Labour Force Survey

Gender Thematic Report

December, 2025

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Foreword

Labour statistics serve as essential instruments in monitoring the progress toward achieving Rwanda's commitment to ensure decent work for all. To enhance inclusive participation for all and evidence-based decisions, the Government of Rwanda requires accurate, timely, and accessible gender disaggregated data to monitor policy implementation and outcomes. In this context, the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) is pleased to present the *Gender Thematic Report from the 2024 Labour Force Survey*. This report provides an in-depth analysis of the dynamics of women and men in Rwanda's labour market, with a focus on participation, employment, unemployment, and sectoral engagement.

Gender equality and women's economic empowerment remain at the center of Rwanda's national development agenda and are integral to achieving the objectives of Vision 2050, the Second National Strategy for Transformation (NST2), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Monitoring gender gaps in employment and access to decent work is therefore crucial to inform policies that promote inclusive growth, reduce inequality, and ensure that no one is left behind.

The 2024 Gender Thematic Report builds on data from the Rwanda Labour Force Survey, conducted nationwide, and provides evidence-based insights on key labour market indicators disaggregated by sex, age group, and area of residence. The analysis highlights progress made in increasing women's participation in the workforce, while also pointing out persistent challenges such as gender disparities in unemployment, underemployment, wage levels, and access to managerial positions.

This publication is intended to serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, development partners, researchers, civil society, and all stakeholders committed to advancing gender equality in Rwanda's labour market. We hope that the findings presented in this report will stimulate dialogue, guide targeted interventions, and contribute to the design of programs and policies that empower both women and men to fully realize their potential in the world of work.

The National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda extends its appreciation to all partners who contributed to the successful completion of the 2024 labour force survey and the development of this thematic report. Furthermore, NISR invites all users to utilize the valuable data presented in this report to enhance Rwanda's Economic development. NISR values the feedback from all data users regarding this publication. We remain committed to continuously enhancing the variety of our analyses and presentation of findings to ensure their effective use.

MURENZI Ivan

Director General of NISR
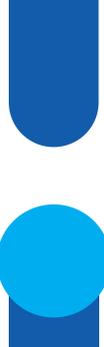
Acknowledgement

This report is the result of a collective effort from numerous individuals and institutions, and we deeply appreciate the contributions of everyone involved in its development and extend our deepest gratitude to our valued partners.

Our profound appreciation also goes to the NISR technical team members namely: Mrs. ISHIMWE Caroline, Establishment census specialist; Mr. NKURUNZIZA Venuste, Gender and youth statistician; and Mr. NSHUTINABAGENZI Eric, Households surveys and poverty statistician; for their active involvement in the compilation of this report, under the technical guidance of Mr. NILINGIYIMANA Faustin, Director of the Demographic and Social Statistics Unit and Mr. BYIRINGIRO James, Survey program manager.

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Executive Summary

This report offers an in-depth analysis of how gender influences employment dynamics in Rwanda between 2020 to 2024. It captures both the progress made toward gender equality in the labour market and gaps to be addressed. Rooted in solid data, this report supports Rwanda's efforts to build an inclusive and equitable labour market, in line with national ambitions like National Strategy for Transformation, Vision 2050 and global commitments, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Labour Force Participation Trends in Rwanda (2020–2024)

From 2020 to 2024, Rwanda experienced an overall increase in Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) for both females and males, with notable variations across areas of residence, age groups, and educational attainment levels. At national level, the LFPR for females increased from 48.2% in 2020 to 55.6% in 2024, while the LFPR for males increased from 65.6% to 71.1% over the same period.

Urban populations consistently exhibit higher labour force participation rates compared to those in rural areas. In 2024, 64.8% of urban females and 79.5% of urban males were economically active. Comparatively, 51.9% of rural females and 67.4% of rural males were active in the labour market.

In 2024, the labour force participation rate was high among individuals aged 25–34, reaching 71.1% for females and 88.7% for males. The lowest participation was recorded among those aged 65 and above.

The education level is highly correlated with labour force participation. In 2024, females with university qualifications had an LFPR of 85.2% compared to 54.7% of those with no formal education. Similarly, males' LFPR ranged from 72.0% (no education) to 90.4% (university degree).

These trends reflect the critical role of education, age, and geographic location in shaping Rwanda's labor force.

Employment

From 2020 to 2024, Rwanda demonstrated steady improvements in employment rates for both females and males. The employment-to-population ratio increased from 38.5% to 45.9% for females and from 55.2% to 62.2% for males. Despite this growth, a persistent gender gap remains across various education levels and economic sectors as per the below summary table.

Unemployment

From 2020 to 2024, Rwanda experienced a decline in unemployment rate for both females and males. However, gender gaps persisted.

The unemployment rate for females decreased by 2.7 percentage points, from 20.3% in 2020 to 17.6% in 2024, while for males, it declined by 3.3 percentage points, from 15.9% in 2020 to 12.6% in 2024.

Among young females aged 16–24, the unemployment rate declined by 3.9 percentage points, from 26.8% in 2020 to 22.9% in 2024. Among individuals aged 25–34, the unemployment rate declined by 7.9 percentage points (28.1% in 2020 to 20.2% for 2024) for females, compared to a drop of 6.6 percentage points (18.2% in 2020 to 11.6% in 2024) for males.

Young females with upper secondary or university education consistently reported higher unemployment rates than males. Among university-educated females, the unemployment declined by 10.4 percentage points (38.3% in 2022 to 27.9% in 2024) for females, compared to a drop of 8.6 percentage points (26.4% to 17.8%) for males over the same period.

Income Disparities

In 2024, Rwanda experienced significant gender-based income disparities across all sectors of employment.

On average, females earned less per month compared to males. This disparity is observed across different parameters related to residence areas (urban and rural) and across levels of education, but this difference was especially pronounced in urban areas, where females earned considerably less or almost a half of their male counterparts. Workers without formal education, especially females, earned much lower wages.

Time Spent in Employment

From 2020 to 2024, Rwanda experienced an overall increase in average weekly working hours for both males and females, but a gender gap persisted along the period.

The data from LFS report 2024 shows the percentage differences in weekly working hours between males and females in 2024. On average, female worked 15% fewer hours per week than males. The only exception to this gap was among individuals with a university education, where no difference in working hours was observed. In all other sub-categories, the gender disparity in working hours exceeded 10%, with the most significant difference observed in the agriculture sector, where males worked 20% more hours than females, despite both genders working few hours in this sector overall.

Gender and Own-Use Production

In Rwanda, females consistently spend more time on own-use production work than males, particularly in unpaid domestic tasks where they spend nearly twice as much time as men. In contrast men allocates more time to activities such as grazing animals and construction works.

In summary, between 2020 and 2024, Rwanda made significant progress in narrowing the gender gap in the labor market. More females are entering the workforce, unemployment among women has decreased, and there is increased female participation in paid works. However, males are still more represented in paid works, earn higher wages on average, and work more hours outside usual residence homes. Females continue to carry the burden of unpaid domestic works more than males.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Rwanda maintains its strong commitment to gender equality as part of its national development agenda. Over the years, the country has implemented policies and strategies aimed at increasing females' participation in decision-making, public service, and economic activities. Gender equality is a constitutional principle and is integrated into key national frameworks, including the National Strategy for Transformation, Vision 2050, and Rwanda's commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Despite progress in various areas, disparities remain between females and males in the labor market. Females face lower representation in formal sector employment and higher-paying sectors. Females work fewer paid hours on average, and engage in informal and unpaid work. In addition, females spend more time on unpaid domestic and care work, which limits their availability for income-generating activities. These gender-based differences continue to shape labor market outcomes and influence national productivity and household economic welfare.

The National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) plays a critical role in monitoring gender disparities and inform policy responses through its regular Labour Force Survey (LFS). The LFS provides timely and reliable statistics on labor force participation rates, employment and unemployment statistics, earnings and working hours, and other key indicators disaggregated by sex, age, geographic location, educational attainment, and employment status. The data are collected using methodologies aligned with international standards, including those of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

In 2018, NISR published the first Labor Force Gender Thematic Report based on data from LFS 2017. This fundamental report presented detailed evidence base documenting gender gaps across multiple labour market indicators. The current third edition represents the series and covers data from 2020 to 2024. It builds on findings established in previous editions and incorporates the most recent LFS data to update trends, highlight progress, and identify areas where gender disparities persist.

The report focuses on a range of topics including labour force participation rates, employment and unemployment rates, income levels, working hours, and time spent in unpaid work. It also examines how these indicators differ by factors such as geographic location (urban/rural), age groups, and educational attainment levels.

The purpose of this report is to provide data that support evidence-based decision-making, to inform national planning, policy development, and program design aimed at promoting gender equality in Rwanda's labour market.

Labour force participation serves as a key indicator to measure the extent to which the working-age population is employed or actively seeking employment. The Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) measures the proportion of the working-age population (typically aged 16 and above) who are either employed or actively seeking employment. This metric provides insight into the availability and willingness of individuals to participate in economic activities.

Labour Force Participation

2.1 Trends in labour force participation rate by sex and area of residence

2.1.1 National level trends in Labour Force Participation (2020–2024)

Rwanda recorded a growth in the labour force participation rate for both females and males between 2020 and 2024. At the national level, the LFPR for females increased from 48.2% in 2020 to 55.6% in 2024, while the LFPR for males increased from 65.6% to 71.1% over the same period.

Despite overall progress, gender disparities persist. In 2020, the gender gap in LFPR between males and females stood at 17.4 percentage points, and by 2024, it had narrowed slightly to 15.5 percentage points. This means that while more females are joining the labour force, males are still more likely to be working or seeking work.

