

> GIS for Rwanda



Geographic Information Systems for Rwanda

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> GIS in Rwanda

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) have been progressively introduced into Rwanda over the past ten years. They proved to be especially valuable in the context of the nation's Vision 2020 of becoming an Information Communication Technology (ICT) literate society. GIS is being used for managing spatial data and for supporting decision-making processes in various governmental domains such as cadastre, public health, education, transportation and road planning, utilities, and agriculture as well as in the private sector.

Esri Rwanda Ltd.

The innovator and world-leading company in the GIS field is Esri with its state-of-the-art software ArcGIS. Esri has been supporting GIS projects in Rwanda and Burundi since 2006. To serve new and existing clients such as the National Land Centre, the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, and the Rwanda Environment Management Authority even better, a new Esri office was established in the City of Kigali.

In August 2010 Esri Rwanda Ltd. was registered in Rwanda as a self-contained company to become the official and sole distributor of Esri software in Rwanda and Burundi. Esri supplies GIS and related products, offers maintenance, on-the-job training, workshops, and consultancy services. It also provides tailored GIS solutions for all sectors in the region, including

government, utilities and telecommunications, environment and natural resources as well as security and public safety.

Apart from providing and maintaining technology, Esri aims at building GIS capacity in Rwanda by transferring its vast GIS implementation experience to local experts (e.g. graduates from local institutions of higher learning) and at creating high-value employment opportunities.

Capacity Building and Partnerships

Acknowledging the important role of academic institutions, Esri fosters well-established long-term partnerships with the National University of Rwanda (NUR) and the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST) as well as with the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC). These partnerships comprise unlimited access to Esri GIS software, professional Esri trainings

for academic staff and teachers, distance learning possibilities provided by the Esri Virtual Campus, and the integration of GIS teaching in bachelor and post-graduate degree programs. The collaboration with NUR and KIST does not only help to reinforce the role GIS plays in the development of the region, but it also triggers the transfer of practical GIS skills into the private sector through students graduating from both institutions.

Since 2007 Esri has been supporting the roll-out of GIS in secondary schools in Rwanda together with MINEDUC and NUR. Major achievements of this initiative for secondary school students are a GIS textbook with Rwandan content, certified teacher trainings on a regular basis, GIS training centers at schools, curriculum development, student map competitions and the annual Esri Summer Camp – a GIS project week allowing students to experience the vast possibilities of GIS in the field and in the computer lab.

Advancing GIS literacy is crucial to the success of Esri, but most importantly, it facilitates social and economic development in Rwanda on the whole. GIS is a key technology of the 21st century and it matters to Rwanda's future. Esri is ready to make a difference and to serve the nation.

