

NCST's Journey, Achievements and Vision for Future

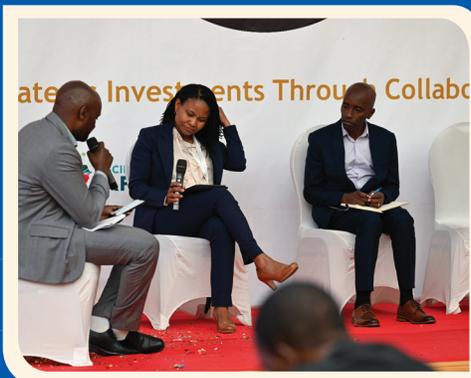
NCST Quarterly Newsletter - Issue No: 009 - July - September 2023

PREAMBLE: Promoting awareness of Science, Technology, and Innovation, along with Research and Development, is crucial for fostering the development of Rwandan society. This issue presents an overview of the accomplishments of the implementation of the SP 2019-2023, and lessons learnt to guide the formulation of the NCST Strategic Plan 2023-2028. Additionally, it emphasizes the establishment of partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders to bolster research and innovation initiatives. Furthermore, it provides insights into the status of implementing the Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) Policy and offers a glimpse of the exciting NCST events scheduled for the upcoming 8 months.

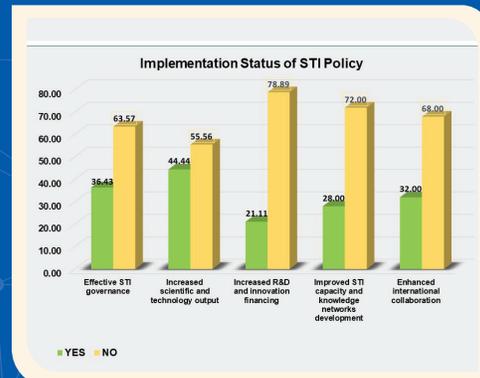
INSIDE THIS ISSUE:



NCSTES presenting Strategic Plan 2019-2023 Achievements to national stakeholders



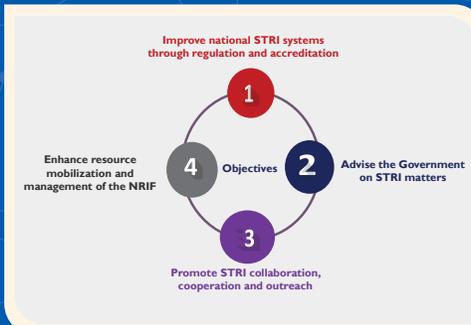
Dr Louis Sibomana on the panel discussion during the Launch GC Malawi, 30th August 2023



STI Policy midi term implementation status



National stakeholders participating in Strategic Plan 2023-2028 validation workshop



Four core objectives of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan



NCST upcoming event : Pre-council meeting symposium call for abstracts

Appraisal of Implementation of Strategic Plan 2019-2023: Achievements and Lessons Learnt

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1. Background

National Council for Science and Technology (NCST) implemented a 5-year Strategic Plan (SP) 2019-2023 with objectives and strategic priorities, that guided NCST's operations and interactions with its stakeholders. The 5-year SP had responsive and proactive fundamental national agenda anchored on the National Strategy for Transformation-1 (NST-1) and Vision 2050.

In June 2023, NCST evaluated the SP 2019-2023 achievements and lessons learnt to inform the development of the next SP 2023-2028. This evaluation aimed at obtaining a variety of evidence-based analysis on the lessons learnt and challenges to improve the SP with reference to NCST mission, mandate and responsibilities.



NCST ES presenting Strategic Plan 2019-2023 Achievement to national stakeholders



National stakeholders participating in Strategic Plan 2023-2028 validation workshop

2. Overview of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan

The SP for 2019-2023 was based on four strategic objectives namely, i) Improve national Science, Technology, Research and Innovation (STRI) systems through regulations and accreditation; ii) Advise the Government on STRI matters; iii) Promote STRI collaboration, cooperation and outreach activities; and iv) Enhance resource mobilization and management of the National Research and Innovation Fund (NRIF) as highlighted **Figure 1**. Each objective had specific strategies, priorities, outcomes and indicators to be implemented through annual work plans as detailed in the following **Table 1**.

