

# PROMOTING OPEN CONTRACTING IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN RWANDA

## PROJECT NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO 1



PARTICIPANTS IN THE LAUNCH OF THE ASSESSMENT ON KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE, AND PRACTICE (KAP) ON OPEN CONTRACTING IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN RWANDA

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

01. KEY OBJECTIVES AND COLLABORATIVE FRAMEWORK
02. PROMOTING OPEN CONTRACTING IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN RWANDA
03. UNLOCKING TRANSPARENCY IN PROCUREMENT
04. ADDRESSING CHALLENGES IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PROMOTING TI-RWANDA'S CALL CENTER AS A PLATFORM FOR REPORTING PROCUREMENT GRIEVANCES
05. MoUs SIGNED BY TI-RW WITH MUSANZE AND RWAMAGANA DISTRICTS TO STRENGTHEN COLLABORATION IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT MONITORING

#### KEY OBJECTIVES AND COLLABORATIVE FRAMEWORK

The project aims to enhance transparency and accountability in public procurement through open contracting principles.

#### SPECIFIC GOALS INCLUDE:

- ✓ Establishing collaboration mechanisms among stakeholders for synergy in promoting open contracting.
- ✓ Reactivating and operationalizing the Rwanda Coalition on Contracts Monitoring



### ARTICLE 1.

#### TI-RWANDA HOSTS KICK-OFF MEETING FOR “PROMOTING OPEN CONTRACTING IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN RWANDA”

On March 8, 2024, Transparency International Rwanda (TI-Rwanda), in partnership with the Open Contracting Partnership (OCP), convened a kick-off meeting at the Grand Legacy Hotel to launch the project titled Promoting Open Contracting in Public Procurement in Rwanda. This initiative builds upon TI-Rwanda's previous efforts in the procurement sector and seeks to advance transparency, integrity, and accountability in public procurement.



PARTICIPANTS IN THE KICK-OFF MEETING FOR “PROMOTING OPEN CONTRACTING IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN RWANDA”

#### Reactivating the Rwanda Coalition on Contracts Monitoring

The meeting marked the reactivation of the Rwanda Coalition on Contracts Monitoring, a collaborative platform comprising key stakeholders in public procurement and public finance management. Participants included representatives from the Rwanda Public Procurement Authority (RPPA), Rwanda Governance Board (RGB), Office of the Auditor General (OAG), Office of the Ombudsman (OoO), RALGA, the Private Sector Federation (PSF), the Institute of Engineers of Rwanda (IER), the Institute of Architects of Rwanda (RIA), and the Association des Entrepreneurs du Bâtiment et Travaux Publics (AEBTP).

During the meeting, participants reviewed and updated the coalition's collaborative framework, discussed the

establishment of a steering committee, and outlined plans for future collaboration.

### **Insights and Recommendations from Stakeholders**

Representatives provided valuable insights and recommendations:

**RPPA** emphasized the need to harmonize monitoring tools and engage the coalition in open data validation.

**RALGA** Proposed integrating procurement monitoring into technical forums and assemblies to strengthen district-level practices.

**OAG** highlighted the importance of institutionalizing coalition activities within member strategies to ensure sustainability.

**AEBTP** advocated for whistle-blower protection and fair competition in the construction sector.

**Office of the Ombudsman** suggested incorporating open contracting into anti-corruption policies for broader societal impact.

### **Actionable Commitments**

Key commitments included creating a WhatsApp group for communication, scheduling bi-monthly meetings, and organizing a hybrid national exchange workshop to share experiences and promote open contracting practices.

### **Moving Forward**

The meeting concluded with consensus on initiating quick-win actions to promote transparency and citizen participation in public procurement. TI-Rwanda reaffirmed its dedication to fostering collaboration among stakeholders to achieve systemic change, ensuring public procurement processes remain transparent, accountable, and inclusive.