Figure 1:Trend of labour force participation rate by sex from 2020 to 2024
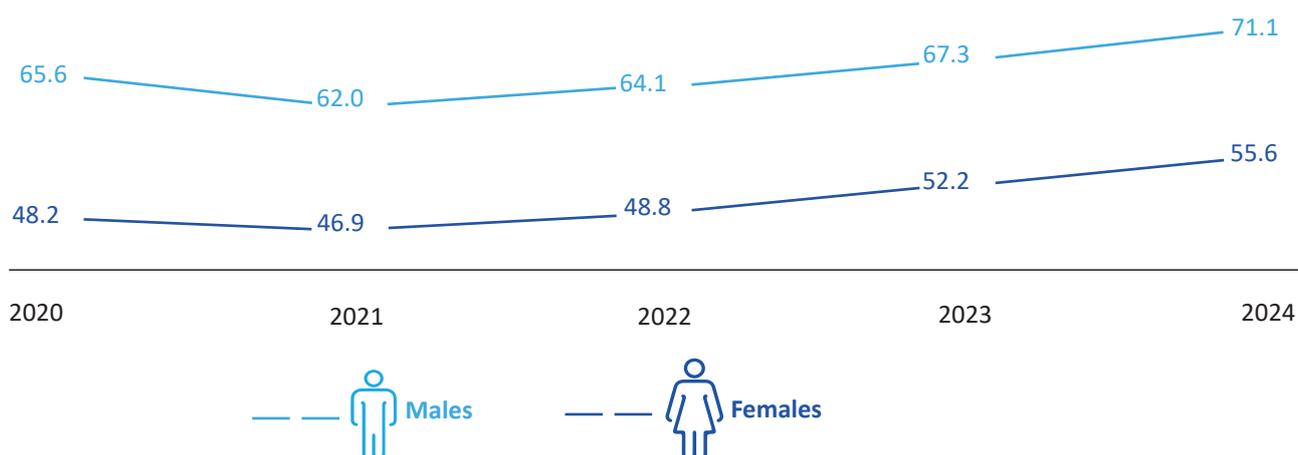
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2020- 2024

2.1.2 Labour Force Participation by Urban and Rural

From 2020 to 2024, labour force participation rates increased in both urban and rural areas across Rwanda. In urban areas, the participation rate for females rose by 4.5 percentage points (60.3% in 2020 to 64.8% in 2024), while for males it increased by 5.5 percentage points (74.0% to 79.5%) during the same period. In rural areas, the rate for females increased by 6.8 percentage points (45.1% to 51.9%), and by 4.2 for males (63.2% to 67.4%).

Figure 2:Distribution of the labour force participation rate by sex and residence areas (in %)
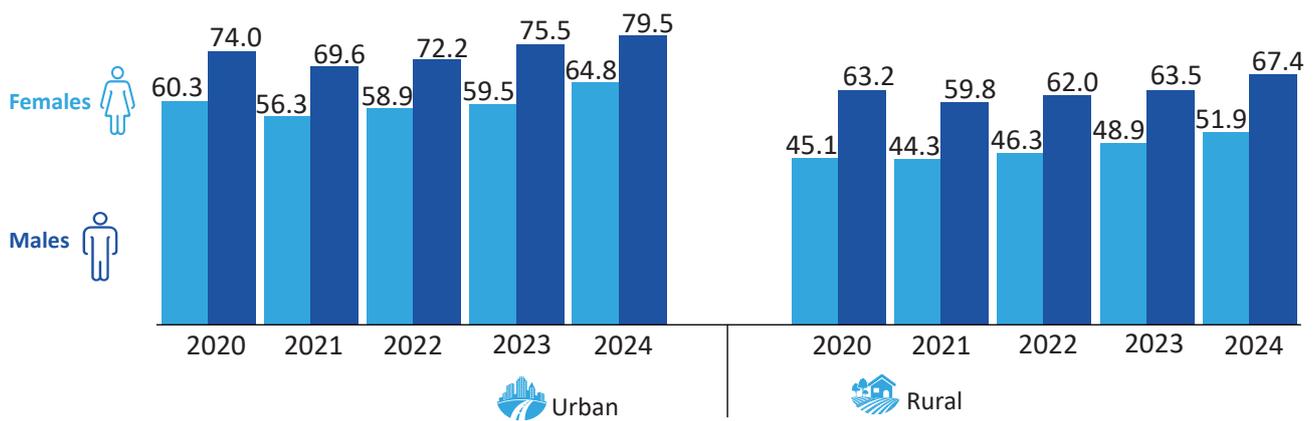
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2020- 2024

2.2   Labour Force Participation by age groups

Between 2020 and 2024, labor force participation rates increased for both females and males across all age groups in Rwanda as follows:

- 16–24 years, the LFPR for female increased from 43.1% in 2020 to 48.5% in 2024 compared to an increase from 50.6% to 56.6% for male respectively.
- 25–34 years, the LFPR for female grew from 62.0% in 2020 to 71.1% in 2024, and it increased from 83.4% in 2020 to 88.7% in 2024 for male.
- 35–54 years, the LFPR for female increased from 54.4% in 2020 to 65.5% in 2024 and it increased from 77.5% in 2020 to 83.0% for males.
- 55–64 years, the LFPR for females moved from 36.1% in 2020 to 45.3% in 2024, and for males, it went from 54.3% to 62.5%.
- 65 years and above, the LFPR for females rose from 11.0% to 15.0%, and for males from 23.7% to 31.3%.

Table 1 Distribution of the labour force participation rate by sex and age groups

		16-24 yrs	25-34 yrs	35-54 yrs	55-64 yrs	65+ yrs
2020	Women	43.1	62.0	54.4	36.1	11.0
	Men	50.6	83.4	77.5	54.3	23.7
2021	Women	37.0	63.5	57.4	33.9	9.0
	Men	43.0	83.2	77.5	49.9	18.2
2022	Women	37.3	67.2	61.0	34.6	9.3
	Men	44.7	85.7	82.5	53.8	18.8
2023	Women	42.6	69.5	63.2	37.7	11.1
	Men	50.8	85.8	82.0	54.5	24.3
2024	Women	48.5	71.1	65.5	45.3	15.0
	Men	56.6	88.7	83.0	62.5	31.3

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) dataset, 2020- 2024

2.3   Educational Attainment and Labor Force Participation

From 2020 to 2024, Rwanda witnessed a growth in labour force participation rates across all education levels for both sexes. For individuals with no formal education, the LFPR for females rose by 8.5 percentage points (46.2% in 2020 to 54.7% in 2024), while for males it increased by 7.0 percentage points (65.0% to 72.0%) over the same period. Among those with primary education, LFPR for female grew by 8.2 percentage points (46.6% to 54.8%), and LFPR for males rose by 6.0 percentage points (63.9% to 69.9%). At the lower secondary level, female participation increased by 2.1 percentage points (40.0% to 42.1%), while male participation grew by 3.1 percentage points (51.3% to 54.4%). For upper secondary education, LFPR for females experienced an increase by 7.0 percentage points (59.2% to 66.2%), and males by 5.6 percentage points (72.6% to 78.2%). At the university level, the LFPR for females grew slightly by 1.3 percentage points (83.9% to 85.2%), while males' participation remained almost unchanged. These figures reveal a strong relation between higher educational attainment and labour force participation for both sexes. (Consider only two levels of education)

Table 2: Distribution of the labour force participation rate by education attainment and sex (in %)

Year	Sex	None	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	University	Total
2020	Females	46.2	46.6	40.0	59.2	83.9	48.2
	Male	65.0	63.9	51.3	72.6	90.2	65.6
2021	Females	45.6	45.0	34.0	60.6	83.0	62.0
	Male	63.2	59	43.1	69.7	88.8	46.9
2022	Females	47.0	47.0	34.0	64.0	88.0	64.0
	Male	64.0	63.0	44.0	72.0	92.0	49.0
2023	Females	51.9	50.4	37.7	63.5	85.4	52.2
	Male	66.9	66.8	51.2	77.1	89.4	67.3
2024	Females	54.7	54.8	42.1	66.2	85.2	55.6
	Male	72.0	69.9	54.4	78.2	90.4	71.1

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)2020- 2024

Chapter

3 Employment

Employment refers to the participation of working age individuals in economic activities, where they produce goods or provide services in exchange for payment or profit. In line with international labour standards, a person is considered employed if he or she was engaged in at least one hour of work for payment or profit in the last seven days or was temporarily absent from their job or business while maintaining a formal job attachment to it.

Employed individuals are classified into two primary categories:

- Employed persons at work: Those who performed any paid or profitable work for at least one hour during the reference period.
- Employed persons not at work: Those who did not work during the reference period but had a job or business from which they were temporarily absent. Acceptable reasons for absence include paid or unpaid leave, illness, maternity leave, or specific work schedule arrangements such as flextime or shift work.

Employment statistics, including the employment-to-population ratio and the classification of employment status, are essential for understanding labour market performance. These indicators not only reflect the economy's ability to create jobs but also guide policymaking that aims to reduce unemployment, underemployment, and informal work.

The classification of employment status provides a detailed understanding of the nature of employment relationships among workers. It refers to the type of explicit or implicit contract between a worker and an employer or organization. This classification is applicable to both currently employed persons and unemployed individuals with previous work experience. The International Standard Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-1993) identifies five main categories:

- Employees: Individuals engaging in paid employment under written, oral, or informal agreements. Their remuneration is not directly linked to the revenue generated by the organization or employer. It may take the form of wages or salaries, commissions, bonuses or piece-rate payments, as well as in-kind benefits such as food, accommodation, or training.
- Employers: Self-employed individuals who operate a business or farm, either independently or in partnership, and regularly engage one or more employees continuously. Their earnings depend directly on the profits generated from the goods and services they produce or sell.
- Own-account workers: Self-employed individuals who operate a business or activity either alone or in partnership without employing others continuously.
- Contributing family workers: Unpaid individuals working without pay in a family business or farm, operated by a member of the household. These workers are neither formal partners nor employers of others.
- Producer cooperative members: Individuals engaged in self-employment as part of a cooperative group that produces goods or services. These members work without employing others on a continuous basis.