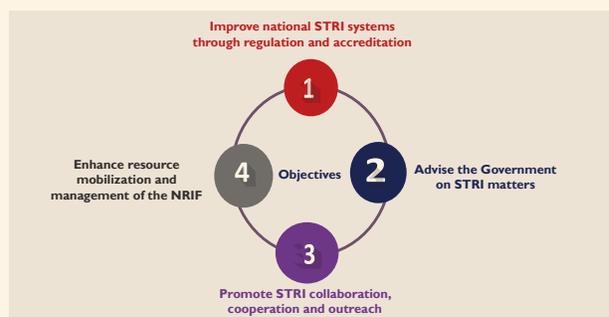


Figure 1: Four core objectives of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan

Table 1: Specific strategies per objective

<p>Objective 1: Regulation and Accreditation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Facilitate the development and implementation of STRI regulations 1.2. Develop and implement accreditation and quality assurance framework for Centers of Excellence and laboratory facilities 1.3. Monitor utilization of available facilities, deficiencies and opportunities 1.4. Support and Promote Intellectual Rights Implementation STRI institutions <p>Objective 2: STRI Advice to Government</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. STRI policy formulation 2.2. STRI governance, planning and coordination 2.3. Develop National Research and Innovation Agenda (NRIA) 2.4. Monitor and evaluate STRI performance 2.5. Provide technology foresight and advisory on niche areas 	<p>Objective 3: STRI Collaboration, Cooperation and Outreach</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Create and support national, regional and international partnerships 3.2. Promote STRI collaboration between Government, Academia, and Industry 3.3. Partake in Science and Society outreach programs and activities 3.4. Support Knowledge and Technology Transfer Programs 3.5. Advocate for Incentives to Promote R&D 3.6. Promote Movement of Scientists, Technologist and Innovators <p>Objective 4: To Enhance Resource Mobilization and Management of the NRIF</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Support research capabilities and expertise growth 4.2. Support sector specific and need-oriented R&D 4.3. Increase innovation capacity 4.4. Boost National STRI facilities (Science Parks, laboratories, Hubs, CoE, KIC, etc.) 4.5. Promote access to scientific resources and information 4.6. Increase NRIF's Funding Portfolio 4.7. NRIF Sound Administration and Management
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3. Key achievements of the SP 2019-2023

For the past 5-years, NCST had considerable achievements regarding the strategic objectives of the SP 2019-2023 as summarized below (Table 2);

Table 2: Summary of the 2019-2023 SP Key Achievements

Strategic Objectives	Key Achievements
1. Improve national Science, Technology, Research and Innovation (STRI) systems through regulations and accreditation	Instructions on Research Activities in Rwanda: developed, presented and approved by MINEDUC senior management and forward to next level of final approval
	Rules and Regulations Research Activities in Rwanda: developed, presented and approved by MINEDUC senior management and forward to next level of final approval
	Research permit awarded: More than 262 research permit applications from national and international researchers have been reviewed and approved
2. To Advise Government on STRI Matters	STI Policy developed and approved by Cabinet in June 2020
	National Research Innovation Agenda (NRIA): developed, validated and disseminated on 24 th June 2021
	National Research and Innovation Fund (NRIF) policy framework: developed, validated and disseminated on 24 th June 2021
	Established Research Coordination Committee (RCC) in June 2020 with 11 members from public and private research institutions established to ensure better national coordination and planning of research.
	M&E Framework and tools developed and implemented for tracking progress of the research and innovation funded projects
	STI policy assessment tool: developed and shared to stakeholders to collect data/information on the status (mid-term) of the STI policy implementation
	R&D survey conducted: R&D survey conducted for reference year 2018/2019 and report published (November 2021)
	STI Status: assessment of the national STI status conducted for reference year 2019/2020 and report published (November 2021)
3. To Promote STRI Collaboration and Outreach	NCST-EASTEKO (East African Science and Technology Commission) Collaboration Agreement signed: to promote and coordinate the development, management and application of science technology and innovation within the East African Community (EAC) Partner States
	NCST-IDRC (International Development Research Centre, Canada) collaboration: funding research and innovation project where IDRC granted 9450,000 CAD to NRIF/NCST to fund research projects
	NCST-TUBITAK (Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye, Turkey) Collaboration Agreement signed: encourage and support cooperation in the field of science and technology between research entities, universities, research institutes and industrial enterprises of the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Rwanda
	NCST-PSF Rwanda Collaboration Agreement signed: to establish innovation programs driven by Knowledge Transfer Partnerships between academia and industry; and to boost business' competitiveness and productivity through funded partnerships with academics and researchers
	NCST-SFA-AUDA-NEPAD Collaboration Agreement signed: to establish Grand Challenges Rwanda, which was launched on 17-18 May 2023

