REPUBLIC OF RWANDA

Ministry of Local Government

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE GRADUATION

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

BDF	Business Development Fund
CBHI	Community Based Health Insurance
CFSVA	Comprehensive Food Security & Vulnerability Assessment
cPW	Classic Public Works
CSO	Civil society organisation
DHS	Disability and Health Survey
DS	Direct Support
EDPRS	Economic Development & Poverty Reduction Strategy
EICV	Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey (Enquête Intégrale sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages)
ePW	Expanded Public Works
FAO	Food & Agriculture Organisation
FARG	Genocide Survivors Support and Assistance Fund
FY	Fiscal Year/ Financial Year
HH	Household
IGA	Income Generating Activity
iSP MIS	integrated Social Protection MIS
JAPSG	Joint Action Plan for Sustainable Graduation
LFPR	Labour Force Participation Rate
LODA	Local Administrative Entities Development Agency
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MEIS	Monitoring, Evaluation & Information System
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
MINEMA	Ministry of Emergency Management
MINAGRI	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Resources
MINALOC	Ministry of Local Government
MINECOFIN	Ministry of Economic Planning and Finance
MIS	Management Information System
MPG	Minimum Package for Graduation

NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NISR	National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda
NST	National Strategy for Transformation
NSPS	National Social Protection Strategy
PPD	Project Planning Document
PSW	Para Social Workers
PW	Public Works
Q	Quarter
RDRC	Rwanda Demobilisation & Reintegration Commission
RGA	Rwanda Graduation Approach
RLDSF	Rwanda Local Development Support Fund
RMI	Rwanda Management Institute
RWF	Rwandan Francs
SACCO	Savings and Credit Cooperative
SBCC	Social and Behaviour Change Communications
SLE	Sustainable Livelihood Enhancement
SP	Social protection
S-R SP	Shock Responsive Social Protection
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
VUP	Vision Umurenge Programme

Glossary of Terms

Able to work	An individual aged between 18 and 64 years of age who is not severely disabled or in full-time education or caring for someone with severe disability,
Akagari	A level of local government between the Village and Sector. Also known as a Cell.
Churning	Describes the situation where a household which was in poverty, escapes but then, for some reason, falls back again.
Classic Public Works	A scheme within the VUP's safety net component providing short-term, temporary employment on community infrastructure and environmental projects
Community Based Health Insurance	CBHI is a mechanism which aims to limit the exclusion of the most destitute segments of the population from health services. CBHI should play a key role inbuilding and strengthening the foundations for the concept of equity in access to various packages supplied by the health system
Direct Support	A scheme within the VUP's safety net component providing unconditional monthly cash transfers
Expanded Public Works	A scheme within the VUP's safety net component providing part-time (at least 2 hours per day) multi-year, year-round employment
Extremely poor household	A household whose per adult equivalent per capita consumption is below the official 'extreme poverty line' (RWF 105,000/year in 2013/14 prices).
Food security	The state of having reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food
Girinka	A programme under MINAGRI that distributes cattle and other livestock to poor households. Also known as the 'one cow per poor family' programme.
Graduation	A situation whereby a previously poor household increase their household productivity and resilience to the extent that their consumption permanently remains over and above the official poverty line (source: National Social Protection Policy, 2020
Graduation participants	Recipients of support aimed at enabling sustainable graduation from poverty. The use of this term intentionally invokes the notion of a service provider relationship with their participants, in which the client has purchasing power and whose needs the service provider is aiming to please.

Labour endowed household	Household containing people who are able to work
Mutuelle de Santé	Rwanda's national health insurance scheme – see Community Based Health Insurance above
Nutrition Sensitive Direct Support	A scheme within VUP safety net component which provides regular and reliable income support to extremely poor pregnant women and children between 0 to 24 months of age at risk of malnutrition. It is also intended to incentivize uptake of critical ante-natal and post-natal health services with a view to addressing wider risks related to malnutrition.
Older Person	Older persons will be considered as those persons aged 65 years and above in line with the labour law and specifically the retirement age of 65 years (as defined in the National Older Policy.)
Poor household	A household whose per adult equivalent per capita consumption is below the official 'poverty line' of RWF 159,000/year. Poor households are typically unable to meet their basic food and non-food needs.
Poverty	A condition of deprivation and, although widely recognized to be multidimensional in nature, is usually defined with reference to an officially defined level of income or consumption. This is known as the poverty line.
Protection	Social protection provides essential support to those living in poverty, protecting them from the worst consequences of that poverty;
Prevention	Social protection provides insurance mechanisms and safety nets that can be activated to catch people in danger of falling into poverty;
Promotion	Social protection supports poor people's investment so that they can pull themselves out of poverty;
Public Works	Publicly funded development programmes providing temporary employment. Public works jobs are usually manual in nature and on community infrastructure development and maintenance projects.
Resilience	An individual or household's ability to withstand livelihood shocks without suffering unacceptable declines in living standards or being forced to adopt harmful coping strategies such as reducing food consumption, withdrawing children from school or selling productive assets.

Resilience Line	A national line, 50% above the poverty line that indicates when a household should be considered to have sustainably graduated.
Social Protection	All public and private income transfers schemes, Social Care Services, livelihood support and insurance schemes that, together, ensure that all extremely poor and vulnerable people have income security, a dignified standard of living and are protected against life-cycle and livelihood risks with a view to achieving sustainable graduation and self-reliance.
Social Registry	The social registry will serve as a gateway for all social programs to objectively identify the poor and vulnerable. The registry will use objectively measurable variables, proven to be strongly correlated with household poverty to identify the poor.
Ubudehe	A system of household wealth ranking implemented across Rwanda.
Umudugudu	A village; the lowest level of local Government in Rwanda
Umurenge	A level of local government between the District and Cell. Also known as a Sector.
Vulnerability	Describes a person or household's capacity – or lack thereof – to withstand shocks and cope with risks, with a view to maintaining their standard of living and well-being

1. Background

Rwanda aims to achieve high quality standards of living for all, building on the trajectory laid out under vision 2020 period. Significant poverty reduction levels were registered, and between 2001 to 2016/17, poverty levels dropped from 58.9% to 38.2% in 2016/17, with more than 1 million people lifted out of poverty.

A clear conceptual framework for promoting graduation is articulated within Vision 2050 aspirations of high standards of living and without leaving any one behind[1], National Strategy for transformation (NST1) as well as the National Social Protection policy and its Strategy.

Overall, Rwanda aims to build strong progress made in reducing poverty with the aim of achieving a rate of below 1% for extreme poverty by 2024 and eliminating poverty by 2030 in order to enhance the living standards of all Rwandans.

In order to achieve these ambitious targets, there is a need to ensure that policies and programmes are put in place to effectively promote sustainable graduation out of poverty.   The NST1 Priority Area 1, focuses on "Graduation from Poverty and Extreme Poverty and Promoting Resilience" and this is further elaborated and detailed in the 'National Social Protection Strategy (2017-2024)' where it is stated:

i.   **Outcome 6**: Extremely poor households have increased access to livelihood support services for economic empowerment
ii. **Outcome 7**: Strengthened values of self-reliance, respect for rights and community-based support for the vulnerable

The purpose of this strategy, therefore, is to support operationalization of the strategic approach to graduation that is articulated within NST1 and the Social Protection Policy (June, 2020) as well as the National Social Protection Strategy (2017-24)

The document further presents a national strategy for graduation. It shows what needs to be done, and how it needs to be done, to further reduce levels of poverty and extreme poverty in Rwanda.

This strategic document will guide social and economic cluster stakeholders in government, civil society organisations and other relevant stakeholders to adopt the graduation approach stated herein to jointly deliver on the set targets articulated in the mentioned policy documents above.

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[1] Government of Rwanda (2017) pp vi and p1

1.1. Introduction to graduation in Rwanda

The discussion of graduation in the social protection sector in Rwanda has a long history, and thinking and understanding has evolved over time.

The SP Policy of 2005 which was developed before the elaboration of EDPRS1 (September 2007), referred to 'exit strategies out of poverty' and not necessarily graduation strategy. As a matter of fact, EDPRS1 set the target of 38% of vulnerable people graduating from livelihood enhancement schemes to achieve economic independence[2].

The subsequent design of VUP in 2007-8 to implement the policy was based on the articulated with the notion that graduation from VUP would be possible, at scale, though with ambitious timelines of about six months, which proved to be over- ambitious during the implementation phase.

The VUP implementation from 2008 and onwards through the pilot phase generated a range of lessons and experiences, which informed the development of the next generation of the National Social Protection Strategy (MINALOC, 2011), which set out the targets for graduation and for the first time, VUP elaborated guidelines on graduation in 2012.

By 2013, the elaboration of graduation in EDPRS 2 was more pronounced, under the thematic area of Rural Development: 'Sustainable poverty reduction is achieved through broad-based growth across sectors in rural areas by improving land use, increasing the productivity of agriculture, enabling graduation from extreme poverty, and connecting rural communities to economic opportunity through improved infrastructure[3].

The national social protection strategy (Minaloc, 2013)[4] featured graduation with specific graduation outcomes: outcome 3.1 under priority area 3: 'Increased and sustained graduation from core social protection programmes by connecting economic opportunities and financial services[5].
Moving from rhetoric to action, a minimum package for graduation (MPG was introduced in 2015 as a pilot in one Sector per Districts (30).

In the elaboration of National Strategy for Transformation 1 (2017-2024) which superseded EDPRS2, graduation from extreme poverty became a prominent topic of interest and as such, priority area 1 of NST1 under the social transformation pillar is '*promoting resilience and enhancing graduation from poverty and extreme poverty*[6].

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[2] Government of Rwanda (2007) p42
[3] Government of Rwanda (2013a) p36
[4] Government of Rwanda (2013b)
[5] Ibid p47
[6] Government of Rwanda (2017) p11

By 2018, recognising that MPG had a narrow scope and would not bring effective results quickly, a policy decision was taken to broaden the approach through a multi sectoral approach and the subsequent multi-sectoral joint action plan and focus poverty reduction efforts on the 17 poorest districts where malnutrition and extreme poverty was also demonstrably high.

With NST1 setting ambitious targets to be achieved by 2024 and the revised social protection policy (June, 2020), and noting that EICV5 indicated insignificant poverty reduction rates, it has been found imperative that the graduation approach and strategies are revised based on the lessons learnt from the implementation of minimum package for graduation, multi-sectoral approach and Vision 2020 Umurenge programme.

Based on the above, the current national strategy for graduation among other things, presents a multi-sectoral approach and shall require a multi-sectoral action at all levels to be implemented with strong coordination across ministries, agencies, non-governmental actors and at decentralised levels.

2.0.   Context and definition of graduation and other key terms

The chapter conceptual clarity on what we mean by graduation and how this has evolved through the discussion to date, sets out the poverty challenge for graduation, and clarifies some terms that are used by this strategy in its discussion of graduation, re-introducing the term 'graduation client'.

2.1.   Policy definition of graduation and other key terms

Graduation was formally defined for the first time in the 2020 National Social Protection Policy for Rwanda, as follows:

'Graduation: A situation whereby a previously poor household increase their household productivity and resilience to the extent that their consumption permanently remains over and above the official poverty line'[7]

A number of key terms are clarified in this definition:

Household level. The unit of analysis is households rather than individuals within that household.

Consumption. The key indicator of graduation is consumption. While graduation may be assessed in several ways, as discussed later in chapter 6, graduation only occurs when any enhancements to asset holdings, employment, or livelihood status translate to a material level of consumption above the poverty line.

Poverty line. Graduation is defined as the rising of households over and above the poverty line, so that they are no longer categorised as poor. The poverty line is a formal statement of what it means to be poor which is assessed and set by NISR, and is revised when necessary. Hence understandings of graduation need to be flexible to keep up with any changes to the Rwandan national poverty line.

