MDAs, challenges and strategies to fast-track development</i>	25/2/- 2/3/2017	300
2018 15 th	Gabiro Scholl of Infantry/Gatsibo	<i>Prerequisites for transformational growth and improving quality of health services.</i>	26/2/- 1/3/2018	300
2019 16 th	Gabiro Scholl of Infantry/Gatsibo	<i>Improving the quality of education and health, agricultural productivity and boosting exports growth and investments.</i>	.15/2/- 18/3/2019	300
2020 17 th	Gabiro Scholl of Infantry/Gatsibo	<i>shaping the country in line with Vision 2050</i>	16-19/2/2020	400

7. Monitoring of the implementation of resolutions

As for the preparation of umwiherero, the monitoring of the implementation of Umwiherero resolutions is also carried out jointly by the Strategy and Policy unit of the Office of the President and the Coordination Unit of the Office of the Prime Minister. The two units work with a retreat steering committee headed by the Prime Minister's office.