	<p>NCST-KTH (Royal Institute of Technology) Partnership Agreement signed: in collaboration with University of Rwanda (UR), Rwanda Development Board (RDB), Rwanda Polytechnic (RP) and NCST a partnership agreement with KTH, Sweden, was developed to enhance innovation ecosystem platform through education, research and innovation</p> <p>1st STI conference organized 31st March-01 April 2022: in collaboration with stakeholders, NCST organized and conducted a scientific conference titled “<i>Leveraging the Potential of Science and Technology to Mitigate Challenges Associated with COVID-19 pandemic in Developing Countries</i>” with the purpose to provide a platform for players in science, technology, and innovators from all over the world to deliberate on technologically innovative efforts underway as humanitarian responses to the COVID-19 pandemic</p> <p>STRI awareness programs implemented: A number of awareness programs and events organized and implemented through different channels: RBA platforms (TV shows and Bikorabite), quarterly Newsletters, Documentation on social media and NCST Website, and Newspapers like Newtimes Rwanda, Covid-19 prevention and awareness program at Nyarugunga sector/Kicukiro district/Kigali city</p> <p>Incentives programs established: Different incentives programs such as Awarding best researchers established. For example, each year in collaboration with stakeholders NCST is awarding on annual basis the Women in Science Award (more than 12 Women awarded). In addition, NCST in partnership with stakeholder has established the Best Research Award during the scientific conference (4 best researchers awarded).</p>
<p>4. To Enhance Resource Mobilization and Management of the NRIF</p>	<p>Operationalization of NRIF: NCST operates the NRIF through establishing and implementing funding schemes that provide competitive and merit-based funding opportunities towards boosting national research and innovation capacity and productivity. As per now, NCST has launched and supported 111 research and innovation projects implemented under different grant schemes and over Five (5) Billions Rwandan Francs have been committed. These grant schemes include Excellent Research Grant for Best Rwandan Researchers (11 projects); Rwanda Innovation Challenge (RIC) for youth and Women (36 projects); Academia-Industry Collaboration towards innovation (19 projects); Sector Strategic Research Grant (8 projects); Special Collaboration Research to address COVID-19 (17 projects); Women in Science Research and Innovation Grant (5 projects); Rwanda Innovation Challenge for Academia-Industry Collaboration Scheme (RIC-R&D) (10 projects); Research and Innovation Mobility grant (RIM) (5 projects); and establishment of grant schemes to address challenges of Malnutrition and stunting and challenges of Fertilizers in Rwanda, Establishment of implementation research for scale up and commercialization of innovations and establishment of Grand Challenges Rwanda</p> <p>Research Innovation and Grant Management System (RIGMS) implemented: a RIGMS platform has been developed, implemented and maintained to support online applications and management of research projects and research permit approval</p> <p>Funds mobilization: The NCST has established strategic partnership and collaborations with regional and international partners to leverage R&D Funding. As per now, NCST managed to raise funding amounting to 1,085,900 Canadian Dollars (CAD) almost One billion Rwandan Francs from the International Development Research Center (IDRC) to support research and innovation projects and capacity building in grant writing and management. The NCST also mobilized 250,000 USD almost Two Hundred Eighty Million Rwandan Francs from African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) to support implementation research for scale up and commercialization of Innovations</p>

	<p>Periodic needs assessment for STI and R&D Performance: Different needs assessment have been conducted through R&D and STI surveys, and assessment reports done by experts from World bank (Dr. Danica Ramljak, a Senior World Bank Expert) and Dr Aliza Belman Inbal, Innovation expert from Israel) as well as team from Rwandan Diaspora scientist</p>
	<p>Human and institutional capacity development: a number of programs to support research and innovation capacity have been established. For example, training program on 08-09 March 2022 on “Building Capacity for Science, Technology and Innovation System in Rwanda” in partnership with national stakeholders, World Bank, and Rwandan Diaspora; and Capacity building workshops on R&D and innovation survey in partnership with AUDA-NEPAD (April 2021); as well as a Research and Innovation Mobility (RIM) Grant established to support knowledge and technology transfer. Further, a training on grant proposal writing for Rwandan research and innovators was conducted on 22-26 May 2023 by Dr Aliza Belman Inbal, Innovation expert from Israel and facilitated by NCST staff</p>

4. Lessons learnt to inform future Strategic Plan 2023-2028

Overall, the objectives and related strategic priorities as well as the interventions of the SP 2019-2023 have been achieved at a satisfactory level. In terms of STI development performance, NCST continues to make a significant contribution across all its focus areas, including STI policy and strategies development, operationalization of NRIF, and cooperation and collaboration with national and international stakeholders.