This is a significant element of the definition, which differs from some previous discussions in which graduation was thought of as rising out of extreme poverty – which is a lower line in Rwanda.

Permanent rise. According to this definition, graduation only occurs where households rising above the poverty line remain above the line permanently. This is important because there is significant 'churning' in Rwanda of households rising and falling around the poverty line[8]. This definition says that if a household rises above the poverty line but then falls back below it again, they have not graduated.

In doing this, it also encourages efforts to ensure that households rising above the poverty line do not fall back down again; and similarly, households living above the poverty line (and therefore

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[7] MINALOC (2020) p iv
[8] See chapter 3 for discussion of poverty dynamics in Rwanda

those who have not permanently graduated) do not fall below the poverty line. This in turn puts a focus on arrangements for helping Rwandan households to be resilient in the face of shocks, and links the discussion on graduation to the discussion on Rwanda's management of shocks.

Implication of shocks. The implication of the requirements for graduation above the poverty line to be permanent is that management of shocks, and protecting poor people from shocks becomes central to efforts to enable graduation. Households seeking to graduate may need support from impacts of shocks which might cause them to fall back below the poverty line.

Graduation from and to. The definition also clarifies from where people graduate, and into what they graduate. People graduate from a state of household poverty, and they graduate to a state where the household is no longer poor, permanently.

Sustainable graduation. The definition also clarifies what we mean by sustainable graduation. Sustainable graduation is achieved where a household moves from below the poverty line to a position above the poverty line and are able to stay there permanently.

Graduation vs poverty reduction. The definition makes clear that there is no functional difference between the process of graduation and the process of sustainable poverty reduction, since both refer to achieving a permanent position above the poverty line. Importantly, this tells us that graduation is not only about social protection; it is about all of the efforts required to help people move out of poverty. This is why a multi-sectoral approach to graduation is so important.

Other key statements on graduation in policy

In addition to the definition of graduation the national social protection policy makes additional statements and clarifications on how to understand graduation in Rwanda.

A timeline of two years for graduation. This refers to households who benefit from effective livelihood development programmes and multisectoral interventions, and access to complementary services, basic services, and markets to create the enabling environment for graduation[9]. If all of these enabling conditions are in place then it should be possible for recipients to graduate in two years. However, the policy also states that this expectation is not achievable in the event that there is 'force majeure', or in other words matters beyond their control. So, if services and the enabling environment, minus disruptive shocks, are not present in the way expected then it is accepted that the two-year target is unlikely to still be possible.

Not everyone who is poor is expected to graduate. The policy is clear that households without labour are not expected to graduate, since they lack the means to embark on a trajectory towards sustainable livelihoods. This includes people with disabilities, the elderly, children and others without labour. Such households can expect to receive social protection support without a time limit. This position is reinforced by the ubudehe cabinet paper which states that households in

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[9] MINALOC (2020) pp 30-31

ubudehe category E (special category) are not expected to graduate and shall benefit from the full State social protection.

Support vulnerable households. The impacts of shocks is that they may cause households above the poverty line to fall below the poverty line, in a process which is the opposite of graduation. If this happens to a household which has recently moved above the poverty line this means, in line with the definition of graduation above, that they have not graduated sustainably. But a similar fate may happen to any household which has never been below the poverty line, and has not been the recipient of support to enable graduation. The implication here is that households above the poverty line need protection from shocks to protect them from becoming poor and in need of graduation support.
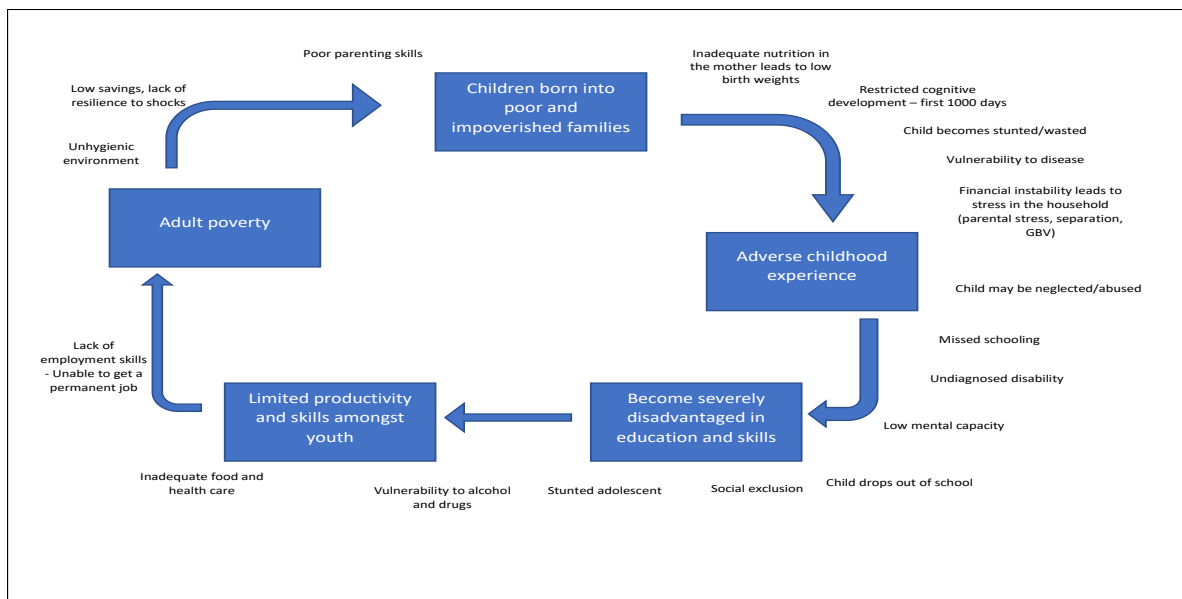
2.2.   The graduation challenge: Understanding situations of the graduation participants

It is common in social protection policies and dialogues to refer to recipients of social protection support as 'beneficiaries. However, this is problematic from a graduation perspective in particular, because a key focus of efforts to enable graduation is to empower citizens to take control of their own destinies. This appears to be inconsistent with the more passive idea of a beneficiary, which implies a recipient of what is provided rather than an empowered citizen aware of and pushing for fulfilment of their rights under the social contract. For the purpose of this strategy and going forward, we shall refer to them as **graduation participants**.

Graduation participants are defined as the 'recipients of support aimed at enabling sustainable graduation from poverty'. It is hoped that this new way of looking at relationships between government (and other) service providers and the recipients of their support will create more demanding participants, who are more willing and able to hold service providers to account for providing effective services which enable graduation in practice and in accordance with the rules and importantly participants' entitlements through national policy decisions

Poor households have very low incomes and have a lack of access to incomes, assets, resources and services such as basic education, health care, and water. They are very vulnerable to shocks and changes in the market and are affected by multiple barriers: social, health, educational, and infrastructural.

Figure 1: **Vulnerabilities throughout the life cycle**

Poor parenting skills

Low savings, lack of resilience to shocks

Unhygienic environment

Children born into poor and impoverished families

Inadequate nutrition in the mother leads to low birth weights

Restricted cognitive development – first 1000 days

Child becomes stunted/wasted

Vulnerability to disease

Financial instability leads to stress in the household (parental stress, separation, GBV)

Adult poverty

Adverse childhood experience

Child may be neglected/abused

Lack of employment skills - Unable to get a permanent job

Missed schooling

Undiagnosed disability

Limited productivity and skills amongst youth

Become severely disadvantaged in education and skills

Low mental capacity

Inadequate food and health care

Vulnerability to alcohol and drugs

Stunted adolescent

Social exclusion

Child drops out of school

All these aggregates together to catch them into a poverty trap, a 'situation in which people get stuck in a cyclical pattern of poverty'. Unless something is done to change the situation, the cycle cannot be broken, leaving generation after generation in a state of constant poverty.

1. Low incomes:

Research[10] shows that households which depend on casual agricultural wage labour (especially when combined with landlessness) are likely to be poor. Households where the household head worked as a farm labourer have the highest likelihood of staying in poverty (45 percent)[11].

As a consequence, these households are likely to have low assets and lack savings which when not tackled adequately could result in an intergenerational poverty cycle.

2. Basic Education:

Household where the household head who hasn't completed primary education are most likely to stay in poverty.

3. Access to Health Insurance

Participation in health insurance is correlated with the dynamics of poverty. From the EICV5 panel survey people who participated in health insurance in 2013/14 but not in 2016/17 are

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[10] EICV5 Thematic Poverty Panel Report, 2016/17 also "What to do about the slowdown in poverty reduction?" Andrew Shepherd, CPAN,2019

[11] EICV 5 also reports that "the number of farm laborers is increasing over time, pointing to the presence of a growing socio-economic problem" (Thematic Poverty Panel report, page 18)

more likely than other groups to have remained in poverty and had an above-average chance of falling into poverty.

4. Household Size

Households with 6 members or more and with high dependency ratios are more likely to be poor.
Conversely, working off-farm, access to health insurance and receiving a cow or livestock provide protection against falling into poverty.

Poor households are likely to be:

- ▸ Female headed households, which tend to have higher dependency ratios
- ▸ Households whose head was aged 40-49, and

Finally, location matters: EICV5 reports that while 18% of the population lives in urban areas, only 7% of the poor are in towns and cities, with the remaining 93% in rural areas. Kigali city has 13% of the population but only 5% of the poor.

2.3.   Poverty dynamics and churning

"Churning" describes the situation where a household which was in poverty, escapes but then, for some reason, falls back again.

This is common phenomenon internationally and in Rwanda. For example, EICV5 report indicated that that ***"almost a quarter of people were poor both in 2014 and 2017, and a half were poor in neither period. An estimated 13.4% moved out of poverty, while 11.7% fell into poverty, during this period."***

Table 1: Churn of households into and out of poverty between EICV studies

|	Between EICV4 and EICV5	Between EICV3 and EICV4[12]
HHs which stayed poor	24.5%	28%
Moved out of poverty	13.4%	15%
Fell into poverty	11.7%	10%
Never poor	50.2%	47%

The primary reason for falling back into poverty is the household (or community) vulnerability to a shock

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[12] Data compiled by Bizoza and Simons, 2018

2.4. Vulnerability to shocks

The Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA) 2018 identifies a number of categories of shock classified under natural hazards, induced disasters, geographical disasters, biological disasters, socio-economic shocks as well as household level shocks as shown in figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Most common shocks
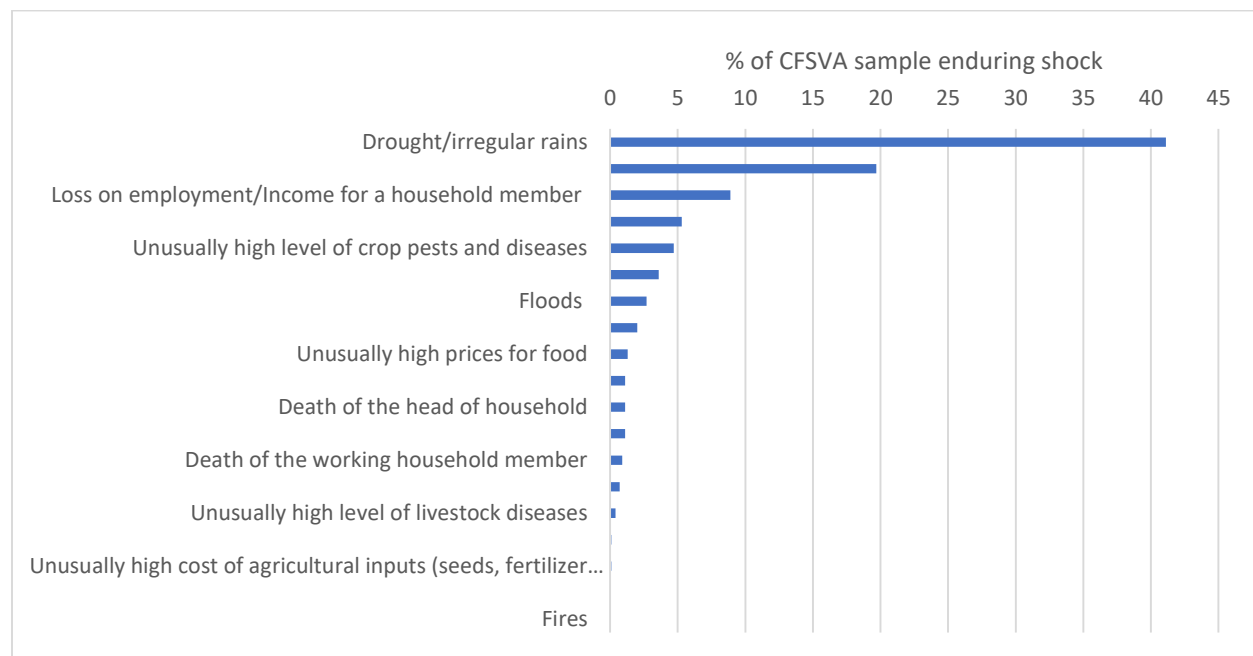
Households in poverty are both more likely to suffer shocks and find it more difficult to recover. And in addition, shocks have a longstanding effect when coping strategies are applied that decrease the resilience of the households. Such coping strategies include:

Food-based coping strategies during the time(s) when they did not have enough food or money to buy food:
- Rely on less preferred and less expensive food;
- Borrow food or rely on help from friends/relatives;
- Limit portion size at mealtimes;
- Restrict consumption by adults for small children to eat;
- Reduce the number of meals eaten in a day.

 Livelihoods coping strategies include:
- Sold household assets
- Spent savings
- Sold more non-productive animals than usual

- Purchased food on credit or borrowed food
- Harvested immature crops
- Consumed seed stock that were to be saved for the next season
- Decreased expenditure on productive inputs, (fertilizer, pesticide, fodder, etc.)
- Sold the last female animals
- Migrated the entire household
- Begged

It is therefore imperative that social protection programmes and graduation strategies are designed to respond to these types of shocks to prevent households which have made progress falling back into poverty.

2.5.   Lessons learned about challenges to graduation

i)   **Poor people experience real structural constraints which drive their choices and limit their actions**.

For poor households to graduate from extreme poverty, it is important to have an accurate understanding of their needs, intra household dynamics and how these affects their options, their choices, and their day-to-day realities. Poverty forces poor families to make difficult choices between expenditures that are all essential: between food, health care, school fees, and seeds or fertilisers; not all are affordable at the same time for poor households.

Key influences on poverty can be characterised in four ways

- **Poverty interrupters** which are factors that help poor people rise out of poverty;
- **Factors which help people get out of poverty. The Strategy should build on these to maximise the opportunities to escape from poverty**
- **Factors which push people into poverty. These should be mitigated and addressed**
- **Factors which keep people in poverty** and unable to escape

Table 2: Understanding poverty dynamics in Rwanda

Factors which help people get out of poverty	Factors which keep people in poverty	Factors which push people into poverty
• Land ownership • Migration and remittances • Family harmony • Livestock ownership • Increased agricultural productivity • Livelihood diversification • Accumulation of l productive assets • Regular saving • Health insurance • Entrepreneurial mindset • Social protection • Enabling environment (access to markets, services etc) • Social empowerment	• Land scarcity • Scarce non-farm employment • Food insecurity and food price inflation • Weak market signals in key agricultural markets • Regulations creating constraints to petty trade • Cash scarcity and low purchasing power in markets • Low levels of education • Large family size & composition • Youth unemployment and under-employment and linked social problems • Patriarchal gender norms • Long-run impact of genocide	• Harvest failure • Loss of livelihood • Theft • High dependency ratios • Intrahousehold conflict or lack of cooperation within the household • Family breakdown and male abandonment • The costs of 'free' primary education • Health shocks • Natural disasters • Misunderstandings and or misconceptions of poverty by the technocrats

Source: (compiled from CFSVA, DHS, EICV5 and other sources)

These findings demonstrate that poverty in Rwanda is complex and multi-dimensional. Potential solutions which are likely to be successful need to be based on an understanding of this complexity. Global evidence on graduation[13] shows us why this understanding is so important: even 'successful' graduation programmes have tended to have smaller effects on the poorest, and in Rwanda graduation efforts are entirely focused on the extreme poor.

ii) Limited understanding of poverty dynamics and graduation reduces the effectiveness of graduation support provided

There is a misconception that poor people are poor because they have a mindset issue which makes them poor, causing them to be dependent, lack the zeal or willing to progress[14]. This 'poor mindset' is rarely understood through the lens of vulnerability and (sensible) risk aversion, bounded rationality, limited capabilities or agency, exclusion, adverse inclusion or the impact of labour or investment constraints[15].

Indeed, it is documented that: 'Sustained improvements in household welfare require interventions that respond to the specific needs, preferences and capacities of individual households'[16]. This is demonstrated by the conducting of household profiling exercise which is

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[13] Eg Banerjee et al (2015)
[14] Ayliffe (2018a)
[15] Bird et al (2019) p72
[16] Multisectoral joint action plan (2018) p13

geared towards the identification of households needs rather than just administering what I thought is needed by the poor households. This does not dispute the fact that there is a mindset issue, but this needs to be properly placed in the context of a better understanding of the realities of life for the extreme poor and moving towards a more understanding, supportive and enabling way of helping people graduate from extreme poverty.

iii) The necessary ingredients, or pillars, for graduation have become clearer over time

The process of graduation does not work like an input-output model in which services are provided, and people graduate. Due to the complexity of poverty and the unpredictability of the external environment, the government and stakeholders can do its best to enable graduation building on experience to date and the necessary ingredients to date as depicted under the graduation framework in chapter 4. So, it should be well understood that graduation cannot be delivered according to a plan, and that enabling graduation is a process and not an end in itself.

Another key lesson is that graduation is a not a one size fit all and therefore not a single formula for graduation can be applied to all potential graduates; it is necessary to understand the specific context, and make context-specific plans with graduation participants. Importantly, it is worth noting that timing, quality, sequencing and completeness of this graduation support is critical: if this is not right then many recipients will still be unable to graduate[17].

iv) Delivering the building blocks for graduation is difficult and faces multiple institutional hurdles

As approaches to enabling graduation have evolved, it has become clear that it is an agenda for the whole of government and its partners and not only social protection actors. A multi-sectoral approach will be necessary, reflecting the multi-sectoral nature of poor people's livelihoods and the support they may require to graduate[18]. However, the institutional arrangements for coordination of that support have not kept pace with that understanding, and a number of common institutional challenges have been experienced.

These include:

- Insufficient prioritisation of all the elements of the necessary support for livestock participants, including lack of training, veterinary services that have among other contributed to challenges in that livestock programme.
- Non-alignment of imihigo, strategies, policies, approaches and plans at different levels, so that graduation objectives are shared and planned under a single shared framework in a coordinated way[19].

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[17] BRAC and UNICEF (2019)
[18] The multi-sectoral join action plan (2018) for example recognises the need to align government services to the same agenda to eradicate poverty
[19] Ayliffe (2020)

- Disconnects among departments at local government level, including veterinary service unit, agriculture, procurement, business development, and Social Protection Units[20]

It is therefore important that institutions responsible for enabling graduation work together in synergy and in a more coordinated way, ensuring that efforts and investments towards graduation are more likely to be as effective as they might otherwise be. It will be important to address the substantial supply-side constraints to effective service delivery.

v) Our understanding of graduation processes is not yet founded on evidence and needs to be tested

Efforts at enabling graduation to date have achieved some successes but also some challenges including that they have not been well-monitored. As discussed above, graduation is complex and not an easy and straightforward process. As a result, there is much that needs to be done to understand and learn about what works and what doesn't work when trying to achieve graduation among different types of poor people. This will help with policy design, programme design, and programme delivery, and ensure that investments spent on graduation has the maximum chance of delivering good results.

vi) Graduation efforts have not always been implemented in the way they were designed

Lessons from the Minimum Package for Graduation (MPG) process evaluation indicated that there were two fundamental ways between initial design & implementation guidelines and actual implementation.

- There was an increasing focus on direct delivery of complementary support especially asset transfers, to the exclusion of other necessary elements.
- There was an observable shift from an enabling/empowering approach towards participants in initial design to one focused on top-down management of inputs and monitoring of the compliance of participants with instructions

Specific issues in which implementation departed from the design included the following:

- VUP public works has frequently been subject to problems with poor targeting, number of work days provided, adequacy of payments, and timeliness of payments.
- Livestock asset transfers have suffered from high levels of livestock mortality, often because steps to avoid this were not followed properly.
- Recipients of asset transfers have sometimes been prematurely assessed as graduated as a result of their measurable assets increasing, lost access to support, and fell back into poverty.

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[20] SLE concept note p7

- Parasocial workers have not systematically linked households to other services, the caseloads managed by each caseworker were higher than initially envisaged and the envisaged financial incentives were not consistently paid[21]. And caseworker incentives were also misunderstood, and led to unhelpful outcomes for participants
- Incentives for Business Development Advisers were ill-adapted to the provision of support to MPG participants in receipt of asset grants
- There was little sequencing and layering of interventions at sub-national level, where MPG was generally understood as consisting merely of public works plus livestock provision
- There was no qualitative assessment of the type of support offered by Case Workers (CW), nor participant feedback on how useful they found it, nor analysis of key challenges faced by households in accessing social protection entitlements or complementary services, nor of lessons learned by CWs.

A key message is that <u>how</u> graduation support is provided is as important as <u>what</u> is provided. All support must be appropriate, timely, of adequate quality and delivered based on an understanding of participants. If it is not then it will be less effective.

vii) The wider enabling environment for graduation is also crucial to success

The environment in which the graduation participant is operating is as important as the support that is provided. There are factors which push and keep people in poverty which are beyond the control of government, service providers, or graduation participants themselves, and relate availability and access to markets, local economic development environment and service delivery systems. These include shocks and disasters, limited availability of non-farm employment, lack of purchasing power and demand for goods in local markets, or youth unemployment.

Some of these potential challenges can be mitigated, for example by health insurance, by social protection or emergency response, or by market analysis or market facilitation. But all have the capacity to affect any graduation client at any time. When they do, they have the possibility of disrupting any plans for graduation, through no fault of the graduation client and irrespective of the effort that has been made, the support that has been provided, or the success achieved.

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[21] Ayliffe (2018)

3.0. Strategic Framework for Graduation

3.1. Objectives of the Graduation Strategy

The overarching objective of this graduation strategy is to enable all households below the poverty line who have the potential to graduate from poverty to reach a status where they have a sustainable livelihood which is resilient to moderate shocks, without access to social protection support.

3.2. Specific Objectives

i) Contribution of income transfers to graduation enhanced
ii) Effective multi-sectoral support for sustainable livelihoods received by graduation participants
iii) Graduation participants access appropriate and aligned complementary public and other non-State services
iv) Wider enabling environment for sustainable graduation maintained
v) Participants' realities understood and effectively supported by all people and organisations involved in facilitating graduation
vi) Institutional arrangements and governance for graduation services function effectively
vii) Graduation performance enhanced by ongoing lesson-learning and adaptive management

The graduation objectives/pillars are summarised in the graduation framework for Rwanda as presented below in the next section.

3.3. The Key Pillars of the graduation framework for Rwanda

The graduation framework premises on **seven key pillars/objectives** which must all come together to help households below the poverty line to graduate sustainably.

