The cost and time to establish a business in Rwanda has seen considerable improvements following several reforms. The reforms are a direct reaction to the World Bank’s Doing Business Report 2019, which found that globally, while Rwanda was the second easiest place to register property and third best for quality of credit information systems and procedures, it lagged behind on:

- Dealing with construction permits, where it ranked 106th
- Starting a business, where it ranked 51st
- Getting electricity, where it ranked 68th.

On dealing with construction permits, the Rwanda Development Board and the Rwanda Housing Authority announced in 2019 that it would reduce costs and streamline procedures in obtaining permits. This included a requirement for constructors to obtain liability insurance on buildings to improve building quality control, as well as reducing the time to obtain water and sewage connections.

On getting electricity, improvements have been made to the reliability of power supply by upgrading the country’s power grid infrastructure. Other changes include exempting small and medium enterprises from paying the trading licence tax for the first two years. This is in addition to the upgrade of information technology systems by the Rwanda Revenue Authority in 2016 to enable taxpayers to file their taxes without red tape, an effort to reduce the ease of tax payment and therefore the ease of doing business in the country.

All these reforms involved scrapping unnecessary procedures and investor requirements. As a result, the World Bank’s Doing Business Report 2020 ranked Rwanda:

- 81st for dealing with construction permits (up by 25 positions)
- 35th for starting a business (up by 16 positions)
- 59th for getting electricity (up by 9 positions).

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1 ‘Getting electricity’ refers to the procedures required for a business to obtain a permanent electricity connection and supply. It includes factors such as applications and contracts with electricity utilities, the necessary inspections and clearances from distribution utilities and the connection works between the business property and the electricity grid.


3 Rwanda Revenue Authority, RRA upgrades its website (2016), [https://www.rra.gov.rw/index.php?id=286&L=1%A3D=0&tx_news_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=News&tx_news_pi1%5Baction%5D=detail&cHash=1b51d186bc6cb25693deb53eca5fc8d](https://www.rra.gov.rw/index.php?id=286&L=1%A3D=0&tx_news_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=News&tx_news_pi1%5Baction%5D=detail&cHash=1b51d186bc6cb25693deb53eca5fc8d)