Although NCST has recorded considerable success in implemented different activities as per 2019-2023 strategic plan, there were a number of challenges which affected the full implementation of the 2019-2023 strategic plan. Among them, the following are the main challenges:

- **Limited number of staff:** as per now, the NCST approved structure is not yet fulfilled, and recruitment is ongoing. However, thanks to Government of Rwanda for appointing 4 Senior staff (July 2021) and for facilitating recruitment of 5 specialists and officer staff (January 2023). In near, future we believe to have all required staffing to support the implementation of NCST responsibilities

- **Impact of Covid-19 pandemic:** the covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on job and activities achievements due to lockdowns and restrictions on travel and gatherings, not only at NCST and in Rwanda, but globally. We are prepared for future pandemics through virtual working environment and facilitating the staff to work remotely.

As per lessons learnt during this 2019-2023 strategic plan, there is a need to:

- Improve availability of data and information as well as all services delivery online
- Strengthen our relationship with stakeholders for partnerships and collaboration
- Regularly track the achievements and keep records
- Enhance STI foresight and data analytics studies for policy recommendations and knowledge creation as well as technology transfer

To achieve this and for the impact-oriented approach, we need to strengthen our capacity to measure the impact of the achieved results towards contribution to the national development. That

is, we need to focus more on results-oriented approach and to promote accountability both internally and externally.

Therefore, for the next 5 years’ strategic plan, the NCST will build upon the achievements and continue to deepen and strengthen STI and R&D excellence. The following key recommendations need to be considered:

- Optimize R&D and innovation productivity towards technological products and services development to feed into global innovation index indicators (*increased number & quality of R&D outputs e.g. IPs, patents, copy rights, trademarks*)
- Enhance strategic national, regional and international partnerships with stakeholders for leveraging NRIF funding and improving academia-industry collaboration
- Continuous support of human and institutional capacity
- Strengthen the STI and R&D Community outreach activities
- Improve monitoring and evaluation as well as reporting

Building Partnerships with Stakeholders to Support Research and Innovation

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Background

Rwanda has been making significant strides in recent years to be transformed into a knowledge-based economy, which is driven by research and innovation. The Rwandan government has recognized the importance of fostering partnerships with various stakeholders to accelerate the country's development in these areas.

Rwanda's commitment to building partnerships with stakeholders to support research and innovation is a testament to its vision for a prosperous and sustainable future. By fostering collaboration between national and international stakeholders, Rwanda is well-positioned to continue its remarkable journey towards becoming a hub for research and innovation in Africa. As the country addresses its challenges and builds on its successes, it is poised to unlock even greater potential for economic growth and societal development.

NCST Initiatives to Building Strong Partnership

One of the NCST's mandate is to attract more funds and explore partnership opportunities within Africa and globally, through innovative collaboration engagement approaches, for example, exchange of practices and ideas, fostering collaborative joint research funding, scientific knowledge and technology transfer as well as linkage to other international partners and global renown scientists, researchers, innovators, and technology business and investors, and seek solutions for common challenges.

It has been observed that many funders initiate programs in Africa and don't un-

derstand what programs and infrastructure are already in place. As a result, new programs established often compete with these activities, and opportunities to leverage are lost.

The **3rd Africa Health Research and Innovation Funders Forum (AHRIF)** held in Cape Town from 24th -26th August 2023, highlighted several activities and platforms that are in place that can be used as starting points for those seeking to initiate programs in Africa.

The forum was designed to provide funders with an insight into challenges unique to the continent due to extreme weather events as the intersection of climate and health is fast gathering global attention. This was an opportunity for funders and stakeholders to understand the challenges and opportunities in this domain and share infor-

mation about their strategies. Some of the objectives of this gathering were:

- To promote awareness of funders' activities in defined territories.
- To promote collaboration between Not-for-Profits, Philanthropies, Development Banks and government departments (and minimize duplication) with respect to research and innovation investments in the respective territories.
- To explore how to best build research and innovation capacity across the (Sub-Saharan) African region



Welcome remarks by Glenda Gray, President, South African Medical Research Council

A more interesting session was on Identifying **research gaps in Africa**. It is important for funders to understand what programs and platforms exist in Africa. It is also important to understand where the gaps are and discuss how these can be addressed, for instance, what research gaps does the vaccine industry need to be addressed? What are the gaps in pre-clinical research in Africa?