TI-RWANDA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SPEAKING AT THE MEETING

## **ARTICLE 2.**

# **UNLOCKING TRANSPARENCY IN PROCUREMENT: INSIGHTS FROM TI-RWANDA'S TECHNICAL WORKSHOP**

On **June 7, 2024**, Transparency International Rwanda (TI-Rwanda) hosted a groundbreaking technical workshop at the Grand Legacy Hotel, Kigali, gathering key players in public procurement and finance. The event spotlighted innovative tools and techniques for monitoring procurement processes, drawing participants from institutions like the Rwanda Public Procurement Authority (RPPA), Open Contracting Partnership (OCP), and members of the Rwanda Coalition on Contracts Monitoring.



PARTICIPANTS IN THE UNLOCKING TRANSPARENCY IN PROCUREMENT: INSIGHTS FROM TI-RWANDA'S TECHNICAL WORKSHOP

### **Strengthening Tools for Transparency**

The workshop aimed to harmonize and refine monitoring tools, including the Integrity Pact and Civil Society Procurement Monitoring Tool (CSPMT), for use in Musanze and Rwamagana districts. Participants explored best practices for promoting transparency, fairness, and value for money in procurement processes.

### **Expert Contributions and Global Insights**

Representatives from the Open Contracting Partnership, led by the Head of Africa, shared innovative techniques to monitor procurement, including:

- Open Contracting Data Standards (OCDS),
- Data visualization and business intelligence tools,
- Early detection of red flags, and
- Case studies from Uganda, Paraguay, and Colombia showcasing impactful contract monitoring.

### **Diverse Participation**

The workshop featured a diverse array of stakeholders, including members of the Rwanda Coalition on Contracts Monitoring, such as RALGA, the Institute of Engineers of Rwanda (IER), the Institute of Architects of Rwanda (RIA), the Office of the Ombudsman (OoO), the Private Sector Federation (PSF), the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB), the Office of the Auditor General (OAG), the Association des Entrepreneurs du Batiment et Travaux Publics (AEBTP), and the Association of Procurement Professionals in Rwanda (APPR). These groups joined efforts to exchange ideas and align on strategies to enhance transparency and accountability in public procurement.

### **Collaborative Engagement**

A highlight of the session was the interactive exchange of ideas among participants, who contributed feedback to refine the CSPMT. This tool is vital for collecting actionable data at district and project levels, ensuring public procurement adheres to principles of accountability and inclusiveness.

### **A Call to Action**

The workshop reinforced the importance of collaboration in combating irregularities in procurement. TI-Rwanda emphasized the role of its toll-free call center (2641) and social media platforms to encourage reporting of malpractices, ensuring a collective push toward integrity and efficiency in public procurement.

This event marks a significant step in fostering transparency and accountability in Rwanda's procurement processes, demonstrating the power of partnerships in driving systemic change.



UNLOCKING TRANSPARENCY IN PROCUREMENT: INSIGHTS FROM TI-RWANDA'S TECHNICAL WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

**ARTICLE 3.**

**TI-RWANDA PARTICIPATES IN RPPA'S "IDEATION WORKSHOP ON ADDRESSING CHALLENGES IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT"**

On **June 24, 2024**, Transparency International Rwanda (TI-Rwanda) joined key stakeholders at the Ideation Workshop on Addressing Challenges in Public Procurement, organized by the Rwanda Public Procurement Authority (RPPA) at the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. The workshop brought together approximately 130 participants, including representatives from public institutions, private sector organizations, civil society, academia, and professional bodies, to brainstorm innovative solutions to procurement challenges.



PARTICIPANTS IN THE IDEATION WORKSHOP ON ADDRESSING CHALLENGES IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

**TI-Rwanda's Contribution to Enhancing Transparency in Public Procurement**

TI-Rwanda's Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator, Sano Alain Mugenzi, highlighted the critical role of civil society in fostering transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in public procurement. Drawing from its extensive experience, TI-Rwanda shared key insights and approaches, including:

**Integrity Pact Approach:** Monitoring procurement processes to ensure compliance, transparency, and integrity.

**Evidence-Based Advocacy:**

Engaging policymakers and stakeholders using research findings to inform dialogues, develop policy briefs, and advocate for systemic and policy changes.