The success of enabling graduation from poverty at scale in Rwanda will require all seven of these ingredients to be in place, and not just a selection of them and none of the ingredients is optional.

Prior to provision of any support, targeted community and household level sensitization will be conducted. The objective of this community and household sensitization and awareness is as follows:

i) Community awareness and sensitization: To ensure that recipient households are well aware ahead of administering any type of support the objectives of the graduation programme. This will include information on their eligibility, the time bound support and how to utilise and maximize the support provided to them to ensure that they graduate in the specified period of time. The community mobilization and sensitization is to improve on the social behavior and mind set change which has implications on community and household graduation. Sensitisation and awareness will be done by

both local government officials, community volunteers, civil society organisations using different communication channels.

ii) Coaching and Intensive outreach: Graduation participants/Clients will be provided with support and coaching to support them throughout their graduation journey. Such coaching may be lifestyle coaching (health, nutrition, resolution of household challenges) or may be related to their livelihood (technical support in agricultural extension, veterinary needs or in other skills areas).

iii) Para social workers: Para social workers will play an important role in the offering graduation clients with referral services. They will work with the graduation clients to identify their needs in this area. The para social workers will then work with local government officials to ensure that the needs are addressed in a timely way by a suitably skilled expert. Coaching may also be facilitated by NGOs and CSOs with expertise.

iv) Household performance contract: As part of accountability and commitment on the part of the graduation clients, households will sign performance contracts. This will act as a catalyst for them to propel themselves to achieve improved socio-economic status and thus graduate out of poverty.

Figure 3: The Graduation Framework
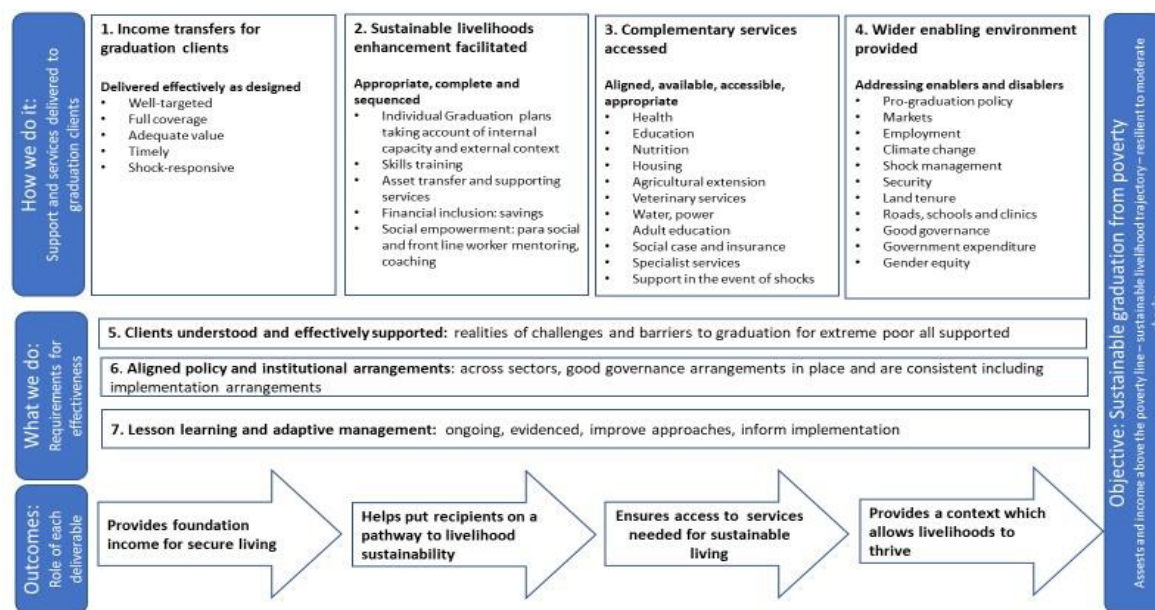
1. **Contribution of income transfers to graduation enhanced:** Effective cash transfers which are adequate, timely and well-targeted to the poor and vulnerable households provides the foundation for efforts to improve livelihoods, and provides additional support to protect households recover from disasters and shocks when required.

2. **Effective multi-sectoral support for sustainable livelihoods received by graduation participants:** Access to livelihood enhancement support that is well-designed and appropriate to targeted households, in additional to households/individual performance contracts/graduation plans; productive asset transfers; tailored planning, coaching and

mentoring; technical and life skills training, savings groups and specific support services. The livelihood enhancement requires strong coordination mechanisms and partnership to ensure the multidimensional needs of graduation participants are met.

3. **Graduation participants require access to appropriate and aligned complementary public and other non-state services:** Complementary services are those defined as outside social transfers and livelihood support covered in strategic objectives/pillar 1 and 2 above, but which are essential services which will help poor households overcome the key disablers and barriers to graduation. These complementary services include but are not limited to information, health, agriculture, nutrition, education, water and sanitation, electricity, business development, shock response, and others as required. These services include those which promote family health, children's education, good nutrition, clean water and good sanitation and hygiene, adequate housing, agricultural extension, veterinary services, adult education, social services, childcare services, and specialist facilities such as rehabilitation centres for people with disabilities. Achieving effective linkages between graduation participants and these services requires multi-sectoral coordination and alignment so service providers ensure.

   For graduation to be effective, it is the wider responsibility of cross sectoral ministries and agencies to address supply-side constraints in service delivery so that graduation participants may access them wherever required.

   Simultaneously, the role of proximity advisers through referrals is pertinent; service-seeking behaviours by empowered graduation participants; and third, service providers aligning their own strategies and resources to the graduation agenda and reaching out to provide the required services.

4. **Wider enabling environment for sustainable graduation maintained:** Access to effective and functional markets and affordable prices; to employment; to enabling infrastructure and services such as roads, hospitals/health centres and schools; secure land tenure, good governance and protection from shocks which may be economic, social, environmental, or institutional. These are regarded as **enablers to graduation.**

5. **Client realities are understood and support is effective**. Ensuring all involved in planning and supporting graduation have the understanding and perspectives on poverty dynamics and the realities of challenges and barriers to graduation for the poor necessary to provide effective support to graduation participants, based on the latest research and experience.

It is thus important to equip policy makers as well as implementers of the graduation programme with requisite knowledge and understanding through guidance, training and support for them to act as effective facilitators of change.

The key ingredients for effective support from facilitators of graduation are as follows.

- Having sufficient numbers and types of staff with required technical training and skills to provide envisaged support
- Ensuring staff have an adequate understanding of the livelihood realities of graduation participants.
- Ensuring that these attitudes, understandings and skills are internalised in efforts to work with graduation participants and there are accountability measures in place for both the staffs and graduation participants.

6. **Alignment of policy and institutional arrangements**. Ensuring that organisation roles, responsibilities and governance arrangements of the organisations that support graduation efforts are aligned to the sector policy, strategies plans and budgets to this graduation strategy and follow up that implementation follows plans as designed.

    This calls for enhanced leadership, multi-sectoral coordination with clear roles and responsibilities of the different actors and accountability at all levels and the operationalisation of the graduation steering committee along the governance framework.

7. **Graduation performance enhanced by ongoing lesson-learning and adaptive management.** Building awareness, willingness and systems which allow ongoing learning from efforts to enable graduation to inform and adjust planning so that performance improves over time.

    This process of ongoing learning and using these lessons to adjust and improve implementation over time is known as 'adaptive management' – in which the approach to implementation is adapted over time in response to new insights.

N.B: The first four pillars (**1-4**) relate to **delivery of services and support** to graduation participants while the final three (**5-7**) relate to **effective ways of working** and **enablers to graduation** by programmes developers, implementers and services involved in facilitating graduation at all levels, and cross-cut all of the first four ingredients which means they are all required for each of these first four ingredients.

4.0.   Targeting for graduation

The population target for this graduation strategy is the population under the poverty line and extreme poverty line which is 38.2% or 16.1% (497,000 HHs) as of 2016/17 respectively according to EICV5.

Alternatively, the target population for this graduation strategy are households with labour capacity with graduation potential. Graduation potential implies those households with ability to work but have limited opportunities or assets to sustain their livelihoods. Along the graduation pathways, participant households will be linked with agricultural services to ensure food security.

Albeit, households with the potential to graduate, households characterised with no labour capacity due to age, severe disability or having chronic illness and with no other source of income are not expected to graduate and can only rely on full time government support to sustain their livelihoods without which, their livelihoods would be compromised.

For households that are above the poverty line, some key policies related to Crop and livestock Insurance as well as a conducive environment that act as important mitigation and resilience mechanisms that cushion households from households falling back into poverty in the event of moderate shocks.

Table 3: Holistic package of services

Resilience building	
Households who have created wealth and sustain their livelihoods	• Households are self-reliant and resilient from moderate shocks; they have diverse sources of income. • They need a conducive environment (policies) for investment and business growth such as access to social services, insurance schemes etc.
Target group for graduation	
Households with graduation potential	
Household with labour capacity but have limited assets to sustain their livelihoods.	**Livelihoods programme interventions** a) **Safety nets** - Public works - Nutrition Sensitive Direct Support b) **Livelihoods Enhancement programmes** 1. Productive Asset Transfers (Agricultural inputs, Small and big livestock, toolkits for IGAs) 2. Financial Services including Financial Literacy and Incentives for long-term saving scheme (EJO HEZA) 3. Subsidised Medical Insurance 4. Skills Training 5. Free Basic Education 6. Social and behavior change communication services 7. Literacy and numeracy skills 8. Intermediate technology skills 9. Proximity advisory services 10. Link households to agriculture services Households will be under the graduation programme or on other livelihood enhancement programmes. Some big impactful programs can continue even after HHs have finished the 2 years under the graduation programme.

Household who have limited labour capacity and no assets to sustain their livelihoods.	**Safety nets and Livelihoods programmes**
	
	a) **Safety Nets**
	   1. Public Works
	   2. Nutrition Sensitive Direct Support,
	   3. Subsidised Medical Insurance (Community-based health insurance)
	
	b) **Livelihoods enhancement programmes**
	   4. Productive Asset Transfers (Agricultural inputs, Small and big livestock, toolkits for IGAs)
	   5. Financial Services including Financial Literacy and Incentives for long-term saving scheme (EJO HEZA)
	   6. Skills Training
	   7. Free Basic education
	   8. Social and behavior change communication services
	   9. Literacy and numeracy skills
	   10. Proximity Advisory services or community empowerment advisers
	   11. Link households to agriculture services
	In the event that they have been provided with support through the graduation programme, it is anticipated that they will be eligible for some service in a period of 2 years. Some big impactful programs can continue even after HHs have graduated to ensure sustainable graduation

Household with no potential to graduate (special category)	

Household with no labour capacity due to age (children and old persons), severe disability or having chronic illness with no other source of income	**Social Protection schemes**
	   1) Direct Income Support
	   2) Medical Insurance (Community based health insurance – CBHI)
	   3) Social Care/assistance Services
	   4) Assistive devices/prosthesis and rehabilitation services
	   5) Full or partial exemption from social service fees in public goods (water, electricity)
	   6) Shelter
	   7) Free basic education
	Most of the HHs in this category are not expected to "graduate" given the profile of the recipients, except young people (child-headed HHs, once grown-up)

Source, (MINALOC, Sept, 2020)

4.1.   Elements to consider for Graduation

There are two elements to consider while targeting households for graduation:

- Households with potential to graduate where some are regarded as slow movers while others can be referred as fast movers.