Where does Africa have strong R&D, and where are the gaps? Who are Enablers of Sustainable Research Networks? What can be done for Strengthening Regulatory agencies in Africa?

Grand Challenge Rwanda is working together with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to co-fund a call for application; the GC Rwanda Climate for Health

proposal seeks to promote research and innovation by addressing the unprecedented health, agricultural, and environmental challenges posed by climate change. Through this approach, the overall goal is to foster a healthier population by addressing the intersection of climate change and public health.



Group Photo of all 3rd Africa Health Research and Innovation Funders Forum Participants

Note that this request for proposals will be launched by six Grand Challenges partners: African researchers located in Ethiopia and Rwanda should apply through the respective country specific Grand Challenges portal; African researchers located in all other African countries should apply through the Grand Challenges Africa portal; Brazilian researchers located in Brazilian organizations should apply through the Grand Challenges Brazil portal; and Indian researchers located in Indian organizations should apply through the Grand Challenges India portal. Researchers outside of these geographies should apply through the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Grand Challenges portal.

forts from members of the global Grand Challenges family following Rwanda which launched GC Rwanda in May this year to support research and innovation.

This Launch brought together Grand Challenges Africa members (including Grand Challenges Rwanda) and partners to deliberate on mechanisms to leverage opportunities for research and

innovation collaboration to support economic growth of the continent.

The goal of GC Malawi is to support the most creative scientists in Malawi to collaborate with their partners in Africa and globally, to implement research that fosters innovation in solving the most critical development challenges in Malawi and Africa.

Grand Challenges Malawi Launch

The 30th of August 2023 marked an important milestone to launch Grand Challenges Malawi program at Bingu International Convention Centre (BICC), Lilongwe, Malawi. Malawi joined a growing global network to leverage ef-



GC Malawi Official Launch by Honorable Minister of Education

Grand Challenges Rwanda Participation at the launch of Grand Challenges Malawi

The launch was made of different activities such as Official launch of Grand Challenges Malawi by the Minister, Mrs Madalitso Kambauwa Wirima, MP, Unveiling of the published Grand Challenge Request for Proposal (RFP), Keynote Address, Panel discussion Sessions and Innovation Exhibitions.

GC Rwanda was well represented by its coordinator, Dr. Louis Sibomana who attended the Launch of Grand Challenges Malawi.



Group photo of GC Malawi Launch Event Participants

Dr. Louis Sibomana was among the panelists on the panel discussion under the theme **“Prospects for research and innovation development in Africa and lessons learnt from the Grand Challenges National Programs from Ethiopia, Rwanda and South Africa”**. During the discussion, he shared with the participants what has been done so far by GC Rwanda in the last three months; RFP, initiation with GC families as well as Capacity building on grant writing. He emphasized on the need for governments to put much effort in R&D, and Innovation investments. He also briefly spoke about an upcoming call for applications which is co funded on global level. Chances are for Rwandan applicants, but the good thing about the call is that Rwandans can choose any affiliation. This is part of collaboration and partnership efforts among GC chapters and other funders.



Panel Session 1: Launch GC Malawi, 30th August 2023

Some Recommendations for GC Malawi Launch Participants

The following are major recommendations:

- i. Participants recommended a need for further strong partnerships of the GC Africa members for joint investment and funding in research and innovation as well as science communication and to scale up potential R&D output and potential innovations
- ii. NCST Rwanda and NCST Malawi to collaborate and partner in implementation of GC programs and joint funding and applications. This will be a good opportunity to share successful stories from GC family

National Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Policy - Implementation Assessment

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In June 2020, the Cabinet approved the National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (STI Policy), which frames the role of STI in the pursuit of Rwanda's national development imperatives as set out in Vision 2050, and aimed at providing coherent and up-to-date policy framework to guide the strategies and interventions of the various STI actors. This STI Policy sets out a range of system-level strategic imperatives for science and innovation, as well as outlines five (5) key strategic objectives and several associated interventions, which jointly are intended to raise the national level of research, science and technology-led innovation.

STI Policy Objectives:

Effective STI governance: With the aim to establish an enabling policy environment as well as coordination mechanisms aimed at strengthening of linkages between science, economy and society to encourage research and innovation.

Increased scientific and technology output: To boost the capacity in terms of Adapting, Inventing and Innovating (All) technology products and services towards sustainable socio-economic development.

Increased R&D and innovation financing: To establish funding mechanisms that boost basic research, as well as the development and commercialization of new products, processes and services.

Improved STI capacity and knowledge networks development: To enable the development of a critical mass of Rwandans with knowledge, skills, and competencies to support a knowledge-economy.

