

RUSIZI

A hub for cross-border trade, tourism and agri-business

Rusizi sits on the south-western border with the DRC and Burundi and aims to become a center for cross-border trade and tourism. © Rusizi Secondary City Master Plan.

QUICK FACTS ABOUT RUSIZI

City	Rusizi
District population	400,858
Urban	63,258
Rural	337,600
Population density	418 p/km ²
Total surface	940.95 km ²
Administrative entities	Sectors(18); cells (93) villages (586)
Closest Secondary City	Huye
Main economic activities	Cross-Border Trade (with Burundi and the DRC), Tourism (Lake Kivu, Bugarama Hotsprings, Nyungwe National Park), agri-business

Rusizi sits on the border with two countries: The DRC on the west and Burundi to the south; and has five border posts spread along the western and southern tip of the district. A total of 20% of the country's cross-border trade takes place from the western province from the cities of Rubavu and Rusizi. As the furthest of all the Secondary Cities, compared to the location of Kigali, Rusizi needs to capitalize on the production of goods and agricultural produce required by its neighboring countries to sustain itself in the future; in fact it is easier and more valuable to import and export goods to the DRC and Burundi than to transport the goods for internal trade to Kigali. The DRC has a strong dependence on Rusizi for perishable foods and beverages while Burundi is dependent on Rusizi for mineral, construction materials, and manufactured goods. Most of the products are readily available in the district because of its rich agricultural lands. The availability of construction materials like the stones and cement also strengthens the presence of Rusizi and automatically puts it on a global map.

* Data from the NISR (2012 Population Census, 2021 Demographic and Health Survey 2019–2020), Districts Development Strategies, NLU DMP 2050, the World Bank and District websites. Population numbers are mostly taken from the 2012 Population Census and may differ from current figures.

RUSIZI'S DDS AND CITY MASTER PLAN

introduce some key green concepts and practices, which include:

- Sustainable mobility: Construction of roads and a city transit taxi park and shared parking lots (pedestrian and cycling friendly to reduce the need to commute and promote cycling and walking)
- Sustainable and resource efficient water supply facilities
- Sports, recreation and tourism infrastructure
- Green buildings and construction (Rusizi eco-industrial park; promote planned green initiatives, resilient and efficient resources for urban infrastructures and buildings)

Due to its strategic location the city also falls along the EAC freight corridor to ensure the smooth movement of the products from one country to another. This is another opportunity that the city can build on to grow its economy.

The District also is home to a large part of the Nyungwe National Park and has 45 km² area of Lake Kivu, making it a good destination for tourism. However, for it to exploit its tourism potential to the fullest extent, Rusizi needs to be strategic in the development of tourism facilities and attractions – something that is well covered in the DDS and City Master Plan. Rusizi's airport, which is operational and has limited weekly flights from and to the capital Kigali, gives this south-western town a high competitive advantage to become a prized trade and tourism hub in the near future.