- Households living in an environment which sustains livelihood development or conducive environment

Table 4: Elements to consider while targeting households for graduation

Households with the capacity to graduate (fast movers)	Capacity of the environment to sustain livelihood development
• Education level of household head • Labour capacity in the household • Lower caring responsibilities • Access to land • Access to basic tools • Households close to the extreme and poverty line respectively	• Household is provided with a safety net payment for 2 consecutive years. Alternatively, household is provided with one off sizeable cash transfer (block transfer). • Productive asset transfer plus skills development. • Financial literacy and training on how to manage a project/small business plus additional insurance, health & livelihood related services. • Facilitated access to Financial Services/ loan (if needed). • Para social workers to facilitate monitoring, advisory/coaching and referral services. • Ensure access to agriculture services, and other social services (education, health, water, electricity and markets………) • Ensure that environments less prone to shocks are selected for successful implementation of a graduation programme.

Figure 4: Graduation package and pathways
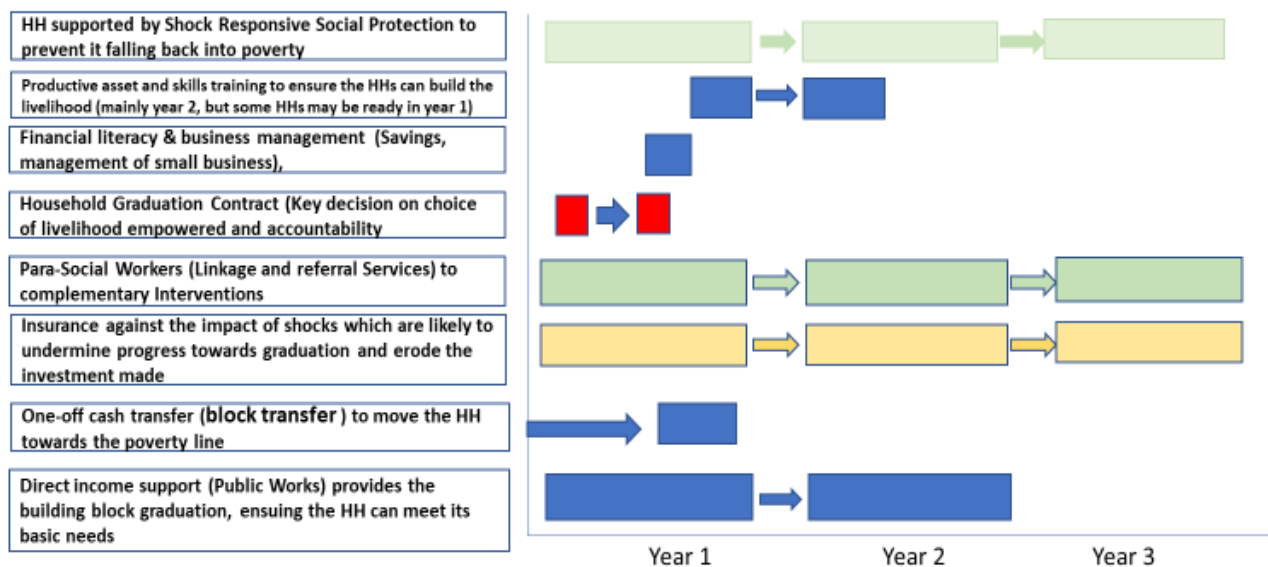
4.2. Costing and financing for the graduation package

The cost estimate is based on provision of safety net payments (2 years); productive asset transfer (1 year), and skills development for one year, Financial literacy and training on how to manage a project/small business for one year, and includes insurance, health and livelihood related services, facilitated access to financial services/loans as well as para social workers to provide advisory and coaching services for a period of 3 years.

This graduation model assumes a conducive environment that facilitates access to agriculture services, education, health, water, electricity and markets as well as areas that are less prone to shocks. Each individual household should have a graduation contract that set out the obligations of the graduation participant and also the obligations of service provider; the participant should be made aware of the expectations beforehand.

Table 5: **Estimated total cost of a graduation participating households**

Package of services	Year 1 (Rwf)	Year 2 (Rwf)	Year 3 (Rwf)
o Direct income transfer inclusive of insurance	165,000	165,000	-
o Financial literacy/business management	10,000	-	-
o Parasocial workers	155,000	155,000	155,000

	-	175,000	-
○ Productive assets (small livestock, machines, start-ups	-	175,000	-
○ Skills development	-	642,000	-
○ Shock responsive social protection	-	-	63,000
Total	**330,000**	**1,137,000**	**218,000**

From the table above, the estimated cost of the graduation package for a participating household over the period of two years overlapping to the 3rd year is estimated at Rwf 1,685,000 for a household to sustainably graduate out of poverty. Based on this assumption, if we benchmark our targets on the numbers for safety nets for FY2022/23 which is 102,000 households, we can estimate that for FY2023/24, the budget estimate is Rwf 171,870,000,000 over two years.

Alternatively, a participating household which has been identified as having the potential to graduate and resides in a conducive environment that can sustain its livelihood development can be provided with a sizeable one-off cash transfer (block transfer) of Rwf 800,000 for a period of one year and coaching and advisory services for 2 years to enable a household to rapidly graduate out of poverty. This model is based on evidence and experience from other programmes that have been implemented it in Rwanda. The detailed costing can be found in the table below.

Table 6: Targeting households for rapid graduation

Package of services	Year 1 (Rwf)	Year2 (Rwf)
○ Cash transfer (block transfer)	800,000	-
○ Financial literacy/management of small businesses	10,000	-
○ Para social workers to monitor, coach and do referral services	155,000	155,000
Sub-total (Yr 1) Rwf	**965,000**	
Total (2 years) Rwf	**1,120,000**	

These households are considered fast movers and require less resources for coaching and supervision. However, along the way, further support is needed to protect their investment to cushion or prevent them from falling back into poverty. If the same assumption of the number of households covered by safety nets 102,000 households for the current FY2022/23 is used, the total cost in the first cohort year (FY2023/24) is Rwf 114,240,000,000.

Note that the two models can be implemented simultaneously.

This cost estimate in the two models does not include administrative cost such as training local government etc.

4.3.   Five key principles underpining the Implementation framework

Principle 1: Community awareness and sensitisation directed towards graduation clients and the community is very important to ensure that households are communicated, informed of the programme objectives and expectations in advance of provision of support.

Principle 2: Graduation will only come about with the coordinated inputs of a number of Ministries, agencies and stakeholders through a multi sectoral approach who need to commit to:

1. Specific inputs to support the graduation initiative; and
2. The timing when those inputs will be provided

Principle 3: Households with the capacity to graduate are identified against defined criteria and specifically targeted;

Principle 4: The ability of the environment to sustain graduation is a critical component of the graduation strategy. This will be address in the Local Economic Development annual workplan which will include a survey to identify sectors where infrastructure works should be planned.

Principle 5: Graduation should take place in two years with overlapping inputs in the 3rd year. There will be a new cohort of households with the potential to graduate identified each fiscal year who will be targeted

Principle 6: Shock responsive social protection interventions support households with the capacity to graduate in the event of a shock which threatens to push the household back into or further into poverty OR threatens the livelihood which has been developed.

The budget needs to be mobilised. However, not all budget is completely new as there is already some existing budget such as that allocated through Vision Umurenge Programme, Local development projects, agriculture sector, just to mention a few. Through multi sectoral planning and budgeting, resources can be mobilised.

Therefore, it should be noted that the multi-sectorial costs have not been included, these are: provision of livestock by other agencies (e.g. MINAGRI and RAB), improving sector infrastructure (which will be funded by LED) and the cost of complementary services.

Finally, it cannot be assumed that all households with the potential to graduate will do so. Given that 40% of households are affected by a shock the development of a Shock Responsive Social Protection strategy is a key intervention which will maximise graduation.

4.4.   Graduation measurement

According to the social protection policy (June, 2020), a poor household which has received the full graduation package, shall graduate in a period of 2 years. To determine whether a household has graduated, it should have moved above the poverty line and stayed their permanently.

The main poverty line is set at RWF 159,375 per adult equivalent per year[22] in the prices of January 2014. So, with an average household size of 4.4 persons, then household income should be at least RwF 701,250 per year for the HH to reach the poverty line.

However, measurement will be done using proxy indicators to determine and be determined on what HHs has received (baseline) and how they have made it productive. Para social workers will be reporting on key measurement indicators (proxy indicators) to measure progress of participating HHs on a six-monthly basis on asset and income consumption accumulation.

Household will invest in increased consumption and in their livelihood– productive assets have a downstream consumption value which we need to estimate (number of meals per day)

Monitoring household progress towards graduation shall include visits to the participant households on a regular basis to see and record the physical status of the graduation HH.

A measurement module will be constructed in the dynamic social registry and:
- We will be able to ascertain households that have improved their welfare based on the cut off score vis a vis their previous welfare status.
- If a graduation client is not making the progress expected it is critical to understand WHY

Table 7: Graduation Measurement indicators

Outputs	Measurement indicators	Means of vérification
Household able to address basic needs	o Nᵒ of graduation participants able to eat 2 times per day o Nᵒ of graduation participants with nutritious meals per day per person o Nᵒ of school age children in the graduation participants' HHs enrolled in school and attending regularly o % graduation participants HH members enrolled in mutuelle de sante o % of graduation participants able to access health care services	**PSWs**
Households acquire physical and financial assets	o Nᵒ of graduation participants involved in savings schemes o % of graduation participants with access to productive land o % of graduation participants with access to other productive assets o Nᵒ of Graduation participants making regular payments to EJO HEZA	**PSWs**

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[22] Inflating it at CPI, as a rough measure of inflation, takes the amount to RWF **218,799 in 2022.**

HHs gain increased entrepreneurial and financial literacy skills	o Nº of graduation participants involved in savings schemes o Nº of graduation participants making regular savings	PSWs
Households have increased access to financial and income generating skills	o Nº of graduation participants with a small business o Nº of Graduation participants applying financial management skills save regularly	PSWs
Strengthened socio-economic infrastructure at community level	o Nº of successful livelihoods created in the sector o Graduation participants currently engaged in IGAs	PSWa
Households have received productive assets. The productive asset will be supported with start-up kits and skills training where relevant	o % of graduations participants receiving asset in accordance with sequenced delivery o % of graduations participants who have received a productive asset also receive and skills training with sequenced delivery	MEIS
Households which choose will be facilitated to access to micro-credit (Financial Services) and access to business development services	o % of Graduation participants applying for FS loans o % of Graduation Participants FS loan application approved	MIFOS
Access to complementary & business support services provided by para social workers	o % of Graduations participants linked to business support services in a timely way o Number of visits to each Graduation participant HH by para social worker in a 6-month period	PSWs
Households will access financial literacy training and entrepreneurial skills/project management training	o % of Graduation participants accessing financial literacy training o % of Graduation Participants accessing entrepreneurial training	District reports
Targeted messaging empowers graduation participants on the graduation pathway	o % of Graduation Participants report feeling empowered to develop their livelihood o Nº of visits to each Graduation Client HH by para social worker in a 6-month period	PSWs
Households have access to shock responsive interventions at need, including both health	o % of Graduation Participants covered by health insurance o % of Graduation Participants covered by risk pooling insurance o % of Graduation Participants suffering shocks receiving support at need	CBHI MEIS

insurance and pooled risk agricultural insurance etc.		
HHs able to address basic needs	o Nº of graduation participants with nutritious meals per day per person o Number of school age children in the graduation participants' HHs enrolled in school and attending regularly o % graduation participants HH members enrolled in mutuelle de sante o % of graduation participants able to avail health care services	PSWs
HHs acquire physical and financial assets	o Nº of graduation participants involved in savings schemes o % of graduation participants with access to land o % of graduation participants with access to other assets o Number of Graduation participants making regular payments to Ejo Heza	PSWs
HHs gain increased entrepreneurial and financial literacy skills	o No of graduation participants involved in savings schemes o Number of graduation participants making regular savings	PSWs
HHs have increased access to financial and income generating skills	o No of Graduation participants with a culture of saving o No of Graduation participants able to save regularly o No of Graduation participants applying financial management skills	PSWs
Strengthened socio-economic infrastructure at community level	o No of successful livelihoods created in the sector o Graduation participants currently engaged in IGAs o Graduation client HH earn a regular income o Graduation client HH regular income has increased	PSWs
Shock responsive social protection to prevent HHs falling into/back into poverty	o % of Graduation Participants affected by shocks whose livelihood assets are maintained through insurance and/or economic stimulus package	Districts
Strengthened linkages and referral to complementary services & existing opportunities	o Increased awareness of how to access formal financial services o Increased awareness of how to access business support	PSWs
OUTCOMES		
Increased social inclusion and positive mindsets – empowered HHs	o No of graduation participants who are confident they have the skills and knowledge and support to develop a livelihood	PSWs

	o Graduation participants expresses clear vision for the future through household goals and budgeting	
	o No of times graduation participants able to voice their thoughts in community meetings	
	o No of time graduation participants access community resources when a need arises through linkages	
Increased livelihood diversification and HH earnings	o No of graduation participants with operating livelihoods which are profitable	PSWs
	o Graduation participants have at least 3 sources of income	
Increased consumption of basic needs and asset accumulation	o No of graduation participants with nutritious meals per day per person	PSWs
	o No of graduation participants who have accumulated saving above the established poverty line by the end of the 2-year cycle.	