Enhanced international collaboration: To provide an overarching framework through which bilateral, multilateral, regional and international cooperation can be structured to strengthen Rwanda's National Innovation System performance. As STI cuts across almost all sectors of the economy, this underscores the need to integrate STI across all sectors to stimulate economic growth, and therefore, its implementation is channeled through various sectors of the economy. The figure below shows the six (6) adopted priorities:



Implementation assessment:

Considering that it is now 3 years and plus since the Cabinet approved the policy, the National Council for Science and Technology (NCST) initiated an assessment of the aforementioned STI policy in March 2023. Specifically, the main objective of this assessment was:

- to evaluate how the STI Policy's objectives have been implemented on the ground in Rwanda;
- to identify specific successes or gaps in implementation; and finally;
- to make recommendations which can fast-track and ensure efficient and effective implementation of the STI policy.

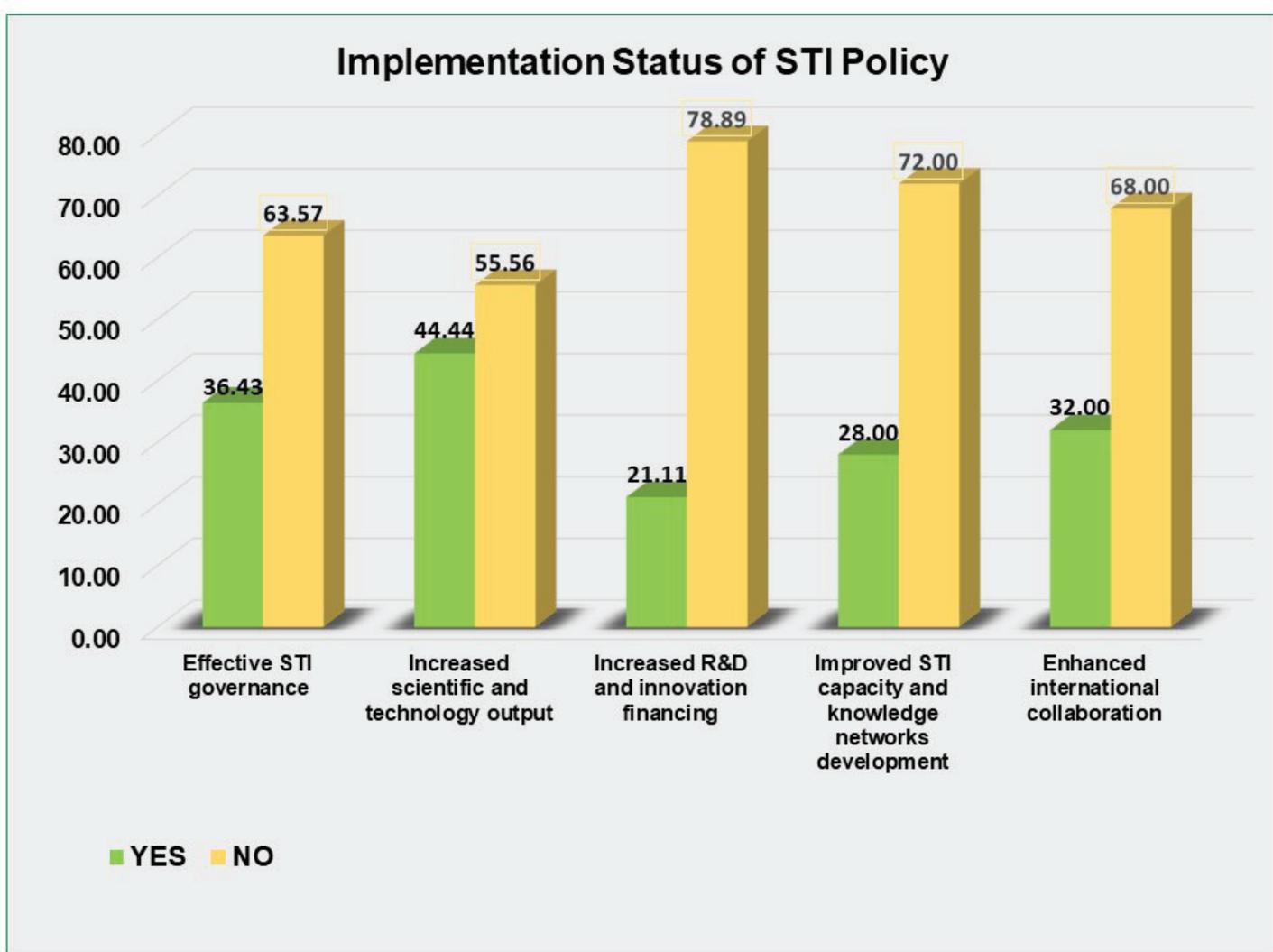
Pending the publication of the full report, preliminary data show the following high-level implementation status:

In general, all policy objectives are being implemented but the level of implementation differs from one sector to another, as well as from one objective to another.