This classification facilitates a better assessment of employment structures within an economy. It particularly enables the differentiation between formal and informal sectors and contribute in identifying vulnerable forms of employment such as unpaid family work or informal own-account work.

3.1 Employment to population ratio by sex and area of residence

The employment-to-population ratio measures the proportion of the working-age population currently engaged in employment. It is an important indicator of an economy's ability to create jobs, with higher ratios suggesting a greater proportion of the working-age population being employed or actively participating in the workforce.

From 2020 to 2024, Rwanda's national employment-to-population ratio increased, from 46.3% to 53.5%. For females, this ratio increased from 38.5% to 45.9%, while it increased from 55.2% to 62.2% for males. The employment-to-population ratios in urban areas were consistently higher than the national average. For urban females, the ratio increased from 48.0% to 53.2%, and it increase from 62.0% to 70.5% for urban males. In rural areas, the ratio for females increased from 36.0% to 42.8%, while for rural males, it increased from 53.3% to 58.5%. These trends indicate an overall improvement in employment opportunities across Rwanda, with positive developments observed across both sexes and all areas of residence.

Table 3: Employment to population ratio by sex and areas of residence (in %)

Area of Residence	Years	Females	Males	Total
National	2020	38.5	55.2	46.3
	2021	35.6	50.5	42.6
	2022	37.3	52.7	44.5
	2023	41.6	57.5	49.0
	2024	45.9	62.2	53.5
Urban	2020	48.0	62.0	54.9
	2021	42.8	57.1	49.7
	2022	44.5	60.1	52.0
	2023	47.5	66.5	56.6
	2024	53.2	70.5	61.6
Rural	2020	36.0	53.3	44.0
	2021	33.6	48.6	40.6
	2022	33.6	48.6	42.6
	2023	39.0	53.5	45.7
	2024	42.8	58.5	50.1

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)2020- 2024

3.2 Employment by age group and Sex

In 2024, employment-to-population ratios in Rwanda varied across age groups and showed clear gender differences. Individuals aged 25 to 54 recorded the highest employment rate, with males exceeding 70%, and females around 56%. Youth aged 16–24 had the lowest participation in the labour market, particularly among females, whose employment rate was below 40%. Among older adults aged 65 and above, employment rates

declined for both sexes. These patterns highlight how employment engagement tends to peak during prime working years and gradually declines with age, while gender gaps remain visible across all age categories.

Figure 3: Distribution of employment to population ratio by age group and sex
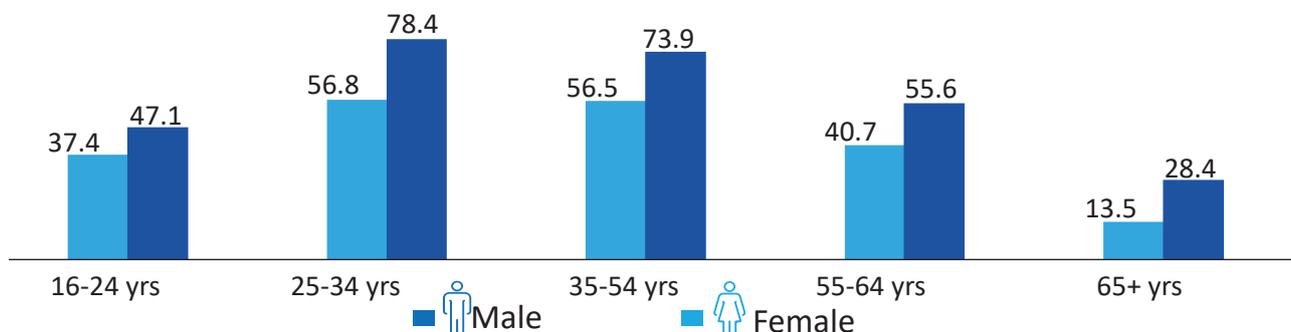
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)2024

3.3   Educational Attainment and Employment

Rwanda' s employment-to-population ratios from 2020 to 2024 show an increase across all levels of education for both females and males. For individuals with no formal education, the ratio for females increased from 38.7% in 2020 to 45.8% in 2024, and for males it rose from 55.7% to 63.6%. Among those with primary education, females' ratio rose from 36.1% to 45.3%, while the male ratio grew from 53.9% to 61.2%. For those who completed lower secondary education, the ratio for females increased from 29.5% to 32.7%, and for males from 41.2% to 46.5%. At the upper secondary level, the ratio for females increased from 42.3% to 51.3%, and for males from 56.6% to 64.5%. For individuals with university education, employment-to-population ratios remained the highest, with females increasing from 69.1% to 72.7%, and males from 77.2% to 82.1%. These trends show that employment outcomes improve with higher levels of educational attainment for both sexes.

Table 4: Employment to population ratio by the attained level of education and sex (in %)

		Level of education completed					
		None	**Primary**	**Lower_ secondary**	**Upper_ secondary**	**University**	**Total**
2020	Females	38.7	36.1	29.5	42.3	69.1	38.5
	Men	55.7	53.9	41.2	56.6	77.2	55.2
2021	Females	36.0	34.0	23.0	41.0	67.0	36.0
	Men	52.0	48.0	34.0	53.0	74.0	50.0
2022	Females	37.0	37.0	25.0	40.0	69.0	37.0
	Men	54.0	52.0	35.0	52.0	78.0	53.0
2023	Females	42.7	39.7	28.0	45.6	70.8	41.6
	Men	57.6	56.8	43.9	62.9	78.8	57.5
2024	Females	45.8	45.3	32.7	51.3	72.7	45.9
	Men	63.6	61.2	46.5	64.5	82.1	62.2

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)2020- 2024

3.4 Status in Employment

A comprehensive understanding of the employment status is important for assessing both the quality and type of employment held by individuals in the labour market. It provides insight into whether people are working as employees, self-employed, or contributing to family-run businesses. This classification helps identify levels of job security, income stability, and the prevalence of informal employment. The following subsection presents the distribution of employed persons in Rwanda by their employment status, disaggregated by sex, over the period from 2020 to 2024.

3.4.1 Distribution of Employed Population by Status in Employment

From 2020 to 2024, most employed persons in Rwanda were classified as employees. Among females, the proportion working as employees was 64.2% in 2020 and 64.8% in 2024, after reaching a peak of 73.0% in 2021. The share of own-account workers, those self-employed without regular employees increased slightly from 27.1% to 28.2%, indicating a gradual shift toward self-employment. Contributing family workers remained a small group, rising from 4.0% in 2021 to 5.8% in 2024, while females working as employers consistently accounted for just over 1.1%.

The employment patterns for males, followed similar trends. Employees remained the largest group at 67.9% in both 2020 and 2024, after a peak of 74.9% in 2021. Own-account workers made up around 28.7% in 2020 and 28.4% in 2024, showing continued importance of self-employment. The proportion of male employers increased modestly from 1.5% to 2.1%, slightly higher than the rates among females. Contributing family workers and cooperative members together represented less than 2% of employed males throughout the period.

Table 5: Distribution of employed population by status in employment, according to gender (in %)

	Status in employment	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Females	Employee	64.2	73	70.1	68	64.8
	Employer (with regular employees)	1.1	0.8	1.1	1.2	1.1
	Own account worker (without regular employees)	27.1	22.1	23.3	25.8	28.2
	Member of cooperative	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.04
	Contributing family worker	7.5	4.0	5.3	4.9	5.8
Men	Employee	67.9	74.9	72.4	69.6	67.9
	Employer (with regular employees)	1.5	1.1	1.4	1.4	2.1
	Own account worker (without regular employees)	28.7	23.1	25.2	27.9	28.4
	Member of cooperative	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1
	Contributing family worker	1.7	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.6

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)2020- 2024

3.4.2 The employed population by institutional sector

In 2020, 91.1% of employed males were in the private sector and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), compared to 88.1% of employed females. By 2024, this share remained the same for males, while it saw a slight increase for females, rising to 88.7%.

Employment in the public sector also showed a slightly higher concentration among males. In 2020, 5.8% of employed males worked in the public sector compared to 5.6% for females. While in 2024, females proportion was 5.8% compared to 6.5% for males.

Conversely, females were more likely to be employed than males in the household sector. In 2020, 6.3% of employed females worked in this sector, compared to 3.1% of males. By 2024, the share of females in household employment decreased slightly to 5.4%, while the share of males also declined to 2.5%.

These findings also indicate that in the household sector, females maintain a relatively higher presence compared to males.

Table 6: Distribution of employed population by institutional sector, according to gender (in %)

Institutional sector	Females			Males		
	Public	Private & NGO	Household	Public	Private & NGO	Household
2020	5.6	88.1	6.3	5.8	91.1	3.1
2021	5.8	88.7	5.5	6.7	90.6	2.7
2022	5.7	88.6	5.7	6.4	91.3	2.3
2023	5.1	89.2	5.7	5.7	91.8	2.5
2024	5.8	88.7	5.4	6.5	91.1	2.5

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)2020- 2024

3.4.3 Employment by Institutional Sector and by sex in 2024

The table below illustrates the distribution of employed females and males across institutional sectors from 2020 to 2024, revealing persistent gender disparities. In 2024, females comprised 43% of public sector employees, compared to 57% for males. Similarly, in the private and NGO sector, females accounted for 45% of total employment, while males represented 55%. The household sector remained the most pronounced gender-imbalance, with 65% of workers being females compared to 35% for males.