**Policy and Legal Consultations:**

Actively contributing to national consultations, including the recent amendments to Rwanda's Public Procurement Law.



PARTICIPANTS IN THE IDEATION WORKSHOP ON ADDRESSING CHALLENGES IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

- **Community Engagement:** Raising awareness and promoting transparency through radio and TV talk shows, regional workshops, and training programs.
- **Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration:** Partnering with the Rwanda Coalition on Contract Monitoring and the Open Contracting Partnership to advance open contracting principles.
- **Key Messages on Open Contracting** During the workshop, TI-Rwanda emphasized the importance of open contracting in improving procurement outcomes. The following messages were shared with participants:



Participants were encouraged to report irregularities and corruption-related issues in public procurement via TI-Rwanda's toll-free hotline (2641) or WhatsApp number (+250 788 309 583).

**Collaborative Recommendations and Next Steps**

The workshop underscored the value of collaboration among stakeholders to address procurement challenges. TI-Rwanda reaffirmed its commitment to working with RPPA and other partners to promote transparency, strengthen procurement systems, and empower citizens to hold duty bearers accountable. By leveraging its expertise and engaging diverse stakeholders, TI-Rwanda continues to contribute meaningfully to enhancing integrity and accountability in Rwanda's public procurement sector.



TI-RWANDA M&E COORDINATOR OFFICE Alain Sano MUGENZI PRESENTING DURING THE WORKSHOP

## ARTICLE 4.

### PROMOTING TI-RWANDA'S CALL CENTER AS A PLATFORM FOR REPORTING PROCUREMENT GRIEVANCES

Transparency International Rwanda (TI-Rwanda) continues to enhance its efforts to promote its toll-free call center (**2641**) as a key platform for reporting grievances related to procurement, including corruption and other injustices.



#### Engagement with Stakeholders in the Construction Sector

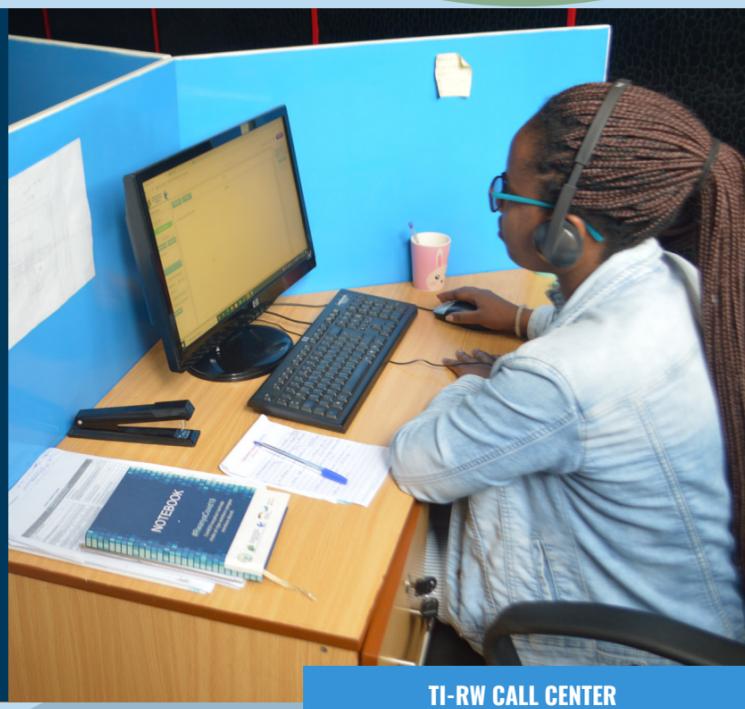
As part of this initiative, TI-Rwanda has partnered with the Rwanda Coalition on Contract Monitoring and key stakeholders in the construction sector to encourage the use of the call center. Association des Entrepreneurs du Bâtiment et Travaux Publics (AEBTP) has committed to:

- Sharing cases related to the construction sector with TI-Rwanda.
- Mobilizing its members to report instances of corruption or procurement malpractices via the call center.