The statistics show that the 2nd objective (Increased scientific and technology output) is being implemented at 44.4%; followed by the 1st objective (Effective STI governance) at 36.4%; followed by the 5th objective (enhanced international

collaboration) at 32%; followed by the 4th objective (Improved STI Capacity building and knowledge networks development) at 28%; and lastly followed by the 3rd objective (Increased R&D and innovation financing) at 21.1%.

The following figure shows the implementation rate:



Implementation status of STI policy where no means not yet implemented and yes means implemented

Upcoming Events at National Council for Science and Technology (NCST)

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In accordance with the Law No 40/2017 of 16/08/2017 establishing the National Council for Science and Technology (NCST) and determining its mission, among others to foster a culture of innovation and propel Rwanda into the technological advancement. In this regards, the NCST diligently aligns its endeavors with national priorities and global best practices. In the spirit of this commitment, NCST is organizing a series of important events that foster innovation, research, and development in the country. In this article, we provide an overview of four upcoming events.

I. Pre-council meeting symposium:

The law establishing NCST stipulates that the Council serves as the Organ overseeing the NCST functioning. One of its key roles is to define the areas of activities that should receive precedence in the application of science and technology, while also offering guidance to empower the NCST in fulfilling its mission. Given this mandate, it falls upon the NCST Secretariat to seize the moment when all counselors convene for their annual meeting, to providing a platform for highlighting some of the notable accomplishments.

In this regard, prior to the 8th NCST Council meeting, on 18th October 2023, there will be a pre-council meeting symposium themed *"Insight into existing research programs by priority areas in Rwanda"* where national scientists will present research funded projects with innovative ideas and solutions, technology development, new evidence-based scientific development with innovative products and services in six priority areas namely: sustainable energy, food security, life and health sciences, local production, digital services,

and resilient environment and natural resources. NCST invited Rwandan National researchers from Business sector, Government sector, Higher Education sector, Private non-profit sector who have ongoing research studies, research funded projects with innovative ideas and solutions, technology development, new evidence-based scientific development with innovative products and services to submit research abstracts and accepted abstracts will present their research in the pre-council symposium and best ones will be awarded.

At the same time, best STI Communicators and journalist from various sectors will be given opportunity to demonstrate their contribution to communication and/or dissemination of science, technology and Innovation in the community.

The event will be an opportunity to stimulate competition where prestigious awards will be presented to best national researchers and innovators and STI communicators in the categories of a) Most Accomplished Researcher Award; b) Most Innovative Research Award; c) Women Research Award d) Promising Young Researcher Award; and e) Best STI Communicator Award.

II. The 8th NCST Council Meeting:

Date: 19/10/2023

Venue: Marriot Hotel Kigali

Theme: *"Insight into existing research programs by priority areas"*

As stipulated by the law, the NCST Council will seat for its 8th Annual meeting on 19th October 2023 at Marriott Hotel. The meeting aims to:

- Share key progress activities, plans, challenges and opportunities for integrating Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) in national programs.
- Deliberate on stakeholders' roles to enable improved collaborations and exchange of best practices.
- Examine and appreciate existing research projects tailored national and global context.
- Shape sustainable solutions and strategies to become a regional hub for R&D and innovation attracting African and global researchers and innovators.

Expected Outcomes

- A strategy to stimulate improved R&D and STI activities
- Prioritized action plan for Fiscal Year 2024/25
- Long-term strategy to attain and leapfrog improved STI and R&D outcomes
- Briefing Note meeting with the Government of Rwanda High-level leadership.

III. 2nd STI Conference:

Tentative dates: on 9th–10th May 2024

Venue: Kigali (TBD)

Theme: *Promoting Climate Resilient Agriculture through Science, Technology and Innovation for improved food security and nutrition*

After the successful organization of the 1st Rwanda STI Conference on March 31st

– April 1st 2022, the National Council for Science and Technology is embarking to organizing a Second Rwanda Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) Conference from 9th – 10th May 2024, as one of the key resolutions from the first conference to organize it every two years.