Throughout the period, females were more concentrated in household-based employment, where they consistently constituted over 60% of the workforce. Males, by contrast, were more likely to be employed in the public and private sectors. While the gender gap remained relatively stable over time, the household sector continued to show the widest gender disparity as of 2024.

Table 7: Share of females and males in employment according to the institutional sector (in %)

	Females			Males		
	Public	Private & NGO	Households	Public	Private & NGO	Households
2020	43	43	62	57	57	38
2021	41	44	61	59	56	39
2022	42	44	66	58	57	34
2023	42	44	65	58	56	35
2024	43	45	65	57	55	35

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2018- 2024

3.5   Employment by economic sectors

From 2020 to 2024, the agricultural sector remained the main source of employment. In 2023, the employed people in this sector increased from about 1.72 million to over 1.77 million in 2024. It comprised 52.7% females and 35.9% males in 2023, compared to 47.9% females and 33.3% males in 2024.

The service sector ranked second among employers, with 1.58 million workers in 2023, rising to over 1.90 million in 2024. Females accounted for 38.9% in 2023, compared to 40.6% for males. In 2024, females represented 42.5% compared to 43.2% for males.

It should be noted that the industrial sector had the fewest workers, but nevertheless recorded growth, from 662,203 workers in 2023 to 764,324 in 2024 (Females accounted for 8.4% in 2023 compared to 23.5%, while in 2024 they accounted for 9.6% compared to 23.5% for males).

Table 8: Employment by Economic Sector and sex

	Economic Sector	2023	%	2024	%
Females	Agriculture	938,705	52.7%	966,570	47.9%
	Industry	150,600	8.4%	194,975	9.6%
	Services	692,802	38.9%	857,478	42.5%
Males	Agriculture	781,372	35.9%	808,530	33.3%
	Industry	511,603	23.5%	569,349	23.5%
	Services	883,734	40.6%)	1,047,783	43.2%

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2023 -2024

3.5.1 The share of agricultural workers by sex

The total workforce is defined as the sum of all individuals engaged in paid or profit-oriented employment and those working in subsistence agriculture. Therefore, the share of agriculture workers in the total workforce refers to the proportion of individuals employed in agriculture relative to the entire workforce. As shown in Figure 4 below, the proportion of agricultural workers in the workforce for 2024 was 57.6%. This share was significantly higher among females, with 67.4% of females working in agriculture, compared to 47.3 % of males.

Figure 4:Trend of agricutural workers by sex

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2020- 2024

3.6   Employment by economic activity

In 2024, Rwanda's employment remained dominated by the agriculture, forestry, and fishing sector, which employs 47.9% of females and 33.3% of males. Although agriculture continues to be the leading sector, its share has declined slightly since 2022 for both sexes.

The services sector, which includes trade, education, health, and other social services, accounted for a significant portion of employment. In particular, wholesale and retail trade employed 17.5% of females and 10.7% of males, while the education sector accounted for 5.2% of females employment and 3.8% of males employment. Employment in accommodation and food services increased slightly, reaching 3.8% for females and 3.2% for males.

The industry sector, including manufacturing and construction, continued to employ more males than females. In 2024, 5.8% of females and 5.6% of males were employed in manufacturing, while 3.1% of females and 14.9% of males were working in construction. The gap in construction employment remained high, withmales heavily dominating the sector.

Table 9: Distribution of employed population by economic activity, and sex (in %)

Economic activity	Females				Males			
	2020	2022	2023	2024	2020	2022	2023	2024
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	49.2	55.6	52.7	47.9	33.6	39.8	35.9	33.3
Mining and quarrying	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.7	2.6	1.9	2.0	2.6
Manufacturing	5.4	5.7	5.3	5.8	6.2	5.0	5.6	5.6
Electricity gas stream and air conditioning supply	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Water supply, gas and remediation services	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2
Construction	5.5	3.1	2.7	3.1	18.1	16.1	15.6	14.9
Wholesale & retail trade; repair of motor vehicles & motorcycles	16.7	13.5	16.8	17.5	11.0	8.1	9.9	10.7
Transportation and storage	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.9	7.2	9.6	10.2	11.7

Economic activity	Females				Males			
	2020	2022	2023	2024	2020	2022	2023	2024
Accommodation and food service activities	3.1	1.9	3.1	3.8	2.3	2.2	3.0	3.2
Information and communication	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4
Financial and insurance activities	1.0	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.1	0.7	0.8	0.7
Real estate activities	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Professional, scientific and technical activities	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.8	1.0	0.7	0.8
Administrative and support activities	1.2	1.1	1.5	1.8	2.7	2.1	2.3	2.4
Public administration and defense, compulsory social security	1.2	1.0	0.9	1.0	2.5	2.3	1.9	2.7
Education	3.4	4.6	4.5	5.2	2.8	3.7	3.8	3.8
Human health and social work activities	2.0	1.8	1.2	1.6	1.3	1.1	1.0	1.1
Arts, entertainment and recreation	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.2
Other services	2.6	3.1	2.5	3.3	3.0	2.6	3.1	2.8
Activities of households as employers	6.7	5.8	6.0	5.5	3.3	2.5	2.8	2.5
Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS), 2020-2024

3.7   Employment by occupation group and sex , 2023–2024

From 2023 to 2024, the number of employed persons increased across various occupation groups in Rwanda and has increased from 3 million in 2023 to 4.5 million in 2024. The elementary occupations remained the largest employment group. Female employment in this group decreased from 62.5% in 2023 to 55.6% in 2024 and from 52.2% to 50.6% for males in the same period.

Managerial employment in Rwanda remained constant for females (0.8%) while it slightly increased for males, with 1.2% to 1.4%   between 2023 and 2024.

Professional occupations for females demonstrated significant growth, increasing from 5.3% in 2023 to 6.3% in 2024, while male professional occupations declined from 6.8% to 6.2%.

The number of technicians and associated professionals more than doubled, rising from 0.5% to 1.1% for females and from 1.2% to 1.9% for males, reflecting a clear shift towards skilled jobs. Employment growth was recorded for both males and females in this category.

In service and sales work, employment increased from 20.1% in 2023 to 22.7% in 2024 for female workers, while male services and sales workers slightly decreased from 15.7% to 15.1% in the same period, which shows that females continued to dominate this group. Meanwhile, males remained the majority in craft and related trades, plant and machine operations, and technical occupations.

Table 10: Employment by occupation group and sex

Occupation group	2023				2024			
	Females	%	Males	%	Females	%	Males	%
Managers	14,935	0.8	24,547	1.2	16,857	0.8	33,926	1.4
Professionals	102,417	5.3	140,966	6.8	129,557	6.3	153,396	6.2
Technicians and associate professions	8,664	0.5	24,638	1.2	21,754	1.1	46,880	1.9
Clerical support workers	17,883	0.9	15,015	0.7	24,369	1.2	19,441	0.8
Service and sales workers	386,144	20.1	324,711	15.7	464,475	22.7	369,518	15.1
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	107,532	5.6	117,733	5.7	149,354	7.3	169,301	6.9
Craft and related trades workers	80,176	4.2	231,826	11.2	96,113	4.7	283,963	11.6
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	1,553	0.1	105,506	5.1	4,758	0.2	135,434	5.5
Elementary occupations	1,203,948	62.5	1,076,970	52.2	1,139,818	55.6	1,242,480	50.6
Total	**1,925,275**	**100.0**	**2,061,912**	**100.0**	**2,049,079**	**100.0**	**2,454,339**	**100.0**

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS), 2023-2024

Unemployment

The unemployment rate serves as a key indicator to measure labour market conditions. It shows the proportion of the labour force that is not working but actively seeking employment. In Rwanda, this indicator is regularly tracked to monitor progress in job creation and to support evidence-based employment policies.

4.1   Trends in Unemployment

From 2020 to 2024, Rwanda experienced a decline in unemployment rates for both females and males. Following a peak in 2021 at 24.1% for females and 18.5% for males, the unemployment rate declined to 17.6% for females and 12.6% for males in 2024. Despite this progress, females continued to experience higher unemployment rates than their male counterparts.

Figure 5:Trend of unemployment rate by sex from 2020 to 2024
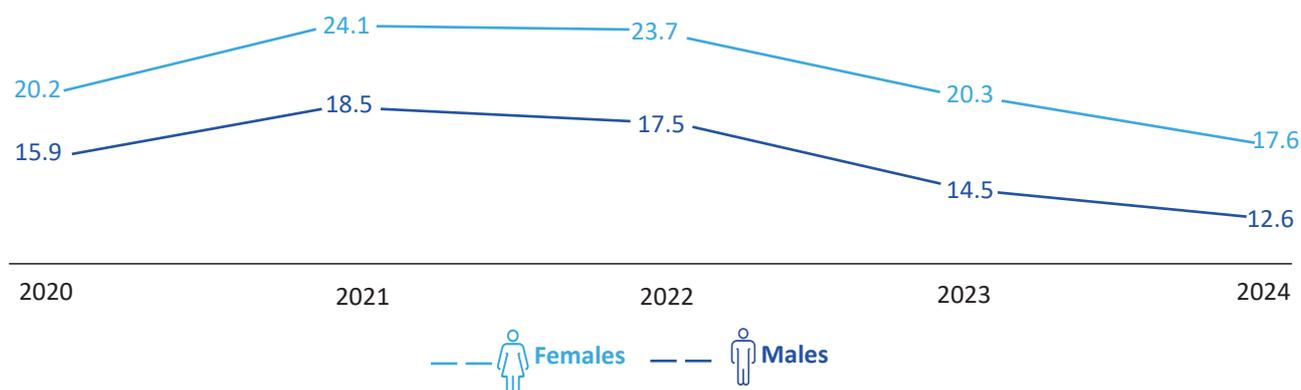
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Females	20.2	24.1	23.7	20.3	17.6
Males	15.9	18.5	17.5	14.5	12.6

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS), 2020-2024

4.2   Unemployment by age group

In 2024, young people experienced the highest unemployment rate. Among individuals aged 16–24, 22.9% of females and 16.8% of males were unemployed. In the 25–34 age group, 20.2% for females and 11.6% for males were unemployed. The unemployment rate declined with the age, falling to 13.9% for females and 11.0% for males in the group of 35–54 years old. Those aged 65 and above had the lowest unemployment rates 10.2% for females and 9.0% for males. These results show that unemployment mostly affects young people, especially young females.