5.0.   Institutional Arrangements

The roles and responsibilities of various institutions and stakeholders at national and district level in implementing the National Strategy for Sustainable Graduation are mainly to work towards contributing to Joint Action Plan for Sustainable Graduation. This will be done by ensuring planning and budgeting for interventions that either contribute to creation of an enabling environment or intervention that form direct inputs to enhance graduation or both. The respective sectoral ministries will contribute what is in line with their mandates and will line the agencies attached to them in terms of programming.

The graduation steering committee will be composed of permanent secretaries and heads of agencies from the social and economic clusters. The steering committee will be chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Local Government and co-chaired by the Permanent Secretary from the Economic cluster lead.

The steering committee of Permanent Secretaries and Heads of institutions will report to the relevant social and economic cluster Ministers forum for any final decisions and orientation.

This coordination framework will be replicated at the District, Sector and Cell level to ensure coherence and ownership along the graduation pathways.

Specific terms of reference for each level will be developed in order to operationalise the graduation steering committee.

Figure 5: Governance arrangements for delivery of the graduation joint action plan for sustainable graduation
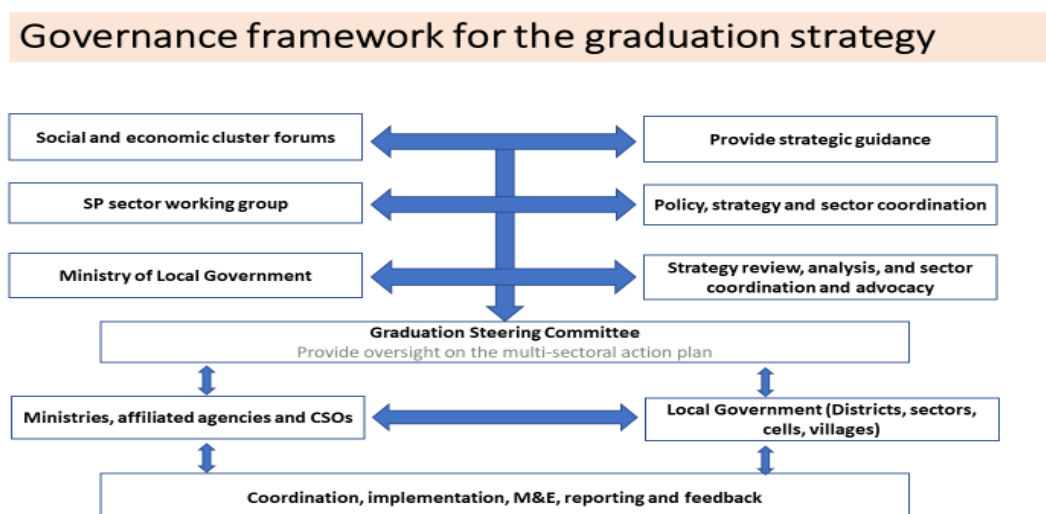
The sector ministries and agencies representation on the steering committee will include Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Agencies and Senior Technical Staffs from the agencies attached to them. The responsibilities of the respective actors are summarised in the table 8 below:

Table 8: Institutional arrangements

Institution	Actions
National level	
Social Cluster and Economic Cluster	• The Social Cluster forum will provide the guidance at a high level to ensure that the policy coordination and advocacy is well catered for in the relevant line Ministries and affiliated agencies. • The Economic Cluster will ensure that there is alignment of resources and synergy with the multi sectoral actin plan • Coordinate, at policy level, the functions of individual ministries' planning, and budgeting for the multi-sectoral interventions to constitute a Joint Action Plan for Sustainable Graduation (JASG) • Assess whether the periodical targets of are mainstreamed into relevant ministry and affiliated institutional plans and budgets. • Approve a Joint Action Plan for Sustainable Graduation (JASG) embodying the plans and contributions of the respective Social Cluster ministries • Spearheading the monitoring and generating lessons to keep graduation interventions dynamic • Coordinate the individual ministries' reporting and approving the consolidated report of the multi-sectoral interventions • Assigning and giving orientation to the technical National Steering Committee
Social Protection Sector Working Group	• Participate in Resource Mobilisation for the multi-sectoral interventions • Provide technical support to the development of the Joint Action Plan for Sustainable Graduation (JASG) • Contribute to technical Capacity Building at Central and Local Government levels • Integrate activities contained within the JASG into the work plan of the SPSWG • Conduct technical analysis and evaluations of key policies and programmes to support evidence-based policy development
National Graduation Steering Committee	The National Graduation Steering committee forms the technical arm of the Social Cluster and Economic cluster Forum and will be responsible for: • Technical Coordination of the individual ministries' planning, and budgeting for the multi-sectoral interventions to constitute a JASG

	• Elaboration of the JASG and submission of it to the Social Cluster Forum for approval
	• Monitor the implementation of the JASG
	• Technical oversight on the graduation strategy implementation and proposing the Strategy's adaptation Strategies to the National Social Cluster Forum
	• Composition: MINALOC, MINECOFIN, MINAGRI, MININFRA, MINISANTE, MINEDUC, MINEMA, MIGEPROFE, MIFORTRA, CSOs and relevant affiliated agencies (LODA, RAB, WASAC, REG, ……)
MINALOC	• Chair the Graduation Steering Committee and Social Sector Working Group
	• Establish a graduation secretariat/ desk to coordinate the day-to-day monitor the implementation of the joint action plan on sustainable graduation.
	• Designate resource persons to manage the Graduation Secretariat
	• Coordinate the monitoring and evaluation activities in the social protection sector
	• Coordinate the targeting of the graduation participants through the social registry information system
	• Provide technical support to relevant line ministries and agencies in the mainstreaming of graduation agenda within sectoral policies, programmes and action plans.
	• Proactively, promote strategic coordination between social protection and key complementary programmes
	• Engage with MINECOFIN to ensure that, to the extent possible, that the JASG on graduation is fully financed (with a particular focus on maximizing harmonization, coverage) and that intra-sectoral financing responds to strategic priorities and lessons learnt on supporting sustainable graduation from extreme poverty
	• Ensure that the graduation agenda is appropriately integrated into Joint Sector Imihigo and District Imihigo frameworks
	• Associate RALG in the Capacity Building of Local Governments
MINECOFIN	• Co-Chair the graduation steering committee and ensure that, to the extent possible, the JASG is fully financed, with a particular focus on maximizing the coverage of core social protection programmes and other relevant local economic development projects as a critical basis for sustainable graduation;
	• Ensure that sector financing responds to strategic priorities and lessons learnt on supporting sustainable graduation from extreme poverty
	• Provide stimulus packages (economic and social protection) in the event of shocks and disasters) by establishing a disaster response fund.
MININFRA	• Mainstream graduation agenda into infrastructure development plans in consultation with the social protection sector

	• In collaboration with MINALOC and Local Governments, ensure that poor and vulnerable access work in the infrastructure projects under the ministry's direct responsibility (water and sanitation, roads, energy, building infrastructures, etc • Align planning of key enabling environment creating projects with localities for graduation packages
MINAGRI	• Review the policies and strategies on agricultural subsidies (seeds, fertilizers) and Grants (Small and Big Livestock, Agricultural and Livestock equipment) to ensure access for poor households with potential for graduation. • In collaboration with MINALOC and Districts, ensure that poor and vulnerable households access work in the agricultural sector's labour-based projects such as in terracing and feeder roads • Ensure planning and budgeting for the Agricultural sector's contributions to the JASG. • Crop/Livestock insurance to cushion households from falling into poverty in the event of floods, crop pests and drought. • Provide technical assistance on activities related to agriculture and livestock as packages of livelihood enhancement
MINISANTE	• Ensure access of health services by the poor and vulnerable. • Ensure planning and budgeting for the health sector's contributions to the Joint action Plan • Align planning of key enabling environment creating projects with localities for graduation packages (eg health infrastructures) • Ensure the health services systems are responding to Social Protection needs, especially in the delivery of Nutrition Sensitive Direct Support, in particular fulfilment of pre-conditions for NSDS implementation at health centre level • In collaboration with MINALOC and Local Governments, ensure that the poor and vulnerable access work in the health sector's labour-based projects such as in construction of health centres and hospitals
MINEDUC	• Ensure access of education services by children from the poor and vulnerable Households. • Ensure planning and budgeting for the education sector's contributions to the JASG including literacy and numeracy skills for the poor and vulnerable • Align planning of key enabling environment creating projects with localities for graduation packages (eg school infrastructure, TVETs) • In collaboration with MINALOC and Local Governments, ensure that the poor and vulnerable access work in the education sector's labour-based projects such as in construction of schools, TVETs, dormitories and hostels

MINEMA	• Ensure planning and budgeting for emergency relief services in case of shocks as a contribution to the Joint action Plan including literacy and numeracy skills for the poor and vulnerable
	• Ensure liaison with MINALOC/LODA in mitigation and response measures to shocks and disasters
MIFOTRA	• Ensure planning and budgeting for the employment and labour services, as contributions to the JASG; in particular to reinforce mainstreaming "Decent Job" principles, skills development to reinforce the related social protection instruments and to create the desired synergy
	• Contribute to capacity development of the central level of Government through Rwanda Management Institute (RMI)
MIGEPROF	• Reinforce gender and childcare mainstreaming into Graduation Agenda
	• Build the capacities of Gender officers and women council structures at decentralised level to contribute to the planning and implementation of the JASG
	• Build the capacities of Inshuti z'Umuryango to complement the effort of para social workers in case management especially in management of referral cases
Social Protection agencies (LODA, RDRC,	• Continue to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of core social protection programmes (LODA, RDRC, NRS, NCPD)
	• Strengthen monitoring and evaluation of core social protection programmes, including through the implementation of high-quality Management Information Systems (MIS) linked to the integrated Social Protection MIS (iSP MIS).
	• Proactively explore opportunities for enhancing coordination between core social protection programmes and key complementary programmes
	• Build the capacity of local governments with a view to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of core social protection programmes and enhancing the linkages with key complementary programmes and services.
	• Align their interventions with the contributions of their line ministries in building the enabling environment and delivery of core social protection and complementary services
Sub-national level	