This upcoming conference will bring together stakeholders from academia, industry, government, policy makers, development partners, to discuss on strategies to improve the integration of agriculture development and climate responsiveness, the use/applications of emerging technologies and innovations for climate resilient agriculture, as well as the role of STI in transformation of the world’s agriculture and food security to address these challenges to improve food security and broader development goals under a changing climate and increasing food demand.

IV. Women in Science Award

Date: February 11th 2024

Venue: Yet to be communicated

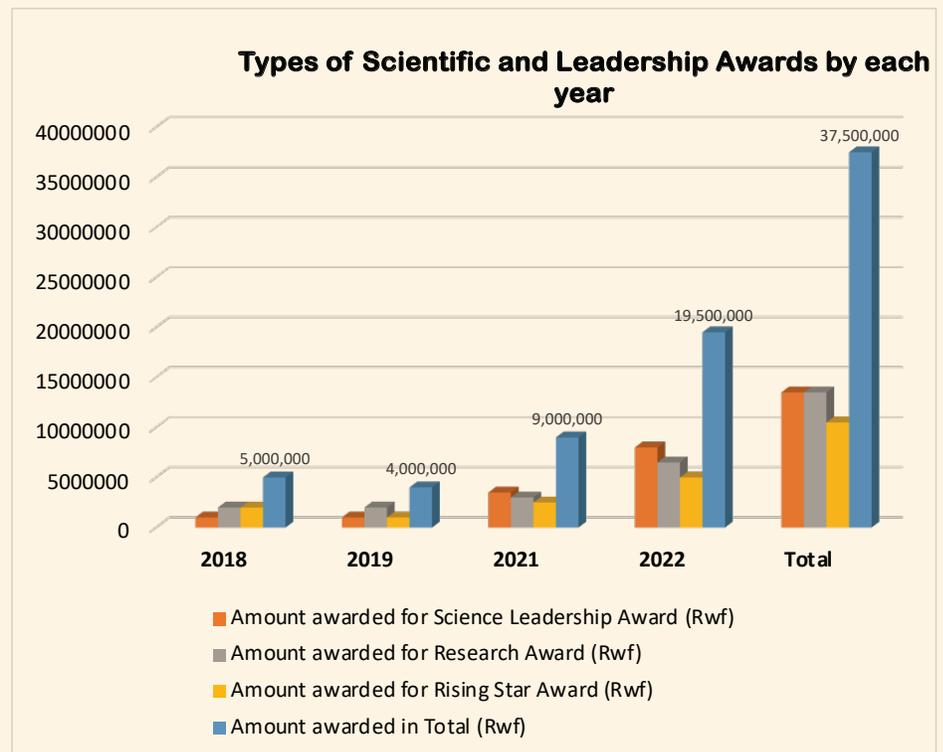
Theme: *To be communicated (TBC)*

Since 2018, NCST has introduced the Women in Science Award given to women on the celebration of International Day of Girls and Women in Science on 10th February every year, for their demonstrated commitment to advance science in the society. Since then, NCST has honored a total of 13 outstanding women in this framework. The awards are distributed across three distinct categories: Science Leadership Award, Research Award, and Rising Star Award.

For a detailed breakdown of the number of women honored in each category per year, please refer to the **table 3** below:

Table 3: Types of scientific awards for women at NCST since 2018

Year of Award	2018	2019	2021	2022	Total
Number of awardess	4	3	3	3	13
Amount awarded for Science Leadership Award (Rwf)	1,000,000	1,000,000	3,500,000	8000000	13,500,000
Amount awarded for Research Award (Rwf)	2,000,000	2,000,000	3,000,000	6,500,000	13,500,000
Amount awarded for Rising Star Award (Rwf)	2,000,000	1,000,000	2,500,000	5,000,000	10,500,000
Amount awarded in Total (Rwf)	5,000,000	4,000,000	9,000,000	19,500,000	37,500,000



This day offers an opportunity to demonstrate the commitment of Government of Rwanda to promote full and equal access to participation in science for women and girls and to advance their achievements in science. It is also an opportunity to equip Girls & Women with knowledge and soft skills to enhance development of scientific thinking and experimentation in STI in addition to creating a network between young generations and men & women with more achievements in STEM to encourage more women to pursue careers in science and technology.

In the same spirit, on the celebration of the International Day for Girls and Women in science scheduled to take place on 11th February 2024, the National Council for Science and Technology and its stakeholders will organize again the Women and Girls in Science awards.

More details on this upcoming event and the selection for award will be provided shortly. Readers are invited to regularly visit NCST website and link on its social medias.