Table 11: Unemployment rate by sex (in %) and by age-group

	2020		2022		2024	
Age group	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males
16-24	26.8	20.3	30.2	25.2	22.9	16.8
25-34	22.1	16.4	26.5	17.2	20.2	11.6
35-54	15.2	12.5	19.4	14.7	13.9	11.0
55-64	12.8	15.1	15.5	15.7	10.1	11.0
65+	12.3	9.9	13.2	10.6	10.2	9.0
Total	**20.3**	**15.9**	**23.7**	**17.9**	**17.6**	**12.6**

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)2020- 2024

4.3   Unemployment by Educational attainment among youth

Unemployment among young people varied by education level between 2020 and 2024. In 2020, young people aged 16-30 with no formal education had an unemployment rate of 19.3% for females and 15.7% for males. In 2024, the rate had increased to 20.7% for females and decreased to 12.7% for males. For people with upper secondary education, the rate has fallen significantly, from 34.2% in 2020 to 28.6% in 2024 for females and from 28.2% to 25.4% for males over the same period. Even university graduates faced notable unemployment, with 27.9% for females and 17.8% for males in 2024. These results show that unemployment has decreased over time, and remained high among young people and more severe for females.

Table 12: Unemployment rate by attained level of education and sex among youth aged 16-30 years old (in %)

		Completed level of education					
Sex		None	Primary	Lower-secondary	Upper-secondary	University	Total
2020	Females	19.3	26.6	28.4	34.2	28.4	25.7
	Males	15.7	17.2	23.6	28.2	32.5	19.7
2021	Females	26.0	28.8	34.7	39.7	35.3	30.5
	Males	19.7	22.5	25.6	29.0	35.4	23.1
2022	Females	25.0	26.1	31.8	40.9	38.3	29.4
	Males	18.6	19.8	22.1	37.8	26.4	22.3
2023	Females	20.1	25.2	28.0	34.8	25.1	25.2
	Males	15.1	16.7	15.6	24.2	20.5	16.9
2024	Females	20.7	20.6	23.3	28.6	27.9	22.5
	Males	12.7	13.2	15.0	25.4	17.8	15.0

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2020- 2024

Employment Among Persons with Disabilities

This chapter examines the labour market conditions for persons with disabilities (PWD) in Rwanda, utilizing data from the Labour Force Survey. It provides trends in labour force participation, employment, and unemployment rates among persons with disabilities between 2020 to 2024.

5.1   Trends in labour force participation rate among persons with disabilities

In 2020, the overall employment rate for persons with disabilities in Rwanda was 18%, with women representing for 17.5% and men 18.7%

By 2024, the number of persons with disabilities in employment had risen from 18% to 22.6%, with a higher rate among men for 28.4% than women 18.8% These figures highlight a gender gap in employment among persons with disabilities.

Figure 6:Labour Force Participation Among Persons with Disability 2024

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS), 2020-2024

The 2024 Labour Force Survey shows disparities in labour force participation among persons with disabilities and those without disabilities. The labour force participation rate (LFPR) for persons without disabilities stood at 64.1%, while the rate for persons with disabilities accounted for 26.6%.

Regarding gender-specific participation, 72.2% of males without disabilities were active in the labour force, compared to 32.7% of males with disabilities. Among females, the LFPR was 56.9% for those without disabilities and 22.6% for those with disabilities.

WW

5.2   Employment rate among persons with disabilities

Employment rate among people with disabilities rose from 18% in 2020 to 22.6 in 2024. According to the sex, Females employed increased from 17.5% in 202o to 18.8% in 2024, while male employed among people with disabilities increased from 18.7% to 28.4% in the same period.

Figure 7: Employment Rate Among Persons with Disabilities, 2020-2024

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)2024

5.3   Unemployment Rate among persons with disabilities, 2024

In 2020, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities in Rwanda was 21.3%. This rate was higher among men for 24.6% than among women 18.5%. In 2024, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities in Rwanda was 14.9%. Disaggregated by sex, this rate was higher among women 16.5% than among men 13.2%. This disparity shows that women with disabilities continue to face greater difficulties in finding employment than their male counterparts.

Figure 8: Employment Rate Among Persons with Disabilities, 2024

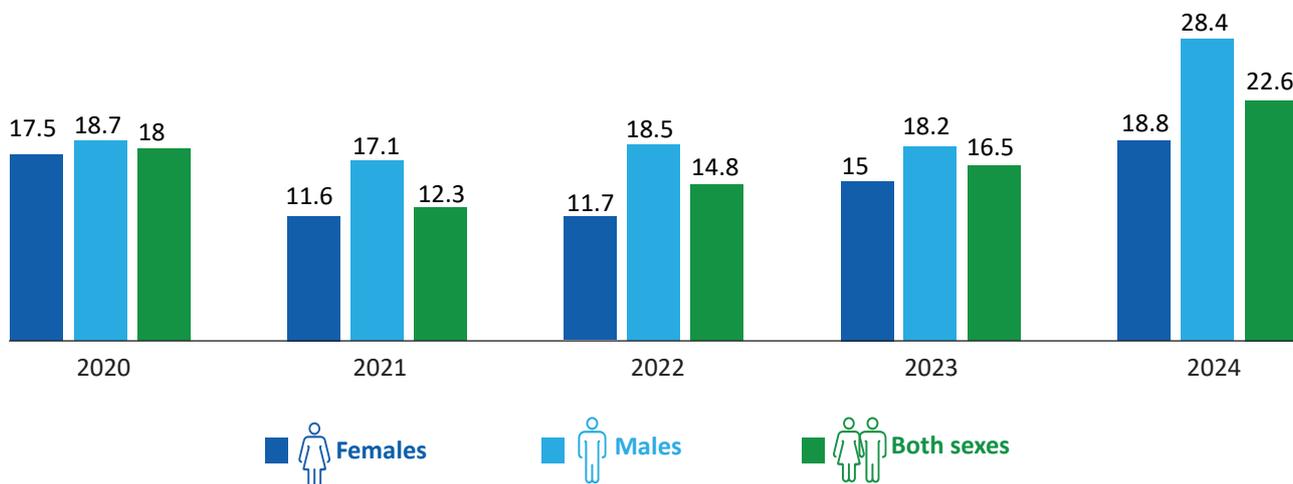*Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)2020-2024*

Income from employment

This chapter presents findings on income from employment in Rwanda, using data from the Labour Force Survey. The findings focus on income from workers' primary jobs, including both cash and in-kind payments. The estimates are provided separately for paid employees and self-employed workers, reflecting differences in how income is generated. For paid employees, income includes wages, bonuses, and social benefits, while self-employed workers reflect net profits after operating costs.

6.1   Income by area of residence and sex from 2023–2024

From 2023 to 2024, males consistently earned higher than females across all areas of residence in Rwanda. At the national level, females earned an average of 50,627 RWF in 2023 and 54,406 RWF in 2024. In comparison, males earned 83,162 RWF in 2023 and 89,549 RWF in 2024. While both females and males experienced income growth, the gender gap remained wide, with females earning only about 61% of males' income nationally in 2024.

In urban areas, females' average monthly income slightly decreased from 98,281 in 2023 to 96,606 RWF in 2024, while males' income rose from 151,955 RWF to 161,918 RWF. As a result, urban females earned only 60% of urban males' income in 2024.

In rural areas, females' income increased from 30,845 RWF in 2023 to 35,904 RWF in 2024. Males' income also rose from 46,793 to 52,380 RWF. Although incomes rose for both sexes, the earnings gap persisted, with rural females earning only about 69% of rural males' income in 2024.

Table 13: Average monthly income by nationality, residence, and sex

Residence	2023			2024		
	Females	Males	Both Sexes	Females	Males	Both Sexes
Urban	98,281	151,955	130,184	96,606	161,918	134,642
Rural	30,845	46,793	39,378	35,904	52,380	44,858
National	50,627	83,162	68,656	54,406	89,549	73,948

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2023- 2024

6.2   Average monthly income by age group and sex, 2021–2024

From 2021 to 2024, average employment income increased across all age groups for both males and females. However, males consistently earned more than females in every age category throughout the period. In 2024, the highest average income was recorded among workers aged 35–54 years, at 89,928 RWF, followed by those aged 25–34 years, at 80,805 RWF. The lowest average income was observed in the 65 years and above group, at 36,913 RWF.

Among workers aged 25–34, males earned 93,965 RWF in 2024, while females earned 63,187 RWF—a gap of over 30,000 RWF. In the 35–54 age group, males earned 112,676RWF compared to 61,588 RWF for females.

For the youngest group (16–24 years), income increased from 28,455 in 2021 to 44,336 RWF in 2024, with males earning 49,309 RWF and females 38,190 RWF in 2024.