This collaboration aims to generate evidence-based data that will support joint advocacy efforts with coalition members to address systemic challenges in public procurement.

- **Radio Spots:** These will be aired on various stations to reach business professionals and the broader public, encouraging them to report procurement-related complaints.
- **Information, Communication, and Education (ICE) Materials:** These resources will be tailored for mobilizing private sector players, particularly in the construction industry.

  
**TOLL FREE  
2641  
TO REPORT  
A CASE OF  
CORRUPTION**



They will also be distributed during coalition meetings to organizations like AEBTP, the Institute of Engineers of Rwanda (IER), and the Institute of Architects of Rwanda (IAR).

#### Leveraging Social Media for Awareness

TI-Rwanda is also utilizing its social media platforms to share posts featuring open contracting messages. These messages aim to educate the public on the importance of transparency and accountability in procurement processes, encouraging citizens and stakeholders to report irregularities.

#### Building a Culture of Transparency

Through these efforts, TI-Rwanda aims to create a culture of openness and accountability in public procurement. By empowering citizens and private sector members to report grievances, the organization seeks to strengthen the procurement system, reduce corruption, and ensure fairness in the allocation and management of resources.



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## ARTICLE 5.

### TI-RWANDA SIGNS MOUS WITH MUSANZE AND RWAMAGANA DISTRICTS TO STRENGTHEN COLLABORATION IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT MONITORING

Transparency International Rwanda (TI-Rwanda) has taken a significant step in promoting transparency and accountability in public procurement through formalized partnerships with local governments. **On August 14 and 20, 2024**, TI-Rwanda signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with Musanze and Rwamagana Districts, respectively. These agreements aim to operationalize collaboration and guide the monitoring of selected infrastructure projects to ensure adherence to open contracting principles.

#### Musanze District Partnership

An interface meeting held on August 14, 2024, in Musanze brought together TI-Rwanda's Executive Director, the district's Mayor, and the Vice Mayor in charge of economic affairs. Discussions emphasized the role of civil society organizations in enhancing transparency and accountability in procurement processes and fostering open contracting practices.



As an immediate outcome of the meeting, an MoU was signed, facilitating the monitoring of two significant infrastructure projects:

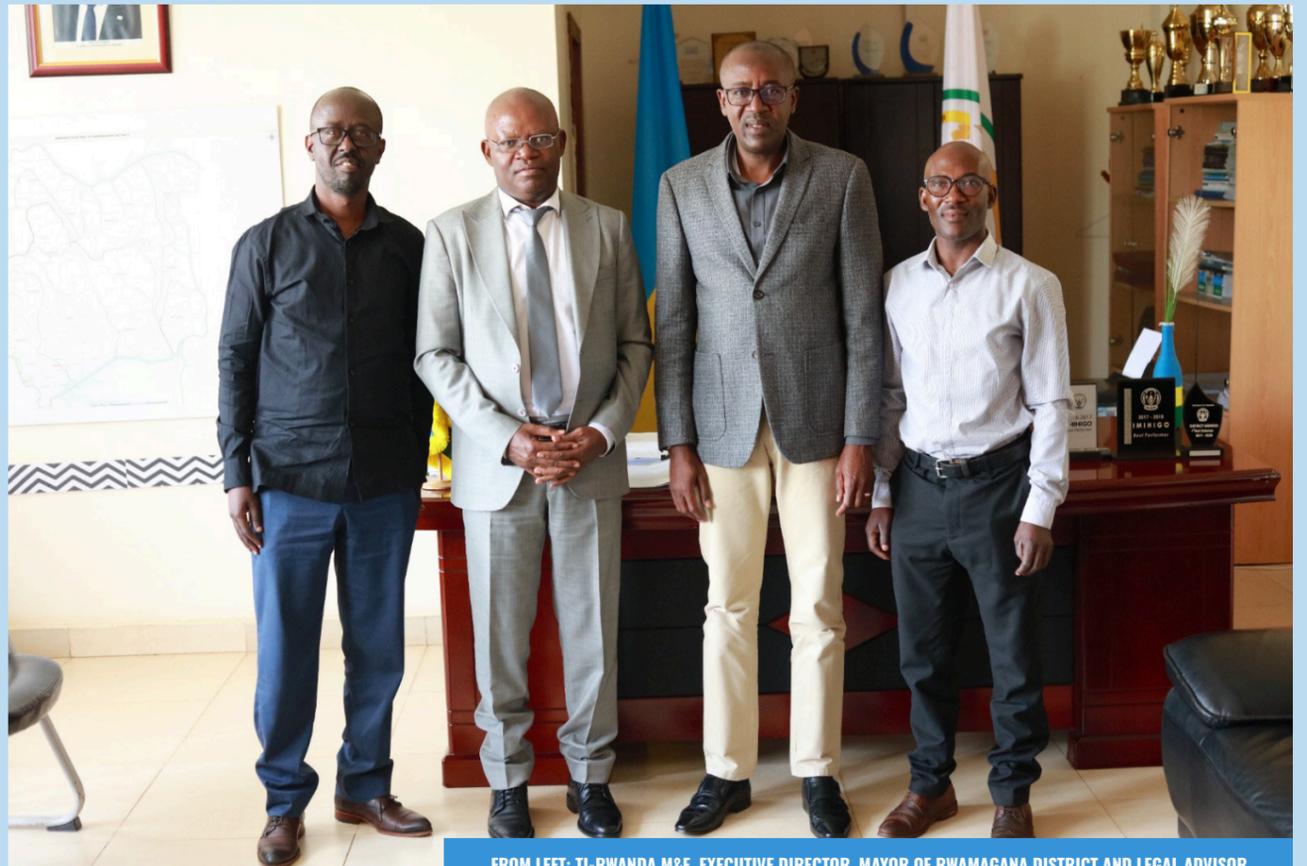
#### 1. Completion of Musanze Agri-Product Market

**Location:** Muhoza Sector  
**Value:** 3,841,526,900 RWF  
**Status:** 100% completed  
**Implementing Entity:** Reserve Force

#### 2. World Bank-RUDP Construction of Asphalt Roads in Cyuve Sector

**Value:** 8,658,101,274 RWF

#### Rwamagana District Partnership



On **August 20, 2024**, another interface meeting took place in Rwamagana District. TI-Rwanda's delegation met with the district's Mayor and Legal Advisor to discuss the importance of collaboration in promoting transparency and accountability.

The MoU signed during this meeting will enable the monitoring of two key projects:

#### 1. Construction of Boys Dormitory at ES Muhazi

**Location:** Gishari Sector  
**Value:** 526,388,890 RWF  
**Duration:** 9 months (project commenced on December 11, 2023)

#### 2. Construction of Saint Aloys-Nyagasenyi Asphalt Road (1,821 meters)

**Funding:** Enabel  
**Value:** 1 billion RWF

#### Enhancing Transparency Through Collaboration

These MoUs mark a milestone in TI-Rwanda's ongoing efforts to strengthen public procurement monitoring at the district level. By working closely with local governments, TI-Rwanda aims to:

- Promote accountability in the implementation of infrastructure projects.
- Foster citizen trust through open contracting practices.
- Generate evidence-based data for advocacy and systemic improvements in procurement processes.

Through these partnerships, TI-Rwanda reinforces its commitment to building transparent, accountable, and efficient public procurement systems across Rwanda.