Districts	• Integrate the graduation agenda into District Imihigo and reporting frameworks.
	• Align the JADF Platform' interventions to the graduation agenda for synergy.
	• Commit the JADF platform to delivery of Sustainable Graduation interventions by signing Imihigo with the respective members.
	• Continue to work to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of core social protection programmes and key complementary services.
	• Participate in social protection sector monitoring and evaluation processes.
	• Strengthen coordination and harmonisation of the Social Affairs department for synergy in implementing the graduation agenda.
	• In particular the Graduation Component will be under responsibility of the Vice Mayor in charge of Economic affairs in its sustainable livelihoods' enhancement schemes of the Graduation component (Financial Literacy, Micro credit, Skills Development, and Productive Asset Transfers) to ensure harmonisation with related services of the Business Development and Employment under his/her jurisdiction;
	• In particular, the Vice Mayor in charge of Social Affairs will be responsible for oversight in identification of beneficiaries for the graduation component;
	• Both Vice Mayors will work closely in implementation of the cross-cutting pillar of Community Mobilisation and Public Communications with the Vice Mayor in charge of Social Affairs as lead.
Civil Society Organisations/JADF **JADF**	▪ Align CSO/NGO action strategies and plans to national level sectoral strategic orientation and Districts plans
	▪ Participate in Local Government Planning processes;
	• Integrate actions arising from the JASG into District JADF planning processes;
	• Monitor implementation of the JASG at district level;
	▪ Contribute to capacity building of Local Government structures and para social workers;
	▪ Participate in community mobilisation and monitoring of activities;
	▪ Sign Imihigo with Districts on implementation of JASG;
Sectors	▪ Coordinate para social worker's activities at cell level;
	▪ Supervise para social worker selection process;
	▪ Ensure proper compliance with para social worker's implementation guidelines;
	▪ Consolidation of para social worker's report from cell and submit the consolidated report to District;

	▪ Organize and conduct quarterly coordination meeting with para social workers.
Cell	▪ Coordinate and manage the para social worker's activities and relevant files;
	▪ Follow up of the para social worker's selection process;
	▪ Participate in the evaluation of para social workers performance contracts;
	▪ Organise and coordinate the monthly coordination meeting with para social workers;
	▪ Conduct a regular field visit to sampled beneficiaries;
	▪ Supervise para social worker's activities, support and mentor them, so that they further build their skills;
	Conduct a regular follow up of referred cases.
	Co-sign the parasocial performance contracts for accountability purposes
Village	▪ Facilitate elections of para social workers as well as their replacement if deemed necessary;
	▪ Coordination of para social worker's activities at village level;
	▪ To carry out home visit together with para social workers on households with complex cases/ relevant issues;
	▪ To collaborate with para social workers in the follow up of outcomes on referred cases, complaints and appeals on behalf of beneficiaries;
	▪ To provide a list of household/ beneficiaries each para social workers to monitor.
Para social workers	The key role of the para social worker is to understand the particular needs of each extremely poor household participating in social protection programmes (VUP, FARG and RDRC and then link them to relevant proximity advisory services by: • Understand the aspirations, priorities, needs and constraints of each household, help them develop performance contracts. • Inform households of their social protection entitlements (VUP, FARG, RDRC and community health insurance (CHI) • To provide referral services to facilitate access to other existing services such as Business Development Advisors, VUP Financial Services, agricultural extension services, health services, education etc.

	- Monitoring households' improvements in their socioeconomic livelihoods. - Para social workers will organise community sensitisation sessions for behaviour change, provide coaching and training to households under the graduation program.

Table 9: Detailed implementation plan

Strategic output	Activity	Timeline	Responsibility
Strategic Objective 1: Contribution of income transfers to graduation enhanced			
Improve targeting of social protection programmes to ensure eligible graduation participants are included, and to minimise inclusion of ineligible households	Ensure development of single registry meets needs for graduation planning and monitoring	Work is ongoing. Q1 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC
	Ensuring coherence with targeting instruments to respond to lessons on social protection policy on targeting	FY2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
	Engage with ongoing processes for improving social protection targeting to ensure inclusion of eligible graduation participants	Q2 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, RSSB and LODA
	Ensure appropriate plans are made for targeting of shock-responsive social protection to include graduation participants but also those at risk above the poverty line so they do not 'un-graduate'	Q1 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN, MINEMA and LODA
Ensure coverage of social protection so that all potential graduates who are eligible for support receive it	Identify potential graduates who are not receiving income transfers to which they are entitled	Q3 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
	Include these households as temporary recipients of transfers in the short-term	Q1 to Q4 2022/23	LODA
	Ensure these households are considered when retargeting exercises are considered	Q1 to Q4 2022/23	LODA
Improve the amount of social protection incomes received, so that they allow effective consumption smoothing, protect against risk, and better provide a secure foundation from which to build towards graduation	Provide clear evidence on the importance of adequate transfer value for graduation	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN and LODA
	Research and model transfer values required for graduation by different types of household so that transfer value calculation is conducted on a clearly-evidenced basis	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN, LODA and NISR
	Advocate for establishing target incomes for transfer recipients at or above the official poverty line, in line with the definition of graduation in national policy	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN and LODA
	Develop a mechanism for routine monitoring and resetting of transfer values	Q2 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN and LODA
	Ensure transfer values agreed for different types of households are received in practice	Ongoing from Q2 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN and LODA

	Continue efforts to sensitise all stakeholders on the importance of adequate transfer values to graduation	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
Ensure the timing and duration of support provided fits with the requirements of potential graduates for consumption-smoothing and a stable foundation for efforts to graduate	Provide clear evidence on the importance of timing and duration of support for graduation	Q3 to Q4 2022/23	LODA and Districts
	Continue efforts to sensitise all stakeholders on the importance of timing and duration of support to graduation	Q3 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
	Work with social protection stakeholders to revise implementation guidelines to reflect findings	Q3 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and Social cluster Ministries and Agencies
	Ensure that graduation-enabling activities – including public works – are distributed through the financial year and not delayed to the last quarter	Q3 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN and LODA
	Monitor implementation of guidelines and amend operations as required	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23	MINALOC and Social Cluster Ministries
Ensure timeliness and regularity of transfer payments, so that the correct amounts are received regularly when they are meant to be	Provide clear evidence on the importance of timely transfers for graduation		
	Implement recommendations of studies assessing timeliness of transfers	Q1 2023/24	MINALOC and Social Cluster Ministries
	Closely monitor timeliness of transfers and take preventive and remedial action as required	Q3 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
	Continue efforts to sensitise all stakeholders on the importance of timeliness of transfers to graduation	Q4 2022/23	
Amend design of all programmes so they can scale-up when required to mitigate the effects of external shocks	Conduct research on the effects of shocks on graduation	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC and Social Cluster Ministries
	Contribute a graduation perspective to ongoing design of shock-responsive social protection in Rwanda	Q3 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and Social Cluster Ministries
	Ensure that graduation gains are protected by supporting households at risk of falling below the poverty line	Q2 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN, MINEMA and LODA
	Support implementation of shock-responsive social protection, ensuring the specific needs of graduation participants are addressed	Q2 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN, MINEMA and LODA
	Monitor the effectiveness of shock-responsive social protection in relation to graduation, and improve as required	Q2 2022/23	MINALOC, MINEMA and LODA
	Conduct research on how systems weaknesses affect graduation	Q4 2022/23	

Ensure redesign of social protection systems for cash transfers and shock response takes full account of the specific needs of graduation participants	Contribute a graduation perspective to design and implementation of social protection system development, for example the social registry, digitisation of transfers, and others	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, MINEMA and LODA
	Ensure that design of systems required for shock responsive social protection, for example alignment and coordination with wider emergency response, early warning, triggering support, disaster financing, financial management mechanisms, selection, payments, contingency planning, capacity development, takes into account the specific needs of graduation participants and also includes people in danger of falling below the poverty line due to shocks	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN, MINEMA and LODA
	Monitor the effectiveness of system development in relation to graduation and improve as required	Ongoing annually from Q1 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA

Strategic output	Activity	Timeline	Responsibility
Strategic Objective 2: Effective multi-sectoral support for sustainable livelihoods received by graduation participants.			
Planning: Accurately assess graduation potential and develop appropriate strategies for individual households	Strengthen national capacity for poverty and vulnerability analysis for improved understanding and knowledge on poverty and graduation.	Q1 2023/24	MINALOC, MINECOFIN, NISR and LODA
	Ensure effective ubudehe categorisation as basis for eligibility for graduation support	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
	Improve effectiveness of household profiling	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
	Operationalise social registry	From Q2 2022/23	MINALOC
	Objective and accountable assessment of graduation potential tailored to the needs of the household	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
	Informed assessment of market potential and risks to underpin productive asset transfers in viable market opportunities	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC and Social Cluster Ministries
	Coordination of the planning and budget to ensure that all the elements of the graduation package are adequately funded and implemented.	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN and LODA
	Participatory development of household-level graduation plans	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
	Establish household performance contract (imihigo)	Q3 2022/23	MINALOC and Districts
	Sign supply-side performance contracts for commitments to deliver and enable graduation, fully aligned with client imihigo contracts	Q3 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and Districts

	Conduct local skills assessment in the context of household graduation plans and identify which graduation participants require what skills development	Q1 to Q3 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and Districts
Skills training: Deliver appropriate technical skills training to support planned strategy	Ensure availability where needed of appropriate service providers for skills development of sufficient quality	Q1 2022/23	LODA and RDB
	Ensure all graduation participants receive agreed skills training of the right kind, and at the time needed to support graduation activities	Q3 2022/23	LODA
	Ensure alignment of timing of asset transfers with skills training	Q3 2022/23	LODA
	Plan and arrange a programme of skills development updates and enhancement to improve skill levels of graduation participants over time and to avoid a one-off approach	Q4 2022/23	LODA
Asset transfer and supporting services: Provide appropriate asset transfers and support to selected households, taking into account and addressing previous experiences and challenges	Ensure lessons learned on asset transfers are used to redesign programmes and approaches so that support is appropriate and effective, especially for livestock transfer programmes	Q4 2023/24	MINALOC, MINAGRI and LODA
	Ensure programme rules do not compromise viability of asset transfer investments	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, MINAGRI LODA and District
	Ensure that households are able to meet their basic needs at the time of the asset transfer	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, MINAGRI LODA and District
	Ensure all skills and life skills training is received by each client before asset transfer	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, MINAGRI LODA and District
	Ensure all necessary infrastructure, materials and tools are in place before asset transfer	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, MINAGRI LODA and District
	Ensure linkages to necessary services, such as veterinary support, are in place before asset transfer and ensure commitments are in service provider imihigo	Q3 2022/23	MINALOC, MINAGRI LODA and District
	Agree on compensation arrangements for graduation participants in the event of challenges with assets received beyond their control, such as livestock mortality, or lack of access to promised services or other support	Q4 2022/23	MINAGRI LODA and District
	Provide assets as per programme design, taking into all lessons learned to date	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, MINAGRI LODA and District

Strategic Action	Detailed Action	Timeline	Responsibility
	Conduct ongoing monitoring by proximity advisers of progress and challenges for each client receiving assets, and seek preventive action for any issues	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, MINAGRI LODA and District
Financial inclusion: Ensure access to appropriate and voluntary saving mechanisms	Recognise that savings, not credit, is the first instrument most appropriate for financial inclusion of the poorest, and design approaches accordingly	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
	Facilitate membership of all graduation participants in effective local level savings arrangements, with a preference for VSLAs	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
	Ensure financial services offered to graduation participants are specifically designed so they are appropriate and do not have barriers to entry or success	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23	LODA and District
Social empowerment: Provide adequate access to quality coaching and mentorship for life skills, and for social integration	Implement the para social workers and case management mechanisms and regularly review as required in response to learning	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
	Ensure effective linkages and coordination between all local-level workers, such as parasocial workers, other proximity advisers, and their management systems	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
	Ensure adequate and appropriate technical knowledge for all proximity workers expected to provide technical advice	Annual update training in Q1 each year	LODA and District
	Ensure all proximity workers have a full understanding of the nature of poverty in Rwanda and on perspectives and approaches to effectively support poor households to graduate	Q2 2021 with refresher training every year	MINALOC, LODA and District
	Ensure realistic caseloads for parasocial workers that they are able to cover effectively	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
	Build referral systems between parasocial workers and complementary services for when proximity advisers cannot offer sufficient assistance	Q3 to Q4 2022	MINALOC, LODA and District
	Design incentives structures for parasocial workers which are supportive of graduation participants' efforts and consistent with programme design as facilitators of graduation	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
	Provide high-value mentoring and empowerment support, including how to establish a mindset which will help graduation to become possible.	Q2 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
Strategic Action	**Detailed Action**	**Timeline**	**Responsibility**