Table 14: Average monthly income (in RWF) from main employment by age group and sex

Age group	2021			2022			2023			2024		
	Females	Males	overall	Females	Males	overall	Females	Males	overall	Females	Males	overall
16-24	23850	32344	28455	28236	35842	32427	33209	42756	38370	38190	49309	44336
25-34	48004	66786	59076	45539	72311	61156	58626	82694	72344	63187	93965	80805
35-54	49174	81672	67343	49282	89357	71376	57594	108099	85686	61588	112676	89928
55-64	38405	51192	45373	29878	94739	66829	42414	71667	57432	50364	108687	79970
65+ yrs	20455	36411	29025	23230	49099	36856	31489	76473	57313	25858	45881	36913
Total	**41718**	**63642**	**54073**	**41651**	**72165**	**58784**	**50627**	**83162**	**68656**	**54406**	**89549**	**73948**

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2021- 2024

6.3.   Average monthly income by educational attainment and gender

From 2021 to 2024, the average monthly income in Rwanda increased across all education levels. While higher education consistently led to higher earnings, a significant gender pay gap persisted at every level throughout the four years.

Among those with no formal education, males earned 44,247 in 2024 compared to 29,610 RWF for females. This pattern was similar at the primary level, where males earned 63,501 RWF compared to 34,378 RWF for females. The largest income gaps were observed at higher education levels, with males earning 376,339 and females 271,644 RWF.

Table 15: Average monthly income (in RWF) from main employment by attained level of education and sex

			Level of education attained				
			None	Primary	Lower_ secondary	Upper_secondary	University
2021	Females		20,753	22,783	32,059	70,184	254,965
	Male		30,228	43,745	69,113	93,448	305,351
2022	Females		22,402	24,564	32,550	77,327	239,719
	Males		34,680	49,262	67,488	105,285	345,156
2023	Females		27,003	28,373	43,736	93,418	308,935
	Males		39,758	58,285	84,502	123,072	404,460
2024	Females		29,610	34,378	42,786	111,206	271,644
	Males		44,247	63,501	100,216	154,573	376,339

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2021- 2024

6.4. The average monthly income from main employment by occupation group

From 2021 to 2024, income from employment varied across all occupation groups, and males consistently earned higher wages than females in most categories.

In 2024, female professionals earned 165,437 in 2024 compared to 248,597 RWF for males. Income in this group remained stable over the two years, with only minor changes.

For technicians and associate professionals, income dropped for both sexes in 2024, with females earning 219,337 and males 274,473 RWF, down from 278,455 and 316,891 RWF respectively in 2023.

Clerical support workers' income increased for both sexes, with females earning 187,978 and males 172,296 RWF in 2024. Notably, in this group, females earned more than males in both years.

Among service and sales workers, income remained modest and stable, with females earning 79,441 and males 70,308 RWF in 2024.

In traditionally male-dominated fields like craft and related trades and plant and machine operation, males earned substantially more than females. For example, in 2024, males in plant and machine operator roles earned 200,960, while females earned 64,475 RWF.

In elementary occupations, the lowest-paid category, income remained low for both sexes in 2024, with males earning 40,590 and females 30,672 RWF.

Table 16:Average monthly income (in RWF) from main employment by occupation groups by sex

Occupation group	2023		2024	
	Females	Males	Females	Males
Professionals	168,092	247,085	165,437	248,597
Technicians and associate professions	278,455	316,891	219,337	274,473
Clerical support workers	177,000	149,770	187,978	172,296
Service and sales workers	85,182	69,724	79,441	70,308
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	40,544	44,688	31,715	42,230
Craft and related trades workers	73,108	117,757	83,251	132,747
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	51,298	163,346	64,475	200,960
Elementary occupations	27,462	38,415	30,672	40,590

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2023-2024

6.5. Income distribution by sex and area of residence

From 2023 to 2024, Rwanda's employment income distribution improved slightly as workers shifted from lower to higher income brackets. Despite this progress, persistent income disparities by sex and residence area remained noticeable.

At the national level, the proportion of both males and females earning less than 20,000 RWF declined from 17.3% in 2023 to 12.5% in 2024 for females and from 11.3% to 8.9% for males in the same period. The share of those earning 100,000 RWF and above increased slightly from 10.2% to 12.1% for females, and from 21.4% to 24.5% for males. Although these changes indicate progress, males continue to dominate the higher income brackets.

In urban areas, more workers shifted from lower- to higher-earning groups. Urban females earned 100,000 RWF and above, significantly increased from 24.7 % in 2023 to 26.3 % in 2024, which indicates the positive advancement in female earnings, as well as Urban male earners who were in this category also rose from 42% to 47.3%. The proportion of females earning less than 20,000 RWF also declined from 13.1% in 2023 to 10.1% in 2024.

In rural areas, the number of female workers who earned less than 50,000 RWF decreased from 91% in 2023 to 88% in 2024 as well as male workers who were in the same category also declined from 72% in 2023 to 66% in 2024 .

Table 17: Size distribution of income from employment by area of residence and sex (in %)

		National		Urban		Rural	
		2023	**2024**	**2023**	**2024**	**2023**	**2024**
14.2Females	Less than 20,000	17.3	12.5	13.1	10.1	19.1	13.6
	20,000 - 29,999	46.8	38.5	25.4	19.2	55.7	47.0
	30,000 - 49,999	17.5	25.9	19.4	23.4	16.8	27.1
	50,000 - 99,999	7.8	10.2	16.8	19.5	4.0	6.1
	100,000 and above	10.2	12.1	24.7	26.3	4.2	5.9
	Not stated	0.4	0.74	0.6	1.47	0.2	0.4
Males	Less than 20,000	11.3	8.9	6.0	4.8	14.2	11.0
	20,000 - 29,999	28.9	23.2	10.2	8.0	38.8	31.1
	30,000 - 49,999	17.4	19.7	13.5	11.5	19.4	24.0
	50,000 - 99,999	20.0	22.7	27.3	26.5	16.1	20.6
	100,000 and above	21.4	24.5	42.0	47.3	10.5	12.6
	Not stated	1.0	1.08	1.0	1.9	1.0	0.7

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2023-2024
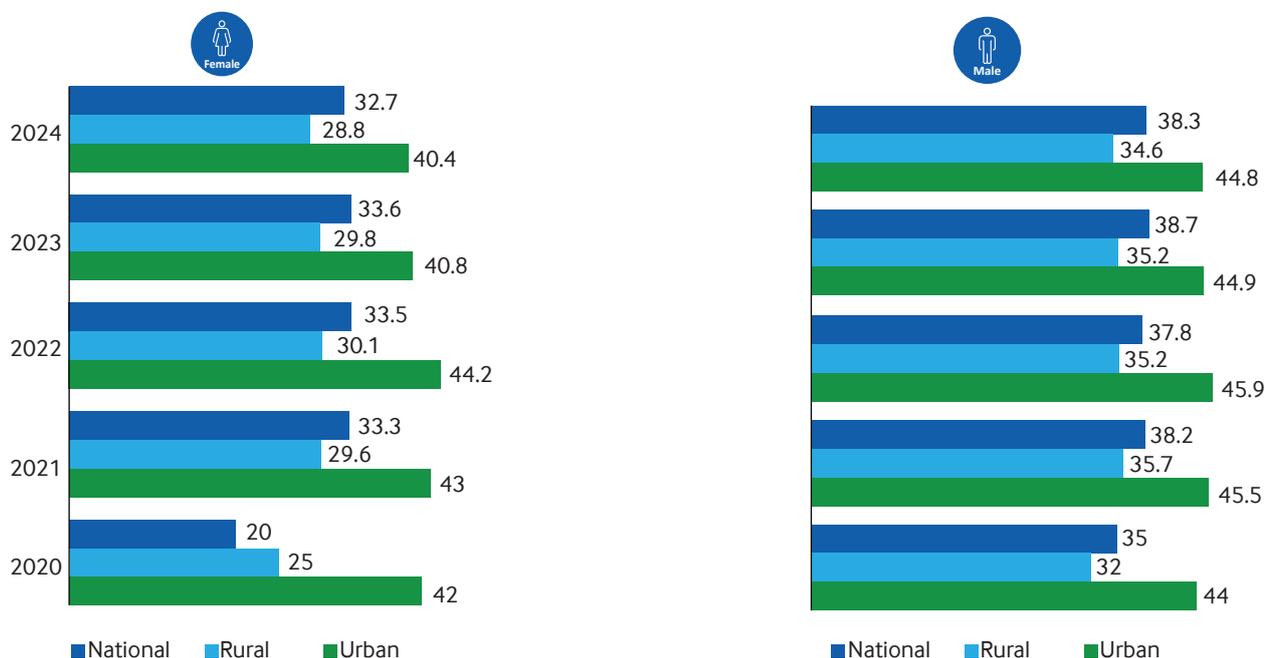
Time spent in employment

The international definition of employment encompasses all persons who are engaged in paid work for at least one hour in the last seven days. It is thus important that employment is analyzed in relation to data on working hours to distinguish the various intensities of employment. Working hours data are essential for calculating time-related underemployment and determining hourly income from employment, thereby enabling equitable income comparisons across all categories of workers.

7.1   Average weekly hours spent in employment

From 2020 to 2024, the average working hours per week were around 33 to 36 hours, with males consistently working longer hours than females. At the national level, the average working hours increased from 20 hours in 2020 to 32.7 hours in 2024 for females, while males' average weekly working hours increased slightly from 35 hours in 2020 to 38.3 hours in 2024. Generally, in urban areas, working hours were higher than the national average.

In 2024, urban males worked 44.8 hours, while urban females worked 40.4 hours per week. However, in rural areas, the average weekly hours were lower: 34.6 hours for males and 28.8 hours for females.