## ARTICLE 6.

### TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL RWANDA LAUNCHES KAP REPORT ON OPEN CONTRACTING IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT



PARTICIPANTS IN THE LAUNCH OF THE ASSESSMENT ON KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE, AND PRACTICE (KAP) ON OPEN CONTRACTING IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN RWANDA

On **19th December 2024**, Transparency International Rwanda (TI-Rwanda) successfully launched report, “Assessment on Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) on Open Contracting in Public Procurement in Rwanda”. The event brought together stakeholders from government institutions, civil society, the private sector, development partners and Media practitioners to discuss the findings and chart a path toward enhancing transparency and accountability in Rwanda’s public procurement system.

The report provides a comprehensive analysis of awareness, attitudes and Practice toward open contracting in Rwanda. It reveals that 94.02% of respondents are familiar with the concept of open contracting, indicating significant awareness of its principles. However, gaps remain, particularly in advanced knowledge and application, underscoring the need for targeted capacity-building initiatives.



TI-RWANDA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SPEAKING AT THE EVENT

Speaking at the event, **Apollinaire Mupiganyi, Executive Director of TI-Rwanda**, emphasized the importance of transparency in ensuring equitable resource allocation. “While Rwanda has made commendable strides in promoting transparency in public procurement, challenges such as corruption and limited access to information continue to hinder the full realization of open contracting principles. This report offers a roadmap for addressing these barriers and building an inclusive, accountable procurement system,” he said.

According to the report, **71%** of respondents view Rwanda’s public procurement as transparent, reflecting a generally positive perception of the system. However, barriers such as **corruption**,

inadequate digital infrastructure, and restricted access to procurement information persist, hindering full transparency.

While 55.56% of respondents identify transparency across all procurement stages, awareness of critical aspects like public access to data and accountability remains also limited.

Respondents broadly recognize the role of open contracting in fostering transparency and accountability, with over 94% acknowledging its importance in ensuring integrity in public procurement.

Almost 89% of respondents report having direct experience in procurement processes, underscoring the relevance of their perspectives on implementation challenges and benefits.

Despite progress, mixed perceptions about the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) suggest the need for increased visibility and capacity to amplify their advocacy efforts. While some respondents view CSOs as effective advocates, 34.19% remain uncertain about their impact.

The report highlights the need for collective efforts to address existing gaps in Rwanda’s procurement system. Key recommendations include enhancing digital infrastructure to ensure public access to procurement data and equipping stakeholders, especially CSOs and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), with the necessary tools and knowledge through capacity-building initiatives. Strengthening enforcement mechanisms to uphold transparency and accountability at all procurement stages is essential to tackling persistent issues like corruption and limited access to information. By implementing these reforms, Rwanda can foster a more transparent, inclusive, and efficient public procurement system aligned with global best practices.



TI-RWANDA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TALKING TO MEDIA AFTER EVENT

Transparency International Rwanda remains committed to promoting transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in public procurement and calls on all stakeholders to take decisive action to address the challenges identified in this report.

### More about the Study

This study was conducted across five districts and three Government Business Owned Enterprises, providing valuable data to inform actions aimed at improving transparency, accountability,

and citizen participation in Rwanda's public procurement system.

It adopted a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative methods to explore the promotion of open contracting in public procurement in Rwanda and gather comprehensive insights from key actors and stakeholders involved in the process.

The study engaged 117 respondents, including government officials, procurement officers, private sector representatives,

civil society organizations, and members of the general public. Most respondents were affiliated with district-level institutions, accounting for nearly 80% of the sample, while the private sector and government projects represented 15.38% and 5.13%, respectively.

Nearly 96% of participants held university or tertiary-level education, reflecting a highly qualified and professional group. These demographics underscore the involvement of experienced stakeholders in the public procurement process, ensuring that the study's findings are grounded in well-informed perspectives.



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