Strategic Objective 3: Graduation participants access appropriate and aligned complementary referral services			
Link graduation participants to access free basic and adult education to children and adults in targeted households to address the education needs and challenges.	No detailed actions	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23. Continuous	District
Link graduation participants to nutrition advisory services	No detailed actions	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23. Continuous	District
Support efforts to secure adequate housing for all graduation participants	No detailed actions	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23. Continuous	District
Link graduation participants to agricultural extension services	No detailed actions	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23. Continuous	District
Link graduation participants to veterinary services	No detailed actions	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23	District
Link graduation participants to social services as required	No detailed actions	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23, continuous	District
Link graduation participants to childcare services	No detailed actions	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23. Continuous	District
Link graduation participants to specialist services when required	No detailed actions	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23	District
Link graduation participants to aligned NGO services and support where available	No detailed actions	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23	District

Strategic Action	Detailed Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Mainstream graduation into home-grown solutions, to link graduation participants to local community-led support, investments and services where available	No detailed actions	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23	District

Strategic Action	Detailed Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Strategic Objective 4: Households effectively supported by all people and organisations involved in facilitating graduation			
Put in place an adequate system for advisory staff with appropriate capacity	Establish the proximity advisory services/para-social workers at household level	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
	Build staffing, capacity, coverage and quality of advisory and coaching system	Each year/recurrent from Q1 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
Ensure improved understanding of graduation participants results in evidence-based decision making	Review use of household profiling and redesign in line with lessons learned	Each year/recurrent from Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, NISR and LODA
	Conduct studies and assessments as required to ensure relevance of understanding of graduation participants' realities	Each year from Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, NISR and LODA
	Develop guidance on how to ensure all graduation activities are driven by an understanding of the complexities of poverty dynamics in Rwanda	Q3 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
	Roll out comprehensive training, and refresher training to stakeholders both at national and local government level involved in graduation planning and delivery	Annually from Q1 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
	Conduct peer learning peer review on graduation best practices	Annually from Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
Improve accommodation of graduation participants' needs in complementary sector strategies and plans	Develop graduation mainstreaming guidelines, based on the new guidance on incorporating an understanding poor people's reality in decision-making	Each year/recurrent	MINALOC and LODA
	Review all sector strategies, plans and programmes relevant to graduation and learn lessons on effectiveness at enabling graduation	Q3 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and Social Cluster Ministries
	Ensure sector strategy, plans and programmes are adjusted to mainstream understandings required to enable graduation effectively based on new guidance	Q3 to Q4 2022/23 then annually	MINALOC and Social Cluster Ministries

Strategic Action	Detailed Action	Timeline	Responsibility
	Maintain register of all programmes with elements relevant to enabling graduation	Q3 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN and LODA
	Review effectiveness of complementary programmes' appropriateness for graduation participants regularly	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23	MINALOC and Social Cluster Ministries
	Review and learn lessons from implementing the multi-sectoral Action Plan for Sustained Graduation and other efforts at enabling graduation and incorporate lessons into the single action plan for graduation	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN and LODA
	Develop and institutionalise a multi-sectoral single action plan on graduation that incorporates the required needs and budgets for better implementation and provides the basis for all graduation-enabling activities	Q3 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN and LODA
Build effective engagement among all staff and organisations engaged in enabling graduation	Roll out training and sensitise all national and local staff on understanding poverty and how to effectively engage with poor participants to enable graduation	Annually from Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
	Provide clear guidance on attitude, behaviours and practices to be adopted by staff involved in enabling graduation	Annually from Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
	Roll out participatory refresher training on key messages for engaging effectively annually	Annually from Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
	Ensure all support is designed with realities of graduation participants in mind	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23	
Enhance management of advisory support provided to graduation participants	Build accountability systems for service providers and the quality and effectiveness of service provision, including structured and regular participant feedback	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
	Strengthen grievance management system	Q1 to Q2 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
	Encourage adherence to behavioural good practice among advisers and coaches	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
	Develop system for monitoring attitudes and behaviours of advisory and management staff involved in graduation	Q3 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and District
Strategic Action	**Detailed Action**	**Timeline**	**Responsibility**
Strategic Objective 5: Institutional arrangements and governance for graduation services function effectively			

Ensure alignment of all policy and strategy documents relevant to graduation in line with this graduation strategy document	'Retire' all documents which are no longer the latest versions or are no longer relevant	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
	Provide clear guidance on which documents are to be used as the source of current guidance	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
	Provide clear guidance on how all remaining, valid and current, documents relevant to planning of graduation fit together in an aligned and coherent way	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
	Maintain coherence with clear communication as new documents are developed	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
Assess current institutional arrangements for graduation	Ensure the in-depth review of institutional arrangements planned under the SP-SSP includes institutional arrangements for graduation at national and local government levels to identify current issues and challenges and form the basis for improvements which reduce duplication and scattered interventions and strengthen coordination	Q2 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
Strengthen national-level inter-sectoral coordination for graduation	Address the findings of the institutional assessment of graduation	Q3 2022/23	MINALOC and Social Cluster Ministries
	Establish high-level oversight and governance arrangements for the effective multi-sectoral management of the graduation agenda, including links to the political system	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC and Social Cluster Ministries
	Build understanding and commitment to roles and responsibilities on graduation among all relevant government bodies	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC and Social Cluster Ministries
	Sign Memoranda of Understanding with all concerned bodies to align and coordinate efforts	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC/ MINECOFIN, LODA District NGOs and DPs
	Monitor mainstreaming of graduation considerations in strategy, plans, programmes and budgets of all contributing ministries and agencies to ensure it has been completed effectively across all sectors and is maintained	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC and MINECOFIN
	Mainstream multi-sectoral planning for sustained graduation into all relevant individual, organisational and Joint Sector Imihigo contracts	Each year/recurrent	MINALOC and MINECOFIN
	Align targeting policies for key complementary programmes and services	Each year/recurrent	MINALOC and MINECOFIN

	Roll out the VUP approach across other infrastructure and labour-intensive public works programmes	Each year/recurrent	MINALOC MINECOFIN and LODA
	Establish a framework for effective planning and ongoing assessment of effectiveness of graduation efforts of sector policies and plans, to allow adaptive management and course-correction	Each year/recurrent	MINALOC MINECOFIN and LODA
	Convene an annual national conference to build awareness and understanding graduation, mobilise stakeholders and review progress and lessons learnt in implementing the National Graduation Strategy;	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
	Develop and implement a partner engagement plan targeting the private sector (e.g., professional associations, individual companies), Civil society organizations (INGO, NGOs, CBO and Faith based organizations) and Government institutions such as the Army, Police, and, etc. to mobilise technical, financial and in-kind support for implementation of the graduation strategy and to ensure alignment of all efforts behind a single strategy.	Q3 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN and LODA
Strengthen local-level inter-sectoral coordination for graduation	Address the findings of the institutional assessment for graduation	Q3 2022/23	MINALOC and Social Cluster Ministries
	Support Local Governments to mainstream graduation agenda into District Local Economic Development (LED) strategies and investment planning systems in line with the new mainstreaming guidelines for graduation	Q3 to Q4 2022/23 then annually	LODA Districts
	Ensure good coverage and quality of efforts to build the capacity of local government and all staff to understand graduation well and the role of local government in enabling it at scale	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23	LODA Districts
	Strengthen local government capacity for multi-sectoral and evidence-based planning for graduation, in line with new guidance for graduation	Each year/recurrent	MINALOC, LODA and Districts
	Build the capacity of JADFs and Districts in multi-sectoral coordination of social service delivery;	Each year/recurrent	MINALOC, LODA and Districts
	Ensure all districts comply with new graduation mainstreaming guidelines	Each year/recurrent	MINALOC, LODA and Districts
	Build the capacity of local governments to mobilise technical, financial and in-kind support from the private sector;	Each year/recurrent	MINALOC, LODA and Districts

	Improve coordination and performance management of caseworker and outreach structures at local level in line with new graduation guidelines	Each year/recurrent	MINALOC, LODA and Districts
	Establish systems and processes for coordination with civil society on graduation efforts	Each year/recurrent	MINALOC, LODA and Districts
Strengthen accountability for service delivery	Develop a communication strategy and conduct information campaign on rights and responsibilities of graduation participants, and expectations of service providers.	Q2 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and Districts
	Establish a system of social accountability in which citizen voices are actively sought and measures taken to address concerns	Each year/recurrent	MINALOC, LODA and Districts
	Ensure imihigo contracts have appropriate agreements based on lessons learned about effective support to graduation participants and avoid perverse incentives	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC Districts
	Ensure Imihigo contracts of service providers properly measure the adequacy and effectiveness of services and support provided to graduation participants, and link this to expectations placed upon graduation participants	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC Districts
	Introduce and manage effective performance management at all levels	Each year/recurrent	MINALOC, LODA and Districts
	Ensure strong grievance management systems	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and Districts
	Ensure linkage between accountability arrangements and monitoring, evaluation and learning systems for graduation so lessons can inform national-level action	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and Districts
Strategic Action	**Detailed Action**	**Timeline**	**Responsibility**
Strategic Objective 6: Graduation performance enhanced by ongoing lesson-learning			
Monitoring, evaluation and learning systems and capacity for graduation strengthened	Review current MEL arrangements for graduation and propose improvements to systems and frameworks to allow quicker use of ongoing lessons learned to enhance ongoing performance	Q3 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and Districts
	Introduce new systems and frame works covering monitoring, evaluation and learning designed to achieve the objective of the new approach to MEL	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and Districts

	Build capacities as required to effectively implement the new systems	Each year/recurrent	MINALOC, LODA and Districts
Improve and align sector and programme MEL frameworks and MISs for graduation	Ensure promotion of sustainable graduation from extreme poverty is mainstreamed across the MEL frameworks for all relevant programmes with roles in enabling graduation	Each year/recurrent	MINALOC, MINECOFIN, LODA and Districts
	Establish arrangements for integrated multi-sectoral MEL for graduation	Q3 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and Social Cluster Ministries
	Align all programme and sector MEL frameworks with the multi-sectoral MEL framework from graduation	Q3 to Q4 2022/23	MINALOC, LODA and Districts
	Strengthen MIS in all core programmes and bodies relevant to graduation such as VUP, and RDRC for social protection and key complementary programmes such as Girinka, NCC, NCPDF, RSSB	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC and RISA
	Formalise institutional arrangements for MEL for graduation, including links to sector processes such as JSRs	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN and LODA
Use ongoing lesson learning to enhance graduation performance	Introduce pre-assessment for consistency with graduation strategy and current understandings of appropriateness to identify winners and losers of all interventions during design of new programmes and annual planning and budgeting process for existing programmes	Q4 2022/23	MINALOC and LODA
	Introduce piloting and associated lesson-learning into planning of new interventions	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN and LODA
	Introduce ongoing and regular lesson-learning process reviews for all elements of the graduation framework	Ongoing from Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN and LODA
	Develop multi-sectoral systems for ongoing learning from implementation	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN and LODA
	Develop systems for quickly adjusting programme design and implementation at national and local levels in response to lessons learned	Q1 2022/23	MINALOC, MINECOFIN and LODA