Figure 9:Average weekly hours spent in employment (in number)

Female

Year	National	Rural	Urban
2024	32.7	28.8	40.4
2023	33.6	29.8	40.8
2022	33.5	30.1	44.2
2021	33.3	29.6	43
2020	20	25	42

Male

Year	National	Rural	Urban
2024	38.3	34.6	44.8
2023	38.7	35.2	44.9
2022	37.8	35.2	45.9
2021	38.2	35.7	45.5
2020	35	32	44

■National ■Rural ■Urban

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)2020- 2024

7.2 Average weekly hours spent in employment by level of education attained and sex

From 2020 to 2024, the working hours of people employed in Rwanda varied according to sex and education level throughout the period, showing that men consistently worked longer hours than women, regardless of education level.

For people with no formal education, women worked an average of 26 hours per week in 2020 and 23 hours in 2024, while men in the same group worked 31 hours in 2020 and 29 hours in 2024. Among those with primary education, the number of hours worked per week by women decreased slightly, from 29 hours in 2020 to 27 hours in 2024, while that of men decreased from 35 to 33hours in the same period. Among those with lower secondary education, there was a slight decrease in the number of hours worked per week by men, from 40 hours in 2020 to 37 hours in 2024, while the number of hours worked by women fluctuated between 33 and 30 hours. From 2020 to 2024, at the upper secondary level, the gender gap in terms of hours worked was small, with an average of around 42 to 39 hours for women and 43 to 41 hours per week for men. No gender disparity was observed among university graduates, where women and men regularly worked between 45 and 43 hours per week during the same period.

Overall, higher levels of education were associated with longer working hours for both men and women, and gender disparities in working hours were smaller among those with higher levels of education.

Table 18: Average weekly hours worked by sex and educational attainment (Hours)

Year	None		Primary		Lower secondary		Upper secondary		University	
	Females	Men	Females	Men	Females	Men	Females	Men	Females	Men
2020	26	31	29	35	33	40	42	43	45	45
2021	22	27	26	31	30	36	41	41	45	45
2022	23	28	28	33	34	36	42	41	45	45
2023	25	29	29	34	31	38	41	43	44	44
2024	23	29	27	33	30	37	39	41	43	43

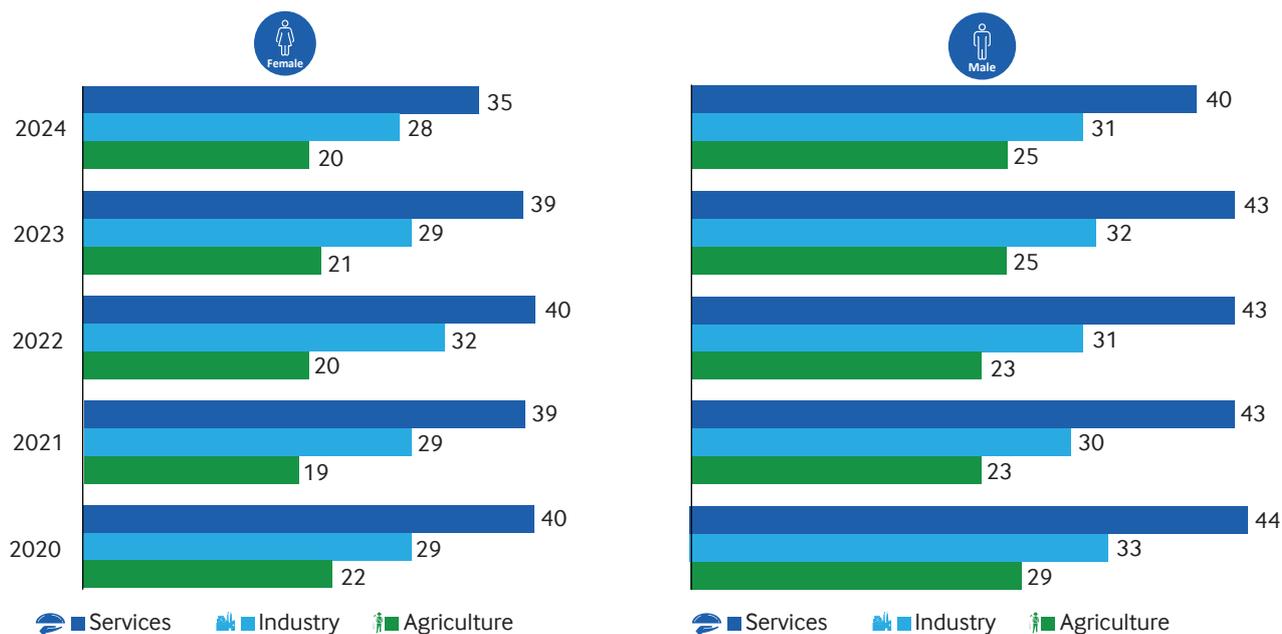*Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)2020- 2024*

7.3 Average weekly hours spent in employment by main sectors of economic activity

From 2020 to 2024, the average weekly working hours in Rwanda varied considerably from one economic sector to another, with notable gender disparities. In the agricultural sector, men worked longer hours than women, with an average of 26 to 25 hours for men and 22 to 20 hours for women per week from 2020 to 2024.

The industrial sector showed a slight decline in hours worked for both men and women, with men generally working between 33 and 31 hours, while their women counterparts worked between 29 and 28 hours per week.

n the service sector, men and women recorded the highest working hours compared to other sectors, where men worked up to 44 hours and women up to 40 hours per week in previous years. However, by 2024, these averages had fallen to 40 hours for men and 35 hours for women.

Figure 10:Average weekly hours worked by main sector of economic activity (hours).

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)2020- 2024

7.4 Average weekly hours spent in employment by institutional sector and sex.

From 2020 to 2024, working hours in Rwanda varied depending on institutional sectors, including public, private & NGO, and household by sex. The public sector recorded the longest working hours compared to other formal sectors. Females worked about 45 hours per week in 2020 and 2021, declining gradually to 40 hours by 2024. Male workers demonstrated higher averages, starting at 50 hours in 2020 and decreasing to 46 hours in 2024.

In the private and NGO sectors, females worked fewer hours, specifically 27 hours in 2020 to 25 hours in 2024, compared to males who worked 34 hours to 31 hours weekly over the same period. Moreover, working hours remained relatively stable throughout 2022 and 2023 for females.

The household sector maintained the highest working hours overall across all years for both females and males. In 2020, females worked 56 hours weekly compared to males' 54 hours. These hours stayed high until 2022, then dropped to approximately 49 hours for females and 50 for males by 2024.

Figure 11:Average weekly hours spent in employment by females and the institutional sector (in number)
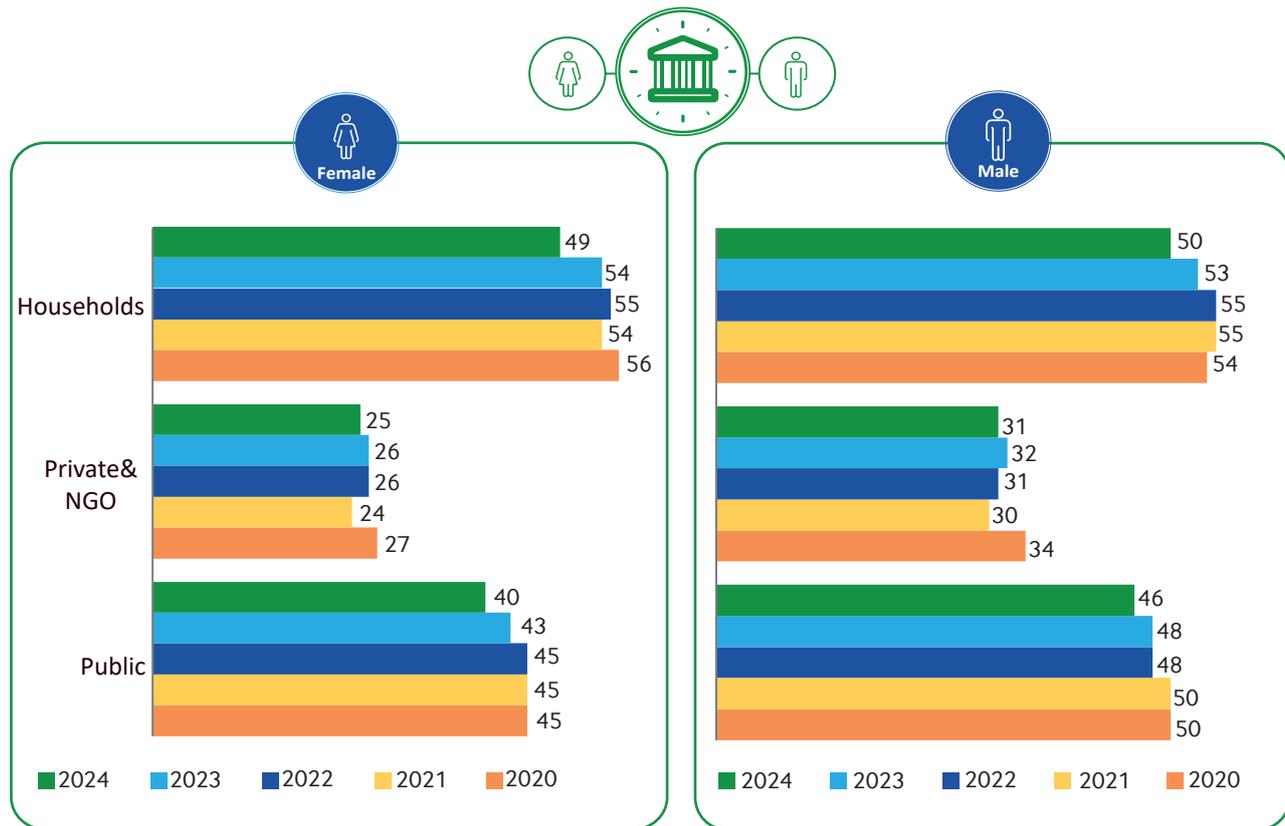
7.5   Average weekly hours usually worked at the main job by the branch of economic activity

The average number of hours worked per week is influenced by various factors, including job type, gender, and whether workers reside in urban or rural areas.

In 2023, the national average indicated that females worked 33.5 hours per week, while males logged 38.4 hours. By 2024, these averages slightly declined to 32.4 hours for females and 37.6 hours for males. Workers in the agricultural sector reported fewer working hours, averaging between 28 and 31 hours, in contrast to sectors such as finance, insurance, and household services, where working hours averaged around 45 to 50 hours.

In urban settings, both sexes tended to work more hours than their rural counterparts. In 2023, urban females averaged 40.6 hours and males 44.6 hours per week, with these figures remaining relatively stable into 2024. The longest working hours were recorded in sectors such as accommodation and food services, financial activities, and administrative services, with males in these areas often exceeding 48 hours per week.

Conversely, working hours in rural areas were typically lower compared to urban areas, which shows no major changes. In 2023, rural females worked approximately 29.7 hours and males about 34.9 hours, with these figures declining to 28.4 hours for females and 34.1 hours for males in 2024. Although agriculture was the predominant activity, it consistently showed lower working hours compared to other sectors. Some sectors, such as electricity supply and water management, recorded higher working hours, although with fewer employees

Table 19: Average weekly hours usually worked at the main job by branch of economic activity

Employed population	Urban Female 2023	Urban Female 2024	Rural-Female 2023	Rural-Female 2024	Urban-Males 2023	Urban-Males 2024	Rural-Males 2023	Rural-Males 2024
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	28.2	26.9	27.6	28.6	30.5	29.7	33.9	31.6
Mining and quarrying	33.1	37.6	39.7	38.3	40.4	40.2	38.4	41.0
Manufacturing	31.8	29.0	39.4	40.2	38.4	36.8	43.6	45.5
Electricity gas stream and air conditioning supply	40.0	0.0	34.7	38.4	73.3	51.8	43.2	45.2
Water supply, sewerage and waste management	50.7	42.4	51.2	42.2	48.0	48.0	49.5	44.9
Construction	28.3	27.7	35.6	37.2	35.7	35.8	38.5	40.5
Wholesale & retail trade; repair of motor vehicles & motorcycles	31.9	28.9	43.4	41.8	36.8	34.6	48.5	47.4
Transportation and storage	22.6	25.4	34.9	32.6	40.8	35.8	47.4	47.4
Accommodation and food service activities	33.8	34.1	45.5	44.8	38.3	35.3	53.4	48.1
Information and communication	12.7	46.6	44.2	39.2	51.4	43.1	44.9	43.0
Financial and insurance activities	40.7	42.3	47.4	48.8	43.8	48.5	49.6	48.6
Real estate activities	0.0	0.0	47.5	34.9	51.6	29.2	41.1	43.4
Professional, scientific and technical activities	41.5	39.9	43.4	36.9	22.9	31.9	43.2	39.4
Administrative and support activities	24.8	24.1	41.7	43.7	56.0	51.5	53.9	55.4
Public administration and defense	41.0	41.4	42.9	43.9	48.4	53.4	51.3	51.3
Education	37.6	34.3	40.2	38.4	42.8	42.5	43.1	41.9
Human health and social work activities	41.7	39.8	60.2	43.9	60.2	48.4	53.4	45.1
Arts, entertainment and recreation	38.1	19.9	42.1	37.3	42.0	45.5	44.8	33.0
Other services	29.6	26.0	30.1	31.3	35.2	35.6	44.8	44.2
Activities of households as employers	54.2	50.0	53.9	50.7	48.7	48.0	51.4	48.9
Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies	16.0	17.4	38.1	40.0	0.0	40.0	40.8	40.8
Overall	29.7	28.4	40.6	40.1	34.9	34.1	44.6	44.3

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS)2023- 2024

7.6 Average weekly hours spent in own use production activities by type and sex

Participation and time spent data in own-use production work is essential to inform a wide range of policies such as those targeting employment creation in rural areas, poverty reduction, food security, and provision of a wide range of services, including water supply, child and elderly care, domestic services, etc. It is also essential for addressing gender issues and for a better understanding of participation and access to labour markets, and related issues such as work-life balance.

The analysis of time spent on own-use production work (OWP) in 2023 and 2024 indicates that females consistently devoted nearly twice as many hours as males to unpaid productive activities. In 2023, females spent an average of 23.6 hours per week compared to 13.6 hours for males, while in 2024, the averages slightly declined to 22.6 hours for females and 12.6 hours for males. Females spent more time on household chores, including shopping and preparing meals (12.0 hours in 2023 and 11.5 hours in 2024), and on caring for children and the elderly (8.2 hours in 2023 and 7.8 hours in 2024). In contrast, males spent more time searching for fodder or grazing household animals (10.1 hours in 2023 and 9.3 hours in 2024) and constructing

or repairing their own dwellings (7.7 hours in both years). Although a slight reduction in average working hours was recorded, the gender disparities in unpaid work persisted over the two years.

Figure 12: Average weekly hours spent in own use production activities by type and sex
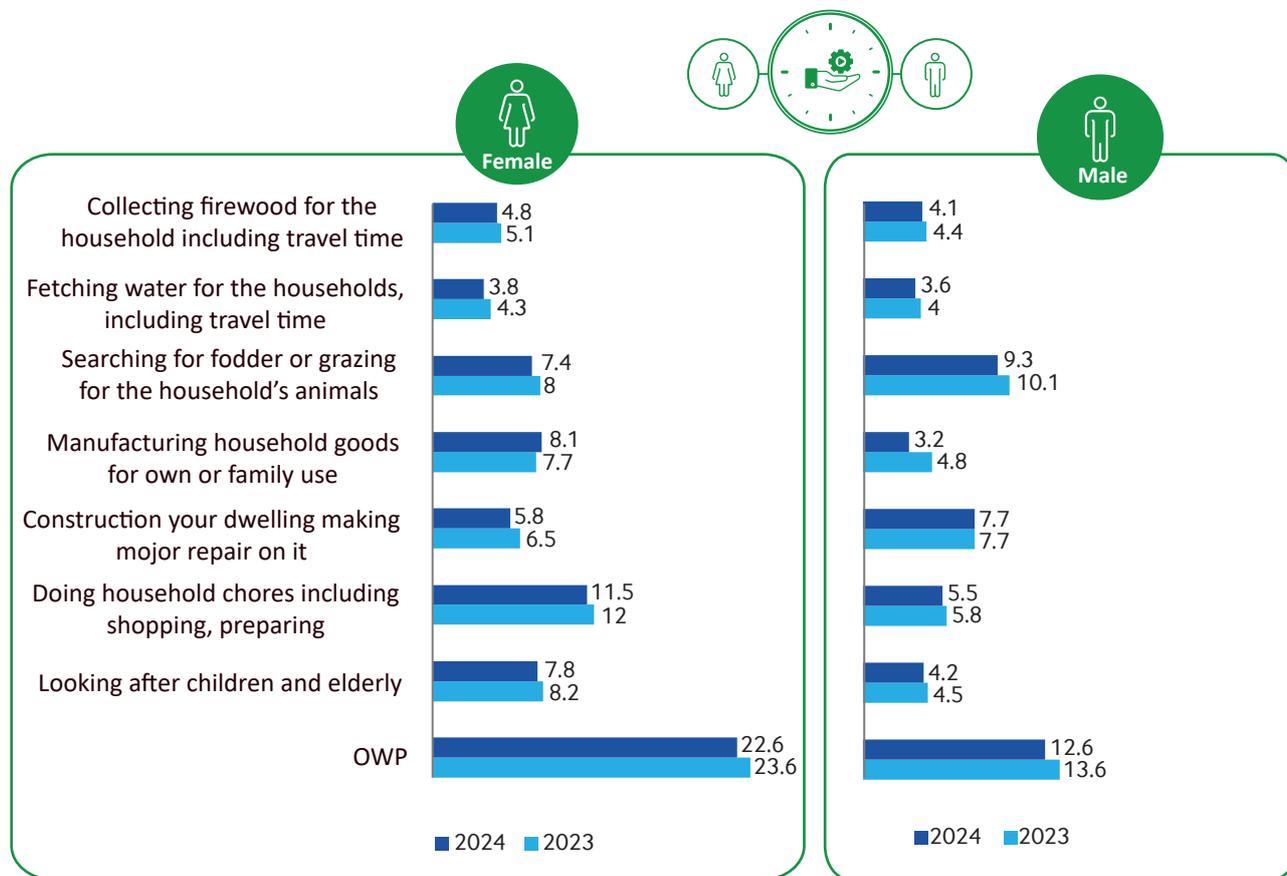
Source: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2023-2024

Annex

Officials involved in the LABOUR FORCE SURVEY 2023, Gender Thematic Report

NATIONAL COORDINATORS

MURENZI Ivan, DG, NISR

MWIZERWA Jean Claude,DDG, NISR

TECHNICAL DIRECTORS

NILINGIYIMANA Faustin

KAYITESI Claudette

SURVEY COORDINATOR

BYIRINGIRO James

ANALYSIS & REPORT WRITTING

ISHIMWE Caroline

NKURUNZIZA Venuste

NSHUTINABAGENZI Eric

REPORT EDITING & DESIGN

KAGOYIRE Delphine

KABERA Jean Luc

Layout, Typesetting

UWAMUNGU Thierry, Publication Specialist

Proofreading & Correction:

KALISA Neema Grace

NKURUNZIZA Venuste

NSHUTINABAGENZI Eric

SIBOMANA Jean Claude